



A TRANSITIVITY ANALYSIS OF SHORT STORY *THE PIECE OF STRING*

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Abstract

This study examined the experiential meanings in Guy de Maupassant's "*The Piece of String*" using a Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) perspective, with an emphasis on the transitivity system. Literary narratives are influenced by the linguistic choices of the authors, and analysis of these choices reveals the way characters, actions, and themes are formed. This research explored how Maupassant's use of grammar contributes to the creation of the story's meaning. Firstly, the study intended to locate and categorize the different transitivity processes depicted in the narrative. Secondly, it aimed to find out the processes that are mostly used and what the predominance of these processes about the narrative style. The research employed a mixed-method approach combining the quantitative analysis by the UAM Corpus Tool and qualitative interpretation based on Halliday's SFL model. The results showed that material processes are the most common in the story, the narrative is mainly about physical actions and events. The dominance of these processes reflected Maupassant's focus on the characters visible behavior and communication with others, which not only drive the development of the plot but are also the major themes of the work. The study infused new idea into the field of stylistics by demonstrating the transitivity patterns with real examples that these patterns influence narrative meaning. Along with that, it is a source of a replicable linguistic method for analyzing literary works and has pedagogical implications in teaching SFL-based literary interpretation.

Keywords: *Transitivity Analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL),
Material Processes, Stylistics, Narrative Discourse*

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1. Introduction

Language is a way for human beings to communicate. There are many languages in the world and each language has its own features and patterns. Language plays an important role in expressing ideas, feelings, emotions, happenings and information. Any spoken or written form of language is categorized as a text. For Halliday (2014) the term “text” is written or oral form of language and can be understood by anyone who knows that language. Different types of linguistic approaches are used to analyze the meanings and organization of the text. In linguistics, SFG is one of the most important approaches to analyze any form of text. In SFG the meanings of a text are realized through three metafunctions, i.e. ideational, interpersonal and textual (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). The present study applied the transitivity system of ideational metafunction. French author Guy de Maupassant was well-known both in France and abroad. The Miss Harriet collection contains his short story "*The Piece of String*." This story illustrates the folly of caring about what other people think, especially when they suspect you of lying and there is no way to demonstrate your innocence.

1.1. Research Questions

1. What type of processes are used in Guy de Maupassant’s "*The Piece of String*"?
2. Which type of processes are most frequently used by the writer and what they suggest?

1.2. Research Objectives

1. To identify and classify the types of transitivity processes employed in Guy de Maupassant’s short story “*The Piece of String*” using Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics framework.
2. To determine the most frequently used process types in the story and to interpret what these dominant processes suggest about the narrative style, character construction, and thematic meanings.

1.3. Significance of the Study

This study presents a thorough, empirical and corpus-assisted linguistic analysis of transitivity processes in Maupassant's "The Piece of String." The document initiates and interprets the process types thus supplying a clear portrayal as to which part of the story material processes are most prevalent in, hence, giving more weight to Halliday's statement that experiential meanings determine narrative action and the creation of characters. On the method side, the research is a demonstration of a study done through the combination of a UAM Corpus Tool analysis with qualitative interpretation, thus presenting a stylistic research model which can be easily followed. The mixed methods used here not only increase the depth of stylistic analysis but also provide measurable linguistic patterns as the basis of interpretation. By means of this research, clear pedagogical examples are provided, demonstrating how process types can serve as a vehicle to uncover narrative perspective, characterization, and thematic emphasis. Moreover, the research journey can be navigated toward a future exploration of comparative analyses across Maupassant's stories, translation studies applications, and computational stylistics concentrating on process-type distributions.

2. Literature Review

The systemic functional grammar model was employed in this investigation (SFG). The ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions of language make up the core of this grammar. The participant, the process, and the circumstance are the three components that the ideational metafunction uses to convey experience in the clause. It is mostly accomplished by the system of preference. Transitivity examines that how different types of processes, participants and circumstances are organized within the sentences. (Berry, 1975). The distribution of diverse processes, their participants, and circumstances to create a specific slice of reality is what the transitivity system is concerned with when it comes to how sentences are constructed to represent that experiential meaning. It "is concerned with a coding of the happenings: who does what in connection to whom/what, where, when, how, and why. In light of some process, its participants, and the circumstances relevant to the process-participant configuration, the analysis in question is therefore done." (Hasan, 1988, p.63).

