Linguistic Analysis of Naguib Mahfouz's Short Story, The Answer is No, Using Systemic Functional Grammar

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Abstract

This study presents a mixed-method analysis of Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Answer is No," utilizing Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar to examine transitivity processes. The research explores how Material, Mental, Relational, Behavioral, Verbal, and Existential processes reveal the protagonist's internal conflict and emotional states. Material processes dominate the narrative, constituting 66.15% of the total, indicating a strong emphasis on physical actions and events that drive the plot forward. Mental processes account for 15.38%, highlighting the protagonist's internal experiences. Relational processes, making up 7.69%, establish her identity and relationships. Behavioral processes constitute 3.08%, adding nuance through observable behaviors, while Verbal processes, at 6.15%, underscore the role of communication. Existential processes, at 1.54%, mark significant moments of realization. The distribution of these transitivity processes illustrates a narrative deeply concerned with both external actions and internal experiences. This analysis underscores the intricate interplay between action and introspection, revealing a narrative that is both dynamic and introspective, with a profound emphasis on the protagonist's resilience and strength.

Keywords: Linguistic Analysis, Systemic Functional Grammar, Transitivity processes, The Answer is No

Introduction

The present study aims to provide a systemic functional analysis of the short story "The Answer is No" by Naguib Mahfouz. Naguib Mahfouz, a Nobel Prize-winning Egyptian writer, is renowned for his rich narratives and profound character development. "The Answer is No" is one of his compelling short stories that studies themes of personal agency, societal pressures, and individual resilience. Transitivity analysis, a component of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), focuses on how linguistic choices in a text reflect and construct experiences, identities, and power dynamics. By examining the transitivity structures in Mahfouz's story, we can gain deeper insights into the portrayal of characters, their actions, and the broader social context within which they operate. Systemic Functional Analysis is a theoretical tool used to examine ideology (Matu, 2008). Developed by Michael Halliday in the 1960s, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) views language through three social functions: interpersonal, textual, and ideational meta-functions. The ideational meta-function represents our experiences by considering our external and internal surroundings. Within Halliday's framework, ideational meta-function and transitivity focus on how meanings are constructed and expressed at the clause level and how ideology is shaped through specific linguistic choices (Halliday, 1994). This meta-function illustrates how speakers encode language to reflect their mental picture of reality and their experiences of the world (Matu, 2008). The systematic selection of particular process types can be ideologically significant (Jahedi & Abdullah, 2012).

Systemic functional linguistics is crucial for textual analysis (Fairclough, 1992). Transitivity analysis within the systemic functional grammar of English (Halliday, 2004) includes processes, participants, and circumstances. It distinguishes between material, behavioral, mental, verbal, relational, and existential processes. Material processes involve happening, creating, changing, doing, and acting, describing external experiences outside the speaking subject. Mental processes involve seeing, feeling, and thinking, representing internal experiences. Behavioral processes are outer manifestations of inner workings. Relational processes relate one thing to another, identifying and classifying, thus construing both inner and outer experiences as processes of being rather than doing or sensing. Verbal processes describe saying's and meaning, while existential processes, situated between relational and material

processes, recognize phenomena of all kinds as simply existing (Maatta, 2007). This paper applies the systemic Functional Grammar approach to the short story The Answer is No by Naguib Mahfouz.

Problem Statement

This study investigates how Naguib Mahfouz utilizes transitivity processes in his short story "The Answer is No" to convey the experiences and agency of the protagonist. Specifically, it explores how these linguistic choices reflect underlying power dynamics and societal constraints within the narrative. "The Answer is No" is a poignant story that examines themes of autonomy, societal pressure, and personal resolve through its protagonist's experiences. Transitivity analysis, a component of systemic functional linguistics, offers a powerful tool for examining how different types of processes (material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential) are represented in a text and how they contribute to the construction of meaning. Applying this analytical lens to "The Answer is No" can uncover how Mahfouz uses language to shape the protagonist's experiences and decisions, providing insights into the interplay between language and meaning in the story. The research aims to address the lack of a detailed transitivity analysis of Mahfouz's "The Answer is No." It seeks to fill this gap by systematically analyzing the types of processes and participants in the text and how these linguistic choices reflect the underlying themes and character dynamics. By examining the types and distribution of transitivity processes, the study will reveal how Mahfouz constructs the protagonist's identity and the broader social context.

Significance of the Research

The study of transitivity processes within literary language offers profound insights into how language constructs meaning, power relations, and character dynamics. This research paper focuses on Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Answer is No" and employs transitivity analysis to dissect the linguistic choices that underpin the narrative structure and thematic depth of the text. Naguib Mahfouz, a Nobel Prize-winning Egyptian writer, is renowned for weaving complex social and psychological themes into his works. By applying transitivity analysis, this study aims to uncover the deeper layers of meaning embedded in Mahfouz's prose, particularly how the choices of process types (material, mental, relational, etc.) reflect and shape the characters' identities and interactions. This paper is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it enhances our understanding of Mahfouz's storytelling techniques and the subtle ways he conveys complex themes, contributing to a richer appreciation of his literary artistry and thematic concerns. Secondly, the analysis offers valuable insights into the linguistic mechanisms Mahfouz employs to construct his narrative, serving as a methodological framework for analyzing other literary texts and demonstrating the utility of transitivity analysis in literary studies. Thirdly, understanding the transitivity choices in "The Answer is No" sheds light on the broader social and cultural issues Mahfouz addresses, such as gender dynamics, personal autonomy, and societal expectations in the Egyptian context, providing readers and scholars with a deeper awareness of the cultural milieu in which Mahfouz wrote and its influence on his storytelling. Lastly, the findings from this research can be utilized in educational settings to teach students about the interplay between language and literature, enhancing their analytical skills and appreciation of literary works.

