

Transitivity Analysis of Full Power of Women in Systemic Functional Grammar

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Abstract: The research is a transitivity analysis of Priyanka Chopra's speech: Full Power of Women in Systemic Functional Grammar. Systemic Functional Grammar has been considered as one of the most prominent and effective linguistic theories for discourse analysis and M. A. K. Halliday is the main representative. Priyanka Chopra's speech arouses wide attention and can touch the hearts of the audience. The study on Chopra's address can reveal the relations between language and its meaning which can help the researchers get a better understanding of the speeches conveyed. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are adopted complementarily in this study to explore how transitivity analyses are realized in Priyanka Chopra's speech and then find out the characteristics of her speech and reveal the deep meanings of Chopra's speeches and the speech skills beneath them. According to the analysis of transitivity of Priyanka Chopra's speech, the author finds some distinguished features of Priyanka Chopra's speech such as standing in ordinary people's shoes to express her ideas, focusing on the spirit of dedication, emphasizing the importance of education, and encouraging the girls to face the difficulties bravely and tap their potential to make their dreams come true.

Keywords: *Speech, Transitivity, Process*

1. Introduction

Priyanka Chopra, an Indian actor, singer, producer, and model, was born on July 18, 1982, in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, India, and then lived and studied with her parents in Delhi, Chandigarh, and Ambala. In 1995, 13-year-old Priyanka Chopra went to the United States with her relatives and studied in many places. In Massachusetts, she participated in several theater performances and learned Western classical music and chorus. In 1998, Priyanka Chopra returned to India and completed high school at the Army Public School in Bareilly. After graduating, she entered Mumbai Jasinde College to study. In 2000, Payaka Chopra signed up for the Miss India contest and was successfully elected, representing India in the Miss Global World contest, and won the championship again.

Systemic Functional Grammar is put forward by M. A. K. Halliday, a world-famous linguist who modified and developed the idea of Firth's theories in the London School. The Systemic Functional Grammar is a sociologically oriented functional linguistic approach that regards functions as being "built into language as the fundamental organizing principle of the linguistic system".^[4] The publication of *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* by M.A.K. Halliday in 1985 symbolizes that the SFG has been relatively mature and its integrality and systematicness have formed.

Among the published works concerned with discourse analysis under the framework of SFG, they can be roughly classified into four types: discourse analysis on literary works, translation, practical texts, and discourse analysis on public speech. The analysis of public speaking is very popular in recent years and many researchers put their emphasis on public speeches addressed by celebrated presidents or presidential candidates.

By analyzing Priyanka Chopra's public speeches, this thesis helps to reveal the deep meanings of Chopra's speech and the speech skills beneath them which are very important for the researchers to study the ideology, thought, and purposes of the speaker. In this sense, this thesis is beneficial to disclose how Priyanka Chopra uses appropriate words and expressions to convey her thoughts, motivate the audience and then achieve her speech purposes. This thesis can help the learners get a better understanding of public speaking and meanwhile strengthen the awareness of choosing appropriate words in appropriate places. Thus this study has both theoretical and realistic significance in the field of speech study.

In addition, this study can broaden the scope of discourse analysis of public speech under the framework of SFG. Previous studies on public speeches mainly take presidents or notable leaders as the

object of study. The study on the artist is raw, hence the choice of research object of this thesis is a kind of innovation compared with previous studies.

What's more, this thesis is of pedagogical significance as well. By analyzing Priyanka Chopra's speech, it can arouse the awareness of the public the importance of education not only for the educatees themselves but also for the family and country especially the education of the girls who are more likely to be overlooked across the world. Besides, the innovations of this thesis are also beneficial for the latter researchers in their studies compared with previous studies. In the end, this study is of innovation significance.

By analyzing the speech delivered by Priyanka Chopra, the author tries to find out the characteristics of her speech based on the theory of Systemic Functional Grammar and figure out the following questions:

- (1) What are the characteristics of the verbs used in Priyanka Chopra's speeches?
- (2) How does Priyanka Chopra use appropriate words and expressions to convey her attitudes and meanings?

