



Exploring The Themes of Freedom, Pain and Beauty in Khalil Gibran's Novella the Prophet Using Systematic Functional Linguistics

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Abstract: Numerous theories have been successful in accounting for aspects of language. One of the most substantial theories is Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (often SFL), which has been employed in the literature on linguistics and applied linguistics. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a useful and indeed powerful tool for the analysis of the text. This paper aims to validate Halliday's SFL with a focus on the Theory of Transitivity, specifically material and mental processes of ideational meta-function of language. The researchers have explored the themes of Freedom, Pain, and Beauty in Khalil Gibran's novella, The Prophet using various transitivity processes.

Keywords: Discourse Analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistics, transitivity, Freedom, Pain, and Beauty Charismatic

1. Introduction

Human Language is a very complex system that not a single definition is enough to capture all aspects of it. Delving language makes you understand the language, its construction, modification, alteration and also helps people with interaction, sharing emotions, sentiments, and understand each other desires. In linguistic we study all these features to understand the language. Linguistics' major purpose is to comprehend the essence, identity of the language, and interaction. The research of linguistic helps us to understand different languages, also about their structures around the world and where they are originated.

Michael Halliday was an English linguist who builds SFL, Systemic Functional Linguistic. According to Halliday, language is the main mean of communication, how meaning is developed and transmitted means language is a resource for making meanings. Halliday states that the purpose and role of language are more important than its structure because, without any function, language structure would be pointless. Like, communicating with a child who is two years old, you will know that being grammatically correct is almost irrelevant. In this system, SFL helps to understand the connection between languages and their function. Halliday depicts three different functions of the language, known as Metafunction. The first one Ideational metafunction, the second one is interpersonal metafunction and the third one is textual metafunction.

Ideational Metafunction: In this metafunction, one studies language that how it depicts reality, describes one its own experience that what is going on around him and how, where, when. Interpersonal Metafunction: Moreover, the association between the addresser and addressee in a discourse is demonstrated by them. Similarly, the

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relationship between the primary position and secondary position of addresser and addressee within a discourse is evaluated via them

Textual Metafunction: Likewise, in textual metafunction: the text and its meaning are their main focus particularly the meaning that could make sense.

Halliday has introduced the system of transitivity. As a matter of fact, this system is concerned with the distinct procedures of grammatical order that are present in the language and structure. It consists of three kinds of processes such as major and minor processes. Halliday has divided the three major types of transitivity system which are mental process, relational process, and material process. In the same way, he divides the minor types as well which are existential process, behavioral process, and verbal process. Hence, the clauses of doing and happening fall into the category of material process.

While the relational process is the type of process that is present within man. However, this is further divided into three sub-types: intensive, Circumstantial, and the last one is possessive. In contrast, the behavioral process comprises of further two types: psychological behavior and physiological behavior which includes cry, smile, dream, etc. Furthermore, the process of conversation is a verbal process as the name denotes which includes three contributors: first comes the Saver, on the second is the Receiver and the last contributor is the Verbiage. In the light of the aforementioned knowledge, it is evident that the addresser is the Saver, the addressee is the Receiver and the content of the message is Verbiage. However, the happening or exiting of something is explained through the existential process.

Khalil Gibran was a Lebanese American Poet, author, visual artist, and journalist. Most of his work shows the picture of modernizing world. Most of his works comprise of alienation, disruption, and the destruction, the charm of rural life. As well, he was most inspired by the late European modernist writers. Besides this, Khalil Gibran's literary style resembles Rumi and William Blake, and also one can find his writing poetic and esoteric. Moreover, "The Prophet" written by Khalil Gibran opens up with the man, named Almustafa, who is chosen as a Prophet by town's people. When the time of farewell comes and he bids farewell to his people, he feels sad but means while the people ask him about his philosophy of life and death. He preaches them on different issues of life like marriage, religion, children, crime, good, evil, beauty, property, and friendship.

2. Literature Review

Transitivity analysis is found out in the short story The Last Leaf by O' Henry conducted by Khan (2018). In this short story, the researchers have explored different themes of "The Last Leaf" through the theory of Transitivity; the theme of death, hope, and hopelessness. It explores the functions and the personalities of the different characters. As one of the major characters, Johnsy's perception about life is shown that how she is hopeless and connects her life days with the leaves of the ivy plant and waits for death. The other character Sue is optimistic and tries to bring back Johnsy to normal life and also shows the sacrifice of old Behrman which gives hope to Johnsy and once again she comes back to her life.