Research Questions

> How are different transitivity processes utilized by Naguib Mahfouz in "The Answer is No"?
> How do these Processes reflect the internal conflict and emotional states of the protagonist?
> What is the frequency of processes and Circumstances in the short story?

Research Objectives

> To analyze how different transitivity processes are utilized by Naguib Mahfouz in "The Answer is No".
> To examine how these processes, reflect the internal conflict and emotional states of the protagonist.
> To determine the frequency of processes and circumstances in the short story.

Literature Review

Systemic Functional Grammar

Transitivity analysis, a linguistic method, has been applied across different forms of discourse, such as novels. As per Halliday and Matthiessen (2008), it examines how the participants in a clause interact, their respective roles, and the actions they perform. Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) explores how language serves its purpose within social contexts. Beard (2000) highlights that the transitivity system aims to analyze the linguistic expression of actions, participants involved, and the manner in which actions unfold. This concept delineates between transitive and intransitive verbs (Halliday, 1976), irrespective of whether they require an object. In SFG, language serves as the bridge connecting grammar with meta-functions. Halliday posits that language serves as a societal emblem reflecting social interpretation, as noted by Arnold (1978). Conversely, Richard and Schmidt (2013) propose that Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) investigates the correlation between language and its functional aspects. Transitivity serves as the primary element of the experiential aspect of a clause, conveying the movement of ideas representing activities or occurrences like events, actions, cognitive processes, and connections (Halliday,1985). Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), pioneered by Halliday in the 1960s, investigates language within its functional and social contexts, viewing language and its grammatical structures as tools for creating meaning. It emphasizes the intricate relationship between form and meaning (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). Halliday (1975) identified three primary social functions through which language develops, which he termed 'meta-functions': ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions (Halliday, 1978). He underscored that these functions operate

concurrently within language (Halliday, 2014). The ideational meta-function, according to Halliday (1978), interprets experiences, encompassing both internal and external phenomena, and is closely tied to the concept of transitivity (Halliday, 1981), which is a method for analyzing clauses to express specific ideational meanings. Transitivity comprises three key elements: the process, participants, and circumstances, as illustrated diagrammatically.

Application of SFG in Literary Analysis

The application of SFG to literary texts allows for a deeper understanding of how language constructs meaning within a narrative. Literary scholars have employed SFG to analyze character development, narrative structure, and thematic elements. For instance, studies have explored how authors use language to represent reality, convey relationships between characters, and structure their narratives cohesively. By examining the linguistic choices within a text, researchers can uncover the underlying ideologies and social dynamics presented by the author.

Naguib Mahfouz and His Literary Contributions

Naguib Mahfouz, an Egyptian novelist and Nobel Laureate in Literature is renowned for his profound and nuanced portrayal of Egyptian society. His works often explore themes of existentialism, social justice, and human relationships, set against the backdrop of contemporary Egyptian culture. Mahfouz's writing style is characterized by its rich descriptive quality and deep psychological insight, making his works ripe for linguistic analysis.

"The Answer is No" by Naguib Mahfouz

"The Answer is No" is one of Mahfouz's short stories that delves into themes of personal autonomy, societal expectations, and the struggle for individual identity. The narrative revolves around the protagonist's internal conflict and her response to societal pressures, making it an excellent text for analysis through the lens of SFG. By applying SFG, particularly focusing on the ideational metafunction, researchers can dissect how Mahfouz's linguistic choices convey the protagonist's experiences and the societal context in which she operates.

Previous Studies Works Using SFG

Mahmood and Hashmi (2020) examine the portrayal of Nilopher in the book The Stone Women. Utilizing a corpus-based approach, they employed the AntConc software to identify the frequency of six processes. They applied Halliday's (1994) transitivity framework to scrutinize the collected data. The research revealed that Nilopher predominantly employed the material process in the novel, indicating her confident, corrupt, and bold character traits. Furthermore, the consistent use of the lexical device "I" pronoun underscores her self-possession and audacious demeanor (Mahmood and Hashmi, 2020). Additionally, Nurlela et al. (2020) examine the translated English version of the narrative text Hikayat Delhi through the lens of transitivity analysis. Employing a mixed-method approach, the study reveals a predominant use of material processes. The analysis uncovers that the author frequently narrates various events, depicting characters engaging in diverse actions within the text (Nurlela et al., 2020).

Sriyono (2021) investigates Indonesian texts from Madura and their English translations, focusing on how transitivity analysis conveys meaning in tourism texts and their translations. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the study utilizes Halliday's (1985) framework for data analysis. The findings reveal a prevalence of relational processes in both Indonesian texts (such as dihuni, terletak, and adalah) and their English translations (like has, have, seem, and become). Additionally, the study underscores variations in analysis and perspectives across both texts. In contrast, Syed et al. (2021) examine the characterization of females in the short story "The Boarding House" to identify its central processes, particularly focusing on dissecting female characters. Utilizing a mixed-method approach and Halliday's framework for textual analysis, the study finds frequent use of material processes in the forty clauses of the short story, illustrating which character engages in unpleasant actions.