2. Research methods

To make this thesis convincing and objective, qualitative and quantitative methods are used in this thesis. The materials altogether have about 1246 words. What's more, there are about 58 clauses/processes in the research material. All of these transitivity processes are analyzed and listed according to their types and the frequencies of occurrence are presented in charts to provide a visual picture. As for the data collection part, the speech is downloaded and gathered firstly and then is divided by clause. After that, all of these clauses are classified by transitivity processes. According to transitivity, the number of each process is calculated by searching keywords in Microsoft Office Word, the total number and percentage of each process are calculated in Microsoft Office Excel and then the data are obtained. The quantitative method is mainly used to analyze and calculate the numbers and frequencies of each process appearing in the material, and the qualitative method is used as a theoretical framework to analyze the deep meanings beneath the distribution features and the characteristics of Priyanka Chopra's speech. Based on the charts of the study, the analysis of the deep meanings can be supportive and credible. Both the quantitative and qualitative methods are used complementarily during the study to achieve reasonable and justified findings.

3. Systemic functional grammar and mak. halliday

Systemic Functional Grammar is put forward by M. A. K. Halliday, a world-famous linguist who modified and developed the idea of Firth's theories in the London School. It regards functions as being "built into language as the fundamental organizing principle of the linguistic system" ^[4]. The publication of Halliday's *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* in 1985 indicates that the SFG has been relatively mature and its integrality and systematicness have formed.

Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar has been considered as one of the prominent and most effective linguistic theories for discourse analysis. At the same time, Halliday points out that the purpose of the text analysis is explanatory rather than interpreting, that is, it is intended to explain how and why the text expresses its meaning, but not to just interpret the meaning of the text.

Systemic Functional Grammar includes two parts which are "Systemic Grammar" and "Functional Grammar".^[1] However, it is not formed by adding these two parts briefly. Instead, they are two indivisible segments of an integrated framework of language theory. Systemic Grammar stresses that as the internal underlying relationships of a system, language is a system network (also called "meaning potential") that is composed of empty optional subsystems that are related to the meaning. As one of the symbols, language will inevitably make choices among all kinds of semantic functions when expressing the semantics of the speaker. Content determines the form and form are realized by an entity.

Functional Grammar regards language as the tool of social communication. The formation of a language system is decided by the different semantic functions during human communication.^[4] Similarly, choosing among the language system is also the motivating activity based on the function to be achieved. Halliday repeatedly stresses that language should be explained from the semiotic

perspective. The stoics are the earliest that regard language as semiotic and they changed the opinion that language is only a tool and created a new road that explains the language from an opinion that is similar to semiotics. Nowadays, semiotics has been treated as a way of thinking and they can be represented not only in language but also in various aspects of culture. Culture is a meaning potential that consists of various symbol systems. Architecture, art, dance, music, etiquette, commodity exchange method, etc. can be regarded as a symbol system. From this perspective, language is only one of the ways of representing social semiotics. On the other hand, language is an extremely special system that also works in manifesting other symbol systems and hence is the main way by which people build the world.

4. Ideational function

According to the Systemic Functional School, language is the production of social activity which bears various functions as one of the tools of human social activities. According to M. A. K. Halliday, the functional elements of grammatical phenomena in a language can be divided into three meta-functions which are ideational, interpersonal, and textual function.^[5] The ideational function includes experiential function and logical function and experiential function is mainly represented by transitivity and voice.

Transitivity is a semantic system in English that is used to represent the ideational function that divides what is heard and seen and what one does and how he behaves into different "processes". According to Halliday, there are six processes of transitivity which are material, mental, relational, behavioral, verbal, and existential process.^[5]

The material process has been glossed as those of "doing", but this is too active a term, as is the alternative name "action clause" that has sometimes been used for this type. They include events as well as actions: not only doings but also happenings.^[7] The material process is generally represented by dynamic verbs (play, write, clean, fight, build, buy), actor and goal. The "Actor" is the doer who performs the action or does the deed which is usually the logical subject and the "goal" is the target that the process is directed at or whom the action is extended to^[3] and it is the logical direct object which is often represented by nouns (house, room, bag, desk, glass, window, car, school) or pronouns (he, she).