The grammatical system of transitivity deals with different types of processes which can be found in language. There are six primary types of processes that are commonly used in this text are: material, mental, verbal, behavioral, existential and relational processes. Material processes are actions that involve an actor and a goal. The Actor is someone who acts, and the Goal denotes being instructed to perform. Sensor and

phenomenon are the two elements in mental processes. The sensor is one who is feeling, thinking, or perceiving. What is perceived, felt, thought, and seen is the phenomenon. Perception, emotion, and cognition are three categories of mental processes. Processes of being are relationships. Physiological and psychological actions like breathing, dreaming, smiling, crying, coughing, etc. are examples of behavioural processes. These actions often involve just one participant, the behavior. The Sayer, the Receiver, and the Verbiage are in verbal processes. The Verbiage is the message's substance, the Sayer is the message's addresser, and the Receiver is the message's addressee. Existential processes illustrate the existence or occurrence of something. Reconstruction is frequently used to realize it.

2.1. Previous Studies in this Field

The first and most notable study in transitivity analysis was conducted by Halliday (1971) on William Golding's "The Inheritor." Researchers have studied transitivity by using this framework to investigate how linguistic features result in particular ideologies and meanings in literary writings. Hubbard (1999) looked into the transitivity analysis of the characters in "The Moor's Last Sigh" by Salman Rushdie. According to him, this framework can alter readers' perceptions of the characters. Cunan (2011) used the transitivity framework in stylistic analysis to analyse Virginia Wolf's "Old Mrs. Grey." He discovered that the author's and reader's linguistic choices can explain the elusive and personal thinking of the writer. In order to describe the psychological perspective of the author portrayed in the story, Mwinlaaru (2012) highlighted the transitivity patterns in a text. In order to support a literary analysis that "Maria" serves as a symbol for the "Virgin Marry" in James Joyce's short story "Clay," Azar & Yazdachi (2012) investigated the transitivity patterns of the protagonist, "Maria." Song (2013) performed a transitivity study on "A Rose for Emily" and outlined the steps that were taken to develop the text's theme and main character, as well as their respective purposes. Another study by Asad Mehmood et al. (2014) & Iqbal, Sabiri & Batool (2023) used transitivity as a technique to examine the language structures that have a communicative purpose in Wilde's "The Nightingale and the Rose." It is evident from the noteworthy findings in the studies listed above that transitive analysis is essential for evaluating the text and for illuminating the rationale behind the use of particular linguistic choices.

3. Research Methodology

An integrated, mixed-methods study was employed here that combined both quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate the transitivity patterns in Guy de Maupassant's *The Piece of String*. The work of the quantitative side was to show the frequency and distribution of six process types, while the qualitative side was to reveal

how these linguistic choices interpreted the meaning of the narrative. The use of both methods enabled the author to get a deeper insight into the text since numbers could be explained by the interpretive observations.

3.1. Data Selection

The data were the full text of the short story by Maupassant, *The Piece of String*. The story was used as an example for the analysis of transitivity because it presents the wide range of actions, perceptions, and occurrences. Character interplay and vivid illustrations made the story not only a suitable material for the study of how language encodes experience but also an engaging narrative.

3.2. Quantitative Procedures

In the quantitative section of the research, the UAM Corpus Tool was employed. Clauses extracted from the text were classified according to six process types in the transitivity system. Upon finishing the annotation, the program could produce the numbers of the occurrences together with the relative frequency for all the given process types. This way, the researcher was able to see the most frequent patterns of characters' actions, thoughts, and experiences representation in the text.

3.3. Qualitative Procedures

During the qualitative phase, the focus was on processing the annotated material for the understanding of the processes functioning the story. The authors of the work first unveiled the dominating patterns via quantitative methods and then closely examined the selected phrases in order to figure out how the depiction of actions worked, the mental states were expressed, and the relations between participants were constructed. The qualitative interpretation of narrative implies the different kinds of processes that with the help of the text provide the effects and give insight into how Maupassant's language use led to characters' and events' portrayal.

3.4. Analytical Focus

The research focused on the main transitivity elements, i.e. processes, participants, and circumstances. These features of language were analyzed jointly to see how the reality was reflected in the texts. By combining the qualitative and quantitative parts, the research made it possible to have a more vivid idea of the contribution of transitivity patterns to the whole meaning and structure of the narrative.

