



TRANSITIVITY ANALYSIS ON STURNIOLOTRIPLETS' YOUTUBE VLOG 'YOU ARE SKATING ON THIN ICE CAR VIDEO'

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the transitivity system, including processes, participants, and circumstances, used in the YouTube vlog "You're Skating on Thin Ice – Car Video" by the Sturniolo Triplets. The purpose of this study was also to identify the types of transitivity processes and to determine the most dominant process found in the discourse. This research focused on how experiential meaning is constructed in informal digital communication through spontaneous spoken interaction. Using a qualitative descriptive method, the data were taken from a transcription of the vlog. The data were collected through documentation and analyzed clauses by clauses based on Halliday's (1994) and Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) theories of Systemic Functional Linguistics, particularly the ideational meta function. Each clause was categorized according to its process of type, participants, and accompanying circumstances to reveal patterns of meaning representation. The findings showed that all six types of transitivity processes were present in the vlog, including material, mental, verbal, relational, behavioral, and existential processes. Among these, the material process was the most frequently used, indicating that the speakers mainly focused on actions and activities during their conversation. Mental processes also appeared frequently, reflecting the speakers' thoughts, feelings, and personal evaluations. Verbal and relational processes supported interaction and description, while behavioral and existential processes occurred less often. In conclusion, this study shows that experiential meaning in informal digital discourse is largely constructed through action-oriented and subjective expressions. The findings highlight the relevance of transitivity analysis in understanding everyday spoken language in online media.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci:

digital discourse,
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analysis, Youtube vlog

Analisis Transitivitas pada Vlog Youtube SturnioloTriplets 'You Are Skating on Thin Ice Car Video'

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis sistem transitivitas, termasuk proses, partisipan, dan keadaan, yang digunakan dalam vlog YouTube "You're Skating on Thin Ice – Car Video" oleh Sturniolo Triplets. Tujuan penelitian ini juga untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis proses transitivitas dan menentukan proses yang paling dominan yang ditemukan dalam wacana tersebut. Penelitian ini berfokus pada bagaimana makna pengalaman dibangun dalam komunikasi digital informal melalui interaksi lisan spontan. Dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, data diambil dari transkripsi vlog tersebut. Data dikumpulkan melalui dokumentasi dan dianalisis klausa demi klausa berdasarkan teori Linguistik Fungsional Sistemik Halliday (1994)

dan Halliday dan Matthiessen (2014), khususnya metafungsi ideasional. Setiap klausa dikategorikan menurut jenis proses, partisipan, dan keadaan yang menyertainya untuk mengungkap pola representasi makna. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa keenam jenis proses transitivitas hadir dalam vlog tersebut, termasuk proses material, mental, verbal, relasional, perilaku, dan eksistensial. Di antara proses-proses tersebut, proses material adalah yang paling sering digunakan, menunjukkan bahwa para pembicara terutama berfokus pada tindakan dan aktivitas selama percakapan mereka. Proses mental juga sering muncul, mencerminkan pikiran, perasaan, dan evaluasi pribadi para pembicara. Proses verbal dan relasional mendukung interaksi dan deskripsi, sementara proses perilaku dan eksistensial terjadi lebih jarang. Kesimpulannya, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa makna pengalaman dalam wacana digital informal sebagian besar dibangun melalui ekspresi yang berorientasi pada tindakan dan subjektif. Temuan ini menyoroti relevansi analisis transitivitas dalam memahami bahasa lisan sehari-hari di media daring.

Introduction

Language is a key part of how we show, organize, and talk about our experiences. In everyday conversations, people use language to make sense of their actions, ideas, feelings, and relationships, which creates specific versions of reality. In modern times, people are making sense of things more and more through digital media, where spoken conversations are captured, written down, and shared extensively. Scripts made from digital video recordings are useful linguistic data because they keep spoken language as it is and let researchers look at its grammatical structure in a methodical way.

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), developed by Halliday, provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing how language constructs meaning in social contexts. Unlike formalist approaches that prioritize structure, SFL views language as a resource for meaning-making. Within this framework, language simultaneously realizes three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The ideational metafunction is concerned with how speakers construe their experience of the world, both internal and external. This metafunction is primarily realized through the system of transitivity, which explains how clauses encode processes, participants, and circumstances (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Transitivity theory is essential for comprehending experience meaning as it elucidates how speakers linguistically depict events, participants, and contextual situations. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), there are six primary categories of processes: material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential. Each process type is linked to particular participant roles, including Actor, Senser, Carrier, or Sayer, and may include circumstantial aspects that denote time, place, method, or reason. Transitivity analysis reveals the structuring and emphasis of experience in speech through the examination of various configurations.

