

Mental and Relational Process of Transitivity in Donne's and Blake's Poems: A Systemic Functional Linguistics Approach

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Abstract: *This research occupied the transitivity system to analyze Donne's and Blake's poems, then specifically, it investigated each line containing mental and relation process. Elaborating the analysis, it as well applied descriptive analysis method. Fortunately, from six poems, the researcher identified thirty four lines indicating sixteen mental processes, and twenty three relational processes. It could be reported that two classifications of relational process were found; attributive and identifying relational process. Furthermore, the finding showed that there are some verbs usually used to indicate mental process, those are 'love', 'honor', 'know', 'think', 'hear', 'see', 'repent', 'mind', 'want', 'fear', and 'dream'. Besides, there are four indications that are able to differentiate attributive relational process from identifying relational process; those are verbs (have and mean), articles (a/an, and the), adjectives (dead, tired, spent, young, bare, cold, joy, happy, and warm), and circumstance of place. Conducting this research, the researcher assumed that it could be an inspiration for other researchers to take more attention on such research since it combines linguistic and literary nuance.*

Key words: *mental and relational process, senser-attribute, token-value, circumstance, attributive- identifying.*

Introduction

As a genre of literature, poem constructed in lines and stanzas as well is a medium of expressing ideas. Moreover, sometimes poets try to hide the intended meaning and monopolize the words in order to build up a nice structure of a poem. According to Bugeja (2001) poem contains ideas unifying thought and feeling, it shapes how people perceive the world and excites people with images of beauty or moment of truth. Thus, poets as the composer try to convey the real world by occupying the words. For instances

“She was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
(Wordsworth, *She was a phantom of delight*, 1st and 2nd line)

It seems that Wordsworth tried to depict what came to his sight then transferred and expressed it by words, therefore, it can be posited that poem is made in order to express the reflection of world. On the other hand, the researcher argued that the instances of two lines above as well can be analyzed based on the linguistic point of view, for instance by applying systemic functional linguistics (SFL). Thus, SFL views language as a resource for making meaning, further Gerot and Wignell (1995) stated that this approach attempt to describe language in actual use and so focus on text and context. Besides, it concerns on how the meaning of texts are realized,

therefore the researcher would conduct a research based on this point of view in order to dig out more insight.

Specifically, according to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) there are three lines of meaning in the clause; clause as a message, clause as exchange and clause as representation. What this research was going to occupy is the last one i.e. clause as representation or it is called transitivity in SFL. As proposed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 170) that the transitivity system construes the world of experience into a manageable set of process types. Further, Gerot and Wignell (1995) posited that through the system of transitivity, there are points which can be explored from the text (clauses); those are who=does=what=to=whom, who/what=is=what/who, when, where, why or how function. This argumentation ensures the researcher to apply the linguistic view especially transitivity system in this present research.

Taking a look deeply on the explanation above, the researcher was interested in that discussion and then found two previous researchers covering about transitivity; they are Sujatna (2013) and Nguyen (2012). In her research, Sujatna did a descriptive analysis of mood and transitivity system on flight department slogan of both national and regional airlines (Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam, Brunei Darussalam, and Laos). Especially transitivity, she found three process types; material, relational and mental processes in national airlines, while four process types are found in regional airline; material, mental, relational, and behavioural processes. Further, she identified that relational process more often appear than other process types. On the other hand, Nguyen as well did a research of transitivity on a novel, relating to the result of this research, Nguyen argued that by concerning on the transitivity, it would help to comprehend the characteristics of the characters in the story especially the main character since this research focused on the main character. Both researchers gave an inspiration to take an eye on this point too, then what makes this present research different from both is that this research analyze poem and tried to correlate the process types and the ideas in poems.

Trying to find out the answer of what this research focused on, the researcher directed the analysis on poems existing in Puritan Age. According to the historical background happened in that time, there was great movement of purifying the religion (the Church of England with everything under the popery). The point is puritan wished to return to more primitive principles, to simplicity, to sobriety, to religious earnestness, personal self-control and to a more democratic church organization. This condition influenced people to be closer to the religion, not only that it as well influenced the development of literature. There was shifting in theme and form. Relating to the theme, this research tried to investigate the transitivity system in the poems especially mental and relational process, the researcher argued that poems in the puritan age covered more on the religious contemplation and paradigm so that both processes would appear and reflect the ideas existing in the poems. Therefore, this research took the poems of two English poets living in the puritan age; they are John Donne and William Blake.

