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Analyzing transitivity in eleventh-grade students' hortatory exposition texts written

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ABSTRACT

Writing is a fundamental English language skill in Indonesian education since it has become an academic requirement. However, students' interest in writing to fulfill the academic requirements is still low, especially in writing hortatory exposition text. To contribute to overcoming this problem, this research aims to find the process employed in hortatory exposition text and the dominant processes in students' hortatory exposition text to discover the students' ability to write hortatory exposition text from the perspective of systemic functional linguistic (SFL), specifically in transitivity and to find out the pedagogical implication to deal with those problems. This research belongs to qualitative descriptive research, in which document analysis is used to obtain the data. The finding showed that the material process is the first dominant transitivity process in students' writing hortatory text. Of all 39 clauses, the material process occurs 20 times (51.2%), followed by the relational process 13 times (33.3%), the mental process 4 times (10.2%), and the existential process only 2 times (5.12%), and verbal and behavioral processes were not found in the students' texts.

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INTRODUCTION

In English language teaching, one of the four skills that the students must master is writing skill. According to Nunan (2003), writing is a mental and physical process that involves creating ideas, expressing them, and structuring them into coherent words and paragraphs for the reader. Writing is a fundamental English language skill because writing is a tool for conveying information (Hosseini et al., 2013). Writing aims to communicate writers' ideas, whether for readers or themselves. One of the English skills that students should master is writing, especially in senior high school. However, recently, a study found that students' interest in writing as an essential skill to fulfill academic requirements is still low (Toba & Noor, 2019). Students in senior high school are expected to be able to write a text because their school has taught them how to do so. The school uses a variety of text genres to prepare its students, including recount, hortatory, descriptive, and narrative texts. Each of those texts differs from the others since it has uniqueness and function. In this study, the writer used exposition text. Soanes and Stevenson (2003) describe exposition as an in-depth examination and explanation of a theory and hortatory as the formal way to tend, encourage, or persuade. There are numerous steps in composing a hortatory exposition

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text. The first is the thesis, also known as the general statement, which provides an overview of the subject before going into additional detail. This provides some preliminary illustrations for the text's main subjects. Additionally, the thesis serves to announce the subject at hand. The second is the arguments consisting of a grouping of statements; the conclusions can be one of those statements, and the other is the premise (Hardegree, 2009). The last is the recommendation; it concerns statements regarding what should or should not be done by looking at the arguments given. As they progress through the writing process, students need to focus on language use, text construction, style, layout, and content value, in addition to the overall structure of the work (Harmer, 2007).

In reality, some students have trouble putting their ideas into language. The author focuses on hortatory exposition texts. They struggle to express, offer a point of view or an argument, and come up with engaging concepts for analytical exposition texts that are coherent paragraphs. Students should become more aware of the words they use when writing hortatory exposition texts. However, some students have difficulty in choosing the appropriate words. Furthermore, students' most common issue was creating a paragraph that followed the paragraph pattern with sentence structure, coherence, and cohesion. Students also worry about structuring the content in a way that follows its grammatical rules and general structure. Their writing demonstrates this, as it continues to ignore important details like the climax and event seguences. Another issue that students have is a lack of understanding about transitivity. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) define transitivity as a clause system that includes processes, participants, and contexts. According to Emilia et al. (2017), transitivity serves as a tool for interpreting and expressing various types of occurrences, happenings, goings-on, mental states, sayings, actions, and relations. As a result, it is crucial to introduce students to systemic functional grammar, especially the transitivity system. However, it is unfortunate that most EFL teachers are not familiar with functional grammar in the first place and that grammar is typically taught in schools as a rule(Matthiessen & Halliday, 2009).

Several recent studies regarding transitivity analysis have also been conducted on different types of text genres, such as recount text (Rahmawati, 2019; Rosmayanti, 2021), hortatory exposition texts (Yolanda & Zaim, 2021), analytical exposition text (Chanifah, 2019; Septianti & Kurniawan, 2023), descriptive texts (Apendi & Mulyani 2020; Nurwanti, 2022), narrative texts (Zein, et al., 2019; Mulyanti & Wati, 2022), and explanation texts (Kencana & Gemilang, 2022). According to this research, most students could understand the linguistic characteristics and schematic structures of each form of literature. For example, research conducted by (Kencana & Gemilang, 2022) found that material processes were reported to be the most prevalent process used in the texts of students in the XI grade. The findings demonstrated that students could write explanatory texts explaining how a phenomenon happened while following its intended meaning and purpose. In the meantime, considering the current circumstances in the field. The teacher merely discusses the characteristics of text when teaching different types of texts without providing information about the source (where) and method (how) the process was obtained (Yolanda & Zaim, 2021). By applying transitivity analysis to the text, texts can be characterized by the kind of processes they contain.

