Analyzing Transitivity Process of 'Star' Song Lyrics by Colde

Puteri Syara Hasna Bilah
hasnabilahsyara16@gmail.com

Mobit Mobit
mobit@fkip.unsika.ac.id

Dedeh Kartini
dedehkartini@fkip.unsika.ac.id

Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang

ABSTRACT

In several industries, song's language is often created and arranged differently from traditional language. In other words, because music expresses songwriter's feelings, some listeners may find it difficult to understand the song's message or objectives. This study aims to identify kind of the transitivity process in Colde's song 'Star'. Descriptive research was used in this research. The lyrics of Colde's song 'Star' served as the research's data source. Meanwhile, the data consists of song lyrics' transitivity-processing clauses. An interactive model is used to analyze the data. The results indicate that the lyric of the song contains four various types of transitivity processes: material, mental, existential, and relational processes. This illustrates that several transitivity mechanisms are used in the song's realization. The 'Star' song lyrics mostly use material processes, out of the four categories of transitivity processes identified. This illustrates the chosen song lyrics link to the physical actions that happen to part in social phenomena. Understanding the transitivity process can aid readers in comprehending the song's meaning. It also gives composers an advantage when composing song lyrics because it gives them an increased selection of words.
Key words: Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL); Transitivity Process; Song Lyrics

INTRODUCTION

Language serves primarily as a communication tool. It serves as a medium for the expression and transfer of concepts, ideas, or experiences between individuals, not just inside the social circle but also to those from other social backgrounds. Language has been a social practice, a way of doing things, rather than just an instrument for description and communication (Kroger, 2000; Harbi, 2019). A kind language's tools in entertainment that can be applied to boost someone's mood is listening to good sound with rheme, such as song. By deciphering the lyrics and exploring the meaning behind the words, listeners can learn new facts and insight from music. The songwriters usually write different kinds of lyrics for different reasons. Some songwriters write songs on religion, romance, criticism, and other

topics. Song lyrics require language to be written. recognized that language tools of communication (Riandini, 2024).

In several industries, song's language is often created and arranged differently from traditional language. In other words, because music expresses songwriter's feelings, some listeners may find it difficult to understand the song's message or objectives. Song language analysis thus becomes interesting and crucial to perform (Riandini, 2024). Followed the statement above, one of the song's highlights consists of lyrics which use imaginative language and profound ideas. The words a lyricist employs to depict feelings or a situation are known as the lyrics. Most of the song's lyrics can be made up of a single sentence. Typically, composers condense a grand phenomenon into a song's significant lyrics, which are straightforward and devoid of long phrases. It does not define all meanings; rather, it implies that well-constructed sentences facilitate the description of meanings (Sigalingging, 2022). Furthermore, this research discussed about analysis transtivity process of one song by colde entitled 'Star'

To be able to understand the meaning of lyrics of the song can use one of system method. The system that manages language-expressed content, such as all doing, feeling, being, and saying that happens place in the world, known as the transitivity system. Transitivity, concerned with the function of experience. Our perception of the world is arranged by the experiencing function. It is the language's ability to relate figures with elements (such still images from a movie or comic book picture) and distinguish these components into processes, the people involved in these processes, and the environments where the processes take place (Prasetiyo, 2023). Therefore, the types of transitivity processes that Colde used in the lyrics of 'Star' and how each sentence in the song realizes them are the research objectives of this study. The advantage of this research is that it will make it simpler for readers and musical fans to comprehend every word in a song they listen. In addition, to make song lyrics easier for listeners to understand, songwriters should think about using different transitivity processes when writing song lyrics.

Relating to the topic discussion, there have been some research conducted to investigate types of transitivity processes such as in debate (Fadilah, et al. 2021), female character in a short story (Syed, 2021), and news report on Covid-19 of Jakarta Post press (Fadilah, 2021). Although there is some research on the transitivity processes, there is still not much research on transitivity analysis in song lyrics. Thus, this research closes the gap and advances knowledge of the transitivity processes in songs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Related Study

There are various researchers have investigated of transitivity process, the outcomes of the earlier study are as follows. First, Fadilah, et al (2021) investigated the

transitivity properties (processes, participants, and circumstances) used in the presidential debate between Donald Trump and Joe Biden in presidential election debate in 2020. The findings showed that all types of processes, including material, mental, verbal, relational, existential, and behavioral processes, were found. The material process was significantly applied both two debaters. It can be conclude, the debate focused of the realization aspect of society action.