Hopefully, this research is such a chemical compound that can give the contribution on the literature as well linguistics, and become the inspiration for other researcher who is interested in cultivating literary works by applying linguistic approach.

Review of Literature

Transitivity system consists of six process types; those are material process, mental process, relational process, behavioral process, verbal process, and existential process. Each of these processes has its own characteristic. This research would only focus on mental process and relational process. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) mental process, as the clause of sensing, is concerned with our experience of the world of our own consciousness. It was added by Gerot and Wignel (1995) and Sujatna (2013) that mental process shows the feeling, thinking, perceiving and having emotional action to things. Mental process in clauses has three elements; the participant (*senser and phenomenon*), the process (*mental*) and *circumstance*. For instances;

[I wandered lonely as a cloud]
(Wordsworth, *I wandered lonely as a cloud*, 1st line)
[When first she gleamed upon my sight;
(Wordsworth, *She was a phantom of delight*, 2nd line)

Taking a look on two clauses above, both can be classified as mental process since the verbs (wandered and gleamed) relate to thinking and perceiving. From both, the researcher identified the participants (I, she, and my sight) and *circumstances* ('lonely', 'as a cloud' and 'when first'). As well, there is a difference of structure between both clauses; the order of the first clause is that *senser* is followed with process (verb), while the second clause the word 'she' as the subject takes role as the *phenomenon* while the *senser* is 'my sight'. It means that not every subject is the *senser*. Furthermore, there are three classifications of mental process; affective, cognitive and perceptive.

On the other hand, relational process is a process expressing state of being. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), a relational clause serves to characterize and identify. Further, Gerot and Wignel (1995) it involves states of having. For instances;

["She was a Phantom of delight]
(Wordsworth, *She was a phantom of delight*, 1st line)
[They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
(Wordsworth, *I wandered lonely as a cloud*, 21st & 22nd line)

The first clause above shows that there are two participants; 'she' as *carrier*, while '*a Phantom of delight*' as *attribute*. *Carrier* and *attribute* are the term found in the attributive relational process. According to Gerot and Wignell (1995), Deterding and Poedjosoedarmo (2001), Eggins (2004), Lock (2004), Bloor and Bloor (2004), and Sujatna (2013), therefore, the second clause, classified as the identifying relational process, as well consists of two participants; 'eye' is as *token*, while 'the bliss of solitude' is as the *value*.

Methodology

Describing mental and relational process in the poems, the ideas embedded in the poems and the correlation process types toward the ideas, this research occupied descriptive analysis. What this

research analyzed are poems taken from John three Donne's poems (*Break of Day, The Sun Rising, and The Apparition*) and three William Blake's poems (*The Chimney Sweeper, The Garden of Love, and The Angel*) randomly.

Furthermore, this research applied two steps in collecting the data; identification of process and clausal formation. Identifying the process, the researcher took attention on the verb/verbal group found in the poems, since process type is basically referred to the verb. It means that identifying verb automatically identify the process types. The purpose of this step is to collect mental and relational process and to part the other process types. The second step is to take out the clause in which the process type exists.

Findings

Discussing both processes, the researcher would elaborate each poem orderly. Then, after being calculated, there are thirty four lines indicating mental and relational process. The analysis will be started from Donne's poems and followed with Blake's poems. The Following are the detail elaboration.

Break of Day / John Donne

1. Light hath no tongue, but is all eye; (7th line)
Carrier Pr. Relational Attribute Pr. Relational Attribute
2. This were the worst that it could say: (9th line)
Dummy subject Pr. Relational value
3. And that I loved my heart and honor so, (11th line)
Senser Mental phenomenon mental circumstance
4. Oh, that 's the worst disease of love; (14th line)
Dummy Subject relational value
5. He which hath business and makes love, doth do (17th line)
Carrier relational attribute

Finding five clauses in this poem, the researcher then analyzed them in order to part mental and relational process and it is found that there is only one mental process in this first poem. Take a look on the clause (3), it seems that there are two verbs which as well can be classified as mental process; they are 'loved' and 'honor'. On the other hand, the relational processes exist in this first poem contain two classification; attributive and identifying. When the participant (subject) is *carrier*, it would be attributive relational as in clauses (1) and (5), then when the participant (subject) is *token* so it would be identifying relational process as in clauses (2) and (4). In order to identify which relational process as identifying and attributive, it is by taking attention on the information about the subject whether it is explaining the quality of subject (for attributive) or elaborating the identity of subject (for identifying).

