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**Analysis of Narrative Essay Text in Pakistani ESL Learners with the
LENS OF SFL**



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Abstract

This study explores how the narrative essay writing text employs transitivity structures to realize the experiential meanings, focusing on process types, participants, and circumstances within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Simultaneously the study explores the ideational meta-functions in the narrative essay written texts by the university undergrads participants 20 in number. Under the ideational exploration the linguistic choices reflect the material and experiential focus at maximum level. A mixed-method approach was implemented for transitivity elements analysis of the narrative essay texts under the lens SFL (Systemic Functional Linguistics) a grammatical appraisal framework developed by Halliday (1994) using a linguistic corpus tool UAM 3.3x version along with the additional help of the UAM 6.2 version of the linguistic corpus tool at the same time. The results manifested the material processes were dominant ($N= 656$, 13.5%), followed by relational ($N=165$, 3.4%) and mental ($N= 138$, 2.9%) processes. Participants ($N=1397$, 29.2%) and circumstances ($N=744$, 15.5%) were frequent, with actor, goal, and carrier as key roles. The narrative essay text prioritized factual description over introspective or interpersonal meanings. These results suggest the need for more balanced experiential representations in writing content of ESL Learning, and expose the underlying in depth meaning and ideological orientations contained in the narrative text.

Keywords: Transitivity, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Ideational Meta-Function, UAM Corpus Tool

INTRODUCTION

Language has its pivotal role in all sorts of communications, paving a medium for understanding amongst addressers and addressees aiming different sorts of understanding in variety of milieus of life. All areas of communication conform texts by all means, i.e. to speak, listen, read or write. The reading and writing are active skills which impregnate meaning within the text. Texts either from textbooks or any other written pieces construe their importance as key instruments of instruction, significantly influencing students' knowledge, beliefs, and social awareness (Muzaffar, 2016; Muzaffar, et. al. 2020). Amongst all the language skills, writing unlike speaking, paves its own essentiality due to its complex structure, in which it bounds the under-stander to stay confined in the rules of syntax to construct the meaning from the text. The ESL learners confront an abandoning impediment through writing, whenever there is a need of writing, an eminent medium in meaning and understandability. A colossal waste of understandable vocabulary, in developing a meaningful text amongst ESL learners has been observed through a number of attempts via ESL Learners. To understand the text in an in-depth manner the text has been undertaken the lens of SFL through the narrative essay writing amongst ESL learners of Undergrads of university level. The narrative text is construed and understood on the behalf of storytelling attitude in the text or a story based text. Despite having the narrative lens, the text is confined to look into the setting, characters plot, conflict/climax, and resolution of the text, but the expanded and embedded method of understanding the text through the lens of SFL (Systematic

Functional Linguistics) which inculcates the text in its extended areas of understanding, i.e. through Ideational, Interpersonal, and textual levels. The SFL lens provides the deeper understanding of material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential levels underlying the impregnating terms under ideational study. By decoding the text on differential levels of ideational plane, it delivers the grave level understanding of the text inculcating multifaceted hidden ends within the text.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

The foundations of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) by Halliday (1985) have paved the strategies and ushered the roadmap of Systemic Functional Linguistics in his book, "An Introduction to Functional Grammar". Halliday (1994), states SFL deals the language as a functional system that constructs meaning in social contexts. The primitive work has been established by on Firth's ideas, in the form of developed Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The later advancement in SFL witnesses Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) work of semiotic system inculcating the meaning process in three major areas of key meta-functions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. There comes the transitivity system primarily focused by ideational metafunction following the representation of reality through the language. These processes are assessed through the verbs, and the actions in verbs with the doer of the actions, and circumstantial elements to experience the time span in terms of 'when', allocations in terms of 'where', and happenings pattern in terms of 'how'. The transitivity system encapsulating these three planes of in which the text is assessed on the basis of experiences based on our actions, thoughts, and realtions to the worldly state of affairs. Matthiessen & Halliday (2009), state that the ideational metafunction provides the means to express both our extrinsic experiences to the world, and our intrinsic thoughts at clausal level through the transitivity system.

Language operates on two main levels: **discourse-semantics** and **lexico-grammar**.

The **discourse-semantics** level focuses on how meaning is constructed across and within the texts.

Discourse perspective, focuses coherence—the logical flow and unity of a text.

Eggins (1994), states that coherence can be generic (arising from the structure of a genre) or registerial (arising from consistency in context and style)

Semantic perspective, which deals with three **meta-functions** of language: experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings.

The clausal level is dealt by **lexico-grammar**, that how these meanings are expressed through grammar and vocabulary. Framing all the areas in which experiential meaning is involved it caters the human experience expressed through the process delving into the meaning of verb, its participant i.e. noun prepositional phrase under the plane of Circumstantial analysis.

Interpersonal meaning reflects social interaction and is realized through **Subject**, **Finite (modal verbs)**, and **Adjuncts**.

Textual meaning organizes , dividing a clause into **Theme** (the starting point of the message) and **Rheme** (what follows).

Cohesion, as explained by Halliday and Hasan (1976), refers to the grammatical and lexical links—References, conjunctions, and word relationships that develop the connectivity within the text construed as slinks of Cohesion.