Second, Syed, et al (2021) identified female characters in the short story 'The Boarding House' by James Joyce using transitivity process. After conducting an analysis of the female characters, the researcher found material process to be the most frequently used process. The coclusion, in that short story the doer is really presented in action as the researchers have found the material process in highest frequency and percentage.

Third, Fadilah, et al (2021) invertigated transitivity properties (processes, participants, and circumstances) of news report on Covid-19 of Jakarta Post press. The results showed that all of proceess types were found in the texts, namely material process, mental process, verbal process, behavioral process, and relational process. Besides, material process was used dominantly.

Transitivity Procces

The concept of transitivity in traditional grammar is very different from what is meant by the phrase (Thompson, 1996; Prasetiyo, 2023). As an analytical method for discourse analysis, transitivity analysis has been applied extensively. In order to learn more about how language patterns in diverse texts and discourses convey unique meanings, transitivity analysis has been used to a variety of them (Zahoor, 2016; Harbi, 2019). Halliday (2014) classified that transitivity processes are divided into six categories: material, mental, verbal, existential, relational and behavioral processes. Material processes are those that take place or are carried out related to with someone's physical body. In human psychology, mental processes are identical to sense processes. Expression of information is referred to as a verbal process. An entity is necessary for existential processes to occur. The relational process reflects the link between two entities, which is classified as attributive and identifying. The systems that control an entity's behavior and signal psychological or physiological activity are known as behavioral processes. Following is the detailed transitivity division.

Table 1. Transitivity process

No	Types of process	Category meaning	Participant		Sample of verbs	
1.	**material**	happening, doing,	actor, scope, recipient	goal, client,	giving, choosing	reading,

2.	**mental**	seing, sensing, feeling, thinking	sense, phenomenom	thingking, loving, knowing, believing, admiring, forgetting
3.	**verbal**	saying	sayer, receiver, verbiage	commanding, saying, telling, asking, and offering
4.	**existential**	to be (am, are, is)	existent	is, am, are, was, were
5.	**relational** attribution identification	being attributing identifying	carrier, attribute token, value	seem, become, appear, etc, or sometime by verbs such as have, own, possess, linking verbs
6.	**behavioural**	behaving	behaver, behivaour	dreaming, smiling, staring, coughing, breathing

Source: Riandini (2024)

METHOD

Design and Samples

This research used descriptive research design. The researchers obtained information about transitivity process in 'Star' song lyrics by Colde. The use of descriptive design aims to describe people's behavior based on the meaning of the lyrics of the song and collect their perspectives, opinions, attitudes, and beliefs on issues without involving numerical (Lodico, 2010). The reason of the researchers' choose the design, because the researchers want to clarify phenomena based on the result of the Colde's 'Star' song lyrics analysis in words to reveal the fact, that is by summarizing data with certain topics to get a good understanding.

Instrument and Procedure

The transitivity analysis framework was utilized to analyze the data. The following procedures were used to conduct data analysis for this study (adopted from Liztiawati, 2021):

1. Classifying the circumstance, participants, and processes in the clauses according to their categories
2. Arranging participants, procedures, and circumstance into categories according to their types
3. Determine the quantity of happening process.
4. Examine the song lyrics and identify the dominant categories of participants, processes, and circumstance.
5. Explaining the transitivity processes that the song uses

Data Analysis

The method of data analysis employed was the interactive model data analysis that Miles, Hubberman, and Saldana (2014:10) recommended. Using the four steps of the interactive model data analysis, this research analyzes the various kinds of transitivity processes in the lyrics of Colde's song 'Star'. The four processes are connected in the process of conducting the analysis, there are: data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing and verification.

RESULT AND DISUSSION

The result of this research indicates that there are 32 processes used in 'Star' song lyrics by Colde. The lyrics to Colde's song 'Star' show various examples of each type of transitivity process. Based on the research, it can be observed that the lyrics of the song 'Star' involved four categories of transitivity processes: material, mental. existential, relational processes. **Table 2** below lists each type of transitivity process's happenings in the lyrics to Colde's song 'Star'.

Table 2. Lists each type of transitivity process's happenings

Types of transitivity process	Happenings of processes
Material	15
Mental	8
Existential	5
Relational	2
Total	**32**

Table adapted from Siahaan (2021)

Table 2 illustrates that the most frequently used material processes include happenings of 15 processes. The second dominance is mental processes, with 8 processes happenings. The existential processes come in next, followed by happenings processes, which number 5. Following that, there are relational processes, when there are 2 process happenings.

