Analysis of the Impact of the French Revolution on the Characters of the Novel "The Tale of Two Cities" Using Transitivity System.

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المستخلص

تعتمد هذه الدراسة على تطبيق نظرية النحو الوظيفي النظامي لتحليل شخصيات العمل الأدبي "قصة مدينتين". يهدف الباحث إلى تحليل الحوارات المستخرجة من رواية تشارلز ديكنز "حكاية مدينتين" والإجابة على هذا السؤال البحثي: إلى أي مدى يمكن أن تؤثر الثورة الفرنسية على لغة الشخصيات؟ يعتمد التحليل على الوظائف التصورية . تظهر النتائج أن الدكتور مانيت ومدام ديفارج هما أكثر شخصيتين تتغيران بسبب الثورة الفرنسية.

Abstract

This study is based on the application of Systemic Functional Grammar Theory to analyze the characters of the literary work "A Tale of Two Cities". The study aims to answer the following research question: To what extent can the French Revolution affect the language of the characters? The analysis is based on ideational meta-functions. Results show that Dr. Manette and Madame Defarge are the two characters who are mostly changed because of the French Revolution.

1. Introduction

Halliday develops J. F. Firth's theory in his General Theory of Language in Context. Halliday's theory is a combination of the structures of syntax and semantics. He displays the close relationship between structure and meaning within the sentence. We can analyze a sentence in two ways: firstly, according to the semantic structure, it consists of an actor, a process, and a goal, secondly, according to syntactic structure it splits into a subject, the main

verb, and an object. So, syntax and semantics help people communicate and express their thoughts and feelings, which is what Halliday tries to assert in his theory.

Systemic Functional Grammar Theory is unlike other theories that deal with language as a mental process; it is concerned with the relationships between language, society, and text. It sheds light on the function of language and the discourses which are produced rather than its structure. It aims at displaying the internal relations in language and showing that language is a means of social interaction. Halliday mentions that all kinds of situational contexts can be explored by field, tenor, and mode and that each one of them represents one meta-function. Halliday (2000) classified language into three semantic constituents: ideational (experimental, logical), interpersonal, and textual. These three meta-functions clarify how people get experiences and represent ideas of the world, how they communicate and interact with each other, and finally how their experiences, interactions, and environments are reflected in their verbal and non-verbal interactions.

Halliday (2014, p. 33) defines the field as "what's going on in the situation: the nature of the social and semiotic activity; and the domain of experience this activity relates to (the 'subject matter' or 'topic')." Additionally, he describes the tenor as " who is taking part in the situation: the roles played by those taking part in the socio-semiotic activity and the values that the interactants imbue the domain with (either neutral or loaded, positively or negatively)." He also believes that the mode is " what role is being played by language and other semiotic systems in the situation: (1)

the division of labour between semiotic activities and social ones (ranging from semiotic activities as constitutive of the situation to semiotic activities as facilitating); (2) the division of labour between linguistic activities and other semiotic activities; (3) rhetorical mode: the orientation of the text towards field (e.g. informative, didactic, explanatory, explicatory) or tenor (e.g. persuasive, exhortatory, hortatory, polemic); (4) turn: dialogic or monologic; (5) medium: written or spoken; (6) channel: phonic or graphic."

2. Theoretical Framework

Part two displays the theoretical framework of the current study. It starts with a general overview of the origin and development of systemic functional grammar theory. Further, it displays theory fundamentals and its dimensions such as the various types of meta-functions, their uses, and functions.

2.1. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar Theory

As said before Systemic Functional Grammar Theory is one of the important pragmatic theories because it puts the foundations of discourse analysis as it links between language and society and helps the participants to create an effective speech/text. Halliday supposes that any language consists of three components: tenor, field, and mode. Every component of them is represented by a meta-function, for example, the field is represented by the ideational meta-function, the tenor is represented by the experiential meta-function, and the mode is represented by the textual meta-function.

