

## **Transitivity Analysis of English Translation of “Azan”: A Hallidayan Approach**

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### **Abstract**

This study claims the transitivity process in the English translation of ‘Azan’ which is eloquent in Halliday’s (1985) ‘Systematic Functional Grammar’ (SFG). Language is described as a model of ‘social semiotic’ to discourse analysis in the SFG approach. Michael Halliday states that the prominent system of language is ‘Transitivity’ belongs to the experiential metafunction that helps to locate the overall process types and grammatical resources in the construction of goings-on. This presented study is mixed-method research in which first the translation of ‘Azan’ is analyzed qualitatively by utilizing the framework of transitivity analysis than after the obtained qualitative result is quantified descriptively. The significance of the presented study is to investigate the application of the theory of transitivity originated by Michael Halliday for analysis of the text. Hence to get this objective, the researcher has used the descriptive quantitative method to identify the characteristics of the population or phenomenon realized by grammatical choices described in the section of research methodology by using a pie chart. The researcher used the method of documentation to collect the data. The data analysis puts focus on main intuitions ideational function and its meta-function in terms of the different perspective of linguistic features: circumstances, participant, actor, and process types that emphasize the doers like who is doing what to whom? The significance of the findings is that grammatical choices in the translation of ‘Azan’ express the main perspective of how linguistic analysis can be used to interpret the text that establishes awareness about grammar construes considering a good reference for further researches. However, according to Fairclough (2001, p. 73) study of language is important to identify its ideology described in its material form.

**Keywords:** Systematic functional grammar, transitivity, linguistics choices, ideational function, grammar construe

### **1. Introduction:**

Language is advent along with human development and formation of human society. People use language to serve different functions of society: consciousness experiences of the inner and outer world (Halliday, 1971). Generally, it is believed that language is the main source to convey a message and make others be able to build up understanding through the choice of words that people use to construct meaning and are also interested in doing amazing things

with language. Bloor & Bloor believe (2004, p. 2) that words choices and grammatical resources which people use in language produce acts that create understanding. However, Wood & Kroger (2000) deduce that a social language is a tool of doing things not just a medium of communication or description. Hence according to Gee (2005, p. 10) language is not just simply taken as a tool of description but it has a magical property that enables one to fit the situation of communicating: during speaking or writing people design that property that magically do the thing with language that someone is using to convey our message. Further, he claims about language is that it formulates and strengthens our perspectives, attitudes, ideologies, values, and activities for using identities. According to Halliday (1985, xiv), the interpretation of language is that it is like a ‘system of meaning’ which is guided by the forms of symbolization, realization, and having the answers the questions of how words work by doing different things by the people. Moreover, it establishes a different and unique outlook of language like it leads a process of ending rather than an end themselves and Michael Halliday had developed “systemic functional linguistics” through this point of view of language and associated in the 1960s. “Ideology of language is found in the material which is investigated by this ideology” (2004, p. 73).

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To specify the different implications of transitivity processes used in the translation of Azan.

### **2. Literature review**

Halliday’s Systemic functional grammar is a way of looking at grammar in every genre of language in terms of how grammar is used to unveil the inner-act meaning of language by the people that play a significant role in shaping, the way people get on with their lives. Functional grammar is used for several tasks: help to explain the language models, principles of the language that work on grammar, and include critical discourse analysis. However, the sub-system of functional grammar is the ideational function which is regarded as ‘transitivity’ an effective model of discourse analysis (Hu, 2006). Yaghoobi (2009) identified processes and the role of participants involved in those processes in the analysis of news structures in print media.

#### **● Studies conducted on ‘Azan’**

There had been very short work carried out on ‘Azan’ however Tavanaei & Saneipur (2009) had done a study on the text of Holy Qur’an to discover the cohesion by applying parse rule and found the cohesion in the text of Holy Qur’an by dividing Qur’anic verses into minor portion. Nasiri (2009) tried to fix the conceptual domain of Dunya (world) by applying a semantic approach in Qu’ranic selected Surahs and notified that there is a conceptual declaration and association of Dunya in the domain of Qur’an. Although Yadollahpour (2009) studies the Holy Quran from a semantic point of view by applying discourse analysis to find the meaning of human dignity. After searching these studies, the researcher had found none of the other work carried out to investigate the transitivity system in ‘Azan’.

Muslims all over the world have taken the 'Azan' and its different aspects as the symbol of Islamic ideology and also considering belief in it. The most important aspect of 'Azan' is its reciting by Moa'zzen (Azan teller). This person is considered as notable in prayer times and after it as he is chosen by Allah Almighty and given this ability to recite the 'Azan' beautifully for Muslims. The first and beloved of Holly Prophet (S.A.W) 'Azan' teller was Hazrat Bilal even today many of the 'Azan' tellers try to recite in that way. As for as the literature review is concerned, there had been no notable work carried out especially on transitivity analysis so that this study will be considered to be the first study in the Islamic domain. Moreover, this study aims to consider the translation of 'Azan' from a transitivity point of view. The main aim of the current study is to strike the answer to the following question.