Based on the result, when a person is faced with social phenomena, the lyrics of Colde's song 'Star' focus more on the physical actions of the person. In its simplest meaning, this song refers to things that happen to people or to those who take actions (material processes) (Prasetiyo, 2023), which are followed by the mental processes of seeing, feeling, and thinking, the existential processes of an entity; and the relational processes make entities' existence and relationships by utilizing attribution, direct or indirect, and identification (Prasetiyo, 2023). In addition, there are no processes related to speaking (verbal processes) or the physiological functions of humans (behavioral processes) in that song. Following that, **Table 3** provides of an investigation of transitivity processes found in song lyrics.

Table 3. Transitiviy processes analysis

Types of transitivity processes	Clause of the song lyrics
Material processes	I **stay** here for long
	I just **can't help** but **stay**, oh
	I **keep** on **praying**
	If my tears **fall**
	Turns into new world
	Time to **find** my way back home
	Thousand years **gone**
	I **hover** like a star
	All the memories **got** stuck (oh)
Mental processes	I don't even **see** myself get old
	I **wanna** break away
	Down in my universe
	I don't **feel** nothing no more
	I am **tired** of the past (ah)
Existetial processes	While everything **is** changed
	It **is** hard to be explained
	Now it **is** time to go
	I **am** tired of the past (ah)
Relational processes	You are the one I long for

Table 3 shown, the words "stay, can't help, keep praying, fall, turns, find, gone, hover, got" mean to perform an action which indicates a material process. This is proven by the examples in **table 1**. Furthermore, the words "see, wanna, feel, tired" mean feeling or sensing which is a mental process. Following that, the words "is and am" indicate an existential process. Next, the sentence "You are the one I long for" shows a relational process which has a related meaning, the song's writer says "You" are the one the song's writer misses and the song's writer misses "You".

This study analyzed the transitivity processes in Colde's song "Star" and found that four types of transitivity processes were present: material, mental, existential, and relational. Material processes, which focus on actions and events, were the most frequently used, accounting for 15 instances, indicating that the song's message primarily revolves around physical actions and happenings. Mental processes, which involve feelings, thoughts, and perceptions, appeared 8 times, suggesting that emotions and internal reflections are secondary but significant themes. Existential processes, which indicate existence, occurred 5 times, while relational processes, showing relationships or attributes, were found only twice.

The predominance of material processes suggests that the song's lyrics focus on physical actions and tangible outcomes rather than abstract concepts or dialogue-based expression (e.g., verbal processes), which were notably absent. This focus on material actions aligns with other findings in transitivity research where physical actions often dominate narratives or expressions of personal experience (Prasetiyo et al., 2023; Fadilah & Kuswoyo, 2021). The use of mental processes also highlights

the reflective and introspective elements within the song, resonating with the common use of mental processes in artistic expressions like song lyrics, where emotions are a key component (Riandini, 2024). The presence of existential processes further emphasizes a focus on existence and being, linking back to the existential themes of life and time found in the song.

This study offers a novel contribution to the field of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and transitivity analysis by applying these frameworks to song lyrics, which are often overlooked in linguistic research. While previous studies have focused on transitivity in debates (Fadilah et al., 2021), short stories (Syed et al., 2021), and news articles (Fadilah & Kuswoyo, 2021), the application to song lyrics provides fresh insights into how songwriters use linguistic structures to convey meaning. The study fills a gap by examining how song lyrics, specifically in Colde's "Star," utilize a variety of transitivity processes, offering a more nuanced understanding of how material and mental processes interplay in artistic expressions. Unlike previous research that focuses more on the cognitive and communicative aspects of language (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), this study explores the emotional and experiential aspects conveyed through music. By focusing on transitivity in song lyrics, this research broadens the scope of SFL applications beyond traditional narratives and dialogues, providing a new lens to analyze artistic and emotional expressions in music.

The findings of this research have implications for both linguistic theory and practical songwriting. For linguists, this study demonstrates the versatility of transitivity analysis in exploring non-traditional texts like song lyrics, offering a deeper understanding of how linguistic structures contribute to emotional and experiential meaning. This application can be further extended to other creative forms, such as poetry or spoken word performances, thus broadening the scope of SFL studies. For songwriters, understanding transitivity processes can be beneficial in crafting lyrics that effectively communicate emotions and actions. By consciously using a variety of processes, such as material or mental, songwriters can diversify the ways they convey their message, making their lyrics more engaging and relatable to listeners (Zahoor & Janjua, 2016). This study also suggests that songwriters may enhance the listener's experience by balancing physical actions with emotional reflections, creating a more dynamic narrative within their songs. In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on transitivity analysis, offering novel insights into its application in song lyrics. By identifying the dominant transitivity processes in Colde's "Star," this research sheds light on the ways in which songwriters use linguistic elements to express both physical and emotional experiences.