In order to address those issues, more research on hortatory exposition texts is still required. Thus, this study aims to find the process employed in hortatory exposition text and the dominant processes in students' hortatory exposition text. The results of the findings later will discover the students' ability to write hortatory exposition text from the perspective of systemic functional linguistics, specifically in transitivity.

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) is known as language theory, which places more emphasis on the concept of language functions than it does on form. In addition to referring to language

theory, this word was first introduced by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), who also developed a system for text analysis based on context. The theory clarifies how language is represented in texts and how it acts to fulfill specific purposes. Since language is socially produced, SFL seeks to analyze and interpret language in order to explain how people use it and how it is structured for various purposes (Eggins, 2004). Gerot & Wignell (1994) stated that there are differences between formal and functional grammar in SFL. Both formal and traditional grammar focus on sentence structure. However, the focus of functional grammar is on texts and their environments. Furthermore, the meaning-creation process of structures is connected to functional grammar. SFL focuses on meaning and grammar, to put it briefly. Ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions make up the three simultaneous levels at which meaning is structured or metafunctions. In specific social contexts, functional language expression embodies these three metafunctions. Ideational meaning refers to the representation of the real world or the experience qualities of language. In the meantime, the speaker and listener's social interactions are covered by the interpersonal meaning. Last but not least, textual meaning defines what makes language into a text. Together, they create meaning at the same time. We can comprehend the dynamic relationship between the meanings the writer wishes to convey, the grammatical structures used, and the context of the situation defining it—which includes ideologies, periods, and movements of the writers by looking into the ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings of the text.

Transitivity System

A sub-network of the ideational metafunction is the transitivity system. The term "transitivity system" describes a language's predicate types and the participant roles that they integrate. (Teich, 1999). Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) stated that transitivity is characterized as a clause system that incorporates participants, circumstances, and a process. In traditional grammar, transitivity describes whether a verb is transitive or intransitive. However, rather than describing the verb and its object, transitivity in SFL is concerned with the entire phrase, such as describing the verb and its object (Herlina & Hakim, 2021). According to Kondowe (2014), the clause is investigated because it can be interpreted to reflect both the inner and outer world of human beings. A clause with transitivity will be easier to read since the reader will be aware of the precise procedure included in the phrase. It illustrates how the world is viewed in three dimensions: the material world, the world of consciousness, and the world of relations (Halliday & Matthiesen, 2004).

The core of transitivity is process, which is usually realized by a verb group. Any semantic verb (doing, happening, feeling, perceiving, saying, behaving, and existing) and everything it expresses, such as an event, relationship, or condition of the physical, mental, or emotions, are examples of processes (Halliday, 1994). These processes are usually expressed or realized by the word group in the clause, and they constitute the main idea of the message from the experience point of view (Thompson, 2004). A participant is an element that actively participates in the process. It refers to a thing or entity. Usually, a noun realizes the participant. Circumstances are additional to the procedure. Students understand the significance of space, time, manner, cause, accompaniment, and matter. Prepositional or adverbial groups usually realize circumstances. Furthermore, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) classified transitivity processes into six types: material process, mental process, verbal process, relational process, behavioral process, and existential process. The type of transitivity process is as follows, and examples can be found in Table 1.

Material process. It represents the representation of a happening or doing process.
 Halliday (2004) stated that there are two primary components of the material process:
 the actor and the goal. An actor is someone or something who performs or does
 something. Meanwhile, the goal is something that is acted or performed by the actor.

Besides that, there are four participants (scope, recipient, client, and attribute). In addition, according to Halliday (2004), several verbs are employed in the material process, including give, send, buy, take, stroll, write, and so on.