"The 'mental processes are processes of consciousness. They fall into three sub-groups, (i) perception (e.g. seeing and hearing), 'seeing'; (ii) reaction (e.g. liking and fearing), 'feeling'; (iii) cognition (e.g. knowing and thinking), 'knowing'. This is the one type of process in English that is treated as distinctively human so that any entity that is cast in the role of this activated entity in a mental process clause thereby becomes endowed with quasi-human consciousness."^[7] "Perception" refers to the sense of thinking, seeing, hearing and looking such as see, look. "Reaction" refers to the sense of liking, fear, glad, satisfying and hate such as like, please. "Cognition" refers to the sense of thinking, knowing, understanding, considering and believing such as know, believe and convince. A mental process usually includes two participants. One is the "sensor" and the other is the "phenomenon". The sensor not only must be a "thing", it must be human or endowed with human-like consciousness and the phenomenon not only need not be human, it need not even be a 'thing', but can be a fact or a report.

The main factor that distinguishes the mental process is the nature of the participants involved. The sensor in a mental process is usually human or personified animals. This is different from that of the material process in which the actor can be human or not human. The phenomenon in the mental process can be either concrete people or things or abstract things or events. Sometimes the phenomenon can be a fact that is represented by "that".

The material process can be asked by "do", however, it is not suitable for the mental process because it is not "do" something that the mental process tries to manifest, it is some kind of feeling instead. It can be said that "What he did was break the glass", but can't be said that "What I did was like the picture".

The relational process is a process of being and having which indicates the relationships between two entities. The relational process is often demonstrated by verbs like be, become, last, own, mean, stand for, signify, act as, resemble, etc. which can be either attributive or identifying. Attributive process refers to what properties a certain entity possess or which type the entity belongs to and the formula of which is "a is one of the properties of x". Identifying process means that an entity is united with another entity, the formula of which is "a is the identity of x". In each of the identifying processes,

there will be an entity called "token" and another entity named "value". The "token" refers to the exterior, sign, form, and title, and "value" refers to essence, meaning, function and identification. Token and value are always combined with an identifier and identified. If the token is the subject, then the clause will appear as an active voice and on the contrary, if the subject is value, the clause will appear as a passive voice. For the attributive processes, there will be a component to signify the "Attribute", the "carrier" of the property and a verb to show the relational process. Each of the three constituents is indispensable in the relational process.

"Behavioral processes are processes of (typically human) physiological and psychological behavior, like breathing, coughing, smiling, dreaming, and staring. The participant who is behaving labeled 'Behaver', is typically a conscious being, like the Sensor, the Process is grammatically more like one of 'doing'.^[9] Only one participant will appear in the behavioral process and the participant should be human there will be "range" in some behavioral processes which add additional information to the process. It is difficult to distinguish the behavioral process from the material process that has only one participant. In such circumstances, the difference depends on whether the activity of someone is related to physiological activity. There can be two participants in behavioral processes, it can be seen as the material process at this point.

A verbal process is a process of information changing by talking. The verbal process often includes verbs such as say, tell, describe, talk, boast and praise, etc. There are three constituents in the verbal process: the sayer, the verbiage, and the receiver. The sayer is usually the subject of a clause. The Receiver is the one to whom the saying is directed which is realized by a nominal group typically denoting a conscious being (a potential speaker), a collective or an institution, the nominal group either occurs on its own or is marked by a preposition — almost always to but sometimes of.^[8] "The verbiage is the function that corresponds to what is said, representing it as a class of thing, rather than as a report or quote; This may mean one of the two things."^[7] The sayer is not always a human being. The receiver can appear to be another participant. Verbiage can be direct speech or indirect speech, a clause or a word group

Existential processes represent that something exists or happens. Words like being, exist, and arise are frequently used in the existential process. There will be an "Existent" in each of the processes. In addition, the word "there" usually plays the role of leading the clause and doesn't have any substantial meaning in the sentence. The entity or event that is being said to exist is labeled, simply, "Existent".^[6]

5. The analysis of transitivity in Priyanka Chopra's Speech

Table 1 below is the distribution of frequency and percentage of each process in Priyanka Chopra's speech. From Table 1 it can be seen that there are 168 processes altogether. The material process accounts for the largest part of the speech which is about 59 percent. The relational process runs the second place which accounts for 28 percent. The verbal process ranks third, accounting for 6 percent and the mental process ranks fourth with the percentage of which is 5. However, there is no behavioral process in the speech and existential processes take up a very small percentage in the speech. The author will analyze these six processes in detail one by one in the following paragraphs.