Transitivity theory was applied to the Rose of Emily conducted by Song (2010). In this short story, Song explains and analysis different processes of transitivity. It explains how the process functions and it helps to develop themes and also the personality of the characters. Moreover, all of the six functions are analyzed and their functions showed that how Emily, the main character of the short story by William Faulkner, breaks the restriction imposed upon her and searches for her happiness. So, in this short story theme is explored through transitivity

This literary review is about The Prophet conducted by Rahimi and Samadi (2013). The researchers have conducted the research descriptively. A descriptive study on Khalil Gibran's point of view about religion and religious thought. The researchers have explored different parts of Gibran's characters and also about his different beliefs about Islam, Jews, and Christ. The method that is applied by the researchers is descriptive. The Prophet is spiritual self-help that celebrates conventional thinking. Gibran believed in religious unity, according to him, it is one of the most effective factors in nature. Gibran believed that one soul should be freed; it should not be bound to rules and principles because a caged soul could not really reach what he is searching for. Gibran's view is that religion is part of human life and one cannot separate it from his life. Gibran wishes to create understanding between different religious beliefs.

Another Transitivity framework of SFL is applied to the poem Daddy by Sylvia Plath conducted by Forough and Suliza (2012). The poem is dark, painful, and of personal experiences and the life of the poetess. By exploring the different images of men in Daddy through linguistic and lexico-grammatical aspects, the study focuses on the minor elements of words that reveal the attitude and opinion of the Plath towards men. Similarly, by applying stylistic and linguistic approaches, the researchers have highlighted the mindset of males in the poem Daddy that

how men are doer and behavior, they treat women cruelly and violently. On the other hand, a female persona is mostly associated with mental processes such as feeling, wishing, and imaging. In this poem, Daddy woman is depicted as an unfulfilled doer, who wants revenge but does not have the strength to take her revenge

Another research on The Prophet is conducted by Palola (2009). The researchers have analyzed the conceptual metaphors in The Prophet by Gibran. The analysis shows that Gibran predominantly uses a few conventional conceptual metaphors in The Prophet to develop elaboration, extension, and composition. Conceptual metaphors are used in different ways in order to make sense of the world for humans. To understand the world it is important to use conceptual metaphors theory. The researchers analyzed the conceptual metaphors which deal with the matter of life, death, and love.

Kurnia (2018) in her research study "The transitivity of the short story No Witchcraft for Sale by Doris Lessing has explored the text through six process types of transitivity that occurred in the story. The processes discussed by the researchers are material process, mental process, behavioral process, verbal process, relational process, an existential process. However, the most dominant of the aforementioned processes are material processes highlighted by the researchers in the text which has identified the text from orientation to resolution.

The research study "An Analysis of Transitivity Options in Hamid's The Reluctant Fundamentalist" conducted by Qasim, Talaat, and Kushi (2018) discussed the experiential meaning in order to find the relation between language and the identity of the participants socioculturally. In the article, the researchers have evaluated the character of Changez in the novel by employing SFL which reflects his dominance over other participants. Besides this, the disturbance and Fear in the world are indicated by the material process by describing the activity and movements. As well, the researchers have evaluated the character of Changez via the mental process. Through, a mental process he is shown as a tormented character and nostalgic character.

Systemic Functional Linguistic is developed by Halliday (1985), it is a new approach to studying language rather than the traditional way in which a set of specific grammatically set rules are to be followed. Halliday states that the function of the language is more important than the structure of the language. The transitivity system and its different types of processes developed by Halliday can be found in the language and the structure.

3. Statement of the Problem

In order to explore the themes of freedom, pain, and beauty and to delve into the elements of transitivity in the novella "The Prophet", the researchers applied and validated the Theory of Transitivity of Systematic Functional Linguistics on the selected chapters of the text of the novella "The Prophet".

4. Objectives of the Study

In general, the purpose of this study is summarized in two parts as follows:

- To explore the transitivity processes used in the novella The Prophet by Khalil Gibran,
- To find out the contribution of material and mental processes to the themes of freedom, pain, and beauty.

5. Methodology

I. Design

The research is both qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative in the sense that it includes statistical data in the form of tables. Moreover, it talks about the different themes of the novella, which shows the qualitative nature of the research.

II. Data Collection

The researchers took the text from the novella The Prophet by Khalil Gibran and analyzed it through the lens of the Transitivity theory of Systematic Functional Linguistics.