In this research, the researcher identified two demonstratives; 'this' and 'that'. Concerning on the context, 'this' in the clause (2) is called *token* since when the researcher took a look on the previous lines, it referred to 'light', therefore, these two demonstrative has the role as pronoun. Thus, in the clauses where these demonstratives exist, they are called as the dummy subject.

The Sun Rising / John Donne

6. Love, all like, no season knows, not clime, (9th line)
Senser *phenomenon* *Pr. Mental* *phenomenon*
7. Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time. (10th line)
Token *Pr. Relational* *value*
8. Why shouldst thou think? (12th line)
(VG)- *Senser* *Pr. mental*
9. But that I would not lose her sight so long; (14th line)
Senser (VG) - Pr. Mental *phenomenon* *circumstance*
10. Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday, (19th line)
Senser *Pr. Mental* *Circumstance*
11. And thou shalt hear. "All here in one bed lay." (20th line)
Senser *(VG) - Pr. Mental* *phenomenon*
12. She 's all states, and all princes I; (21st line)
Token *Pr. Relational* *value*
13. Nothing else is. (22nd line)
Attribute *Pr. Relational*
14. This bed thy center is, these walls thy sphere. (30th line)
Value *token* *Pr. Relational*

Note: 'VG' stands for verbal group, and 'Pr.' stands for process

Take a look on the clause (6) and (7), the researcher tried to reconstruct the clause so that it will be easily explained as follow;

[Love, all like, knows no season, not clime, nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.]

This clause or called as clause complex has two processes, mental and relational process. The researcher argued that 'Love, all like,' is the *senser* and the verb 'knows' is as mental process while the rest i.e. [no season, not clime, nor hours, days, month, which are the rags of time] would be the *phenomenon*. Then, this *phenomenon* could be classified as identifying relational process, the part taking role as *token* is [no season, not clime, nor hours, days, month,], while as the *value* is [the rags of time]. Relating to mental process in this poem, it consists of verbal group (the researcher used 'VG' to indicate it); modal and verb, meaning that a process can be both verb and verbal group as in clause (8), (9) and (11).

Take a look on the clause (11), the researcher posited that the expression [“All here in one bed lay.”] is classified as *phenomenon*, since when it is related to the context of the clause, it seems like an utterance being heard by the *senser* (thou) and has apostrophes at the beginning and the end. According to the transitivity system, even though each element is put reversibly it still has its own name. Just like the clause (14), the researcher assumed that the construction of the clause could be [thy center is this bed], therefore ‘this bed’ being put at the beginning of the sentence, it would be *value*.

The Apparition / John Donne

15. When by thy scorn, O murderess, I am dead, (1st line)
Carrier Pr. Relational attribute

16. And thee, feigned vestal, in worse arms shall see; (5th line)
Senser phenomenon circumstance (VG)-Pr. Mental

17. And he, whose those art then, being tired before, (7th line)
Carrier Pr. Relational attribute circumstance

18. Will, if thou stir, or pinch to wake him, think (8th line)
(VG)- Pr. Mental

19. Lest that preserve thee, and since my love is spent, (15th line)
Carrier Pr. Relational attribute

20. I had rather thou shouldst painfully repent, (16th line)
Senser (VG)- circumstance Pr. Mental

All of the relational processes in this third Donne’s poem are classified as attributive relational process, since the words (‘dead’, ‘tired’, and ‘spent’) explain the quality of the *carrier* or in this case they show the attribute pertaining to the *carrier*. It is usually found in the poem the inverted parts, as happened in clause (16), the researcher argued that it was intentionally done by the poet in order to get the same end rhyme of some lines. If this clause is reconstructed as the common one, it would be [thee shall see feigned vestal in worse arms]. Therefore in the analysis, ‘feigned vestal’ is as the *phenomenon* and ‘in worse arms’ is as the *circumstance* of this mental process. Especially clause (18), the *senser* of it is in the previous clause, since it is actually a clause complex being parted in two lines.