1) What kind of implication of transitivity processes is found in the translation of Azan?

## **2. 1Theoretical Framework of the study**

### **2.1.1 Transitivity (clause as representation)**

A lot of studies were carried out to understand the language of writer and speaker using transitivity analysis which examines the structure of sentences. This analysis process refers to the process in which participants, circumstances, and language itself are involved. With the help of transitivity analysis researchers have tried to reveal that structure of language not only produces certain meaning but also unveils the ideology which always remains explicit for readers in doing functional analysis particularly in the transitivity concept of analysis. Therefore the concept of transitivity has been used to shed the organization of linguistics features in wordings of a language in literary text (Halliday, 1971). Hence there had been made a tentative step towards applying the transitivity model in systemic functional grammar which was helpful for home and abroad countries to apply the transitivity theory in discourse analysis. However, Shen (2006), Chen (2005), Hancock (2005), and Yang (2004) cited that transitivity analysis made applied in different genres of news discourse, different literary works to make it unique, advertisements, and political discourses in China.

However, the ideational function plays an important part in the theories of the transitivity system by which the structure of grammar is achieved. Therefore in functional grammar, it is the belief that transitivity is abstractly a system of semantic describing the whole clause (Halliday, 1994). On the other hand, transitivity refers to a system that construes experiences in terms of configurations of participants, process, and circumstances types. Further, these configurations figure out two major systems: PROCESS type and CIRCUMSTANTIATION are illustrated below.

#### **2.1.1.1 Process types in English**

Process types refer to sorting out the experiences of every kind into different numbers of types. There are six categories of the process introduced in English: material, mental, relational, behavioral, verbal, and existential.

● **Material process type (clause)**

In this process type, a clause refers to the experiences of doing and happening in the external world and describes the process of answering the questions: what does s/he do? Or what happened. It describes two subcategories: event (happening), action (doing). For example;

1. She     made     the coffee     (action)  
       ↓        ↓            ↓  
 actor    process    goal

2. He     climbed     the wall  
       ↓        ↓            ↓  
 actor    process    range

● **Mental process type (clause)**

This type describes the process of persons' consciousness involvement such as perception of something, judging, showing affection, or involvement of cognition. Here participants have different names of the sensor (involved in conscious processing as feelings, thinking, or seeing) and phenomenon (is being sensed or felt). For example;

Sara     likes     pizza  
       ↓        ↓            ↓  
 Sensor    process    phenomenon

● **Relational process type (clause)**

This clause refers to the traditional notion of 'copula' construction of a clause. It is constructed by two different modes: 1. attribution and 2. identification. In this clause, the relation is being set up between two separate entities. These two types of the process have two different sets of participants role attribute clauses with '**carrier + attribute**' and (2) identification clauses with '**token + value**'.

○ Ali     is     the farmer  
       ↓        ↓            ↓  
       Token    process    value

○ Hamid     is     energetic  
               ↓        ↓            ↓  
               carrier    process    attribute

● **Verbal process type (clause)**

Verbal clause represents the processes of 'exchanging information by commonly used verbs like saying, asking, commanding, and praising but this category also includes the modes of semiotic processes but not all semiotic processes need to include the verbal category. Here in verbal processes, the participant is indicated as 'sayer'. For example,

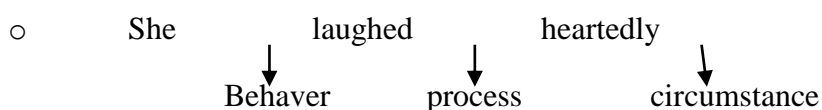
○ My mother     told     me     a story  
                       ↓            ↓            ↓            ↓

Sayer                    process   receiver    verbiage

In addition, in the verbal process clause, the addressee may refer to speech interaction, as the receiver like the receiver indicates the verbal beneficiary that is often marked as ‘to’, for example, “notices told me to keep quiet”.

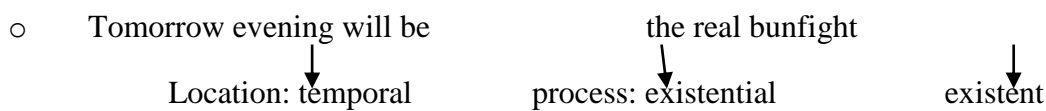
● **Behavioral process type (clause): between material & mental verbal**

This clause refers to ‘psychological activities’ or ‘process of behaving’ as the construed (human) behavior (mental and verbal behavior) are used as an active version of the mental and verbal process such as dreaming, pondering, grin, and gossiping. Generally, in this clause, only one participant behavior (human) is involved in the process. For example,



● **Existential process type (clause)**

It refers to the process of ‘existing or happening’ usually realized by re-construction existent: an object, event, or a human. There is only one participant, ‘the existent’ to be acquainted with the text. For example



**3. Research method**

**3.1 Research design**

Mixed method research had been used in this paper to study the problem. Firstly the data is qualitatively analyzed to describe characteristics being studied of selected population or phenomenon and after that, it was quantified to describe the in-depth analysis and interpretation of process types in transitivity system used in the English translation of ‘Azan’ to determine the functions of verbal clauses.