Rosmayanti (2021) conducted a study to analyze recount texts written by EFL students, aiming to identify the predominant process of transitivity employed in their writing. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the study examined a sample of 6 texts comprising 173 clauses. The findings indicated that the students frequently utilized the material process, depicting physical actions of the participants. Similarly, Linares and Zhi-Ying (2021) investigated the interpretation of selected poetry by Fredy Chikanngana, a Colombian Indigenous poet, utilizing a mixed-method approach for data calculation and analysis. The study utilized Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistics model and revealed that the poet frequently employed the material process in his poetry, exploring physical and concrete actions and the self-determination of the Yanakuna character.

Aini (2021) scrutinizes the recount texts of students to identify the utilization of transitivity processes by both male and female writers in representing their experiences. Halliday's (1994) framework serves as the analytical tool for this investigation. The selection of recount texts is based on qualitative methodologies. Results reveal that the material process is frequently employed by both genders, impacting the structural and functional aspects of the recount texts. Furthermore, Khalid et al. (2021) analyze the portrayal of Western gender ideologies in "A Doll's House" through transitivity analysis, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods. A purposive sample of 48 clauses is analyzed, showing a predominant use of the material process in the dialogues of male and female characters. The male character is depicted as authoritative and superior, while the female character is portrayed as dependent and oppressed.

Research Methodology

This research employs a mixed methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative analyses. Initially, the short story "The Answer is No" by Naguib Mahfouz is qualitatively examined using Halliday's transitivity framework. Subsequently, a quantitative analysis determines the frequency of different process types in the story. By analyzing the most frequently used processes, this study explores the functions language performs in short stories. This approach underscores the strong connection between literature and linguistics, emphasizing that understanding the language of literature enhances our interpretation of literary texts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Material Processes

Material processes represent actions that are physically visible in the concrete world. These processes typically involve two essential participants: **Actor**: The doer of the action. **Goal**: The entity, animate or inanimate, affected by the action. Additionally, there is an element known as **Circumstance**, which provides extra information about the time, place, manner, and reason for the process. Circumstances have a secondary status compared to the process itself and offer details about aspects such as temporality, spatiality, intensity, manner, condition, and instruments. The following examples illustrate the structure where the Actor performs an action (Process) directed towards a Goal, sometimes accompanied by a Circumstance that provides additional context. The examples from the short story are shown in Table 1:

Table-I

Actor/Agent	Process	Goal	Circumstance
A shudder	passed	through her body	(no explicit circumstance mentioned)
She	took herself off	to her study	after eating, to rest for a while before correcting some exercise books
He	had kept	his promise	and had come to ask for her hand

In Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Answer is No," the Material Processes, as defined by Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar, play a crucial role in reflecting the protagonist's internal conflict and emotional states. Her physical reactions and actions provide insight into her psychological struggles. For instance, when "a shudder passed through her body," it signifies her immediate, involuntary response to the headmaster's presence, highlighting her deep-seated discomfort and dread. Similarly, her deliberate actions—such as advancing with her eyes fixed on his chest, avoiding his gaze, and extending her hand—demonstrate her attempt to maintain composure and distance, reflecting her internal struggle to cope with the situation. Her graceful exit, described as turning elegantly and moving off, underscores her determination to uphold her dignity despite her inner turmoil. Further illustrating her emotional state, the protagonist engages in daily tasks to distract herself from her worries, yet her outward appearance betrays her inner distress, as noted by her students. This external manifestation of her internal conflict emphasizes how profoundly her past trauma affects her present behavior. Her oscillation between forgetting and remembering the headmaster signifies the persistent impact of her past experiences on her current mental state. When she firmly rejects his marriage proposal, stating "No," this material process highlights her inner strength and decision to prioritize self-respect over societal expectations. Moreover, her ongoing process of avoiding and fearing love showcases the deep-seated mistrust and fear instilled by her traumatic past. The juxtaposition of the headmaster's promises with her internal rejection further accentuates the conflict between his perception and her reality. Her rejection of coercion and willingness to sacrifice marriage to preserve her autonomy and integrity reveal her resilience and commitment to self-preservation. Material Processes in Mahfouz's story intricately depict the protagonist's internal conflict and emotional states. Each physical action and decision she makes reflects her inner struggles, shaped by her past trauma and her efforts to assert control over her life. This analysis highlights how her actions serve as manifestations of her psychological turmoil, offering a deeper understanding of her character and the enduring impact of her experiences.

Mental Processes

Mental Processes encompass actions of sensing and realizing meanings such as 'feeling', 'perceiving', or 'thinking'. Unlike Material Processes, which derive from the physical, concrete world, Mental Processes originate from and reflect the world of consciousness. According to Halliday (1994), Mental Processes are divided into three categories: 'cognition' (e.g., believing, thinking), 'affection' (e.g., loving, detesting), and 'perception' (e.g., seeing, noticing). These processes involve two essential participant roles: the Sensor and the Phenomenon. The Sensor is the conscious entity engaged in the sensing action, while the Phenomenon is the entity that is sensed, felt, thought, or seen by the Sensor. The entity being 'sensed' in a Mental Process is not directly influenced by the Process,

unlike in a Material Process, making the role of the Phenomenon slightly different from the role of the Goal in a Material Process. Table-2 illustrates the types of Mental Processes in the short story.