III. Theoretical Framework

The researchers have studied the facts through the lens of Transitivity theory of Systematic Functional Linguistics by Michael Halliday. The conventional notion of transitive and intransitive verbs forms the groundwork for this supposition of Michael Halliday. The kinds of verbs that need to be directly followed by an object in order to become perceivable are called transitive verbs. While the verbs that do not need to be followed by an object, in order to be apprehended, is called an intransitive verb. Further, there is another kind that can be perceivable with or without being followed directly by a verb, depending upon the situation, which is called a di-transitive verb. So, Halliday built up this notion regarding the verbs and in his theory, he marked this notion as the Transitivity system (Bustam & SS, 2011). The major three key factors in the transitivity system of this theory are: the method itself which is figured out by the Verbal block, the nominal blocks figure out the other key factor, actors- they are the

folks playing part in these processes, while another key factor is circumstances which are in affiliation with these procedures. Digging further down, we find six more divisions to these processes (Alvin, 2016).

6. Analysis and Discussion

I. General Discussion

The great achievement of Khalil Gibran's "The Prophet" is an anthology, containing a total of twenty-eight prose poems. All of these ingredients of the "The Prophet" guide us to a path of wisdom and knowledge. After analyzing "The prophet", one can easily estimate that the chapters contain full treasures of wisdom in every aspect. It highlights the way Gibran approaches the various departments of life and certain areas of the will of the universe. Gibran thinks of an ideal polis and suggesting a cure for every issue in life in this Polis. He drafts out an imaginary world, whose existence could not be possible till now. He overwhelms all other religions. To draw the ethical and moral image of God the wish of Al-Mustafa to guide, support, and boost the courage of his followers, along with all humanity. He is propagating his prudent teaching gently rather than forcefully to the people whom he is addressing. Al-Mustafa is an Arabic origin name, specified for the Prophet (P.B.U.H). The reason behind choosing the name Al-Mustafa was a strong belief and influence of spirituality on the mind and soul of Gibran. In fact, this could be considered as the highest Utopianism of Gibran, for the construction of a balanced society and to guide the people to the truth. After the complete analysis, it becomes evident that Gibran's book is a conceit to resolve the enigma of life that is finally we will return to the place from where we have come. This book further suggests that we learn from the ups of downs that we face constantly that guide us that we have been made for a specific purpose, which will be realized after death. In his book, Gibran has pointed out "a unity in diversity". It is obvious that we are moral and in fact, we are a drop of the ocean that shall go back to the ocean.

II. Linguistic Discussion

A) Themes and Transitivity Processes Used by the Author in the Novella *The Prophet*

The novella the Prophet consists of sixty-eight different chapters and it has many themes described by the author. In the novella when a prophet Al-Mustafa was leaving, he preached to the townspeople for the last time about how to live life with true meaning and enlighten them with the knowledge they lack. Knowledge about love, friendship, marriage, beauty, freedom, work, pain, and so on. Throughout the novella, the Prophet, spoke about wisdom and sharing knowledge with his people and telling them to see things with different perspectives because only then one can enjoy the real meaning and pleasure of life and also by sharing your knowledge with loved ones.

Table No 01: Number of Transitivity Processes in the Novella

Total Number of Transitivity Process in the Novella: 46(100%)	
Material Processes	Mental Processes
19	27
41.30%	58.69%

The above table (no.01) shows us the overall numbers of material and mental transitivity processes used in the novella, The Prophet. According to the table, the author of the novella uses a total of forty-six (46) material and mental processes, in which nineteen (19) are material processes, which contributes almost forty-one percent (41.30%) of the total processes, while the number of mental processes is twenty-seven (27) which almost makes fifty-eight percent (58%) of the total processes.

i) Theme of Freedom

(a) General Analysis

The theme of freedom is one of the universal themes. In the Prophet Gibran describes freedom as worship, referring to his people that they worship freedom like a deity and believe that it's an escape from the norms of the society. It shows how people are enslaved to freedom same like a slave before a tyrant who slays everything that comes it's way, so are you people sacrificing everything for physical freedom and claim to be freed but it is not real freedom as Gibran says, "I have seen the freest among you wear their freedom as a yoke and a handcuff", "And my heart bled within me", according to author real freedom is a freedom of mind and soul. If your mind is free to think and your soul is free to roam then you are free, you are free to feel anything, to do anything that is what real freedom is. Freedom is not desired to be fulfilled or goal to be achieved, this is not freedom if you think your days are carefree and your nights are without sorrow and grief rather actual freedom is when these things girdle your life

and yet, you rise above them, rise above physical concerns. The author describes that human beings are born free, without rules and regulations but they have enchained their selves to different norms of the society despite being born free, you have enslaved yourself to the law of the state.