**3.2 Source of Data collection**

The data was collected for this study from Thought Co. by using the document source of data collection. ThoughtCo is part of the Dotdash publishing family. The translation of ‘Azan’ was published by Thought Co. on 28 September 2018. The clauses of ‘Azan’ were divided separately and analyzed individually. The researcher used the English translation of ‘Azan’ to determine the processes types presented in the transitivity system by Halliday’s SFG.

**4. Results**

**4.1 Distribution of process type clauses in the English translation of ‘Azan’**

English translation of ‘Azan’ was analyzed in terms of transitivity pattern to highlight the processes that represented what to be doing to whom. The following analysis is the framework of transitivity, showing different processes types.

□ **Relational process**

**Table 1: Allah is most great (said four times)**

Line no.	Allah Allah Allah Allah	Is is is is	Most Great Most Great Most Great Most Great
1 to 4	Carrier	Process	Attribute

Relational process refers to the state of having the relationship between two different entities without suggesting, one entity affects the other as well. The above table 01 represents the relational process having an attributive mode that is further assigning the quality, where the participant “**Allah**” is represented as a carrier of attributive quality ‘**Most great**’. Hence this clause indicates the ‘**intensive mode type**’ of relational process.

□ **Verbal process**

**Table 2: I testify that there is no god except Allah (said two times)**

Line no.	I	Testify	that there is no god except Allah
	I	testify	that there is no god except Allah
5 and 6	Sayer	Process	Verbiage

Communication between sayer and addressee is being exchanged in verbal process, when some message, the verbiage is conveyed by the sayer. There in table no. 2, clauses 5 and 6 the participant “**I**” is represented as a sayer while “**that there is no god except Allah**” is represented as verbiage and ‘**testify**’ labeled as the process of the clause. This table also manifests the conscious message, in form of saying and meaning through language.

**Table 3: I testify that Muhammad (S.A.W) is the messenger of Allah (said two times)**

Line no.	I	Testify	that Muhammad (S.A.W) is messenger of Allah
	I	Testify	that Muhammad (S.A.W) is messenger of Allah
7-8	Sayer	process	Verbiage

Above table 3 is the representation of the verbal process in clauses 7 and 8. Here is also the participant “**I**” represented as a sayer who conveys some symbolic exchange meaning in

form of verbiage (language) that **“Muhammad is the messenger of Allah”**. From this transitivity analysis, it is evident that there is a borderline between relational and mental processes in verbal process type clauses.

□ **Material process**

**Table 4: come to prayer (said twice)**

Line no.	Come Come	to prayer to prayer
9-10	Process	Goal

Material processes express the notion of ‘doing’ or organization of some information to some other inherited participants. Above table: 4 summarizes the strong relation between process and event/goal. Here the goal is **‘to prayer’** represented the relation to emotional loading. So it may be concluded that lexical words are more important for conveying a message than grammatical words.

**Table 5: come to success (said twice)**

Line no.	Come Come	to success to success
11-12	Process	Goal

Here above table: 5 is also used to indicate the importance of lexical words that existed in the translation of ‘Azan’. This also represents the relationship between process and goal but it is a very short line to summarize the detail. Another reason to skip the actor may be due to the fact or person whose value is unknown or may be known from context. **‘To success’** represents the goal of the process **‘come’** is the indication of the worth of hidden message.

□ **Mental process**

**Table 5: Prayer is better than sleep (said twice)**

Line no.	Prayer Prayer	Is is	better than sleep better than sleep
13-14	Sensor	Process	Phenomenon

The mental process involves ‘conscious processing or sensing’. The mentioning table no. 5 demonstrating most important task is to carry out to renew the coming day. Here **‘prayer’**

represents a sensor that sensed the phenomenon of sleep. After hearing this phenomenon audience will consciously accept this glorious act of prayer.

□ **Relational process**

**Table 6: Allah is most Great. (said twice)**

Line no.	Allah Allah	Is is	most Great most Great
15-16	carrier	Process	Attribute

The above table no. 6 shows the relational process in the translation of ‘Azan’ describing the new version for Islamic studies. It is seen through this example that the relational process is a good choice to explain the attributive quality of ‘**Allah**’ who possesses of being an abstract personality by representing as the carrier of the attribute.