2.1.1. Meta-function

People usually do not differ between function and meta-function. The function is defined as what something does or is used for. Unlike function, meta-function is more abstract than function. Schally and Zaefferer (2007) describe meta-function as a particular mode, facet, or layer of meaning. For instance, Halliday uses meta-function to examine the internal function of language not only its use.

2.1.1.1. Ideational Meta-function:

The ideational function is the first function that is pointed out in System Functional Grammar Theory, and which represents human experiences of phenomena of the world. Halliday (1971:332) notes that those experiences cover both human experiences of the internal world of their consciousness such as their perceptions, reactions, and cognitions, and their linguistic acts of speaking and understanding. Eggins (1994) also defines it as what we use to express our experience in language. In other words, this meta-function reflects the events and experiences in both objective and subjective worlds and assists the writer\speaker to convey new information which is unknown to the reader\hearer.

In addition, Zhuanglin (1988:312) adds that ideational meta-function specifies the available options in meaning and determines the nature of their structural realizations. He mentions that Halliday chooses the transitivity system in grammar to represent the

ideational meta-function and clause to be the unit that shows what is being done, what is felt, what is happening, and what the state is. Accordingly, this means that the transitivity system is based on a description of process, participant, and circumstance which reflect our understanding of phenomena that come with our experience. For instance, the clause *"the lion caught the tourist"* can be analyzed as:

[**Actor**] The lion [**Pr**: **Material]** caught [**Goal**] the tourist.

(Halliday, 2014, p.226)

2.1.1.1.1. Transitivity System

The transitivity system is based on processes, participants, and circumstances. There are two modes of transitivity system: transitive and ergative and they are explained in detail in the following part. Halliday & Matthiessen (2014) state that there are two models of transitivity systems: transitive and ergative. They add that the transitive model differentiates the various process types. Transitivity is a liner interpretation that is concerned with a goal (together with, perhaps, the analogous, functions of a target in a verbal process and phenomenon in a mental process of please type), systems that emphasize the distinction between participants (i.e., direct participants, actor, and goal) and circumstances (all other functions). In other words, a transitive model is based on both the actor and process.

1) Processes

Halliday (1985, p.101-2) argues that process refers to a verb or action semantically perceived such as *feeling, sensing, saying, doing, happening, behaving,* and *existing*. Halliday classifies the

process into sex categories: *material*, *mental*, *relational*, *verbal*, *behavioral*, and e*xistential*. Subramanian (2008) believes that Systemic SFG is based on only three main processes: mental, material, and relational process. He adds that verbal, behavioral, and existential processes are located at the three boundaries between the main processes.

A) **Material Process**

Firstly, the material process is one of the major types of processes in the transitivity system. Subramanian (2008) believes that the material process connects both outer experience and the external world. In addition, Zhaunglin (1988) defines material process as the process in which something is done; it is expressed by action verbs such as the verb *give,* the actor, and the goal of the action e.g. "*the kid kicks the ball very hard".* In the previous example "*the kid"* is the actor (doer of the process), the type of process is *"material", "the ball"* is the goal and the type of circumstance is "*manner".*

[Actor] The kid [Pr: Material] kicks [Goal] the ball [circumstance] very hard.

B) **Mental Process**

Secondly, a mental process which Halliday (1994, p.117) determines as the one which expresses mental phenomena using verbs such the verbs that express *reaction* as "like*",* others express *perception* as "see*"* as shown in the following example, and *cognition* as "belief". In other words, it expresses people's inner experiences and their senses of the real world. The participant in this process is not a real subject of doing but the feeling itself. There

are two participants involved in this process: the *senser* (the conscious being who is involved in a mental process) and *phenomena* (which is thought or felt or seen by the conscious senser) e.g. *Sara likes cats*. In this example the senser is *Sara*, the process is *mental*, and the word *cats* is the phenomenon.

[Senser] I [Pr: Mental] saw [**Phenomenon**: **Act**] **the operation taking place**.

(Eggins, 2004, 227)

C) Relational Process

Subramanian (2008) states that the relational process relates a fragment of experience to another. Zhuanglin (1988) demonstrates that it can be classified into two types: attributive and identifying. The first type expresses what attributes a specific object has or what kind it belongs to; for example, *the temperature is high*. The second one shows identical properties of two entities; for example, Ahmed is a boy, and the boy is Ahmed. Table (1) displays the types of relational processes.