4. Results and Discussion

Figure 1. Grammatical Rank

Feature	N	Percent
GRAMMATICAL-RANK	N=605	
participant	177	29.26%
process	159	26.28%
circumstance	93	15.37%
configuration	147	24.30%
configuration-complex	0	0.00%

The distribution of grammatical features from the transitivity analysis to the narrative reveals transitivity as a major source of experiential meaning in the text. Participants make up the most significant proportion at 29.26 percent with 177 instances out of a total of 605 coded occurrences.

The dominance of this indicator means that the narrative is not only the entities that brought the events to life but also reflects the characters and other participants as the main ones in the narrative progression. Besides, processes appear as many as 159 times, thus, explaining 26.28 percent of the data. Their important presence in the text assures that the text is a depiction of actions, events, and states in which, consequently, the dynamic flow of the storyline is facilitated. Circumstances happen 93 times, thus, they account for 15.37 percent of the text. Although less frequent, these elements provide the very necessary contextual information concerning, e.g., time, place, and manner, thus, they give descriptive detail and situational clarity within the narrative.

Also, the analysis uncovers the number of transitivity configurations to be 147, which makes up 24.30 percent of the total instances. These configurations demonstrate the complete use of experiential structures where processes, participants, and circumstances merge to become meaningful clause patterns.

The distribution of different categories of transitivity components points to an overall balanced use with a particular emphasis on participants and processes. Such a setting allows the story to be action-driven and the characters, as the doers, to be in the spotlight while, at the same time, giving the contexts through the use of circumstances.

Figure 2. Clause Type

CLAUSE-TYPE	N=605	
material	83	13.72%
mental	24	3.97%
verbal	21	3.47%
relational	12	1.98%
modal	0	0.00%
existential	4	0.66%

The findings indicate that material clauses are the ones which dominate the share of the process types in this text with 83 instances that constitute 13.72 percent of the total 605 clauses. The overwhelming majority of material processes reveals that the text recites the story mostly in terms of actions and physical happenings, thus giving less verbalized but more implicit and recognizable from the context, the characters' doings and the events' unfolding. Such a pattern is in line with the nature of a narrative text, which is mostly based on action to move the plot forward. The mental processes are represented 24 times making 3.97 percent of the total. They are fewer than material ones; nevertheless, their presence indicates the moments in the narrative that are dealing with the characters' internal experiences, such as perception, emotion, or cognition. These kinds of clauses enable the psychological states of the characters to happen and are also instrumental in the characters' insight of thoughts and feelings.

The verbal processes, aside from this, are observed 21 times, thus their share reaches 3.47 percent. These examples demonstrate the way speech and communication operate in the story. Although they are not dominating, verbal processes help to illustrate the interactions between characters and make a contribution to the plot development by means of dialogue or reported speech. Relational processes, in addition, are signified by the presence of 12 instances, which is equivalent to 1.98 percent. Their appearance signals that the narrative sometimes employs clauses that describe states of being or relationships which, in turn, facilitate the identification of characters, giving their defining attributes, or showing the connections in the narrative. The data do not contain any modal processes, which means that this text does not use this clause type to express obligation, possibility, or necessity. Finally, existential processes are recorded in the text 4 times, which is 0.66 percent of the total. These clauses are used for introducing the existence of certain entities or events in the story. Even though their occurrences are limited, they nevertheless have a share in the establishing of scenes or in the presentation of the new elements of the

narrative. The proportions of the various clause types material clauses clearly dominate the distribution with other processes smaller but still significant in number – mental, verbal, relational, and existential. The presence of these processes reveals that the narrative structure not only focuses on actions and events but also includes perception, communication, and description.

Figure 3. Material Type

MATERIAL-TYPE	N=605	
intransitive	23	3.80%
monotransitive	48	7.93%
ergative	6	0.99%
ditransitive	6	0.99%