Grabe (1988) explains “interactive” in three ways: as a process between reader and text, as a model combining different reading components, and as active engagement with the text as a whole. The term “Interactive” has an active role suggested by Grabe (1988) consisting three patterns as a communication process between reader and text, as a model construing different reading components, and reader as an active agent being engaged in the reading process.

The **Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)** framework views language as functional and meaningful only when studied within its context. **Martin (1992)**, states for **genre** as a structured, goal-driven social activity process comprising different stages that guide meaning and understanding. **Halliday (1985)** states **register** as the combination of **field** (what is happening), **tenor** (who is involved), and **mode** (how communication takes place). **Genre** and **register** paves understandable in depth meaning system in which how language operates within specific social and cultural contexts and paradigm.

Research by Carrell (1983) and Carrell and Eisterhold (1988) shows that EFL and ESL readers often struggle to balance the use of both knowledge-based and text-based reading strategies. Instead, they tend to rely too heavily on one type of processing, which negatively affects their comprehension. Similarly, Farhady and Sajadi (2009) note that many Iranian students face serious reading difficulties that, according to Birjandi et al. (2004), stem from weaknesses in both macro- and micro-reading skills. Lotfipour-Saedi (2005) observes that these issues persist across both secondary and higher education levels. To address this, Sadeghi (2007) suggests the need for a systematic framework of linguistic analysis.

Tabriz Rd. , et.al state Discourse-semantics, and lexico-grammar as the frames to ponder the language from two perspectives. Coherence and cohesion are the areas to ponder the language with respect to the discourse. Semantically it deals with three strands of meanings (meta-functions) at the clause level. Coherence, as holds Eggins (1994), is either generic, created through the togetherness of the functional stages of a genre; or registerial level. But, the latter; i.e., lexico-grammar, serves to realize the meta-functions at the clause level. Finite (modal verb), Adjunct (prepositional phrase); and textual meaning, is realized by Theme (element occupying the initial position in the clause) and Rheme (elements following the Theme).

Feng Chen Zhejiang Ocean University has catered numerous writing strategies which have been applied and implemented in classroom instruction over the past few decades to improve students' writing skills, but no consensus has been established on the best and most appropriate strategy for teaching writing. Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks for SFL Social constructivist and sociocultural learning theories set the ground for feedback literacy (Carless & Boud, 2018). Three salient concepts in the Sociocultural Learning Theory of Vygotsky (1978) particularly inform the construct: scaffolding, mediation and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In instructional contexts, these interrelated concepts highlight the role of a teacher's or capable peers' supportive assistance and interactive attempts in attaining students' learning goals, and such behaviors are quite manifest in the essence of feedback practices. Feedback literacy necessitates acknowledging the rationale of feedback and responding to it to augment learning (de Kleijn, 2021), and hence assumes an active role of students in constructing their own learning through negotiation and collaboration. Such reciprocal interactions between the provider and receiver of feedback stimulate cognitive development (Carless & Winstone, 2020)

Empirical work on SFL

As the advent of feedback literacy as a research area has been quite recent, the relevant literature is mostly conceptual, and empirical studies are observed to be limited in number and diversity. In a recent review of intervention studies on SFL, **Little et al. (2023)** reported only 16 papers, mostly administered to students in British and Australian higher education contexts. The review revealed that the predominant techniques applied to improve the participant students' SFL involved self- and peer assessment activities, discussions, and self-reflection entries, whereas the students' SFL evaluation was grounded on the data from students' self-perceptions, self-report questionnaires, reflective writings, and peer assessment performances. Below more elaborate information is provided on the scopes and results of some individual studies on SFL in general and of those with a specific focus on SFL in L2 writing.

Research on SFL in L2 writing

Feedback interactions are highly valued in second or foreign language (L2) classrooms, particularly in the development of writing skills (Hyland & Hyland, 2019). Drawing on previous definitions of feedback literacy, Han and Xu (2021, p. 3) define L2 SFL as a three-component construct: "the cognitive capacity, social-affective capacity, and social-affective dispositions" preparing students for active engagement with feedback. In this understanding, cognitive capacity comprises students' conceptual and metalinguistic knowledge regarding L2 writing and feedback, and cognitive and metacognitive strategies adopted by the learners. Grammatical metaphor in sfl as a rhetorical resource for academic writing by Chinwe r. ezeife (1987) states SFL as meaning-making by Choice. The basic underlying factor of SFL is meaning-making in the context; linguistic (lexicogrammatical), and extralinguistic (contextual) features (Halliday Explorations 36). Meaning-making in SFL is a product of choice and meaning is said to reside in the systemic patterns of choice of the language users (Eggins 20). Halliday categorized choices open to a writer/speaker in two ways; the "potential" and the "actual" choices (Halliday Social Semiotic). The "potential" consists of the totality of meaningful choices open to the language user to convey simultaneously three meaning potentials which Halliday referred to as the "macrofunctions" or "metafunctions". These metafunctions include – the ideational (representing human experience as content), the interpersonal (enacting human relationships) and the textual metafunctions (how text is created and how text relates to itself – cohesion – and to the context of use – coherence). These metafunctions of transitivity clause are as representation of doings, happenings, being, having, sayings, etc), Whereas Mood, (clause as exchange of goods and services, propositions and proposals) and Theme (clause as a message including how information lies in the clause to convey the message) respectively.