□ **Existential process**

**Table 7: there is no god except Allah**

Line no.	There is	no god except Allah
17	Process: existential	Existent

The existential clause refers to the process of happening or existing something. From the above table ‘**there**’ is the indication of the existential process as this clause always starts from it whereas ‘**no god except Allah**’ represents the existent of the reality of Allah.

## 5. Results Discussion

**Table 5.1: Transitivity processes representation**

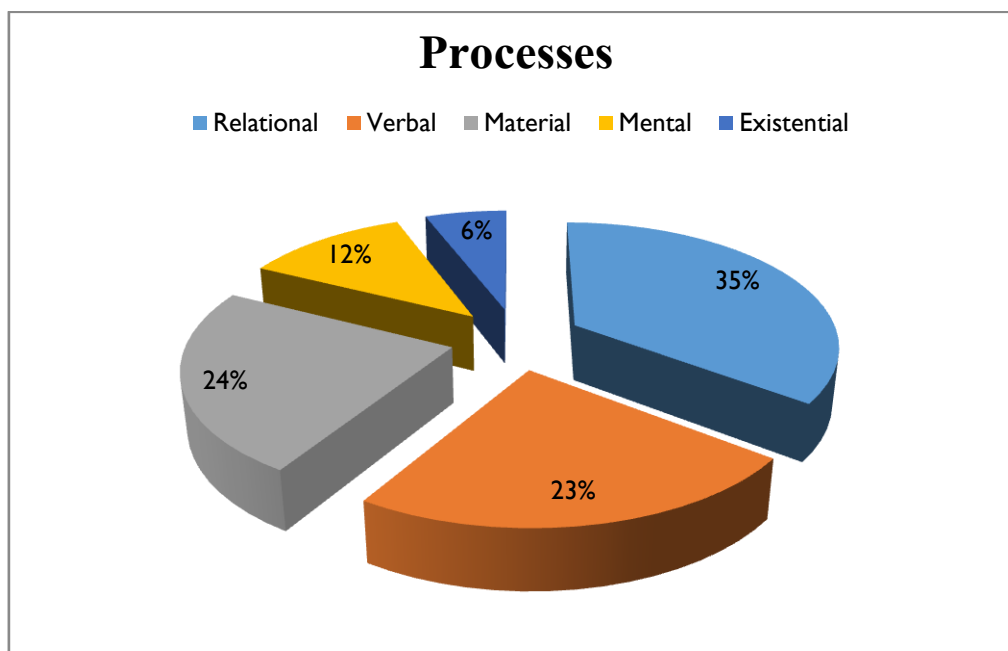
Processes type	Relational	Verbal	Material	Mental	Existential	Total
Value: no	6	4	4	2	1	17
Percentage	1.02%	0.68%	0.68%	0.34%	0.17%	100%

There are a total of 17 ranking clauses found in the translation of ‘Azan’ and from all the six process types, five types are found in the address indicated in the above table 5.1. However, there is a lion share accounting of 1.02% taken by the relational process of all the clauses.



There comes second and third distance of verbal and material processes for having 0.68% of the same percentage then the occurrence of mental and existential showing 0.34%, 0.17% is respectively significant. Although it is observed in SFG, comprehension of written texts and their contextual meaning is based on the choices of words not only from the grammatical rules that emerged by the choices of words indicates the persons' object being to do action with words (Van Dijk, 2006). Further distances found in these transitivity processes are described in the following pie chart.

**Figure 5.1: Processes types in the translation of 'Azan'**



As stated by this figure, there is excessive use of relational process type in the translation of 'Azan' than another process. The relational process reaches 35% ranks whereas verbal processes type with 23%. The four other types of material, mental and existential processes are at 24%, 12%, and 6% respectively significant that focus on the emotional state of 'Azan' for human beings.

## 6. Conclusion

After analyzing the English translation of 'Azan' by applying a transitivity system some major findings are come to have occurred in the English translation of 'Azan' that proposes as addressing to human beings. It is quite obvious that there is frequent use of processes type found with quite different frequencies. However, there is a relational process at quite a high range to signify the inaugural address by signifying the sovereignty of Allah. Form all six process types, there have five processes been found except the behavior process however the relational process is at the highest rank. Hence the distribution of combined features, the author illustrated the attitude towards situation, beliefs, intentions, and plan of the life in the world and hereafter too. According to Gee (2005) that there is a magical property in language: in our communication, we design such words that affect listeners to do things, and also these words be able the listeners to understand the situation of communication that

reveals the writer's perspective. All in all, transitivity analysis, it can be found that the English translation of 'Azan' is to stabilize the whole community of human beings by establishing image characteristics of Muhammad (S.A.W) who won more support and trust Allah as He (S.A.W) facilitator of Allah.

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