The examination of material process types unveils significant differences in the depiction of actions within the text. Mono-transitive clauses dominate the scene with 48 instances, which is 7.93 percent out of 605 total clauses. Their supremacy shows that a large number of actions in the story are those where an Actor and a Goal are involved, thus expressing events in which characters not only act but also do in turn of another entity. This kind of interaction demonstrates to the reader how the narrative is being pushed forward through the activities of the characters and their interaction with objects. On the other hand, there are 23 intransitive material clauses which make 3.80 percent of the total. These clauses point to actions of an Actor, which have no explicit Goal, and are often used to show simple or self-contained actions. Their argument presupposes that the narration is practically recounting the characters' independent activities, which in this way contribute both to the character behavior and environmental change without the involvement of another participant. At the same time, there are six examples of ergative and ditransitive clauses, respectively, which constitute 0.99 percent, respectively, of the total. Infrequently, the ergative constructions, which detail the involvement of an external cause or source, appear, thus implying that the discourse seldom focuses on the actions that are influenced by the external trigger. Similarly, the instances of the Actor, a Recipient, and a Goal-labeled ditransitive clauses are minimally used. From their limited appearances, one can infer that giving or transferring actions are not the main themes of the narrative progression.

Figure 4. Mental Type

MENTAL-TYPE2		N=605	
mental-active	18	2.98%	
mental-passive	6	0.99%	

The different categories of mental process reveal the text's psychological aspect. The number of occurrences of mental active clauses is 18, which means 2.98 percent of the total, and represents characters engaging in perception, emotion, or cognition in the narrative. The clauses, thus, are the means by which the characters' interior side becomes accessible and they assist in the depiction of the characters' inner world. In the text, there are significantly less mental passive clauses, only 6, which constitute 0.99 percent of the total. The limited number of these clauses indicates that the story presents the characters' mental experiences as something they perform rather than something they undergo. To sum up, the repartition of the material processes to mono-transitive and intransitive as the main ways of representing action, while selectively using mental processes to show the characters' internal states, is what the distribution essentially comes down to. The relatively low frequencies of the ergative, ditransitive, and passive mental types suggest that the narrative mostly stays simple and action-driven with only a few instances where the characters' psychological world is revealed.

Figure 5. Verbal Type

VERBAL-TYPE2		N=605	
verbal-active	16	2.64%	
verbal-passive	5	0.83%	

The breakdown of the different kinds of verbal processes shows that the text is mostly filled with verbal active clauses, which are 16 in number, thus constituting 2.64 percent of the total 605 clauses. In other words, the occurrences of direct speech or acts of saying are basically represented by active structures in which the Sayer is the one who carries out the act of communication. These types of clauses serve to show the characters' interactions and, thus, to the narrative by revealing the exchanges, statements, and verbal actions which, consequently, lead to the events' unfolding. Also, the number of verbal passive clauses is smaller as there are only 5 occurrences corresponding to 0.83 percent. Their limited existence is indicative of the story rarely putting the Receiver or the Verbiage