Table (1): The Principal Categories of relational clause
(adapted from: Halliday, 2014, p. 265)

	(i) Attributive 'a is an attributive of x'	(ii) Identifying 'a is the identity of x'
(1) Intensive 'X is a'	Sara is wise	Sara is the leader
(2) Possessive 'x has a'	Peter has a piano	The piano is Peter's
(3) Circumstantial 'x is at a'	The fair is on Tuesday	Tomorrow is the 10th

D) Verbal Process

Fourthly, Zhuanglin (1988) defines the verbal process as the process of exchanging information and almost it contains verbs such as *say*, *tell*, *talk, praise*, *boast,* or *describe*. Subramanian (2008) mentions that the verbal process is on the borderline between both mental and relational processes. He adds that this process is a symbolic relationship constructed in human consciousness and enacted in the form of language.

 [Sayer] Marry [Pr: Verbal] said [verbiage] "I am hungry".

E) Behavioral Process

The fifth process is the behavioral process that crosses the borderline between material and mental processes. It manifests the acting out of the physiological reactions (Halliday, 1994, pp.106–107). Zhuanglin (1988) adds that it refers to both psychological and phycological behavior such as *coughing*, *smiling*, *breathing*, *laughing, crying, staring, and dreaming, etc.* He mentions that this process has only participants who are often human. He believes that it is much like the mental process and that it is hard to distinguish it from the mental process that also has only one participant.

F) Existential Process

The last process is the existential process which refers to something that exists or happens. Forms like "there is " and " there was " are commonly used in this process for instance:

- There were other cars
- There was a pen

The word "there" which is used in the clauses above, is used instead of the subject of the clause because all English clauses

require a subject. Halliday (1994, p142) mentions that the existential process always contains the verb "be" or related verbs such as *occur, come, exist, happen, take place, etc.*

2)   Participants

Eggins (1994) believes that participants refer to entities, which can be human or inhuman. They are directly involved in the process by doing, saying, or behaving something and they are realized by nominal groups. Moreover, Simpson (1993, p.88) illustrates that each type of the six processes is associated with a specific set of participant roles, representing different phenomena in the semantic system of the clauses. In addition, Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) believe that participants consist of actors and goals. Table (2) shows participants that are involved in processes according to their type. Halliday & Matthiessen (2014, p.334) define the actor as "The actor is construed as bringing about the unfolding of the Process through time; and this unfolding is either confined in its outcome to the Actor or extended to another participant, the Goal". Halliday & Matthiessen (2014) state that the actor functions as a representation in the construction of the clause and it is the active participant in the process, it may be the speaker or the doer of something. There are two types of actors. The first type is called *transitive actors* which are all 'beings' as the God or a human, and the second type is the *intransitive actor* which includes animals, one kind of artifact (the ark), and various types of natural phenomena.

Table (2): participants types.

Process type	Core meaning	participants
Material	"Doing", "Happening"	Actor, Goal
Mental	"Sensing"	Sensor, phenomenon
Relational	"Being"	
Verbal	"Saying"	Sayer, Receiver, Verbiage
Behavioral	"Behaving"	Behaver
Existential	"Existing"	Existent

(Adapted from Peng Pingping, 2007)

Ergative interpretation is divided into agent, process, and medium. Halliday & Matthiessen (2014) mention that the medium is achieved when the movement of sending and spreading is actualized. They also add that the difference between "doing" and "happening" descends from a different principle from a transitive one of extension and impact. 'Happening' means that process actualization is represented as being self-engendered, but 'doing' means that process actualization is represented as being caused by a participant which is external to the combination of process and medium. This external cause is called 'agent'. Table (3) shows an example of the difference between 'happening' and 'doing'.

Table (3): **the difference between happening and doing processes**.