Grammatical Metaphor

Congruent versus Metaphorical Realizations as grammatical metaphor have been described as a rhetorical strategy for creating new modes of meaning (Halliday and Bateman 65). Two types of grammatical metaphor are prominent in functional grammar, namely, ideational metaphor and interpersonal metaphor (Halliday and Matthiessen 613-658) although Jamshid (online) gave some exemplifications of textual metaphor. Interpersonal metaphor creates new layers of meaning by "upgrading" modal assessment which in its "congruent" form is realized as an adjunct

of a proposition (for instance, “hopefully,” “regrettably”, etc) to the rank of a whole clause such that the interpersonal assessment becomes a proposition in its own right (for instance, “I hope”, “I regret”). On the other hand, ideational metaphor “downgrades” linguistic sequences, figures and elements to a rank below. As mentioned earlier, our concern here is on ideational metaphor and interpersonal metaphor is outside our scope. According to Halliday and Matthiessen’s (646) definition of ideational metaphor, the general tendency of ideational metaphor is to “downgrade” the domain of grammatical realization of a semantic sequence, figure or element – from clause nexus to clause, from clause to group/phrase, and even from group or phrase to word... Such downgrading affects both the unit whose domain of realization is downgraded, and the units of which it is composed: the downgrading proceeds down the rank scale by a kind of ‘domino effect’. The downgrading may start with (i) a whole sequence of figures (ii) with a single figure, or (iii) with a single element within a figure.

The Ideational Meta-function and Transitivity System

Within the ideational meta-function, the transitivity system consists of six major types of processes: material process (action/doing), mental process (sensing), behavioral process (behaving), Relational process (being), verbal process (saying), and existential process (existing). Each of these process types contains a particular kind of participants (e.g., Actor, goal, sensor) and circumstantial elements (e.g., time, place, manner) as well (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Each process type represents a different way of construing reality:

Material processes describe actions and physical activities (e.g., run, walk, cut)

Mental processes represent thoughts, feelings, cognition, and perceptions (e.g., know, think, feel).

Relational processes express states of being, identity, or possession (e.g., be, have, seem, appear).

Verbal processes involve acts of saying (e.g., tell, say, ask, order).

Behavioral processes include actions we can see or experience as physical or mental (such as laughing, watching, smiling, or crying).

The existential processes point out that something exists or happens (e.g., there is, there exists). This way of classifying information gives us a clear way to examine how knowledge and experiences are formed in educational texts.

Relevance of Transitivity Analysis in Narrative Essays

The transitivity analysis comprises the hidden message at its in depth level of understandability. Educational materials such as narrative essay text also convey certain views on how society and the world work. The frequent use of specific processes may bring the reflection of an author’s preferences for action-oriented, descriptive, or dialogic content (Eggins, 2004). Because of this, analyzing transitivity in educational linguistics is useful since it lets us see the hidden beliefs and methods found in narrative essay’s text. Eggins (2004) claims that the language in a text usually carries deeper meanings that shape what students think about knowledge, their identity, and their role in society. As a result, analyzing the transitivity system in Pakistani context among the under graduates can highlight patterns in how knowledge is presented, the way they implement the meaning and understand. Meaning s are the breakdown of the actions, thoughts, behaviors, being of any states in the wrds and

interactions within the text. This theory is used in educational linguistics to study how text affect learners in terms of both ideas and teaching methods (Eggins, 2004; Thompson, 2014).

Dominance of Material and Relational Processes

Influence on Student Writing Text

Several studies extend the analysis to student-generated texts, showing that learners replicate the process-type distributions modeled in any writing text. Apendi and Mulyani (2020) find that in Grade 9 students' descriptive texts, material (41.6%) and relational (38.3%) processes dominate through the transitivity lens. Rohmat et al. (2018) observe a similar trend, with relational processes as the most common, indicating the influence of text input on student in meaning construction.

Structural and Ideological Implications

Writing narrative texts comprises a critical role in shaping how students perceive language and reality in its sensational level through words and underlying meaning of these vocabularies. Hermawati et al. (2023), analyzing Indonesian textbook, find the carrier participants and relational processes dominant, reinforcing the idea that some textbooks prioritize description and factual representation of action or reflection.

The texts either from the narrative text passages or from any text books as state apparatus privilege a factual, action-oriented depiction of the state affairs and the surrounding world. Thus there is a stimulating factor for learners' ability engaged with more abstract, emotional, or dialogic meanings. The internal or interpersonal experience provides ideological implications with an emphatic material and relational processes constructing a vision for the world that is impersonal, objective, and externally geared. Despite abundant research in Southeast Asian and Indonesian contexts, there remains a gap in applying transitivity analysis to Pakistani context of learning and writing English text. using Halliday's transitivity framework to evaluate the pedagogical or ideological positions that are implicitly conveyed as well as the linguistic construction of human experience.