Gibran’s views on freedom are beyond worldly desires, colors, racisms, religion, sorrow, and pain, according to him no real freedom can be achieved without sorrow and grief, if you are suffering from any of these then the future is yours and you should rise above these all because pain can make achieve real freedom and peace. Gibran’s speaks about the bitter reality of a society and he is being realistic to enlighten his readers about the mystery of the world, to open the eyes of his readers to the unseen reality of the world, to make them believe that more than physical freedom matters freedom of mind and soul, where one can think freely, carefreely, it should be chosen by you, it should not be imposed upon you. Gibran says, “these things move within you as lights and shadows in pairs that cling”, which means everything moves along with you, same like shadows move with light and shadows fade when there is no more light, similarly, if you stop so will be the freedom, the real purpose of your life will stop. Gibran speaks about the bitter laws of the society that the laws which are implemented by the state have fettered the actual freedom, so when it loses its chains then only it will become greater freedom.

(b) Transitivity Analysis

Table No 2: Transitivity Processes for the Theme of Freedom

Total Number of Transitivity Process for the Theme of Hope: 15/46 (32.6%)	
Material Processes	Mental Processes
06	09
40%	60%

The aforementioned table (no.02) includes the statistics of material and mental processes used by the writer of the novella in order to address the theme of Freedom. The table displays that, the author uses fifteen out of forty-six (15/46) material and mental processes, which make almost thirty-two (32.6%) of the overall processes, to construct the theme of Freedom in the novella. The number of material processes is six (06) which makes forty percent (40%) of the total statistics while the number of mental processes is nine (09) which shows sixty percent (60%) of the total processes.

ii) Theme of Beauty

(a) General Analysis

To every single individual, the definition of beauty is different; his approach towards it is different. For some people it is kind, soft, and gentle, for some it might be tough and dreadful like autumn, for some it is like a summer sunrise and sunset and for some people, it is like a dark cold starry night of winter, so beauty is not related to single person’s approach, it has many colors, shapes, and definitions. Beauty lies in one’s heart and eyes. Mostly beauty reflects in the things you lack, the desires of man, incomplete dreams. Something that is out of your reach and the hunger inside you for that thing, you call it beauty. Beauty lives inside a man like, “But rather a heart inflamed and a soul enchanted” means beauty is in the heart like a flame-like fire is set to heart and the soul is under its spell and it triggers a person to seek it, to find it and when you start looking for it your heart motivates you and your soul guide you, to achieve it. Gibran says, “ And beauty is not a need but ecstasy”, which means that beauty is not just the need of a person that he looking for it to fulfill his desire and then his work is done, no, beauty is eternal when you find it, it stays forever. It is not in grief, weary, passion, or any need of yours, beauty is an ecstasy that sets your heart on fire and enchanted your soul like a witch. It is something spiritual which once you understand truly, achieve it then it will never lose neither it will lose its charm. It will stay with you forever and will always shine like a bright star.

(b) Transitivity Analysis

Table No 03: Transitivity Processes for the Theme of Beauty

Total Number of Transitivity Process for the Theme of Beauty: 20/46 (43.4%)	
Material Processes	Mental Processes
08	12
40%	60%

Table no.03 shows us that twenty out of forty-six (20/46) material and mental processes are used in the novella to highlight the theme of Beauty, which makes almost forty-three percent (43%) of the total processes. Overall, the author uses eight (08) material processes and twelve (12) mental processes, which make forty percent (40%) and sixty percent (60%) of the total statistics respectively.