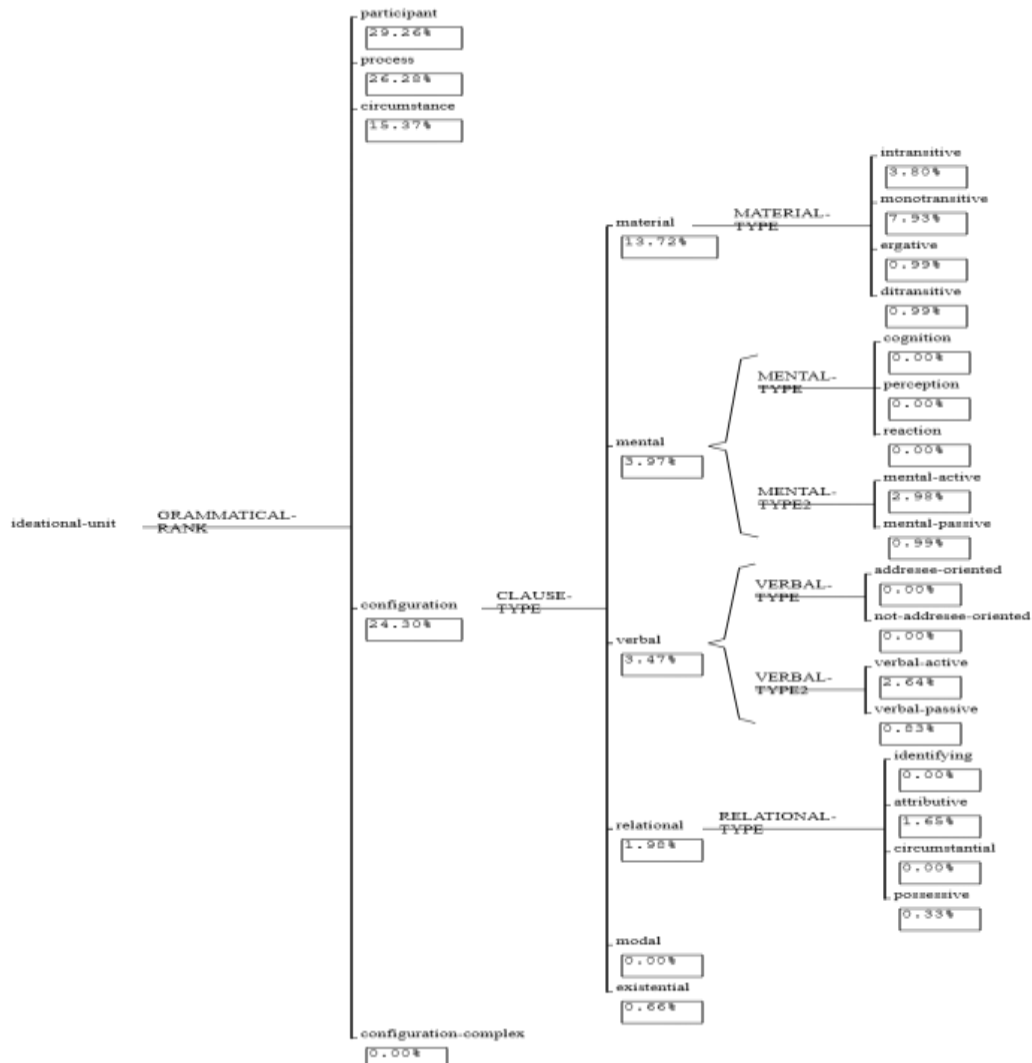
in the spotlight by way of passive constructions. Instead, the focus is still on those characters who utter the words and not on those to whom the speech is addressed. The distribution of the different kinds of the story's verbal processes is likewise indicative of the predominant means being mostly active ones. The relatively few but significant instances of verbal processes facilitate character interaction and help the plot to be unfolded, whereas the low number of passive forms reflects the narrative's preference for direct, agent-focused reporting of speech.

Figure 6. Relational Type

RELATIONAL-TYPE	N=605	
identifying	0	0.00%
attributive	10	1.65%
circumstantial	0	0.00%
possessive	2	0.33%

The breakdown of relational process types revealed that attributive clauses dominate this group with 10 instances making up 1.65 percent of the total 605 clauses. The number of attributive constructions points to the fact that the narrative occasionally employs clauses which assign qualities or characteristics to participants. Such clauses explain the outward or behavioral features of characters or situations, thus, helping in the descriptive texture of the story. Possessive relational clauses are recorded only twice, representing 0.33 percent. Their minimal occurrence indicates that the text rarely focuses on the aspect of ownership or possession as a central feature of meaning. The narrative, however, depends more on action and mental representation than on defining relationships of possession. There were no identifying or circumstantial relational clauses found in the data. The non-existence of identifying clauses suggests that the story doesn't frequently utilize structures that identify one entity with another for the purpose of defining identities or establishing exact correspondences. Similarly, the lack of circumstantial relational clauses indicates that the text does not use relational structures to refer to the location or situational context which is, in fact, provided by the circumstances attached to other process types. Moreover, the narrative contains a small number of relational processes, mostly attributive. Such a pattern implies that the story has some descriptive elements but it mainly uses material, mental, and verbal processes to create meaning and employs relational clauses only occasionally to give attributes or brief references to possession.

Figure 7. Transitivity process



The illustration conveys a clear picture of how ideational elements and clause types are spread throughout a transitivity analysis of the narrative. It first takes the ideational unit and shows, through the different major grammatical components participants, processes, circumstances, and configurations how many times they appear in the dataset. Participants make up the biggest part of the data with 29.26 percent, processes follow closely with 26.28 percent and configurations with 24.30 percent, while circumstances make up 15.37 percent and configuration-complexes are not present at all. The diagram points from the clause-type category to the detailed process types, where material processes take the highest place at 13.72 percent. For these, four types of structures are

identified: mono-transitive, intransitive, ergative, and ditransitive, with the most frequent being mono-transitive clauses. Mental processes account for 3.97 percent and only their active and passive forms are presented because the subtypes cognition, perception, and reaction have no instances. Verbal processes make up 3.47 percent, and, similarly, only active and passive forms are mentioned, while addressee-oriented and non-addressee-oriented types do not occur. Relational processes amount to 1.98 percent and are mostly attributive clauses, with a few possessive clauses and no identifying or circumstantial types. The illustration also shows some existential clauses (0.66 percent) and no modal clauses. The visual display, in general, serves to confirm the dominance of material action structures and the infrequent use of other process types in the story.