Table-2

Sensor	Process Type	Phenomenon
She	heard	of it in the women teachers' common room
She	wondered	what his eyes express
She	forgot	her worries through her daily tasks

In Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Answer is No," the protagonist's internal conflict and emotional states are intricately woven through the narrative using Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar, particularly through mental processes. These mental processes, encompassing perception, affection, and cognition, reveal the protagonist's inner experiences, thoughts, and emotions, providing a deeper understanding of her character and the struggles she faces. Perception is evident when the protagonist reacts to the news of the new headmaster with an involuntary shudder, highlighting her deep-seated anxiety and fear. Her physical reactions, such as her paling face and wide eyes, further underscore her distress, providing a visual representation of her internal turmoil. Affection processes are prominent in her intense emotional responses. When she recalls her past experiences with the headmaster, her unprecedented anger conveys the depth of her resentment and trauma. This emotional intensity stems from her past, where she was coerced and manipulated, leaving lasting scars that influence her current state. Cognition plays a crucial role in expressing her internal conflict. Her internal dialogue reveals a constant struggle to suppress and forget memories of the headmaster, highlighting the persistence of her trauma. Her thoughts oscillate between wanting to forget and being unable to, showing the difficulty of reconciling with her past. Additionally, her conscious awareness of her critical position and the implications of her decisions reflect her cognitive engagement with her reality. The protagonist's deliberate avoidance of direct confrontation with the headmaster, such as fixing her eyes on his chest rather than his face, reveals her intent to maintain composure and minimize emotional disturbance. This intentional behavior underscores her desire for autonomy and dignity, central to her internal conflict. Reliving past experiences through mental processes provides comprehensive insight into her psyche. Her recollection of the traumatic event, marked by an absence of consent and affection, shapes her present emotional state and interactions with the headmaster. The manipulation she faced and her subsequent terror encapsulate the core of her trauma, which continues to affect her present. Through Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar and the use of mental processes, Mahfouz effectively conveys the protagonist's internal conflict and emotional states. Her perceptions, feelings, thoughts, intentions, and recollections of past experiences provide a comprehensive understanding of her struggle with trauma, desire for autonomy, and efforts to navigate her present while dealing with the shadows of her past.

Behavioural Process

In Naguib Mahfouz's short story, this type of process exists at the boundary between Material and Mental processes. They are neither entirely Material nor wholly Mental but embody aspects of both simultaneously, representing physiological and psychological behavior concurrently. Halliday (1994) explains that Behavioral processes "represent outer manifestations of inner workings, the acting out of processes of consciousness and physiological states." Such processes illustrate physiological behaviors like 'breathing' or 'coughing' and describe 'states of mind' through verbs like 'groan,' 'yell,' or 'laugh.' The primary and often sole participant in Behavioral Processes is the Behaver, the conscious entity engaged in the behavior. The role of the Behaver resembles that of a Senser in a Mental Process, while the Behavioral Process itself appears grammatically closer to a Material Process. Thus, it represents a type of process that involves both 'sensing' and 'doing.' Examples in Table 3 illustrate the Behavioral Process in the short story:

Table- 3

Behaver	Process	Type	Circumstance
A shudder	passed	Behavioural	through her body
Her pretty face	paled	Behavioural	(as she heard the news)
A staring look	came	Behavioural	to her wide black eyes

In Naguib Mahfouz's short story, "The Answer is No," the behavioral processes, as defined by Halliday's systemic functional grammar, illuminate the protagonist's internal conflict and emotional states. A significant example is when a shudder passes

through her body upon hearing the news of the new headmaster's arrival. This involuntary reaction underscores her deep, instinctive repulsion and fear, stemming from past trauma. Similarly, her face paling and a staring look coming to her wide black eyes reveal her shock and distress, indicating the profound impact of this revelation on her emotional state. The protagonist's avoidance of his gaze further illustrates her discomfort and strong desire to distance herself emotionally and physically from him. Moreover, her attempt to forget her worries through daily tasks highlights a coping mechanism to manage her emotional turmoil by immersing herself in routine activities. These behavioral processes are not merely physical reactions but are deeply intertwined with her internal struggle. Her firm stance in rejecting the headmaster's marriage proposal in the past, her cold responses during their encounter, and her determination to maintain independence reflect her resistance to coercion and control. Despite her apparent strength, the reappearance of the headmaster brings unresolved conflict and sadness to the surface, as she is forced to confront past traumas. Through these behavioral processes, Mahfouz skillfully portrays the protagonist's complex emotional landscape, illustrating how her physical actions and reactions reveal underlying fear, discomfort, determination, and unresolved sorrow. Thus, Halliday's systemic functional grammar provides a powerful framework for understanding the intricate relationship between linguistic choices and the depiction of internal conflict and emotional states in literature.

