TRANSITIVITY ANALYSIS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS' CASUAL CONVERSATION

Anjar Setiawan
Universtas Muhammadiyah Semarang
Indonesia
anjar17@unimus.ac.id

Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the transitivity of graduate students' casual conversation. The conversation is transcribed then analyzed by using theory of transitivity. The research method applied Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which focused on transitivity analysis. Transitivity within the framework of Ideational Meaning was used as the theoretical framework for the analysis in this study. The analysis involved the analysis of processes and circumstances of the various clauses identified. The results revealed that the processes of material centrally concerned with actions and events of the speakers who carry them out, and the material processes also reveal the daily activity of speakers. Further, the circumstance of place is more dominant in this conversation.

Keywords: transitivity, casual analysis, critical discourse analysis

Introduction

Language is a system of conventional spoken, manual, or written symbols by means of which human being as members of social group in the society. The function of language is communication. Language is the most important aspect in our life. People use language to express their inner thoughts and emotions, make sense of complex and abstract thought. We use language to communicate with others, to fulfill our wants and needs, as well as to establish rules and maintain our culture. Without language we can interact with people around us. We can learn and live in this world through communication. According to Kroger and Wood (2000, p. 4) believe that language is taken to be not simply a tool for description and a medium of communication but as a social practice, a way of doing things. It is mean that if we want to live in the society, we need to communicate with other people. We need their help, their opinion about something. Halliday (1985, xiv), "a language is interpreted as a system of meanings, accompanied by forms through which the meanings can be realized and

answer the question, "how are these meanings expressed?" This puts the forms of a language in a different perspective: as means to an end, rather than as an end in themselves." It is from this point of view of language that systemic functional linguistics was developed by Halliday and his associates during the 1960s.

Halliday (2004: 170) stated that the transitivity system construes the world of experiences into a manageable set of process types. It means that it is possible to analyze text in order to find out the process types representing the experiences. Transitivity traditionally is defined as the grammatical feature it is described as transitive. Based on Halliday (1994:107), there are three components of Transitivity process. The process itself, Participants in the process, and Circumstances associated with the process. This concept is powerful tool for analyzing the meaning expressed in clauses. All of the clause which analyze in this article are taken from casual conversation. Concerning on the transitivity system, this article focuses on which types of process usually appearing

in the casual conversation then capture them in the percentage. Furthermore, this article directs the analysis on a kind of casual conversation by three participants or speakers.

In Halliday's theory, language expresses three main kinds of meanings simultaneously: ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings (1985). The ideational meaning (the clause as representation) serves for the expression of "content" in language, that is, our experience of the real world, including the experience of our inner world. When we use language, we often use it to speak of something or someone doing something. That is why the ideational meaning can be referred to as experiential meaning coming from the clause as representation. Transitivity generally refers to how meaning is represented in clauses; transitivity patterns can reveal the certain worldview "framed by the authorial ideology" in a literary text (Fowler, 1986, p. 138).

Clauses represent events and processes of various kinds, and transitivity aims to make clear how the action is performed, by whom and on what. Transitivity processes are also useful in uncovering the participants involved, how the speaker/writer locate himself in relation to the others, and whether they take an active or passive role in the communication. Gerot and Wignell (1994) stated that there are three semantic categories which explain in a general way how phenomena of the real world are represented as linguistic structures, these are: (1) Circumstances, (2) Processes, (3) Participants. Circumstance answer such question as when, where, why, how, how many and as what. They are realize meaning about *Time* (temporal) tells when and is probed by when, how often and how long, for example "He goes to church *every Sunday*". The second circumstance is Place (spatial) tells where and is probed by where, how far, "He goes to the *church* every Sunday". The third is manner, tells how mean (tells by what means and is probed by what with?), quality (tells how and is probed by how), comparison (tells like what and is probed by what like). Fourth, cause tells why, reason (tells what causes the Process and is probed by why or how), purpose (tells the purpose and is probed by what for), behalf (tells for whose sake and is probed by for whom). Fifth, accompaniment tells with(out) who or what and is probed by who or what else. Sixth, matter tells about what or with reference to what and is probed by as what. The last is role, role tells what as and is probed by as what.