5. Discussion

5.1. Types of Processes Used in Guy de Maupassant's *The Piece of String*

The transitivity analysis shows that the distribution of process types in Maupassant's *The Piece of String* is wide but quite uneven. In line with the basic propositions of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1971; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), the story employs processes not only to depict actions but also perceptions, mental states, communicative events, and states of being. Nevertheless, only five of the six major process types theoretically available as per Berry (1975) are found in the text, with behavioral processes being totally missing. This lack is quite crucial: as Hasan (1988) points out, behavioral clauses are in between material and mental processes in that they are mostly used to refer to physiological or psychological behaviors such as smiling or crying. The non-existence of these indicates that Maupassant is not very much into the subtle, embodied portrayal of behavior and instead he chooses either full action (material) or explicit mental activity (mental), thus suggesting that the narrative is more polarized. Additionally, material processes significantly outnumber other processes in the experiential structure of the text. This is typical of narrative fiction, as Halliday (1971) explains that the plots of stories are mostly advanced through sequences of actions. But still, the extent of the dominance of material processes over all other processes here is a clear indication that the text is essentially a narrative that is strongly driven by what can be seen and done externally. The occurrence of mental processes is limited, but they have an important interpretative role. One of their functions is to provide the view into the characters' minds, more specifically, the characters' fear, frustration, and emotional strain, especially the case of Hauchecorne. In line with Hasan (2011), mental clauses are the main tools for depicting subjectivity, and their carefully planned usage in this story helps to

make a stark difference between the protagonist's mental purity and the external accusations he gets.

Besides, verbal processes are also important to the extent that they depict the story's socially charged atmosphere. Talk, especially public accusations, gossip, and the acts of self-defense, is at the center of the coming conflict. Eggins (2004) points out that verbal processes are the means by which power and influence relations are established, and the here-conducted study shows that they are instrumental in the dynamics of social interaction which revolve around blame and disbelief. The verbal clauses demonstrate how the characters fabricate and disseminate social narratives about Hauchecorne, which is in line with Kennedy's (1982) statement that linguistic choices in literary texts made by characters reveal how characters position themselves within social hierarchies. On the other hand, while relational processes are fewer in number, they still have some input in descriptive and classificatory meanings. Attributive relational clauses bring in details about the characters or the situations, thus, they provide support to the text's interpretive dimension. The fact that only limited numbers of them were employed suggests that Maupassant was less descriptive and more event-driven. This result is in agreement with Gallardo's (2006) point that in narrative texts, relational clauses usually perform the functions of backgrounding or anchoring rather than that of plot-driving.

When it comes to existential processes used for introducing entities or situations, the argument can be made that they exist only to a very limited degree. Their fewness reveals that Maupassant does not depend on existential constructions for setting scenes or for bringing in novelties. Rather, through material or verbal processes, he introduces new events and characters in a natural way, hence, corroborating Cunan's (2011) view that existential clauses are minimally involved in action-driven narratives. Altogether, the set of processes identified is indicative of a narrative style that favors external conduct and social intercourse over internal musing or unchanging description. This is consistent with the conclusion of previous stylistic studies which employed transitivity analysis and which include (Mwinlaaru, 2012; Azar & Yazdachi, 2012; Mehmood et al., 2014) whose findings show that the linguistic choices made by the authors serve as signals for the thematic concerns, the narrative viewpoints, and the ideological orientations of the authors.

5.2. Most Frequently Used Processes and Their Implications

The dominance of material processes (13.72%) is a major factor that shows how Maupassant expresses his narrative style in this story. Material processes signify actions and events, and their prevalence indicates a strong focus on external changes, which is in line with Halliday's (1971) argument that narrative is fundamentally action-driven. The large number of mono-transitive clauses (7.93%) in which an Actor affects a Goal show

that most of the actions in the story are the one that involve interactions with objects or other characters. It is especially significant in a story where the plot revolves around a physical object (the piece of string) and the events that follow the discovery, loss, and misinterpretation of it. Such overwhelming use of material processes reflects Song's (2013) conclusion that conflicted or mysterious narratives heavily depend on material clauses to maintain the tension and the progression of the plot.