Verbal Processes

In Naguib Mahfouz's short story, verbal processes are closely related to mental processes because they express conscious thoughts and feelings. Halliday (1994) states, "The verbal processes express the relationships between the ideas constructed in human consciousness and the ideas enacted in the form of language." These processes involve the participant roles of the Sayer, the Receiver (or Target), and the Verbiage. The Sayer produces the speech, the Receiver is the one to whom the speech is directed, and the Verbiage refers to the speech itself or what is said. Table 4 provides examples of Verbal Processes from the short story.

Table-4

Sayer	Process Type	Receiver	Verbiage
a colleague	said	her	"They speak highly of his abilities."
her mother	inquired	her	"Everything all right?"
she	said	briefly	"Badran, Badran Badawi."

In Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Answer is No," verbal processes play a crucial role in reflecting the protagonist's internal conflict and emotional states, as analyzed through Halliday's systemic functional grammar. The protagonist's interactions, particularly through dialogue, reveal her psychological turmoil. When the new headmaster's arrival is announced, a colleague praises his abilities and strictness, while the protagonist responds with silence and a physical reaction, indicating her deep discomfort. This initial silence sets the tone for her subsequent interactions, highlighting her emotional disturbance.During her encounter with the headmaster, her avoidance of eye contact and silent handshake underscore her discomfort and the lasting impact of past trauma. Her inability to voice any words contrasts sharply with the headmaster's gruff "Thanks," emphasizing her inner struggle. A conversation with her mother further reveals this conflict; when she mentions Badran's appointment as headmaster, her mother dismisses it as an old, forgotten story. This dismissal contrasts with the protagonist's need to address her unresolved feelings, showing a lack of understanding from her mother.Recollections of past events further illustrate her internal conflict. As a young girl, she described Badran as a good teacher despite his messy appearance, to which her mother pragmatically responded that his teaching ability was what mattered. This dialogue sets up the betrayal that follows, deepening the sense of violation and internal conflict when Badran takes advantage of her innocence. Later, her firm verbal refusal of his marriage proposal, despite societal pressures, highlights her inner strength and resolve. Her declaration that any outcome is preferable to marrying him demonstrates her commitment to maintaining self-respect.Additionally, her conversations about marriage prospects with her mother reveal her determination to prioritize personal autonomy over societal norms. Her calm assertion that she knows what she is doing, and her contentment with letting life proceed as it will, underscore her ongoing struggle to find peace despite external pressures. Through these verbal exchanges and the protagonist's silences, Mahfouz skillfully portrays her internal conflict and emotional states, allowing readers to grasp the depth of her psychological struggle and the strength required to navigate her emotional landscape

Relational Processes:

In Naguib Mahfouz's short story, relational processes play a key role in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). These processes describe actions or states by expressing relationships between entities, often in terms of being, becoming, or having. They are divided into three types: intensive, possessive, and circumstantial. Intensive relational processes express an 'is' relationship, indicating that one entity is something or possesses a particular quality. Possessive relational processes express a 'has' relationship, indicating

ownership or possession. Circumstantial relational processes describe an entity in terms of its circumstances, such as time, place, or manner. Each type of relational process involves specific participant roles: the Carrier is the entity that possesses the attribute or is being described, while the Attribute is the quality attributed to the Carrier. In intensive relational processes, the Token is the entity being identified, and the Value is the identification or classification given to the Token. In possessive relational processes, the Possessor is the entity that owns something, and the possessor is the entity that is owned. These roles are fundamental in constructing definitions, descriptions, and classifications in language, making relational processes essential for conveying detailed and nuanced information. Table 5 provides examples from the short story.

Table-5

Carrier	Process: Relational	Attribute / Identified
It	was	an old and long-forgotten story
Miss	is	in a bad mood
her mother	had been	taken aback

In Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Answer is No," relational processes are crucial for identifying and describing the relationships between entities within a text. These processes are instrumental in highlighting the protagonist's internal struggle and emotional turbulence. For instance, when her "pretty face paled, and a staring look came to her wide black eyes," the shift in her physical appearance mirrors her internal turmoil upon hearing about the new headmaster's arrival. Similarly, the statement "She was fourteen years of age. In fact, not quite fourteen" emphasizes her youth and vulnerability during the traumatic event, underscoring the power imbalance and her innocence. Furthermore, relational processes reveal the protagonist's initial perceptions and subsequent disillusionment. Describing her tutor, she notes, "His appearance is a mess, but he explains things well," which contrasts his outward appearance with his teaching ability, reflecting her initial innocent perception before his betrayal. Her emotional distance and rejection of him are starkly conveyed through the statement, "He was as far as he could be from her dreams and from the ideas she had formed of what constituted an ideal, moral person," highlighting her sense of betrayal and disillusionment. The protagonist's self-perception and resolve are also articulated through relational processes. For example, "She had found that she had no love or respect for him" signifies her realization and internal acknowledgment of her true feelings towards the headmaster, demonstrating her emotional clarity and determination to reject him. Lastly, her dread and discomfort with his continued presence are encapsulated in the phrase, "She was certainly unhappy that he could again make his appearance in her life," directly conveying her emotional state. Thus, the relational processes in "The Answer is No" provide a window into the protagonist's psychological landscape, illustrating her fear, anxiety, disillusionment, and ultimately her strength and resolve. Through these processes, Mahfouz effectively communicates the depth of the protagonist's internal struggles and emotional journey, making the reader acutely aware of her complex emotional state.