Processes are central to transitivity, participant and circumstance are incumbent upon the doings, happening, feelings and beings. This suggests that there are different kinds of doing on, which necessarily involve different kinds of participants in varying Circumstances. There are indeed seven different Process types in identified by Halliday:

Table 1:
Process Types

Material	Doing	Bodily, physically, materially
Behavioural	Behaving	Physiologically and psychologically
Mental	Sensing	Emotionally, intellectually, sensorily
Verbal	Saying	Lingually, signaling
Relational	Being	Equal to or some attribute of

Existential	Existing	There exists
Meteorological	Weathering	

Processes are realized by verbs. Traditionally verbs have been defined as doing words. But as the above indicates, some verbs are not doing words at all, but rather express states of being or having. Material processes are processes of material doing. They express the notion that some entity physically does something which may be done to some other entity. The entity who or which does something is the actor. There optionally is an entity to which processes is extended or directed, this entity which may be done to is the goal. The goal is most like the traditional direct object, which we're told only transitive verbs may take.

Mental Processes are ones of sensing: feeling, thinking, perceiving. These processes differ from material ones in as much as the latter are physical, moving, overt doings. Mental processes are mental, covert kinds of goings-on. And the participant involved in mental processes is not much acting or acting upon in a doing sense, as sensing, having feelings, perceiving or thinking. The participant roles in mental processes are senser and phenomenon. The senser is by definition a conscious being, for only those who are conscious can feel, think or see.

Behavioural processes are processes of physiological and psychological behavior, like breathing, dreaming, snoring, smiling, hiccupping, looking, watching, listening, and pondering. There is one obligatory participant, the behaver. Like a senser, the behaver a conscious being. But the process is one of doing, not sensing. Range specifies the range or scope of the processes, defining its coordinator domain. Range appears in several gulses, so we shall return to it below to illustrate the difference. Verbal processes are processes of saying, or more accurately,

of symbolically signaling. Very often these are realized by two distinct clauses: projecting clause encodes a signal source (sayer) and a signaling (verbal process) and the other (projected clauses) realizes what was said. Relational; processes involve states of being (including having). They can be classified according to whether they are being used to identify something or to assign a quality to something. Processes which establish an identity are called identifying processes and processes which assign a quality are called attribute processes. Each has its own characteristic participant roles. In attribute these are carrier and attribute.

Existential processes are processes of existence. Existential processes are expressed by verbs of existing: 'be', 'exist', 'arise' and the existence can be a phenomenon of any kind. Meteorological process has no representational function but does provide a subject.

Methodology

In this article, the writer applied descriptive analysis method; it is in order to elaborate the appearing process types of transitivity in casual conversation and to describe the percentage of process types. The researcher transcribed the conversation into sentences. After that he elaborated and analysed the sentences based on theory of transitivity. The casual conversation is conversation which consists of three participants. This conversation took place in the classroom. They talked about their final task for their finale examination and about their planning what they want to do in their holiday.

The data was analysed based on Halliday, and Gerot and Wignell theory about transitivity. After the writers make the transcript of the conversation, and counts how many turns and sentences in

that transcript. After the researcher made it into sentences, it was divided sentence which has more than one clause. Then the analysis was continued to analyse the transcript clause by clause.

Findings and Discussion

The casual conversation which is used by the writer as the data is took place in the classroom. It consists of three speakers, they are Tutik, Sekar and Sisilia. The first topic they were talked about is they talked about assignment from their lecturer and when they have to submit it. And the second topic they were discussed is their planning in their holiday in January. In the conversation there are 112 turns, Tutik have 42 turns, Sekar have 39 turns, and Sisilia have 31 turns. The writer classified the sentences based on their turns. And the sentences or clauses which analyzed by the writer are 105 processes.

Based on writer analysis, the result of the transitivity are they commonly using material processes. The total material processes are 45 processes. It means that in their conversation is centrally concerned with actions and events and the speakers who carry them out, this material processes also reveal the daily activity of speakers. There are the examples of data that show the processes of material:

1) Have you done all assignments for this week?