The frequency of mental processes is comparatively lower (3.97%), thus implying that the internal states of the characters are there but they are not the main focus of the narrative. Maupassant employs mental clauses selectively to highlight the moments of perception, suspicion, and emotional strain. Hasan (2011) points out that mental processes are a sign of a text's psychological depth, and their selective use here serves to reveal Hauchecorne's inner turmoil without changing the direction of the story towards the author's reflection. However, the lack of mental subtypes such as cognition or perception processes indicates that the psychological aspect of the characters is narrowed, which may result in less reader insight into the characters' motives. This selective portrayal is in contrast to the literature examined by Cunan (2011), where more extensive use of mental processes contributed to the psychological realism of characters.

The role of verbal processes (3.47%) is paramount in depicting how allegations were made and how characters in the story convincingly argued their views. The importance of these processes in the story highlights the social aspect of the narrative, as Eggins (2004) points out, verbal clauses serve as the means of judgment and power. In this very instance, verbal processes disclose that the key clash is not just a physical one but a socially constructed and deeply ingrained issue that is spoken about through acts such as accusations, denials, and rumors. This accords with the view of Gallardo (2006) that verbal processes are often the main characters in play, interpersonal tension, and ideological positioning in literary texts. Relational processes (1.98%) mostly at the attributive structures dominated by, indicate that the plot of the story is providing the descriptive details just enough to be able to guide the unfolding action. The minimalist use of relational clauses in this story shows the stylistic economy of the author, where the description takes a backseat to the events. Song (2013) also states that relational processes in narrative fiction are usually few when writers focus more on dynamic action rather than the static one.

The interpretation is further strengthened by the extremely low number of existential processes (0.66%). Existential clauses are mainly used to present new entities or situations; however, Maupassant chooses to introduce new changes through the embedding of actions rather than by means of explicit existential constructions. This complies with the thoughts of Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) that existential clauses are

not a core element of narratives that are driven by conflict and movement. Crucially, the discrepancy between types of processes is an indication that Maupassant's position as the narrator is more concerned with what can be seen externally rather than what the characters are thinking, focuses on social aspects rather than personal introspection, and prefers action to description. This goes hand in hand with the story's theme being essentially the fatal side of misjudgment and social suspicion. Mehmood et al. (2014), in their stylistic study, point out that the choices of transitivity often mirror the author's ideological focus. Here, the prevalence of material and verbal processes is indicative of a worldview where human actions and social interactions, rather than internal truths, are the factors that determine one's fate.

6. Conclusion

By using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework, a nuanced and cohesive link between the author's grammatical choices and the overarching meaning and thematic focus of the story is illuminated through the transitivity analysis of "The Piece of String" by Guy de Maupassant. The research also reveals that verbal processes (3.47%) are quite crucial from a functional perspective as they refer to the social conflict that is at the core of the narrative: these include public accusations, gossip, and activities of self-defense, all of which lead to the tragic event. Their emphasis points out that the major social conflict is one that has been constructed by society, not a physical one. On the other hand, mental processes (3.97%) are only a few times and selectively used, providing an insight into the protagonist's (Hauchecorne) emotional distress and inner conflict, as a result, opposition between his mind and the accusations outside is strengthened. The scarce presence of mental clauses, alongside the low number of descriptive relational processes (1.98%), indicates the writer's stylistic and a conscious decision to show more of the characters' behavior and interaction with society than to reveal a deep personal or descriptive background. Basically, the transitivity patterns that were uncovered, namely the extensive use of material clauses, the functional role of verbal clauses, and the limited nature of mental and relational clauses which point to a narrative style that revolves around human action and social interaction as the main determiners of one's fate. The same stylistic choice visually manifests the core thematic concern of the story: the lethal aspect of misjudgment and the predominance of social suspicion. Therefore, the research goes beyond merely identifying and categorizing the process types to illustrating the impact of these linguistic decisions on the narrative meaning, thus, functioning as an exemplification of literature interpretation through SFL.

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Appendix

are lying excuses."

They said behind his back.

Hubert felt this shame and disgrace to his self-esteem and character.

He consumed his heart over this and wasted away before the very eyes of the people.

People started to tell the story of the string to amuse themselves and told it in a manner of soldier who had been on a campaign and told about his battles. Hubert's mind touched to the depth, began to weaken day by day.