Research Design

Based on Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), this study used a mixed-method design. The ideational meta-function in particular, the transitivity system, which encapsulates the process by which language constructs experiential meanings—was the main focus of the study. A quantitative frequency analysis was also carried out to ascertain the distribution of various process types, participants, and circumstances. A qualitative interpretation of clause-level patterns was the main focus of the analysis, through transitivity appraisal using Halliday's Systemic Functional linguistic approach. The appraisal was carried out through the corpus tool, a software UAM 3.3x and 6.2 for the corpus analysis.

Research Objectives

To identify and analyze the ideational meanings (material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential) realized in Pakistani ESL learners' narrative essays.

To explore the relationship between learners' functional choices and the overall coherence and communicative effectiveness in their essays

To suggest pedagogical implications for ESL writing instruction based on SFL findings.

Research Questions

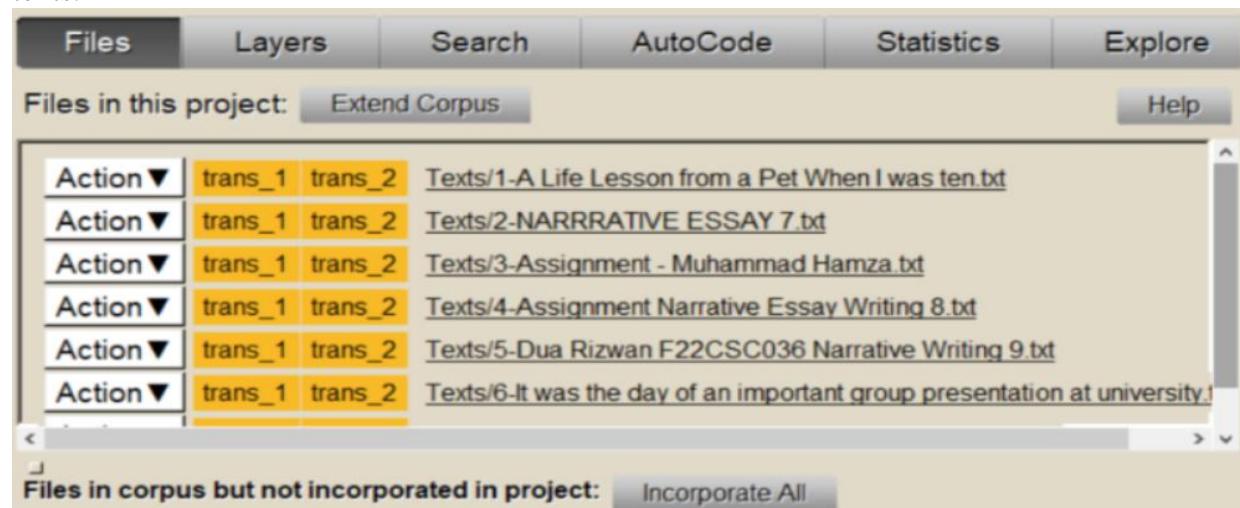
What meta functions are used by students who have written good essays?

How frequently the ideational meta functions are employed in the narrative essays?

How can SFL-based analysis inform writing pedagogy to enhance learners' awareness of meaning-making in narrative writing?

Data Collection Source of Data

The data for this study were collected from the narrative essays texts written by the undergrads students of the university level. It covers a variety of topics, such as national identity, history, entrepreneurship, moral values, and environmental awareness. A variety of topics to cover the maximum area of the vocabulary use, and its influence as indicator in the writing text have been used. The clause-based tagging was focused to ensure the consistency in ideational study through the narrative essay texts.



The screenshot shows the UAM Corpus Tool interface. The top menu bar includes 'Files', 'Layers', 'Search', 'AutoCode', 'Statistics', 'Explore', 'Help', and a 'Files in this project' dropdown. The 'Files in this project' dropdown is open, showing a list of files with 'Action' and 'trans_1 trans_2' columns. The files listed are:

Action	trans_1	trans_2	File Path
Action	trans_1	trans_2	Texts/1-A Life Lesson from a Pet When I was ten.txt
Action	trans_1	trans_2	Texts/2-NARRATIVE ESSAY 7.txt
Action	trans_1	trans_2	Texts/3-Assignment - Muhammad Hamza.txt
Action	trans_1	trans_2	Texts/4-Assignment Narrative Essay Writing 8.txt
Action	trans_1	trans_2	Texts/5-Dua Rizwan F22CSC036 Narrative Writing 9.txt
Action	trans_1	trans_2	Texts/6-It was the day of an important group presentation at university!

Below the list, there is a section for 'Files in corpus but not incorporated in project' with an 'Incorporate All' button.