- 2. Mental process. It is the act of thinking, feeling, and perceiving (Halliday, 2004). According to Halliday, mental processes can be divided into three categories: perception (verbs of seeing and hearing), affection (processes of liking and fearing), and cognition (thinking, knowing, and understanding). There must always be two participants in a mental process: a senser, who is a human or conscious participant, and a phenomenon, which is anything sensed. According to Halliday (2004), these verbs relate to mental processes and include listening, seeing, wishing, understanding, feeling, and observing.
- 3. Verbal process. It is a saying process that is part of the linguistic process (Halliday, 1994). The verbal processes involve four participants: the verbiage (the term used to refer to the verbalization itself), the receiver (the person to whom the saying is aimed), and the target (the thing to which the verbalization is directed). According to Halliday (2004), the following verbs are employed in verbal processes: say, talk, inquire, respond, and offer.
- 4. Relational process. It is a being-and-having process that is employed to identify or assign an object. According to Gerot and Wignell (1995), a relationship process involves both having and being. Relational processes are separated into two categories: attributive processes (claim a quality) and identifying processes (create an identity). Token and value are used in the identification process, whereas carrier and attribute are used in the attributive process. These contain verbs like is, has, will, be, and belong.
- 5. Behavioral process. It refers to the process of showing off inner workings, such as breathing, snoring, smiling, hiccupping, looking, observing, listening, and thinking (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). There is just one participant in the behavioral processes group, known as the behaver, and they consist of material and mental processes.
- 6. *Existential process*. Its process symbolizes the existence of something. This process typically uses "there" as the topic. In this process, there is just one required party, known as the Existent.

Table 1 *Example of Transitivity Processes*

No.	Process	Example
1.	Material	The girl sweeps the floor.
2.	Mental	She likes sushi.
3.	Relational	Kayla is very smart.
4.	Verbal	She said that she likes it.
5.	Behavioral	People are laughing.
6.	Existential	There were a lot of people who went to the supermarket.

Hortatory Exposition Text

The term "genre or text" has recently gained popularity among junior and senior high school students and English teachers. Chandler (2000) stated that the word "genre" originates from the French word "kind," which originally meant "class." The phrase describes a particular kind of text. Hartono (2005) explained that "genre" refers to specific text kinds rather than traditional literary variety within the same concept. It is the kind of text with a particular context and social function. One kind of text is a hortatory exposition text. Researchers have defined a hortatory exposition

text in many ways. There are many versions of sources that define hortatory exposition texts. According to Derewianka (1992), hortatory exposition text aims to persuade the reader or listener by providing logical evidence that supports the provided point. Given that it contains multiple arguments, it falls under the category of argumentative text. It follows a schematic structure different from that of previous literature. It covers three primary elements in a well-organized structure: first is the thesis, which is the opening section of a hortatory exposition text and is usually written at the beginning of the paragraph. Additionally, it makes an effort to develop an introductory statement that introduces the topic at hand. The second part of a hortatory work is called an argumentation, and its major goal is to present a number of arguments that will persuade and encourage readers to believe the writer's point of view.

Furthermore, the writer's recommendation serves to strengthen their point of view by conveying feelings in the readers and guiding them to either agree or follow the waiter's advice. To put it simply, hortatory exposition texts are a type of writing whose major goal is to persuade readers or listeners to believe the idea that the author has presented by means of logical reasoning. Its general framework then addresses the thesis, the argument, and the recommendation. Moreover, the language features in the exposition text differ from those of the other text kinds. Knapp and Watkins (2005; also Derewianka, 1990) summarize the following outlines of language features. The language features of hortatory exposition text include the use of various types of processes, such as linking (relational process), action (material process), saying (verbal process), and mental process. Using reasoning-related connectives, such as comparative (although, on the other hand), causal conditional (because, if), exemplifying and demonstrating outcome connectives (therefore, consequently), and so on.

METHOD

Research Design

In order to answer the initial question, this study employed a descriptive qualitative method since the data was collected, categorized, analyzed, and interpreted (Creswell, 2012). The researcher used content analysis to analyze the data. Content analysis is a type of qualitative data that may be developed in any written material, such as documents, media goods, or transcripts of interviews Cohen (2007).

Research Data

The data used in this study were students' hortatory exposition text. It was identified from a document of score EFL students writing a hortatory exposition text from the English teacher at the tutoring center. Two second-grade students wrote the text in one of the senior high schools in Padalarang. The participants were selected based on their writing skills scores. One had the highest score, and the other had the lowest score.

Research Procedure and Analysis

The analysis procedure was divided into stages (Rahmawati, 2019). The details of each stage are explained as follows

- 1. This study was sorted using generic structure and content. The topic of the text is about hortatory exposition text.
- 2. This study determined the clauses of its transitivity processes in the hortatory exposition text written by the students to understand how their paragraph was constructed based on Halliday's theory (1994)

- 3. This study analyzed the processes in the students' hortatory text based on Halliday's theory (1994).
- 4. This study determined the percentage of process types that were employed in the students' hortatory exposition texts using the formula:

$$P = \frac{N}{T} X 100\%$$

Note:

P: Percentage of the process type N: the number kind of process T: the total number of process (Walizer, 1990)

The frequency of each procedure was counted to see which process was more frequently employed in the students' hortatory exposition writing. Then, the implication of the most dominant process found was described.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher presented the data taken from the student's hortatory exposition text. The researcher analyzed the transitivity in the students' texts in this research. There are material process, mental process, relational process, verbal process, behavioral process, and existential process based on Halliday & Matthiessen (2014), Eggins (2004), Bloor & Bloor (2004), and Gerot & Wignell (1995).