iii) Theme of Pain

(a) General Analysis

Pain is also one of the themes of the prophet. In order to understand the blessing and miracles of life, one needs to taste pain because without damage is no construction. As Gibran says, “Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding”, which means the wondrous of life, one should encounter pain, needs to experience it because without knowing the taste of pain you will never understand the value of happiness. Pain is like a dark night without a moon and happiness is like a morning sun, when you wake up from a dark night in the bright morning only then you came to know the worth of the sun and its brightness. Similarly, when you experience the pain after that you understand the worth of happiness and that how valuable it is. So when you go through sorrow, grief and pain then your heart is able to embrace the real meaning of happiness, miracles, and blessings. One should accept all the seasons of his heart because every season brings its own flavor, its own joy, and its own lessons. Same like in your life you have accepted all the seasons of nature and enjoyed its fruits, different weathers; same like that welcome all the seasons of your heart and also embrace all different weathers of it because only then you can taste all the fruits of joy and sorrow. And you should welcome both winter and spring of your heart because only humans are capable to watch the winter season of his heart with serene. According to the author, most of the pain is self-chosen by a man and he suffers from it because he has not enough strength to embrace it, to live with it, and then it lasts for a long time. When a person is suffering from physical pain he drinks a bitter remedy by a physician in order to heal him, to give him relief, similarly, the pain of heart demands to be embraced when you welcome it, it aches but after all the suffering, and you will understand everything else. So, paths full of thorns are sometimes worth walking because at the end of the path you discover the garden of roses and then you realize that some sorrow is worth suffering.

(b) Transitivity Analysis

Table No 04: Transitivity Processes for the Theme of Pain

Total Number of Transitivity Process for the Theme of Pain: 11/46 (23.9%)	
Material Processes	Mental Processes
05	06
45.4%	54.5%

The statistics of the table (no.04) presents that, total of eleven out of forty-six (11/46) material and mental processes are used to explain the theme of Pain, which make almost twenty-three percent (23.9%) of the total processes in the novella. The author in the novella uses five material processes, which is forty-five percent (45%) of the total processes for the theme of Pain. Similarly, he uses six (06) mental processes, which is approximately fifty-four percent (54%) of the overall statistics for the theme of Pain.

7. Conclusion

In the research work, the researchers have investigated the novella, The Prophet by Khalil Gibran, using the Theory of Transitivity of Systematic Functional Linguistics. In the study, the researchers delved material and mental transitivity processes and highlighted their contribution to the theme of Freedom, Pain, and Beauty in the Novella. Moreover, the researchers also inspected the societal role of the said themes i.e. Freedom, Pain, and Beauty. In this chapter, the researchers summarize the study constructed on the findings of the work.

I. Discussion of the Research Questions

Q No 01: What processes of transitivity are used in the novella The Prophet by Khalil Gibran?

After a thorough examination of the collected data from the Novella, the researchers reach the conclusion that the author has used various transitivity processes and linked it to the theme of Freedom, Pain, and Beauty. Though Gibran has used a variety of transitivity processes the researchers have mainly focused on material and mental processes in the selected chapters of the Novella. Also, the researchers draft out the individual and overall statistics of the material and mental processes used in the Novella.

The statistics show that the author of the novella uses a total of forty-six (46) material and mental processes. The statistics is given as under;

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a) Out of forty-six (46), nineteen (19) are material processes, which contributes almost forty-one percent (41.30%) of the total processes,

b) Similarly, the number of mental processes is twenty-seven (27), which almost makes fifty-eight percent (58%) of the total processes.

Q No 02: How do the material and mental processes contribute to the theme of freedom, pain, and beauty in the Novella?

The researchers delve out that, the author has used various transitivity processes repeatedly by targeting the social issues of a human being to give liberation to everyone from the lawful social norms. The researchers examine only material and mental processes in the already chose chapters i.e. Freedom, Beauty, and Pain. The data shows that Gibran has linked these processes to the theme of Beauty, Pain, and Freedom. The statistics is given below;

a) The number of material processes is six (06) which makes forty percent (40%) of the total statistics, while the number of mental processes is nine (09) which shows sixty percent (60%) of the total processes for the theme of Freedom.

b) Similarly, the author in the novella uses five (05) material processes, which is forty-five percent (45%) of the total processes for the theme of Pain. Also, he uses six (06) mental processes, which is approximately fifty-four percent (54%) of the overall statistics for the theme of Pain.

c) Moreover, the author uses eight (08) material processes and twelve (12) mental processes, which make forty percent (40%) and sixty percent (60%) of the total statistics respectively in order to explore the theme of Beauty.

II. Conclusion

The research work concludes that the author of the novella, Khalil Gibran, has used numerous transitivity processes to achieve the purpose associated with the theme of Pain, Beauty, and Freedom. In the Study, The researchers have only analyzed the use of material and mental processes in the Novella.

III. Suggestions for further research

The research work was limited to the theme of Freedom, Pain, and Beauty in the selected chapters from the novella, The Prophet. The researchers forwarded the theory of transitivity of ideational meta-function of the Systematic Functional Linguistics in the said work. Moreover, the researchers suggest further research work to explore the other aspects of the Michel Haliday Model in various works.

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