Sampling Technique and Sample

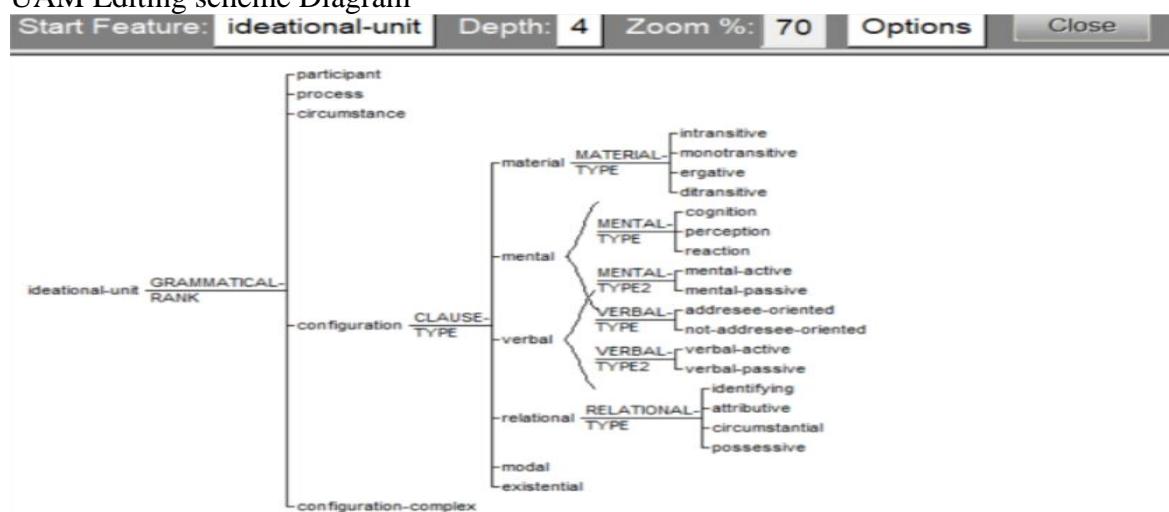
A purposive sampling technique was implemented to select transitivity within the clauses in narrative essay texts. As these genres reflect the functional diversity of the text, the transitivity depicted their distinct communicative purported areas of expressions through narrative text in the essay form presenting factual and abstract knowledge making them suitable for transitivity analysis within the SFL framework. The plain-text files mode was selected and uploaded into the UAM Corpus Tool Version 3.3x for annotation.

Manual Annotation

A custom transitivity annotation scheme was established based on Halliday's functional grammar. Each text was manually tagged for its - Process type (Material, Mental, Relational, Verbal, Behavioral, and Existential processes) - Participants (e.g., Actor, Goal, Carrier, Senser, Sayer, Token, etc.) – Circumstances. The texts were converted to a plain text form word document to establish a smooth tagging of files in the corpus tool (UAM) as it is in the pre-requisites of the tagging process of the files.

Tagging in UAM Corpus Tool:

All the collected data files were converted into plain text first, and then tagged into the UAM Corpus tool, which is specified and renowned software for its vast range in annotations catering linguistics studies. It has a wide range of features to incorporate in depth unfolding of syntactical understandability. The file tagging through its optional editing scheme provides a range of clause-level unit using the transitivity scheme. Screenshots of the tagging hierarchy show the exact structure of participant, process, and circumstance types used in the analysis. Quantitative Frequency Analysis following manual tagging, raw and relative frequencies for each category were analyzed using the UAM Corpus Tool's Statistics. The dominant transitivity patterns were determined by converting these frequencies into percentages which generalize the big number into a percentage.

UAM Editing scheme Diagram**Interpretation of Patterns**

After analyzing the tagged data, dominant experiential patterns were found, and tool screenshots were taken to show how the tool was used. In order to demonstrate how linguistic decisions create ideational meanings in the narrative essay's texts, followed later covered in the Results and Discussion section.

Results and Discussion

The focus in this study aimed to investigate the realization of the ideational meta-function in narrative essay's texts written by the undergrads, focusing on the transitivity system (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). The study addressed three key questions regarding the types, frequencies, and functions of processes, participants, and circumstances used in the narrative texts. The features based on transitivity were manually annotated clause by clause using the UAM Corpus Tool (a software for linguistic annotation) undergone the frequency measure and ideational phase comprising meta-functions as developed by Halliday.

Overview of Transitivity Features

The study viewing transitivity focused the verbs, and the patterns of the built in hierarchy, and editable in the edit scheme of the annotations in the software. The

transitivity resulted in 8216 transitivity features which made up 1397 participants (29.2 %), 1199 processes (25.1%), and 744 circumstances (15.5%). The results show that narrative essay's texts content possess a big number of experiential meaning, particularly by focusing on participant roles (see Table 1)

Table 1 Frequencies of Transitivity Elements in the Narrative Texts

		Texts/1-A Life Lesson		Texts/10-Narrative es		Texts/11-NARRATIVE ES		Texts/12-NARRATIVE ES		Texts/13-NARRATIVE ES	
Feature	N	Percent									
TEMP-TYPE	N=1294		N=1052		N=1130		N=1492		N=1230		
token	406	31.38%	339	32.22%	366	32.39%	478	32.04%	388	31.54%	
nonterm	238	18.39%	186	17.68%	198	17.52%	264	17.69%	226	18.37%	
unknown	3	0.23%	1	0.10%	1	0.09%	4	0.27%	1	0.08%	
TOKEN-TYPE2	N=1294		N=1052		N=1130		N=1492		N=1230		
word	351	27.13%	294	27.95%	325	28.76%	419	28.08%	338	27.48%	
punctuation	55	4.25%	45	4.28%	41	3.63%	59	3.95%	50	4.07%	
TOKEN-TYPE	N=1294		N=1052		N=1130		N=1492		N=1230		
noun	84	6.49%	77	7.32%	85	7.52%	98	6.57%	104	8.46%	
verb	76	5.87%	63	5.99%	77	6.81%	73	4.89%	55	4.47%	
adjective	22	1.70%	22	2.00%	20	1.75%	24	1.66%	20	1.70%	