CONCLUSION

From Colde's 'Star' song lyrics, it is found that 32 transitivity processes are used in numerous happenings of each sort of transitivity process. It has been shown that the song does not make use of all of the six transitivity mechanisms. Only some portion

of the transitivity processes make use of it. Based on the research's findings, material processes are most frequently used, followed by mental, existential and relational processes. It indicates that the primary focus of Colde's songwriter is to explain the material processes behind the physics-related words in the song lyrics, including "stay," "fall," "find," and more. The message of Colde's song 'Star' is conveyed not only through material processes but also through mental processes like "feel," "want to," "see," and others; existential processes by demonstrating the existence of a single entity by using the verbs "be," such as "it is time to go," "I am tired," and relational processes that are realized by using the verb "to be," such as "are." It can be concluded that the lyrics to Colde's song 'Star' shows a varied representation of each sort of transitivity process. This aims to give the terminology in each song's lyrics some variation to keep song listeners interested. Following that conclusion above, the researchers hope subsequent investigations may explore more about functional grammar for analyzing song lyric clauses.

REFERENCES

Arniati, F., Darwis, M., Rahman, N., & Rahman, F. (2019). Mother Behavior to Their Daughters as Seen in"Pride and Prejudice" and" Little Women". *Parenting*, *85*, 5.

Fadilah, R., & Kuswoyo, H. (2021). Transitivity analysis of presidential debate between Trump and Biden in 2020. *Linguistics and Literature Journal, 2*(2), 98-107.

Fadilah, R., & Kuswoyo, H. (2021, August). Transitivity analysis of news reports on Covid-19 of *Jakarta Post* press. In *The 1st International Conference on Language, Linguistic, Literature and Education (ICLLLE)*.

Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *Halliday's introduction to functional grammar* (4th ed.). London: Edward Arnold.

Harbi, S., Jabar, M. S. A., Nor, A. N. M., & Isa, N. M. (2019). 'Hey, Jude! I wanna hold your hand': Transitivity process analysis on popular songs by The Beatles. *International Journal of Language Education and Applied Linguistics*, 45-54.

Kolin, K. F., & Sudibyo, D. (2018). the Effectiveness of Using Songs in Teaching Listening Skill At the Second Grade of Smp N 11 Kabupaten Sorong. *Jurnal Interaction; Vol*, *5*(2).

Lodico, M. G., Spaulding, D. T., & Voegtle, K. H. (2010). *Methods in educational research: From theory to practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis* (3rd ed.). California: SAGE Publications.

Prasetiyo, D., Situmorang, H., & Hutabarat, I. (2023). Process types of transitivity system in Adele's song lyrics. *Jurnal Littera: Fakultas Sastra Darma Agung, 2*(1), 9-20.

Riandini, D. (2024). Transitivity process in Sia's selected songs lyrics. *Sintaksis: Publikasi Para Ahli Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris, 2*(2), 1-7.

Rizal, A., Nursalim, N., Ajam, A., Lestari, S. A. B., & Ridayani, R. (2024). Students' Cultural Literacy Development through Dialogical Approach in Senior High School. *KnE Social Sciences*, 273-287.

Setiawan, A., & Axelina, M. (2023). The English Students' Perception in Using Google Translate and U–Dictionary at Translation Class. *International Social Sciences and Humanities*, *2*(1), 1-6.

Siahaan, H. V. F. (2021). Transitivity processes in Bon Jovi's selected song lyrics. *International Journal of English and Applied Linguistics, 1*(1).

Sigalingging, G. A. (2022). Transitivity analysis of Olivia Rodrigo's song lyrics. [Publication information missing].

Syed, A. F., Nazir, A., Hafiz, A., & Shahbaz, K. (2021). A transitivity analysis of female characters in "The Boarding House" by James Joyce. *World Wide Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development, 7*(1), 57-62.

Thompson, G. (1996). *Introducing functional grammar*. London: Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd.

Wardani, R. C., & Purwati, D. (2019). The moral value analysis as reflected in novel Akeelah and the Bee. *INTERACTION: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa*, *6*(1), 42-56.

Zahoor, M., & Janjua, F. (2016). Character construction in tributive songs: Transitivity analysis of the song "I am Malala". *Trames: A Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences, 20*(2), 201-213.