Previous studies have illustrated the analytical robustness of transitivity theory across several situations. Fadilah and Kuswoyo (2021) demonstrated that material processes predominated political discussion speech, indicating a focus on action and agency. Ahmad (2019) discovered that transitivity patterns in a literary short tale enhanced character representation and narrative progression. In the same way, Boukari and Koussouhon (2018) showed that transitivity decisions in a novel incorporated philosophical ideas about what it means to be human. Brian L. Ott (2017), stated how digital communication platforms like twitter influence discourse through emotional intensity, urgency, and brevity, which effect how experience and meaning are linguistically constructed. In addition, Nurrachman F.A., et al. (2013) stated that digital media discourse, especially on social media platforms,

contains layered meanings influenced by linguistic choices, ideological positioning, and social context. Supporting this, Muhammadiyah, M.m et al. (2023) highlighted that public understanding is shaped by discourse in technology-based communication context, especially when it comes to reacting to false information. Additionally, Anwar A. et al. (2020) showed that critical discourse analysis has been used extensively in media studies to reveal the construction of meaning in Indonesian digital environments. These investigations validate that transitivity analysis is proficient in elucidating the construction of experience meaning via grammatical selections.

These studies, however, mainly focus on written texts or formal spoken conversation, including literary narratives, novels, and political debates. They do not consider informal, conversational scripts originating from digital media sources. Consequently, there exists a paucity of research investigating the functioning of transitivity processes in scripts that document spontaneous, quotidian interactions. This shows that there is a noticeable lack of use of transitivity theory in modern digital discourse, especially in conversational scripts that show informal speech, comedy, and thoughtful commentary.

This difference is conceptually crucial since transitivity theory aims to clarify how experience is interpreted across all types of language use, not alone in formal or literary writings. Using transitivity analysis on conversational digital scripts helps test and improve Halliday's framework in more natural, less organized settings. This kind of analysis can show if certain types of processes are more common in casual conversation and how ordinary language choices impact the meaning of experiences.

To fill this gap, this study uses Halliday's transitivity framework to look at the script of the "You're Skating on Thin Ice" Car Video, which is the main thing being looked at. The script records unplanned conversations between speakers about their daily lives, thoughts, and feelings while they are making a driving video. It is a scripted version of spoken discourse, so it gives us a lot of information to look at how processes, participants, and conditions are set up to shape experience.

This work is significant since it enhances transitivity research by applying the theory to informal digital interactions. This study underscores the significance of Halliday's ideational metafunction in modern discourse analysis by concentrating specifically on transitivity processes and participant roles inside a conversational script. The results should help us better understand how experiential meaning is made in ordinary digital communication. This study aims to identify the types of transitivity processes employed in the "You're Skating on Thin Ice" Car Video script, analyze the realization of participants and circumstances within these processes, and elucidate how transitivity choices contribute to the construction of experiential meaning in informal digital discourse.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach using Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), specifically Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) transitivity framework, to analyze experiential meaning in informal digital discourse. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate because the study focuses on interpreting linguistic features and meaning rather than measuring variables statistically. However, limited quantitative elements in the form of frequency counts are also used to support the qualitative analysis.

The data source of this study is the transcript of the YouTube vlog "You're Skating on Thin Ice" Car Video by the Sturniolo Triplets. The video was selected because it represents spontaneous, informal spoken interaction in a digital context. The transcript was obtained by

manually transcribing the spoken dialogue from the video to ensure accuracy and to preserve the natural features of spoken language, such as pauses, repetitions, and casual expressions. The unit of analysis in this study is the clause, as transitivity analysis operates at the clause level.

Data collection was conducted through several stages. First, the video was watched repeatedly to gain an overall understanding of the interaction and context. Second, the spoken dialogue was transcribed into written form. Third, the transcript was carefully segmented into clauses based on grammatical boundaries. Clauses that were incomplete, unintelligible, or irrelevant to experiential meaning were excluded from the analysis.

Data analysis followed Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) transitivity system. Each clause was analyzed to identify the type of process used, including material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential processes. After identifying the process type, the participants involved in each clause (such as Actor, Goal, Senser, Phenomenon, Carrier, or Attribute) were determined. Circumstantial elements, including circumstances of time, place, manner, cause, and reason, were also identified when present. The analysis was conducted systematically by coding each clause according to its process type and participant roles.

To support the qualitative interpretation, the frequency of each transitivity process type was calculated and presented in tabular form. These frequency results help indicate dominant patterns of experiential meaning in the discourse. Finally, selected excerpts from the transcript were presented to illustrate how specific process types function in constructing meaning within informal digital conversation. The findings were then interpreted in relation to previous studies and the theoretical framework to explain how experiential meaning is realized in everyday digital interaction.