	Agent	Process	Medium	
doing	I'm	going to sent	A great flood	
happening			The great flood	spread
			Medium	process

(Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014)

3) Circumstances

Simpson (1993, p.88) & Eggins (1994, p. 12) mention that circumstances are associated with a process that is expressed by prepositional and adverbial groups. It expresses supplementary information such as *time, manner, means, cause, duration, etc.* Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p.314:328) divide circumstances into nine types:

        A)   Extent
        B)   Location
        C)   Manner
        D)   Cause
        E)   Contingency
        F)   Accompaniment
        G)   Role
        H)   Matter
        I)   Angel

Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) state that both extent and location circumstances are related to each other because they construe the unfolding process in space and time. They also form a four-term set as shown in table (4):

Table (4): **Examples of extent and location**

	Spatial	Temporal
Extent	**Distance** **Walk** (for) **seven miles**	**Duration** **Stay** (for) **two hours**. **Frequency** **Knock three times**
Location	**Place** **Work in the kitchen**	**Time** **Get up at six o'clock**

Extent shows the distance over the space that the process unfolds or the duration in time that the process takes. It can be measured by *hours, years, inches, miles*, and any standard unit of time and space. But location shows the place where the process takes place or the time when it happens. Temporal and spatial location can be either absolute or relative (near and remote). There is also a distinction between rest and motion, and within motion between motion towards and motion away from in both temporal and spatial locations. Extent and location have two types: definite and indefinite. Definite extent and definite location show the specific distance, duration, and frequency as "five miles, five years, at home, at noon", but indefinite extent and indefinite location

display general temporal or spatial as "a long way, a long time, near and soon".

Manner is different and it is divided into four subcategories: means, quality, comparison, and degree.

Table (5): **Subcategories of manner**

		Example
	means	It seems that they traveled **by train**
	quality	We know her **well**
	comparison	**Unlike** his father, he is a hard worker
	degree	We enjoyed it **so much**

On the other hand, the fourth category (degree) is divided into three types: reason, purpose, and behalf. It displays the reason why the process is actualized or the purpose of the process. Behalf is an expression that is used to refer to a specific person who is for his/her sake the process is undertaken.

Contingency circumstances have three subtypes: condition, concession, and default. Circumstantial conditions display the elements on which the actualization of the process depends. Circumstantial of Concession shows frustrated cause. They are expressed by the prepositional phrases that start with the preposition *notwithstanding*, *despite*, *despite*, or *regardless of*. Default circumstantial are concerned with the negative condition and they

usually start with the complex prepositions *in default of* and *in the absence of.*

Accompaniment circumstances are a system of combined participation in the process. It represents the meanings of 'and', 'not', 'or' as circumstantial. It is also expressed by prepositional phrases that start with prepositions like *with, without, instead of, and besides.* There are two subcategories of it: comitative and additive. Both have positive and negative aspects. Comitative starts with the preposition "*with*" if it is positive and with the prospection "*without*" if it is negative. But positive additive starts with a preposition like as *well as, besides*…etc. nevertheless, negative additive circumstances use different prepositions as "*instead of.*"

Another type of circumstance is role. It analyzes the meaning of 'be' and 'become'. It is related to the value of the clause as an "intensive relational". This type consists of two subcategories: guise and product. Guise is used to analyze the meaning of "be" (attribute or identity). It is marked by the preposition *as* and other complex prepositions such as *by way of, in the role of, in the form of* …etc. The product corresponds to the interrogative What into? With the meaning of 'become' (attribute or identity). The *attribute* is a pattern that could be considered a type of role; however, it does not involve a prepositional phrase. It is added to the material process either as depictive, linking to the guise, or as resultative, corresponding to the product. It appears as an adjective with a noun and usually, it comes with "*as*": he comes back as a hero.

A further matter is related to the verbal process as it is the circumstantial which equals the Verbiage. Prepositions as *about, concerning, with reference to, and sometimes* simply to express the circumstances of the matter.

The last category of circumstances is *angel* which is related to either the 'Sayer' in the verbal process or the 'senser' of the mental process. Moreover, this type consists of two subtypes. The first type is 'source' because it displays the source information, and it usually contains the complex preposition *according to*. The other type is called 'viewpoint' because it shows the information which is given in the clause from someone's point of view.