Existential processes

Existential processes in the transitivity system assert the existence, occurrence, or subsistence of something. They typically use a 'be' form of a verb, preceded by 'there,' which functions as a dummy subject with no representational meaning, as seen in sentences like "There is a problem" or "Was there an announcement?" Existential processes usually involve only one participant role, known as "the Existent," represented by expressions such as "a problem" and "an announcement." The Existent can be anything, including an article, an individual, an entity, an organization, an idea, an action, or an event. This process type closely relates to the material process, which was discussed at the beginning of the transitivity system appraisal.

Table-6

Existential Process	Existent	Circumstance
There was	no getting away	from joining the other teachers
There was	a shudder	through her body
There was	a possibility	that might occur

In Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Answer is No," existential processes play a significant role in reflecting the protagonist's internal conflict and emotional states, as analyzed through Halliday's systemic functional grammar. These processes, which indicate that something exists or happens, depict the protagonist's experiences and reactions. For instance, the arrival of the new headmaster, Badran Badawi, is conveyed through the existential clause "the new headmaster had arrived," marking the re-emergence of a traumatic past event that disrupts the protagonist's life. Her involuntary physical reaction to this news, described as "her pretty face paled, and a staring look came to her wide black eyes," highlights her internal turmoil and the sudden resurfacing of buried emotions. Existential clauses such as "How, then, had it happened? Without love or desire on her part the thing had happened" emphasize the inevitability and passivity of the traumatic event in her past, underscoring her lack of control and agency. Her current state is poignantly captured in the repeated existential process "be forgotten," reflecting her ongoing struggle to suppress painful memories and the persistent impact of the past on her present. The simple existential clause "Day by day she becomes older" conveys her resigned acceptance of a solitary life, shaped by past experiences. These existential processes collectively illustrate the protagonist's internal conflict and emotional states by highlighting the involuntary and passive nature of her reactions to both past and present events. They underscore her sense of powerlessness during the traumatic event, her continuous battle to achieve emotional closure, and her eventual acceptance of solitude as a means of preserving her dignity and self-respect. Through these existential processes, Mahfouz effectively portrays the depth of the protagonist's internal struggle and the enduring impact of her past on her present life.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The Table below shows the details of all the processes and their frequencies and percentages in Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Answer is No"

No.	Process Type	Occurrence	Percentage
1	Material	43	66.15%
2	Mental	10	15.38%
3	Relational	5	7.69%
4	Behavioral	2	3.08%
5	Verbal	4	6.15%
6	Existential	1	1.54%
Total		65	100%

Figure-I

The frequency of transitivity processes in Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Answer is No." is shown through pie chart. Each process is shown in a different color, with the percentages labeled for clarity.

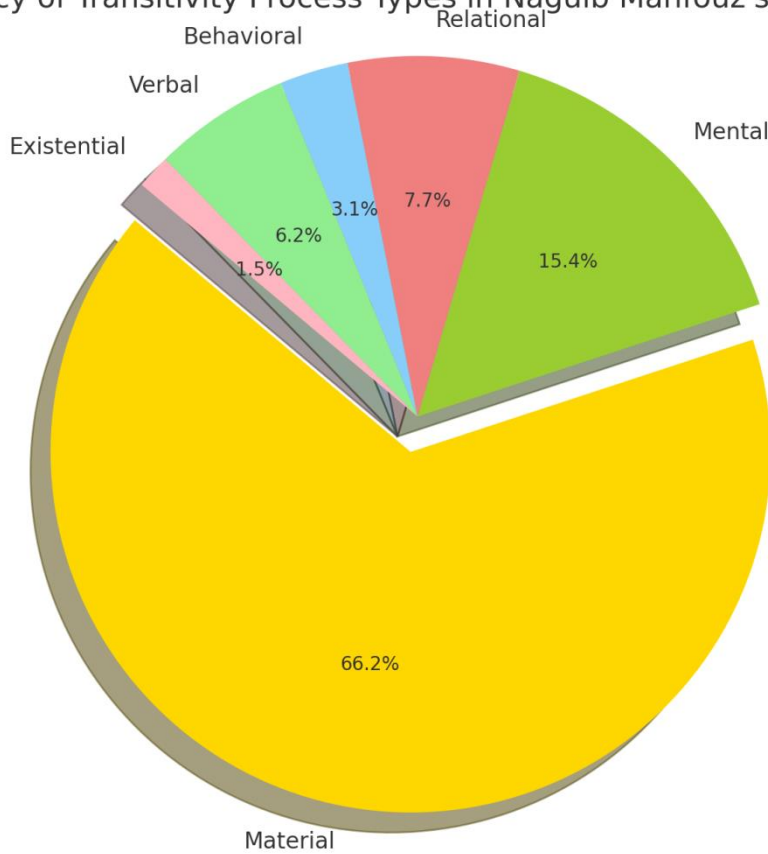Frequency of Transitivity Process Types in Naguib Mahfouz's Short Story