Towards the end of the month he took to his bed. He died in the first week of the following

month. In the delirium of his death struggles he kept claiming his innocence,

reiterating: "A piece of string, a piece of string! By my word of honour I did not lie."

And he died. It is said that a great flood in its great wrath carried away the people and all their

belongings. The grave of Hubert withstood the havoc of the flood. It was engraved on his tomb

stone, years after his death, "Here lies a man who told nothing but truth. Here lies the man who would not prove his innocence, but the flood proved it-!"

The good soul, Mr. Hubert, choked with indignation and fear. "How anyone can tell such lies to take away an honest man's reputation. How can anyone".

There was no use of Mr. Hubert's protesting, for nobody believed him. Mr. Manana repeatedly maintained that Hubert had picked up the pocketbook. For an hour both men abused each other.

Then at his own request, Mr. Huber was searched. Nothing was found on him.

Finally the mayor discharged Hubert with warning that he would consult the public prosecutor and ask for further orders.

As he left the mayor's office, people surrounded and questioned him with serious curiosity. Nobody believed his story of the string. Instead people laughed at him.

Mr. Hubert went along stopping his friends giving them his statement and presentation, turning his pocket inside out to prove that he had nothing. All they said, was, "you old rascal! Get out of here!"

Mr. Hubert went to the village telling every man he knew about his adventure, but he only met with incredulity. It all made him ill. The next day in the afternoon a man named George returned the pocketbook and its contents to Mr. James the owner of the pocketbook.

George claimed to have found the pocketbook on the road to the village market but not knowing how to read he had given it to his employer. The news spread like fire in the neighbourhood. Mr. Hubert was also informed. He was in triumph.

"What grieved me as much was not the thing itself- as the lying. There is nothing so shameful as to be called a liar." Whatever reasons he gave, people were not willing to believe him. "Those

[The Piece of String by Guy de Maupassant

At the end of market day, the rich people with vehicles of all kinds, carts, gigs, wagons, dumpcarts gathered at a great big hall for a great meal. There were chickens, pigeons and legs of mutton in the roast and an appetizing odour of roast, beef. Leaf and gravy dripping over the browned skin, which increased the appetite and made everybody's mouth water. Everyone told his affairs, his purchases and sales. The diners discussed the crops and the weather which was favourable for the green things but not for wheat. Suddenly, at the sound of drumbeat in the court everybody rose from the seats except a few ones who still had the food in their hands. After the drumbeat had ceased, the drummer called out to the people who were now attentive and impatiently waiting for him to call out the public announcement. "It is hereby made known to the inhabitants of this place and in general to all persons in the market that a black leather pocketbook containing five hundred shillings and some business papers was lost on the road between 9.00 and 10.00 in the morning. The finder is requested to return the same to the mayor's office or to Mr. James, the caretaker of this public hall. There will be a reward of 20 shillings.

After the meal had concluded the Chief of the police appeared on the scene. He inquired, "Is Mr. Hubert here?" Mr. Hubert seated at another end of the table replied, "Here I am." The police officer went up to him and said, "Mr. Hubert, will you please accompany me to the mayor's office, the mayor would like to talk to you." Mr. Hubert surprised and disturbed, followed the police officer. The mayor, a stout serious man, was waiting for Hubert. "Mr. Hubert," he said, "you were seen this morning to pick up the pocketbook lost by Mr. James." Mr. Hubert, the simple countryman looked at the mayor astounded and already terrified by the suspicion resting on him. "Why, Me? Me? Me picked up the pocketbook?" "Yes, you yourself." "By my word of honour I never heard of it." "But you were seen." "I was seen with the pocketbook? Who saw me?" "Mr. Manana, the harness man saw you pick up the pocketbook."

Mr. Hubert, the old man, remembered, understood and flushed with anger. "O, him! Yes! He saw me pick up this string here." And as he said so, he drew out the little piece of string from his pocket. But the mayor shook his head and said. "You will not make me believe that Mr. Manana, who is a man of worthy credence, mistook the cord for a pocketbook."

Mr. Hubert, the peasant furiously lifted his hand, spat at one side to attest his honour, and said in the most exasperating tone, "It is, nevertheless, truth of the good God, the sacred truth. I repeat it on my soul and my salvation."

"After picking up the object, you stood there, looking a long while in the mud to see if any money had fallen out."