Finding and Discussion

This section presents the results of the transitivity analysis conducted on the script of the YouTube vlog *"You Are Skating on Thin Ice – Car Video"* by the Sturniolo Triplets. Transitivity analysis, as part of the ideational metafunction in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), explains how language is used to construe human experience through different types of processes, participants, and circumstances (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Based on the analysis of the script, six types of transitivity processes are identified: material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential processes. These processes are used by the speakers to represent actions, thoughts, emotions, evaluations, speech acts, and states of existence in spontaneous digital interaction.

Table 1. Distribution of Transitivity Process Types

S/N	Types	Frequency
1	Mental	203
2	Material	214
3	Relational	73
4	Verbal	126
5	Behavioral	24
6	Existential	12
	Total	652

Mental process

Mental processes are processes of sensing that include cognition, affection, and perception. In the analyzed script, mental processes occur 203 times, making them the second most dominant process type. This high frequency indicates that the speakers frequently express thoughts, feelings, opinions, and perceptions during the conversation.

Excerpt 1.

Nick: “I don’t really *give* no fuck.”

In this clause, the speaker expresses an internal emotional attitude. The clause represents a mental process of affection, with *I* as the Senser, showing the speaker’s personal feeling toward the situation.

Excerpt 2.

Nick: “*I think it’s really crazy.*”

The verb *think* functions as a mental process of cognition, with *I* as the Senser and *it’s really crazy* as the Phenomenon. This shows how the speaker evaluates events based on personal judgment. Mental processes function to foreground subjectivity and internal experience, which is characteristic of informal conversational discourse.

Material Process

Material processes represent actions and events or processes of doing and happening. In this study, material processes are the most dominant, appearing 214 times. This dominance suggests that the speakers frequently describe actions, activities, and hypothetical events.

Excerpt 3.

Nick: “We *decided to film* a car video today.”

The verb *decided to film* is a material process, with *we* as the Actor and *a car video* as the Goal, indicating a deliberate action.

Excerpt 4.

Chris: “*It’s kind of swaying a little bit.*”

The verb *swaying* functions as a material process, with *it* as the Actor, describing physical movement in the real world. The participant *it* acts as the Actor, referring to an object that is visibly moving. This clause constructs experiential meaning by describing an observable event, emphasizing physical movement rather than internal thought or evaluation. The material process here helps ground the discourse in the immediate physical environment of the speakers.

Relational Process

Relational processes express states of being and having, serving to identify or attribute qualities to participants. These processes are frequently used to evaluate situations, objects, or

experiences. In the vlog, relational processes help speakers assign judgments and descriptions during interaction.

Excerpt 5.

Matt: “The more you talk to your AI, the more you *sound* like him.”

The verb *sound* functions as a relational attributive process, linking *you* as the Carrier with the Attribute *like him*. This clause establishes similarity rather than action, showing how relational processes can be used to compare identities. It contributes to humor and interpersonal engagement in the conversation.

Verbal Process

Verbal processes represent processes of saying, including reporting, telling, and expressing speech. These processes are essential in spoken discourse as they help organize interaction and convey information between speakers. In the analyzed data, verbal processes appear in both explicit reporting and conversational responses.

Excerpt 6.

Chris: “I *wrote* this down in March.”

The verb *wrote* functions as a verbal process because it represents the act of expressing information through language. The participant *I* acts as the Sayer, while *this* functions as the Verb, referring to the content being recorded. This clause contributes to the discourse by providing reported information and establishing narrative context.

Excerpt 7.

Chris: “I thought it *said* chicken.”

The verb *said* functions as a verbal process, embedded within a mental clause. Here, *it* serves as the Sayer, while *chicken* functions as the Verbiage. This embedded verbal process reflects how speech and thought interact in spoken discourse, allowing the speaker to report perceived speech.

Behavioral Process

Behavioral processes represent physiological or psychological behavior and lie between material and mental processes. These processes often express involuntary or semi-conscious actions related to perception or emotion. Although less frequent, behavioral processes contribute to the vividness of spoken interaction.

Excerpt 8.

Matt: “*It smells.*”

The verb *smells* functions as a *behavioral process*, representing a sensory reaction that lies between mental perception and material action. The participant *it* acts as the Behavior. This clause adds sensory detail to the discourse and enhances vividness.

Excerpt 9.

Matt: “*Oh my god.*”

This exclamatory expression functions as a behavioral process, representing spontaneous emotional behavior. Although the process is implicit, the clause reflects a psychological reaction rather than a cognitive evaluation or physical action. It contributes to the naturalness of spoken interaction.

Existential Process

Existential processes express the existence of entities, condition or situations and are typically realized through the structure *there is/are*, where *there* has no representational meaning but functions to introduce the Existent. In the vlog script, existential processes appear infrequently, indicating that the speakers focus more on actions and evaluations than on stating existence. These processes are the least frequent in the analyzed segment, indicating that the discourse focuses more on actions and evaluations rather than stating existence.