Table 1: The Distribution of Frequency and Percentage of Each Process in Priyanka Chopra's Speech.

Type of process	Frequency of process	Percentage of process	Total
Material	99	59%	168
Relational	47	28%	
Mental	8	5%	
Verbal	10	6%	
Behavioral	0	0	
Existential	4	2%	

5.1. The analysis of material process

"Material processes have been glossed as those of 'doing', but this is too active a term, as in the alternative name 'action clause' that has sometimes been used for this type. They include events as well as actions: not only doings but also happenings."^[7] There are two most important constituents in the material process, are "actor" and "goal". The "Actor" is the doer who performs the action or does the deed which is usually the logical subject and the "goal" is the target that the process is directed at or

whom the action is extended to and it is the logical direct object which is often represented by nouns or pronouns.

(1) I would **count** all the medicines **put** them in an envelope and **give** it out to patients, and I **took** my job very seriously.

Example (1) describes the job that the speaker did when she was young. The actor in this example is "I". The material processes are "count all the medicines", "put them in an envelope", "give it out to patients", and "took my job very seriously". Priyanka Chopra uses these verbs to indicate how serious she is when she did the job.

(2) For example, girls were **pulled** out of school when they **hit** puberty because they were **considered** ready for marriage and babies.

(3) Eventually, I **decided** to **cover** the cost of her education so that she could **continue** to **learn** because education is a basic human right. And a huge necessity especially today.

Example (2) is an example set by Priyanka Chopra to describe the current situation of girls. The actors are "girls" and "they". The material processes are "pulled out of school", "hit puberty", and "considered ready for marriage and babies". Priyanka Chopra describes the distinction between a boy and a girl or a man and a woman.

In the example (3), the material processes are "decided", "cover", "continue" and "learn". The actors accordingly are "I", and "she". This example shows that Priyanka Chopra pays for the education for the girl whose family cannot afford it for her because the family can only afford her brother to go to school.

5.2. The analysis of mental process

"The 'mental processes are processes of consciousness. They fall into three sub-groups, (i) perception (e.g. seeing and hearing), 'seeing'; (ii) reaction (e.g. liking and fearing), 'feeling'; (iii) cognition (e.g. knowing and thinking), 'knowing'. This is the one type of process in English that is treated as distinctively human so that any entity that is cast in the role of this activated entity in a mental process clause thereby becomes endowed with quasi-human consciousness."^[7]

A mental process includes two important participants. The participant that is 'seeing', 'feeling' or 'knowing' in a mental process clause is referred to as the Sensor. The sensor is narrower than either Actor or Goal: not only must it be a 'thing' — it must be human or endowed with a human-like consciousness. The phenomenon refers to the perceived object in the process. The phenomenon is broader than either Actor or Goal: not only it not be human-- it need not even be a 'thing', but can be a fact or a report.^[7]

(4) That's 1d 13 while boys still **enjoyed** their childhood.

(5) We were both given equal opportunities, and I **want** to emphasize this, I **want** to emphasize this for you because I don't **think** a lot of people might **understand** that being equal might seem very normal but where I come from India and a lot of developing countries around the world more of not this is an exception.

In example (4), the sensor is "boys", the phenomena are "their childhood". The word "enjoyed" is the symbol to identify mental processes. Chopra uses the example to express those boys have a happy childhood while girls are not.

In example (5), the sensor is "I", the phenomenon are "this", "a lot of people" and "that clause". Chopra uses the example to express it is precious for her to receive an education because, in India and a lot of developing countries, girls don't have opportunities to get an education.

5.3. The analysis of relational process

The relational process is a process of being and having which indicates the relationships between two entities. The relational process is often demonstrated by verbs like be, become, last, own, mean, stand for, signify, act as, resemble, etc. which can be either attributive or identifying. Attributive process refers to what properties a certain entity possess or which type the entity belongs to and the formula of which is "a is one of the properties of x". Identifying process means that an entity is united with another entity the formula of which is "a is the identity of x". In each of the identifying processes,

there will be an entity called " token " and another entity named " value ". The " token " refers to the exterior, sign, form, and title, and " value " refers to essence, meaning, function and identification. Token and value are always combined with the identifier and identified.