Figure-2

The frequency of Transitivity Processes in Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Answer is No." is shown in the bar chart. Each process is shown in a different color, with the number of occurrences labeled on top of each bar.
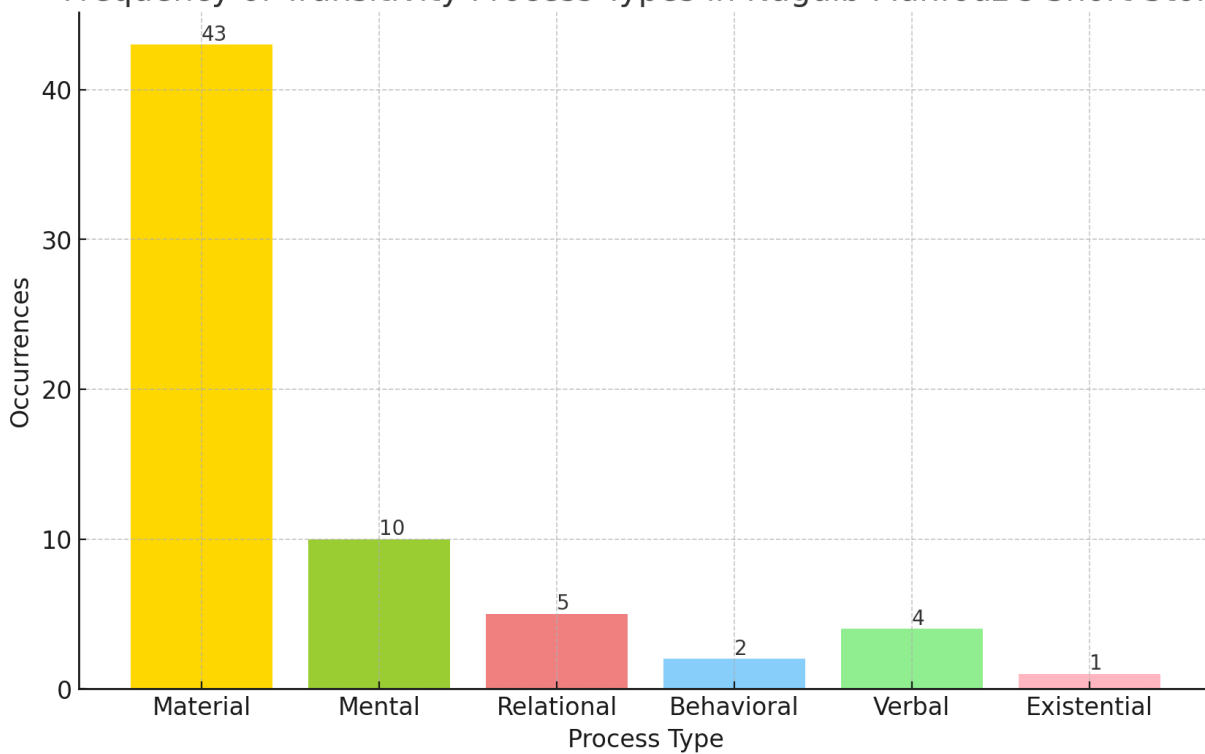

Figure-3

The analysis of transitivity processes in Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Answer is No" offers significant insights into the narrative's focus and thematic elements. By categorizing the processes into Material, Mental, Relational, Behavioral, Verbal, and Existential types, we can infer how the story portrays events and characters' inner experiences.

Material processes dominate the story, constituting 66.15% of the total processes. These processes describe actions and events, such as arriving, hearing, joining, passing, going, receiving, advancing, and moving. The prevalence of material processes indicates a strong emphasis on the physical actions and external events driving the narrative forward. In "The Answer is No," this focus highlights the protagonist's interactions with her environment and the people around her, underscoring the tangible realities of her life, particularly the significant events that have shaped her experiences and decisions. The material processes emphasize the protagonist's struggle with external pressures and societal expectations as she navigates her complex past and present circumstances.

Mental processes account for 15.38% of the total, emphasizing the protagonist's internal experiences, such as speaking, talking, wondering, and feeling. These processes reflect the character's thoughts, perceptions, and emotions, offering readers a window into her psychological state. The substantial presence of mental processes indicates that the narrative is equally invested in exploring the protagonist's inner workings. Her reflections on past events, feelings of anger and contentment, and contemplations about her future contribute to a deeper understanding of her character. This focus on mental processes reveals the protagonist's inner conflict and efforts to make sense of her traumatic experiences.

Relational processes, making up 7.69% of the total, describe states of being and relationships. Examples include the protagonist's status and identity, such as "She was the rich beautiful girl" and "It was the sort of situation." These processes establish the protagonist's identity and her relationships with others, providing context for her actions and thoughts and linking her current state to her past experiences. Relational processes help ground the narrative in the protagonist's personal history and the societal context in which she lives.

Behavioral processes, constituting 3.08% of the total, describe physiological and psychological behaviors, such as remarking and inquiring. These processes highlight the protagonist's observable behaviors and reactions. Although less frequent, behavioral processes add nuance to the narrative by illustrating how the protagonist's internal states manifest in her actions and interactions with others, providing insight into her mood and demeanor.

Verbal processes account for 6.15% of the total, encompassing acts of saying and speaking. These processes highlight the importance of communication in the story. The use of verbal processes underscores the role of dialogue and speech in shaping the narrative. The protagonist's conversations with others, particularly with significant figures in her life, reveal critical information about her past and current struggles. Verbal processes convey the dynamics of power and control in her relationships.