Excerpt 10.

Nick: “*There’s nothing you can do.*”

The structure *there’s (there is)* functions as an existential process, introducing the existence of *nothing* as the Existent. The clause does not describe an action or attribute but rather states the presence of a limiting condition. This existential process contributes to experiential meaning by emphasizing helplessness or inevitability within the situation being discussed.

Excerpt 11.

Nick: “What do you mean? *There’s not really that many baby aesthetics.*”

The clause “*There’s not really that many baby aesthetics*” uses an existential process, shown by the verb group *there is*, to talk about the existence of something. In this clause, *there* does not act as a participant but only introduces what exists. The phrase *not really that many baby aesthetics* functions as the Existent, showing that the number is limited. The negative expression *not really* does not change the process type; it only reduces the amount being stated. By using an existential structure, the speaker presents the idea as a general condition rather than a personal opinion, which helps keep the statement casual and neutral in the conversation.

Conclusion

This study has examined the use of transitivity processes in the YouTube vlog “*You’re Skating on Thin Ice – Car Video*” by the Sturniolo Triplets using Halliday and Matthiessen’s (2014) Systemic Functional Linguistics framework. By focusing on the ideational metafunction, specifically the system of transitivity, the study aimed to identify the types of processes used in the script, analyze how participants are realized, and explain how these grammatical choices contribute to the construction of experiential meaning in informal digital discourse. The analysis demonstrates that transitivity theory is highly applicable to conversational scripts derived from digital media and provides valuable insights into how everyday experiences are linguistically represented.

The findings reveal that all six types of transitivity processes; material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential, are present in the vlog script, with varying frequencies. Material processes are the most dominant, followed closely by mental processes. The high frequency of material processes indicates that the speakers frequently represent experience through actions and events, such as describing physical movement, activities, and spontaneous occurrences during the conversation. This dominance reflects the nature of vlog discourse, which often focuses on ongoing activities and real-time events. Mental processes, which include cognition and affection, are also prominent, showing that the speakers frequently express thoughts, feelings, opinions, and emotional reactions. This highlights the subjective and personal nature of informal spoken interaction in digital contexts.

Relational processes appear less frequently but play an important role in the discourse by allowing speakers to evaluate situations, describe states of being, and make comparisons. Through relational attributive and identifying clauses, the speakers assign qualities such as *funny*, *gross*, or *crazy* to experiences, objects, or events. These processes help construct evaluative meaning and contribute to the humorous and expressive tone of the vlog. Verbal processes are used to report, recall, or refer to speech, supporting the interactive nature of the conversation. Behavioral processes, although limited in number, add vividness to the discourse by expressing sensory reactions and emotional responses, such as smelling or spontaneous exclamations. Existential processes are the least frequent and are mainly used to state the existence or absence of conditions or situations, allowing speakers to present evaluations indirectly.

Overall, the distribution of transitivity processes suggests that experiential meaning in the vlog is primarily constructed through a combination of action-oriented descriptions and personal evaluations. This pattern is consistent with the characteristics of informal digital discourse, where speakers tend to focus on what is happening, how they feel about it, and how they evaluate their experiences in real time. The findings support previous studies that emphasize the dominance of material and mental processes in spoken interaction, while also extending transitivity analysis to a less formal and more spontaneous context.

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the analysis is limited to a single YouTube vlog, which means that the findings cannot be generalized to all types of digital discourse or vlog content. Different genres, topics, or speaker dynamics may produce different transitivity patterns. Second, the study focuses only on the ideational metafunction and does not examine interpersonal or textual metafunctions, which could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how meaning is constructed in the discourse. Additionally, although frequency counts are included to support the analysis, the study remains largely qualitative and does not explore statistical relationships between process types and specific discourse functions.

Future research is recommended to address these limitations. Further studies could analyze a larger corpus of vlogs or compare different types of digital content, such as podcasts, interviews, or livestreams, to identify broader patterns of transitivity use in digital media. Researchers may also combine transitivity analysis with other metafunctions in SFL, such as mood, modality, or thematic structure, to gain a more holistic understanding of meaning-making in informal spoken discourse. Moreover, comparative studies across cultures or languages could reveal how experiential meaning is constructed differently in diverse digital communication contexts.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that transitivity analysis is a valuable tool for examining experiential meaning in informal digital conversations. By applying Halliday's framework to a conversational vlog script, the study expands the scope of transitivity research beyond formal written texts and structured speech. The findings contribute to discourse analysis by showing how everyday experiences, emotions, and evaluations are linguistically represented in modern digital communication, highlighting the continued relevance of Systemic Functional Linguistics in analyzing contemporary language use

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