Transitivity Process Analysis of The Hortatory Exposition Text from Student 1

In the hortatory exposition text from student 1, 18 clauses occurred in the text involving material process, mental process, verbal process, relational process, behavioral process, and existential process. The mental, verbal, and behavioral aspects were absent in this text, and there were only 18 processes analyzed. The distribution of process types of each student's text can be seen in Table 2

Table 2The Distribution of Transitivity Analysis of the Hortatory Exposition Text from Student 1

Process Types	Number of Occurrences	Percentage	
Material	12	66.67%	
Mental	0	0.00%	
Verbal	0	0.00%	
Relational	5	27.78%	
Behavioral	0	0.00%	
Existential	1	5.56%	

Table 2 indicates that the material process or process of doing and happening, which usually involves actual, concrete acts (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Eggins, 2004; Gerot & Wignell, 1995), was the most frequent process used by the student in the text. Results showed that there were 12 material processes occurring in the clauses, with the number of percentages 66.67 %. This can be seen in the following example.

Many people get acquainted		through social media.		
Actor	Pr: material	Goal		

In the example above, the clause contains "many people" as the actor, "get acquainted" as a material process, and "through social media" as the goal. The clause above indicated a material process because it was directed to show the process of doing something "through social media" as the goal. The second most frequent process that emerged was the relational process or a process of being and having, which can be classified into two categories: identifying and attributive processes, which serve to characterize and identify all relational process types (intensive, possessive, and circumstantial). Attributive has carrier and attribute as its main participants. Results showed that there were 5 relational processes occurring in the clauses, with the number of percentages 27.78%. This is exemplified as follows.

Social media	does not only have	a bad influence.	
Carrier	Pr: Relational (Attributive)	Attribute	

In the example above, the clause contains "social media" as a carrier, which was assigned by the quality "a bad impact" as the attribute, then "does not only have" as a relational attributive process. The third process is an existential process that is used to represent something that exists. This process typically uses "there" as the topic. Results showed that there was 1 existential process occurring in the clauses, with a percentage of 5.56%. This can be seen in the example below.

There	are	many benefits.	
	Pr: Existential	Existent	

In the given example, "there" is the signifier of the existential process, followed by "are" as the process explained that something existed, which referred to "many benefits" as existence. On the other hand, three other types of transitivity processes, which are mental processes, verbal processes, and behavioral processes, were absent in the analyzed students' hortatory exposition texts from student 1.

Transitivity Process Analysis of The Hortatory Exposition Text from Student 2

In the hortatory exposition text from student 2, as presented in Table 3, there are 21 clauses that reveal that the process used was material and relational, followed by mental and existential. However, verbal process and behavioral process were not found.

Table 3The Distribution of Transitivity Analysis of the Hortatory Exposition Text from Student 2

Process Types	Number of Occurrences	Percentage		
Material	8	38.09%		
Mental	4	19.04%		
Verbal	0	0.00%		
Relational	8	38.09%		
Behavioral	0	0.00%		
Existential	1	4.76%		

Based on the table above, the material is the dominant process, indicating that the student emphasized the actor to do physical action issues toward the goal because the material process is the process of doing and happening. Results showed that there were 8 material processes occurring in the clauses, with the number of percentages 38.09 %. An example of the use of material processes in the student's text is shown below.

It	contains	a lot of artificial ingredients.		
Actor	Pr: Material	Goal		

In the example above, the clause contains "it" as the actor, "contains" as a material process, and "a lot of ingredients" as the goal. The clause above indicated a material process because it was directed to show the process happening with "a lot of ingredients" as the goal. In addition to the material process, the relational process is the dominant process used in this text. Results showed that there were 8 material processes occurring in the clauses, with the number of percentages 38.09 %. An example of this process can be seen below.

it	can be	a good thing.
Carrier	Pr: relational (attributive)	Attribute

From the example above, "it" had the role of carrier, which was ascribed or attributed to "a good thing" as an attribute. Absolutely, "can be" is the attributive process itself because an attribute serves to characterize or to put quality to something, at which it puts "a good thing" as the characteristic of the carrier. The next process that exists is the mental process. The students used this process to indicate the act of thinking, feeling, and perceiving (Halliday, 2004). Results showed that 4 material processe occurred in the clauses, with 19.04 % percentages. One of the uses of mental processes is shown below.