Existential processes, making up 1.54% of the total, indicate the existence or occurrence of something, such as "There was no getting away." The presence of existential processes suggests moments of realization and acknowledgment of certain truths, marking significant points where the protagonist confronts the realities of her situation.

The frequency and distribution of these transitivity processes in "The Answer is No" reveal a story deeply concerned with both the external actions and internal experiences of its protagonist. The dominance of material processes indicates a focus on the events and actions that drive the plot, reflecting the protagonist's engagement with the world around her. The significant presence of mental processes highlights the importance of the protagonist's internal life, offering a profound exploration of her thoughts and emotions. The relational, behavioral, verbal, and existential processes, though less frequent, add depth to the narrative by providing context, illustrating behaviors, facilitating communication, and marking moments of realization. Together, these processes create a rich tapestry that captures the complexity of the protagonist's journey, her struggles with past trauma, and her efforts to assert her autonomy in a challenging social environment. The analysis underscores the intricate interplay between action and introspection, revealing a narrative that is both dynamic and introspective, with a profound emphasis on the protagonist's resilience and strength.

Conclusion

In Naguib Mahfouz's short story, "The Answer is No," the protagonist's internal conflict and emotional states are intricately woven through the narrative using Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar, particularly through the use of Material Processes. These processes, encompassing physical actions and reactions, reveal the protagonist's psychological struggles, providing a deeper understanding of her character. Material Processes are evident when the protagonist's immediate physical reactions, such as "a shudder passed through her body," reflect her involuntary response to the headmaster's presence, highlighting her deep-seated discomfort and dread. Her deliberate actions—advancing with her eyes fixed on his chest, avoiding his gaze, and extending her hand—demonstrate her attempt to maintain composure and distance, showcasing her internal struggle to cope with the situation. Her graceful exit, described as turning elegantly and moving off, underscores her determination to uphold her dignity despite her inner turmoil. Further illustrating her emotional state, the protagonist engages in daily tasks to distract herself from her worries,

yet her outward appearance betrays her inner distress, as noted by her students. This external manifestation of her internal conflict emphasizes how profoundly her past trauma affects her present behavior. Her oscillation between forgetting and remembering the headmaster signifies the persistent impact of her past experiences on her current mental state. When she firmly rejects his marriage proposal, stating "No," this material process highlights her inner strength and decision to prioritize self-respect over societal expectations. Moreover, her ongoing process of avoiding and fearing love showcases the deep-seated mistrust and fear instilled by her traumatic past. Through these Material Processes, Mahfouz effectively conveys the protagonist's internal conflict and emotional states. Her physical actions and decisions are a reflection of her inner struggles, shaped by her past trauma and her efforts to assert control over her life. This analysis highlights how her actions serve as manifestations of her psychological turmoil, offering a deeper understanding of her character and the enduring impact of her experiences. The quantitative analysis of transitivity processes in Mahfouz's story further illuminates the narrative's focus and thematic elements. Material processes dominate the story, constituting 66.15% of the total processes. These processes describe actions and events, such as arriving, hearing, joining, passing, going, receiving, advancing, and moving. The prevalence of material processes indicates a strong emphasis on the physical actions and external events driving the narrative forward. In "The Answer is No," this focus highlights the protagonist's interactions with her environment and the people around her, underscoring the tangible realities of her life, particularly the significant events that have shaped her experiences and decisions. The material processes emphasize the protagonist's struggle with external pressures and societal expectations as she navigates her complex past and present circumstances. Mental processes account for 15.38% of the total, emphasizing the protagonist's internal experiences, such as speaking, talking, wondering, and feeling. These processes reflect the character's thoughts, perceptions, and emotions, offering readers a window into her psychological state. The substantial presence of mental processes indicates that the narrative is equally invested in exploring the protagonist's inner workings. Her reflections on past events, feelings of anger and contentment, and contemplations about her future contribute to a deeper understanding of her character. This focus on mental processes reveals the protagonist's inner conflict and efforts to make sense of her traumatic experiences. Relational processes, making up 7.69% of the total, describe states of being and relationships. Examples include the protagonist's status and identity, such as "She was the rich beautiful girl" and "It was the sort of situation." These processes establish the protagonist's identity and her relationships with others, providing context for her actions and thoughts and linking her current state to her past experiences. Relational processes help ground the narrative in the protagonist's personal history and the societal context in which she lives. Behavioral processes, constituting 3.08% of the total, describe physiological and psychological behaviors, such as remarking and inquiring. These processes highlight the protagonist's observable behaviors and reactions. Although less frequent, behavioral processes add nuance to the narrative by illustrating how the protagonist's internal states manifest in her actions and interactions with others, providing insight into her mood and demeanor. Verbal processes account for 6.15% of the total, encompassing acts of saying and speaking. These processes highlight the importance of communication in the story. The use of verbal processes underscores the role of dialogue and speech in shaping the narrative. The protagonist's conversations with others, particularly with significant figures in her life, reveal critical information about her past and current struggles. Verbal processes convey the dynamics of power and control in her relationships. Existential processes, making up 1.54% of the total, indicate the existence or occurrence of something, such as "There was no getting away." The presence of existential processes suggests moments of realization and acknowledgment of certain truths, marking significant points where the protagonist confronts the realities of her situation.

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