Note. Data was extracted using the UAM Corpus Tool based on the SFL transitivity framework (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Table 2 Distribution of Process Types Across the Corpus

	Texts/1-A Life Lesson		Texts/10-Narrative es		Texts/11-NARRATIVE ES		Texts/12-NARRATIVE ES		Texts/13-NARRATIVE ES		Texts/14-Narrative Es		Texts/15-NARRATIVE ES		Texts/16-Narrative es		Texts/1-NARRAT ES	
Feature	N	Percent	N	Percent														
GRAMMATICAL-RANK	N=270		N=210		N=184		N=257		N=222		N=338		N=269		N=296		N=18	
participant	77	28.52%	60	28.57%	56	30.43%	83	32.30%	67	30.18%	97	28.70%	76	28.25%	78	26.35%	57	30.1
process	69	25.56%	54	25.71%	49	26.63%	63	24.51%	52	23.42%	83	24.56%	69	25.65%	73	24.66%	45	23.8
circumstance	49	18.15%	36	17.14%	19	10.33%	49	19.07%	40	18.02%	64	18.93%	49	18.22%	42	14.19%	27	14.2
configuration	61	22.59%	46	21.90%	45	24.46%	52	20.23%	48	21.62%	76	22.49%	61	22.68%	66	22.30%	42	22.2
configuration-complex	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.0
CLAUSE-TYPE	N=270		N=210		N=184		N=257		N=222		N=338		N=269		N=296		N=18	
material	34	12.59%	35	16.67%	21	11.41%	22	8.56%	29	13.06%	47	13.91%	34	12.64%	45	15.20%	30	15.8
mental	11	4.07%	4	1.90%	7	3.80%	8	3.11%	4	1.80%	7	2.07%	11	4.09%	3	1.01%	4	2.1
verbal	3	1.11%	0	0.00%	3	1.63%	3	1.17%	1	0.45%	4	1.18%	3	1.12%	0	0.00%	0	0.0
relational	7	2.59%	4	1.90%	10	5.43%	16	6.23%	10	4.50%	9	2.66%	7	2.60%	15	5.07%	7	3.7
modal	1	0.37%	0	0.00%	1	0.54%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.37%	0	0.00%	0	0.0
existential	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.39%	0	0.00%	1	0.30%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.5
MATERIAL-TYPE	N=270		N=210		N=184		N=257		N=222		N=338		N=269		N=296		N=18	

Note. Data was extracted using the UAM Corpus Tool based on the SFL transitivity framework (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Note: Percentages are calculated as a proportion of all (N=1294) transitivity elements

Material Processes appeared only 47 times (13.91 %) amongst 20 participants as the highest measure denoting inclination towards action words use in the clausal

expressions overall in the narrative essay texts. These processes were embedded in a series of accountable material meta-function of transitivity e.g. "Cierra is brushing off the crumbs off the table...", "The day when I received the letter...", 'stepping into the ISSB hall....", "He gave me...", "I had saved the skides.....". which aligns the studies by Mulyanti, W., & Wati, S. (2022).

Mental processes appeared only 11 times (4.07%), amongst 20 participants as the highest, depicting a limited representation of cognition, affection, and perception in the narrative essays' texts. These processes were most frequently used in moral or ideological texts and often embedded in quotes, beliefs, or affective commentary. This aligns with studies by Anggun (2016) and Mulyanti & Wati (2022), who also reported low frequencies of such processes. For example, the clause "Dawn crept across the sky, "As if the air carried a message pursuing the I secretly nurtured" " I often persisted the repeating commands gently rewarding to learn" is a depiction of a Mental process with the sky as the Phenomenon and the imagination enabling the speaker as the Senser.

Behavioral processes appeared

At minimal level in the corpus with only 5 occurrences (0.6%). These processes portray physiological or psychological behavior, often with the association with sensuous and action, but not directed toward another participant, like in material or mental processes. Example clauses included: "But she was arguing with the cashier over the ripeness" lingering at the edges of the moment at her calm unknown to the misery of the day", "He finally obeyed", aligns the study of Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014)." (see Figure1)