3．**Research question**:

To what extent can the French Revolution affect the language of the characters?

4．**Data**

The researcher selects the novel *A Tale of Two Cities* to be the data for the study. The novel is written by the well-known novelist Charles Dickens. Hotten (1870) says that Charles Dickens was born in 1812 in Portsmouth. He adds that Charles left the school at the age of 12 as his father was incarcerated in a debtor's prison. Pollak, Belviso, and Geyer (2014) state that Dickens worked in a shoe polish factory when he was a child and that his tough life inspired him to create the most memorable characters in his novels. They add that he is known for his masterful storytelling in books like *Oliver Twist*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Great Expectations*. They state that he is one of the greatest novelists of

the Victorian era and that his works amuse and inspire both writers and readers.

A *Tale of Two Cities* sets in London and Paris before and during the French Revolution. The novel displays the events and conditions that led up to the French Revolution and the reign of terror between 1775-93. It was published first in London by Chapman & Hall in 1859. It is one of the bestselling novels of all time and it is adapted for film, television, radio, and stage.

A *Tale of Two Cities* discusses mainly the injustice of an aristocratic family called "Evremondee" as an example of the injustice of the aristocracy to the public at this time. It all starts with their injustice to Dr. Manette, who is secretly imprisoned for 18 years, leaving his wife and daughter Lucie, who know nothing about him until they think he is dead. Since then, a close friend of Dr. Manette, named Lorry, took his daughter to London to keep her away from the oppression of the aristocrats in France. When Lorry knows that his friend is released from prison, he goes to Lucie to confess to her the truth about her father. As soon as Lucie learns the truth, she is shocked, but she decides to bring her father back to life again.

5. Data Limitations

The researcher has analyzed the dialogues of all characters of the novel, but she prefers to concentrate on the important and effective characters just to narrow down the data collection to be controllable. So, this research focuses only on six characters: Sydney Carton, Charles Darnay, Doctor Manette, Lucie Manette, Madame Defarge, and Jarvis Lorry.

6. Analysis and results

6.1. Before and After the Revolution

In this part, the researcher compares the use of language (ideational, interpersonal, and textual meta-functions) before and after the revolution to answer the third question of the study "To what extent can the French Revolution affect the language of the characters?"

6.1.1. Ideational Meta-function

Table (6): Percentages of characters' use of processes before and after the revolution.

Characters	Types of process									
	Material		Relational		Mental		Verbal		Existential	
	before	after	before	after	before	after	before	after	before	after
Mr. Lorry	221 41%	54 37%	171 31%	42 35%	108 20%	22 15%	28 5%	16 11%	14 3%	3 2%
Dr. Manette	102 33%	254 51%	97 32%	96 19%	76 25%	73 15%	24 7%	54 11%	6 3%	18 4%
Carton	160 41%	164 43%	102 26%	109 29%	92 24%	71 18%	28 8%	29 8%	5 1%	9 2%
Darnay	68 36%	48 46%	37 20%	35 34%	59 31%	14 13%	18 10%	3 3%	5 3%	4 4%
Lucie	105 44%	30 53%	60 25%	13 23%	51 21%	14 24%	22 9%	0	3 1%	0
Madame Defrage	47 45%	63 38%	30 29%	44 27%	14 13%	36 22%	12 12%	18 11%	1 1%	4 2%

Table (6) shows how characters use the various types of processes before and after the revolution. Mr. Lorry uses the material process before the revolution by a percentage of 41% and

after it by 37%. He applies it before the revolution more as he devotes himself to help both Lucie and Dr. Manette.

N	Actor	process	goal
1	I	Kiss	Your hand
2	you	Can bear	It?
3		Don't kneel	

Unlike Mr. Lorry, Dr. Manette uses this process after the revolution more (= 51%) as before the revolution he suffers from a mental illness which is the reason that led him to depend on others, but after the revolution, he becomes more confident and begins to change and starts helping others, such as his daughter and her husband. The percentage of his use increases by 18% which indicates a huge change in his personality and that he becomes a person of taking action.