I	believe
Senser	Pr: Mental

The example put "I" as the senser and "believe" as the mental process belonging to the emotive type. Thus, this clause stresses senser in the beginning because it tells about feeling like what "I" felt. The last process that exists is an existential process. Students used this process to represent that something exists or happens (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Eggins, 2004; Gerot & Wignell, 1994). Results showed that 1 material process occurred in the clauses, with 4.76 % percentages. The use of the existential process could be shown in the example below.

There	are	advantages and disadvantages.
	Pr: Existential	Existent

The word "are" is the process that means it serves to introduce the entity that begins to exist, in this case, advantages and disadvantages as the existent (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Meanwhile, two types of transitivity processes, verbal processes, and behavioral processes, were absent in the analyzed students' hortatory exposition texts from student 2.

Transitivity Process Dominant Used in EFL Students' Writing Hortatory Exposition Text

After analyzing the whole document, the writer found that the material process followed by the relational is the dominant transitivity process type in this study. Table 4 displays the transitivity process used in EFL students' hortatory exposition text.

Table 4The Dominant Transitivity Process Used in EFL Students' Hortatory Exposition Text

EFL Students'	Transitivity Process Types						
Hortatory Exposition Text	Mat. P	Men. P	VP	RP	BP	EP	Total
Students 1	12	0	0	5	0	1	18
Students 2	8	4	0	8	0	1	21
Total	20	4	0	13	0	2	39
Percentage	51.2%	10.2%	0	33.3%	0	5.12%	100%

Note:

Mat. P: material process Men. P: mental process VP: verbal process RP: relational process BP: behavioral process EP: existential process

From the table above, it can be found that from a whole of EFL students' hortatory exposition texts, the first dominant type of transitivity process in EFL students writing hortatory text is the material process. Of all 39 clauses, the material process occurs 20 times (51.2%), followed by the relational process, which appears 13 times (33.3%). While the mental process appears 4 times (10.2%), the existential process only appears 2 times (5.12%). On the other hand, two types of transitivity processes, verbal and behavioral, were absent in this research.

Based on the findings previously mentioned, it could be seen that only material process, mental process, relational process, and existential process in transitivity process types contained in students' hortatory exposition text written by two students of eleventh grade in one of junior high school in Bandung. The findings found that the dominant type of transitivity process was the material process. The material process appeared 20 times from the whole hortatory exposition text (39 clauses). On the other hand, Emilia (2011) stated exposition texts such as discussion, analytical, or hortatory exposition texts typically use mental processes. However, there are only 4 mental processes from the whole hortatory exposition text (39 clauses). It indicates that every text still needs to meet the requirements for analytical exposition texts, in which the language elements that aid texts in achieving their goals are mental processes. As a result, teachers play a key role in assisting students in learning how to write texts correctly by incorporating elements of text organization that are appropriate for the genre. In order to teach hortatory exposition text, teachers need to have a solid understanding of SFL. They should also be able to teach it effectively to students during the teaching and learning process.

CONCLUSION

After conducting the research, performing the analysis, and presenting the findings, the author was able to draw a conclusion. The study aimed to investigate the processes used in hortatory exposition texts, specifically focusing on those written by grade XI students. The research identified that the texts contained material, mental, relational, and existential processes. Material and relational processes were the most prevalent, appearing 20 times and 13 times, respectively. Existential and mental processes appeared less frequently, while verbal and behavioral processes were absent from the texts. However, to effectively achieve the purpose of a hortatory exposition text, it is typically essential to use mental processes. The findings showed that mental processes

appeared only four times in the students' texts, indicating a need for students to deepen their understanding of hortatory exposition texts, where mental processes should be more frequent. Additionally, teachers should guide students in writing these texts correctly by incorporating the appropriate text organization elements for the genre. To teach hortatory exposition texts effectively, teachers need to have knowledge related to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and be able to convey this knowledge during the teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, this study has several pedagogical implications. First, teachers should encourage and guide students in learning hortatory exposition texts. Second, teachers can help students develop critical thinking skills, which will enable them to write more effectively and meet genre-specific requirements by focusing on the mental processes involved in these texts. Therefore, both teachers and students need a strong understanding of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). This will enable students to understand better and produce hortatory exposition texts.

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