The Chimney Sweeper / William Blake

21. When my mother died I was very young, (1st line)
Carrier Pr. Relational circumstance attribute

22. “Hush, Tom! Never mind it, for, when your head ’s bare, (7th line)
Senser circumstance Pr. Mental phenomenon carrier Pr. Relational attribute

23. You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.” (8th line)
Senser Pr. Mental

24. As Tom was asleeping, he had such a sight! (10th line)
Carrier Pr. Relational attribute

25. And by came an Angel who had a bright key, (13th line)
Carrier Pr. Relational attribute
26. And the Angel told Tom, if he 'd be a good boy, (19th line)
Carrier Pr. Relational attribute
27. He 'd have God for this father, and never want joy. (20th line)
Carrier Pr. Relational value circumstance Pr. Mental phenomenon
28. Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm; (23rd line)
Carrier Pr. Relational attribute carrier Pr. Relational attribute
29. So if all do their duty they need not fear harm. (24th line)
Senser Pr. Mental phenomenon

There are nine lines that the researcher identified from Blake's *the Chimney Sweeper* containing mental and relational process. It was found that there are eight relational processes and three mental processes. Then, the researcher classified all relational processes found as the attributive relational process, since it seems that every part after the process explains the condition of what the *senser* felt and had. Another thing that the researcher got that it is not only auxiliary verb (is, am, are, was and were) which can be used in relational, but also the word 'have', as in the clause (24), (25) and (27).

Take a look on clauses (27), the word 'want' is classified as mental process, for it is followed by *phenomenon*. If it is followed by verb e.g. 'write' – 'want to write', then it would be classified as material process. While the other mental processes in this poem show the psychological response toward certain condition, just like 'mind', 'know' and 'fear'.

The Garden of Love / William Blake

30. And saw what I never had seen: (2nd line)
Pr. Mental Senser circumstance Pr. Mental
31. And I saw it was filled with graves, (9th line)
Senser Pr. Mental phenomenon

Unfortunately, there are only two mental processes that the researcher found in Blake's *the Garden of Love*, and both mental processes have the same process i.e. 'see' (the root word). Take a look on both clause (30) and (31), they are such a clause complex but it seems incomplete since the previous line is the missing part. Therefore, the complete one is [I went to the garden of love and saw what I never had seen and I saw it was filled with the graves]. Concerning on the clause (30), the researcher argued that the construction 'what I never had seen:' can be as well classified as *phenomenon*, it becomes something that the *senser* perceived. Further, the researcher calculated that there are three mental processes in this poem.

The Angel / William Blake

32. I dreamt a dream! What can it mean? (1st line)
Senser Pr. Mental phenomenon token Pr. Relational

33. And that I was a maiden Queen (2nd line)
Carrier Pr. Relational attribute

34. And grey hairs were on my head. (16th line)
Token Pr. Relational circumstance

From this final Blake's poem, the researcher judged three lines containing relational and mental processes. There are three relational processes found, one is attributive relational process and two are identifying relational process. Take a look on clause (34), there is no any *value* after the process, it is only circumstance of place, but it is still classified as the identifying relational process since it means that the *token* 'grey hairs' is identified to be exist on the head or in this case 'on my head'. The researcher as well got the word 'mean' in clause (32) included in the words used in identifying relational process.

Conclusion

This research found that there are thirty four lines containing both relational and mental processes. Further, regarding to the analysis, there are thirty nine clauses indicating thirty nine processes automatically. In detail, there are twenty three relational processes and sixteen mental processes. The researcher as well identified some verbs used in those six poems as mental process, they are 'love', 'honor', 'know', 'think', 'hear', 'see', 'repent', 'mind', 'want', 'fear', and 'dream'. While in the relational processes found, there are three forms appeared, they are 'have', 'mean', 'would be', and 'to be' (is, am, are, was, were). In order to identify which attributive and identifying relational process, this research clarified that there are two conditions to judge attributive relational process; 1) if the process is followed with adjectives (dead, tired, spent, young, bare, cold, joy, happy, and warm) and noun group (being begun with article a/an), and 2) if the process itself is possessive word (have). On the other hand, forms setting the identifying relational process are circumstance of place, article 'the', and the word 'mean'.

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