Material Process			
N	Actor	process	goal	Page number
1	I	am working		p.44
2	I	Must bear	It	p.45

Carton is the protagonist of the novel who always helps other people more than helping himself. The percentage of his use of material processes increases after the revolution by 2% and reaches 43% because of the change of his character after the revolution. He becomes so responsible and sacrificial that he decides to die instead of Lucie's husband to make her happy.

Material Process		
N	Actor	process	goal
1	Officer!	look	to that young lady.
2	Let me	show	you the nearest tavern to dine well at
3	All you	Can do	for me is done.

Darnay is the third character that uses material process after the revolution more and this may happen because he tries to fulfil his promise to Gabille and save him from execution by the rebels, this promise causes him to be imprisoned and send himself to the guillotine. He uses many dynamic verbs to describe his condition in the cell.

Material Process (happening)		
N	Actor	process	circumstance
1	Willingly, and small	returns	for you good offices

Lucie is the fourth character who uses this type of process after the revolution more than before it, and this results because of the imprisonment of her husband and her attempts to save him from death.

Material Process		
N	Actor	process	goal
1	If it	Would make	you happier
2	I	have done	my best to prepare myself

Finally, Madame Defarge as well as Mr. Lorry uses material processes more before the revolution than after it because she calls for the revolution with all her efforts and knits the names of the enemies with wool. But after the revolution, she relied more on her husband.

N	Actor	process	goal
1	He	may wear	his head or lose it
2	I	mock	you
3	I	will tear	you to pieces

The second process is the relational process, which is used by three characters before the revolution more than after it; they are Dr. Manette, Madame Defarge, and Lucie. This result demonstrates that they use it more before the revolution to express their inner thoughts and desires. As for Mr. Lorry, Carton, and Darnay use it more after the revolution as they want to document everything and to try to show their opinions.

Relational possessive by Lucie			
N.	Possessor	process	
3	I	have	No friend who could go with me

The third result is that all the male characters: Mr. Lorry, Dr. Manette, Carton and Darnay uses mental process before the revolution more than after it. Each character has a different reason to explain this result for example Mr. Lorry uses this process to express his wishes for the future and his feelings. Carton mainly uses this process to express his creative ideas as he is a thinker and to

show his love for Lucie. Darnay as well as Carton usually uses this process to express his love to Lucie. But Lucie and Madame Defrage use it after the revolution more. Lucie uses it to express her feelings of sorrow because her husband is unjustly imprisoned. Madame Defarge uses it to express her feelings of happiness when they execute any aristocrat.

Mental process by Mr. Lorry			
N.	senser	process	phenomena	circumstance
1	I	hope	You care to live	

The verbal process is used by Mr. Lorry and Dr. Manette after the revolution more. Mr. Lorry does not use this process many times before the revolution as he is a man of actions more than talking; he uses it after the revolution to exchange information with the other characters.

Verbal Process by Mr. Lorry				
Sayer	process	receiver	verbiage	Page number
You	ask	me	for my advice, Mr. Stryver?	p.109
Jerry	say		that my answer was, RECALLED TO LIFE.	p.13

Dr. Manette uses this process more after the revolution as he becomes the narrator of his own story that he writes in his diary. Carton uses it equally before and after the revolution by 8%. This result shows that the personality of Carton does not rely on his speech; instead, he likes to watch events and think of creative solutions to difficulties. Darnay, Lucie and Madame Defarge use it after the revolution more. Madame Defarge uses it after the revolution to persuade her husband and people to kill any aristocrat and anyone who works for them even if he/she is poor. She also uses it to lead women in the revolution and encourage them to revenge.

7. Conclusion

The final results of this analysis show that Dr. Manette is the most character changes because of the revolution, followed by Madame Defarge then Carton. Based on the above discussion, we can conclude that by using Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar, we can analyze the features or personalities of both real persons and fictional characters through their use of language. The theory helps the researcher to analyze the personalities of the six characters. The results show that the personalities and language of the characters change because of the events of the revolution especially Dr. Manette and Madame Defarge.

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