(6) My brother **was** born a few years later and even then, nothing **changed** for me.

(7) And for me, that **is** the fuel to my fire.

(8) Primary school it's the beginning of our future.

Example (6) is the attributive relational process. The carrier is " my brother ", "nothing" and the attribute is " born", "for me". Examples (7) and (8) belong to identifying relational processes. The tokens are " that " and " it ". The values are " the fuel to my fire" and "the beginning of our future". These examples are Chopra's description of her life. From the depiction, it can be seen that the arrival of her younger brother did not have a great impact on her life and she can still receive an education.

(9) As entertainers and influencers sitting in this room I feel that **is** our social responsibility to **be** a voice for the voiceless, which **is** why I applaud every woman in this room for **being** such a badass.

In example (9), the speaker describes a kind of relationship. The verb "is", "be", "is", and "being" are the symbols of the relational process. This example belongs to the attributive relational process. In these examples, the carriers refer to "that", and "which". The attributes are "our social responsibility", "a voice for the voiceless", "why I applaud every woman" and "such a badass". This is the description of her inner thoughts that we should help weak women.

5.4. The analysis of verbal process

A verbal process is a process of information changing by talking. The verbal process often includes verbs such as say, tell, describe, talk, boast and praise, etc. There are three constituents in the verbal process: the sayer, the verbiage, and the receiver. The sayer is usually the subject of a sentence. The Receiver is the one to whom the saying is directed.^[2] The receiver is realized by a nominal group typically denoting a conscious being (a potential speaker), a collective, or an institution, the nominal group either occurs on its own or is marked by a preposition — almost always to but sometimes of.^[8] "The verbiage is the function that corresponds to what is said, representing it as a class of thing, rather than as a report or quote; It can be the content of what is said and it may be the name of the sayings."^[6]

(10) And she **said**: "Oh, I don't go to school anymore."

(11) So, I went and **asked** her mother and I **said**, you know: "Why isn't she in school?"

(12) And her mom **said** that her family couldn't afford to send her and her brother to school, so they chose the boys.

In example (10), (11), and (12), the verbs "said", "asked", "said", and "said" signify the verbal process. The sayer in this example is "she", "I", "I", and "her mom". The verbiage is "Oh, I don't go to school anymore.", "Why isn't she in school?" and " her family couldn't afford to send her and her brother to school." In this example, Chopra notices that the girl doesn't go to school anymore because her family can only afford her brother to go to school.

5.5. The analysis of existential process

Existential processes represent that something exists or happens. Words like being, exist, and arise are frequently used in the existential process. There will be an "Existent " in each of the

processes. In addition, the word "there" usually plays the role of leading the clause and doesn't have any substantial meaning in the sentence." The entity or event that is being said to exist is labeled, simply, Existent."^[6]

(13) So, in life, **there** are moments when you stop and ask yourself: "How did I get here?"

(14) For using your platform and your voice to contribute to change and for ensuring that **there** is not even one lost generation as long as we are alive.

Existential processes are usually used to state a fact or phenomenon hence tend to be objective. In example (13), the existence is "moments" and it described the fact that people will ask themselves how he gets here in the moments of life. The existent in example (22) is "one lost generation". Example (22) is the expression that people should help the voiceless to reduce the differences.

5.6. *The analysis of behavioral process*

Behavioral processes are processes of (typically human) physiological and psychological behavior, like breathing, coughing, smiling, and staring. The participant who is 'behaving' is regarded as Behavior. In this speech, there is no behavioral process.

6. Conclusion

According to the analysis of transitivity of Priyanka Chopra's Speech, the author finds some distinguished features of Priyanka Chopra's Speech. The first one is that Priyanka Chopra stands in ordinary people's shoes to express her ideas and overlooks her identity. In addition, she tells her own stories to express her opinions and transmit the most ordinary and great love of humans to the audience. The second feature is the focus of the spirit of dedication. Chopra pays attention to the spirit of dedication in her speeches such as encouraging people to make contributions to the women of voicelessness. Thirdly, Chopra emphasizes the significance of education for girls or women. She appeals to the family to cultivate girls to go to school. Last but not the least, Chopra encourages the girls and women to face difficulties bravely and tap their potential to make their dreams come true.

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