Have	you	Done	all assignments	for this week?
	Participant	Material : Process	Goal	Circumstance : time

2) I haven't done it

I	Have not done	it
Participant: actor	Process: material	Goal

3) Yes, we have to go to library to find some sources

Yes	We	(Have to) go	to library to find some sources
	Participant: Actor	Material: process	Circumstance: place

For the mental processes, there are 24 mental processes. It indicates that the transcript between speakers reveal about sensing, having feelings and perceiving or thinking, as friends, they can freely to express their ideas and their opinion about the topic they are discussed. There are the data which show about mental processes:

1) Oh God I am really confused about that

(Oh God)	I	(am really) confused	about that
	Senser	Mental : cognitive	phenomenon

2) Oh, I see. I have collected the sources but I haven't done it

(Oh)	I	See
	Senser	Mental : perceptive

3) I think it is ok

I	Think	It is ok
Senser	Mental: cognitive	Phenomenon

There is no verbal process and behavioural process in this transcript. In Existential processes, there are four processes. It indicated that the speakers show things or places which exist. There are the examples of the processes:

1) *There are a lot of dust*

(there) are	A lot	Of dust
Existential	Existent	Circumstance : accompaniment

2) *There are only Sam Poo Kong and Lawang Sewu.*

(there) are	only	Sam Poo Kong and Lawang Sewu.
Existential	Existence	Circumstance: place

In the relational processes, there are three processes; 25 attributive, four identifying and three possessive. The data analyses for relational processes are:

1) *Does it like waterfall?*

Does it	like	waterfall
Token	Attribute: possessive	Attribute

2) *No, It likes beautiful scenery.*

It	likes	beautiful scenery
Token	identify	value

3) *Yes, it's very natural view*

It	is	very natural view
Carrier	Attribute: intensive	value

There are the table of analysis and percentage of the processes in the transcript of the casual conversation:

Table 2:
Table of Transitivity Analysis

Transitivity		
No	Process type	Number of process
1	Material	45
2	Mental	24
3	Verbal	0
4	Behavioral	0
5	Existential	4
6	Relational: attributive	25
7	Relational: identifying	4
8	Relational: possessive	3

total no. of processes	105

From the diagram above we can know the percentages of the processes. Material process is appearing mostly than other processes in 43%, and the second process is relational: attribute with 24%. In the third place there is mental process with 23% then relational: identify with 4% and the last is relational possessive and existential processes with 3%.

This transcript also uses some circumstances, such as circumstances of location (place), time, matter, manner, role and cause. Circumstances function to add specificity to the information given. The total of circumstance is 33. The dominant circumstance in this transcript is circumstance of location (place) which is used 13. The high proportion of this circumstance shows that this transcript concentrates on situating events in time and space, noting where and when they took place. There are the table of analysis and percentage of the circumstances in the transcript of the casual conversation:

Table 3
The Table of Circumstances Analysis

Circumtances		
No	Type	Number of process
1	Time	7
2	Place	13
3	Manner	9
4	Role	0
5	Cause	0
6	Matter	3
7	Accompaniment	1
total no. of circumstances		33

From the diagram above we can know the percentages of the circumstances used in the transcript of the conversation. Circumstances: place is appearing mostly than other circumstances in 40%, and the second circumstances is circumstances: manner with 27%. In the third place there is circumstance: time with 21% then circumstances: matter with 9% and the last is circumstances: accompaniment with 3%.

The implication of material processes which used in the conversation is that in their conversation is centrally concerned with actions and events and the speakers who carry them out, this material processes also reveal the daily activity of speakers. And for circumstances which is dominant is circumstances of place, it indicated that circumstance shows that this transcript concentrates on situating events in time and space, noting where and when they took place.

Conclusions

Concerning on the focus of this study and looking at the table of the calculation, it can be summed up that there are six types of process found from eight types, they are material process, mental process, relational process : attribute, possessive and identify, and existential process. This study show that in casual conversation is dominated with material processes that mean in their

conversation is centrally concerned with actions and events and the speakers who carry them out, this material processes also reveal the daily activity of speakers. This study also reveals that the circumstance of place is more dominant in this conversation.

References

[1] Fowler, R. (1986). *Linguistic Criticism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[2] Gerot, Linda and Wignel, Peter. (1994). *Making Sense of Functional Grammar. First Edition.* Sydney: Sidney Press.

.

[3] Halliday, A. K. (1985). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (2nd edition). London, Melbourne, Auckland: Edward Arnold.

[4] Halliday, M. A. K. (1994). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar 2nd Edition.* London: Edward Arnold.

[5] Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2004). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* 3rd edition. London: Edward Arnold.

[6] Kroger, R. O., & Wood, L. A. (2000). *Doing Discourse Analysis: Method for Studying Action in Talk and Text*. California: Sage Publications, Inc.