Text-based search: Search for: [word="the"] [tag="nn.*"] Show Context: 3 Help

Hits: 91-104 of 291 <Prev Next>

	Pretext	[word="the"]	[tag="nn.*"]	PostText
s ten.txt	me being in	the	air	, it gives
s ten.txt	realize it at	the	time	, but Max
s ten.txt	muddy puddles in	the	house	, and barked
s ten.txt	barked incessantly at	the	mailman	. I often
s ten.txt	persisted, repeating	the	commands	gently, rewarding
s ten.txt	to learn.	The	moment	he finally obeyed
s ten.txt	passed away,	the	lessons	he gave me
	, Sierra clearing	the	countertop	, and Lyra
	memory lingering at	the	edges	of her calm
	. Unknown to	the	misery	of the day
	the misery of	the	day	, Sierra is
	brushing crumbs off	the	table	, but she
	is arguing with	the	cashier	over the ripeness

Verbal processes were also limited, occurring only 4 times (1.18%) as the highest amongst other 20 participants. All these processes reflect acts of saying, narrating, or reporting, and involve participants such as Sayer, Verbiage, and Receiver. Examples included: " The expert told us", "AI will perform the role of security" The importance were asked by the GTO", (see Figure 2 & 3)

	group	tags were the
patience, and	the	importance
were asked by	the	GTO
wants to be	the	group
I had taken	the	initiative

Essay 15.txt	hits harder than	the	journey	itself. Recently
Essay 15.txt	I started.	The	truth	is, none

Existential processes were the least frequent, appearing only 3 times (0.3%). These clauses typically involve the verb "to be" and the presence of an Existential, often beginning with "there is/are". Examples: "I was overwhelmed", "Cyber security was to be", I could, and "he effected ones could be" . see Figure 4).

	Pretext	[word="the"]	[tag="nn.*"]	PostText
	defenders. Given	the	topic	of a seminar
	heading back to	the	dorm	, I could
	big and serious	the	issue	of cybersecurity was
	to be.	The	ones	affected could be
	this sector,	the	number	of jobs will
	so massive in	the	future	that students,
erience.txt	I still remember	the	day	when I received
erience.txt	my life.	The	ISSB	, what I
erience.txt	truly ready for	the	challenges	ahead. But
erience.txt	, stepping into	the	ISSB	hall, I
erience.txt	was overwhelmed by	the	energy	of my fellow
erience.txt	fellow candidates and	the	strictness	and loudness of
erience.txt	and loudness of	the	officers	. My heart

Participant Roles A total of 1397 participants were tagged ranging 29%. The most common participant roles were Goal Material (133; 15.3%), Actor-Material (104; 12.0%), and Carrier-Relational (44; 5.1%), indicating a strong narrative-descriptive orientation (see Table 3).

GRAMMATICAL-RANK	N	%
- participant	1397	29.2
- process	1199	25.1
- circumstance	744	15.5
- configuration	1086	22.7
- configuration-complex	0	0.0
TOTAL:	4426	92.5%

Circumstantial Elements Circumstances (n = 744) covered a wide range of types, with Location (Place and Time combined = 72; 8.3%) and Cause (Reason + Purpose = 34; 3.9%) being the most frequent. Manner and Extent also appeared but to a lesser degree (see Table 4).

Table 4 POS Distribution of Circumstantial Elements in the Corpus

Note. Percentages in this table are given as a proportion of all 868 transitivity features, and so the column will not sum to 100%.

These patterns mirror those found in narrative and informational genres, where time/place anchoring and goal-oriented clauses are common. The heavy reliance on purpose clauses suggests an instructional tone that supports moral or ideological messaging, e.g., “He wants to be a group leader first”, “I had taken the initiative”, “peaceful surrounding made the hike unforgettable.”

.” See Figure 5 and Figure 6, below, for further examples of circumstance-type (cause) and circumstance-type (location) as tagged in the UAM Corpus

		Hits: 52-65 of 291	<Prev	Next>			
		Pretext	[word="the"]	[tag="nn.*"]	PostText		
		tests, including	the	WAT	, TAT,		
		also curious.	The	group	tasks were the		
		patience, and	the	importance	of supporting those		
		were asked by	the	GTO	was, "		
		wants to be	the	group	leader first?		
		I had taken	the	initiative	maybe I would		
		better chance.	The	interviews	were challenging,		
		growth. Though	the	process	was exhausting and		
		perseverance, and	the	value	of determination.		
		of exploring.	The	excitement	grew because I		
		peaceful surroundings made	the	hike	unforgettable. Later		
		of Islamabad.	The	city	felt extremely safe		
		, which made	the	experience	even better.		

Tool. Figure 4 Examples of circumstance-type (location) (UAM Corpus Tool Output)

Note. Location-type circumstances were extracted from the undergrads' narrative essays texts corpus using the UAM Corpus Tool and classified under SFL categories (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

The expressions depicting the causal circumstantial-type clauses are denoting the causal proportion within the statement through the tokens of expression to verify the processes in different ways of expressions in different clauses. ”Whistles stretching across the streets to remind”, “The childhood uprooted”, “It was the day of an important.....” denotes the causal rationale behind the statements.

Figure 8 Examples of circumstance-type (Cause) (UAM Corpus Tool Output)

		Hits: 117-130 of 291	<Prev	Next>			
		Pretext	[word="the"]	[tag="nn.*"]	PostText		
		whistles stretching across	the	street	, to remind		
		hold, when	the	shadows	of the unived		
		life, of	the	childhood	uprooted, become		
		is etched in	the	walls	, true to		
		, named after	the	lyre	constellation, symbolizes		
		It was	the	day	of an important		
		our slides on	the	projector	. Just as		
		we started,	the	laptop	froze. The		
		laptop froze.	The	slides	would not open		
		open, and	the	projector	showed nothing.		
		beating faster.	The	audience	was waiting,		
		connect properly to	the	projector	. Every second		
		I had saved	the	slides	on a USB		

Note. Cause-related circumstantial clauses from the annotated corpus, tagged using

the UAM Corpus Tool's custom annotation scheme based on Hallidayan principles.

Interpretation and Discussion

The outcomes of the study showed the closer alignment in the SFL tradition (e.g., Halliday, 1994; Maya et al., 2020; Nugraha & Wihadi, 2024). The dominance and reliance of material and relational processes, conjoined along with the representation of mental and verbal processes, indicates a shadowing a concrete impact of the external actions related to the material world, and experiencing inclination in the clausal impressions paving the descriptive knowledge simultaneously. This distribution has ideological implications. As argued by Wengrum (2020), possesses a high frequency in inclination of material and relational processes in the narrative essay texts claims the learners' world views as objective, impersonal, and factual, potentially limiting opportunities for personal expression. The study based on the Halliday's principle of SFL(Systemic Functional Linguistics) has paved a critical thought to dig more for the idiosyncrasy of writing the text using material and relational areas of the world experiences. The study was executed under the same principle of SFL through the narrative essay writing from the university undergrads to observe the inclination appraisal through the clausal use in writing. The appraisal pertinent to the transitivity went very ostensible on using their utmost balance of material processes (happenings and doing actions), relational (experiential, Identification, attribution, possession) meta-functions in their narrative essays which earned highest marks from the teacher. The high marks achievers used the high maximum number of the meta-functions i.e. material and relational at maximum level than the other ideational transitivity elements (verbal, mental, behavioral and existential). Whereas other participants showed less use of the ideational group elements i.e. (material, relational, verbal, mental, behavioral and existential) Thus the results conform a primary strategy for the high marks achieving in academics keeping inclination towards appropriate use of the meta-function in essay writing. Viewing the Pakistani Esl context where it's seen that the area of inclination towards writing skill depicts knowledge for writing essays elucidates the ideational aspects, which conveys a best knower knowledge through words use, and extendedly meaningful to understand the deeper intention of the writer. The state apparatus addresses more emphasis on all the areas in public education pertinent to learning societal observation through academics, and its methodologies. These linguistic patterns are not coincidental, but reflective of top-down curriculum control. State-approved-apparatus comprise the priority to conform, discipline, and collective identity over critical thinking or emotional self-expression, which is linguistically reinforced through the predominance of material and relational processes. The inculcation of such curriculum in the institutes persuades the critical thing confined to the level of material and relational levels. Thus, the confined sense mitigates the areas like mental, verbal, and behavioral processes to think and likely gets overlooked by the thinkers. Lacking in these areas to ponder the interpersonal, dialogue and reasoning may be discouraged, and distant from affective engagement to the grave components of effective and reflective learning.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated how certain perspectives on experience, knowledge, and identity are encoded in narrative essay writing, particularly transitivity patterns. The

outcomes through narrative essay texts put emphasis on factual, external realities reflected in its preponderance of material and relational processes. The sparse use of mental, verbal, and behavioral processes suggests a limited engagement with inner thought, dialogue, and emotional nuance, which create an undefined sense to the reader or understanding mind. The nuance of the ideational transitivity caters deeper insight in meaning of the text material to understand. The trends are not merely stylistic; they also represent more general ideological inclinations and curriculum priorities. Such linguistic framework inculcates the critical and deeper thinking capability in thinkers, which can develop the context of Pakistan's centralized educational system. The study has also shown the concrete benefit of functional grammar to apply as a tool on the text material to have a grave appraisal and to pave a critical lens for the evaluation. The inclusion of such framework in the education system may encourage reflective, and interactive outcomes through the base of critical foundation of thoughts as a supportive and balanced approach in the representations of experiential exposures through the text material in studies, as well as in education system. There can be seen an enormous pavement to study either theoretical or pedagogical ramifications in a more extended level of understanding through the lens of SFL (Systemic Functional Linguistics). Expanding the view of ESL learners in a meticulous lens of SFL provides an eminent pathway for the curriculum designers also to tailor the syllabi accordant to the Systemic Functional Linguistics, which may ground the thoughts in a fulfilling aspect of critical thinking parameter to upgrade the skills of writing and reading through a concrete viewing method. The inclusion of lexical and interpersonal reflective outcomes through a critical thinking may uplift and upgrade the level of learning and understanding with the addition of mental, verbal, and behavioral processes and perspectives in the writing skill. Future researches can provide a room for both public and private sector with the inclusion of transitivity framework, based on grammatical lens ensuring SFL framework to broaden the corpus inclusive other areas of learning in related disciplines. This may bring change in students writing skill, unlike the textbooks patterns imprinted as learning in their practices Apendi & Mulyani (2020).

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