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REVEALING RIDDLER'S IDEOLOGY IN THE BATMAN MOVIE: A TRANSITIVITY ANALYSIS

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Elysa Hartati Universitas Mercu Buana Yogyakarta elysa@mercubuana-yogya.ac.id Abstract: This study aims to describe the transitivity system in the text. The transitivity system is used to explain ideational metafunctions in the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics proposed by Halliday (2014). The analysis in this study focuses on Riddler's utterances in the film The Batman in 2022. This study analyzes the processes and participants contained in the clauses in these utterances. Then, the results of these findings will be linked with power hierarchy theory to reveal Riddler's Ideology. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method to show the analysis results. This research data is obtained from the transitivity process from Riddler utterances, which consists of the process and participants. The results show that Riddler used all kind of transitivity process. He used mostly material, relational, and followed by other processes. By using the transitivity process, Riddler can decide which character has more power through participant in the process. He used it on himself and his friend such as Batman and his follower more frequently than the government or higher up he discussed or talked to. Therefore, it can be concluded the ideologies that Riddler inherits is anarchist which influenced by narcissism.

Keywords: keywords 1, transitivity 2, processes 3, participants 4, power 5 ideology

INTRODUCTION

Language is defined as a tool that people invented to communicate with each other. A lot of different languages have been created. Some languages can function as a bridge to other languages. For centuries, the English language has become the world's lingua franca as *lingua franca* English can be expressed through literature media to bridge the message and ideology more widely. A movie is one of the Literature media that can be spread to everyone worldwide. It exposes the actual language, authentic settings, and culture of the foreign language (Nuriswara, 2014, as cited in Anggraeni et al., 2019). According to previous research, a movie could impact how people express their attitudes and behavior. For instance, dramatic films teach how to interact with the opposite sex and adult (Valkenburg and Cantor, as cited in Kubrak., 2020), and movie about climate issue increases media discussion about that issue (McGreavey and Liendfield, as mentioned in Kubrak., 2020). When the characters speak the words, people can take the meaning and moral message that feelings are trying to convey and then implement it into their daily lives. The certain movie that being used as subject in this research is The Batman from 2022.

The utterance from character might be influenced by some ideology, especially the Riddler's. He is the antagonist character in The Batman movie. In the story, Riddler always



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being opposite of government. Most reviewer on the internet gives their view on Riddler. On Variety.com, Debruge (2022) wrote unlike the Joker's anarchy in The Dark Knight, Riddler is more like an inspired person by influencing other people to become vigilantes like himself and Batman. Other reviewers also wrote Riddler was highly affected by actual life crime, a zodiac killer from the late 1960s, where the killer tested the police and government to find him by sending cryptic codes (The Batman Review. IGN Southeast Asia, 2022). Therefore, it is intriguing how writer made the characteristic of Riddler seems convincing by implementing certain ideology, like anarchism. To prove that, the research on the structure of language that character use in utterances can be held to see whether the opinions or hypothesis are true. This can reveal the knowledge on how language can be useful as tool to shape character or people ideology whether in storytelling or speaking in daily life. In this case, the language grammatical theory that being used is Transitivity System which is one of Systemic Functional Linguistics grammatical system.

Previous research has been conducted to find the transitivity process in the text or speech. The first research was conducted by Dewi (2020) and Mahdi (2020). It focuses on online news. The material process is the transitivity process that this research intended to find. Based on the results, it showed fifty-one material processes are happening in the online news. This research only focused on the material process, while the present research studies the other possible processes in utterance related to the ideology. The second research was conducted by Anggraini (2018), Sahnaz (2018), Fathonah (2018), Al Farisi (2018), and Fidiyanti (2018). They investigated the transitivity process in Donald Trump's speeches during the 45th United States presidential election and used it to reveal Donald Trump's Ideology. The difference between this previous and present research is the subject behind the speech. This research is focused on fictional characters' ideology. It could explore how writers plant the ideology on that character. It might reveal how those characters could affect the audience's way of thinking through the character's language.

This research uses grammar perspective theory and systemic functional linguistics. M.A.K. Halliday, a linguistic professor from the University of Sidney, introduced Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory. SFL explores how people use language in different contexts and how it is structured in a semiotic system (Eggins, 2005, p.20-21). This approach is used to analyze Riddler's utterance. Mainly, the researcher uses Halliday's transitivity system. Transitivity is a clause system that affects the verb in the process and includes participants and circumstances (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014, p. 227). Transitivity system belongs to the The primary processes are material, mental, and relational process. Then it branched into verbal, existential, and behavioral. The main participants that are accompanying the process are: (1) material participants are actors and goal; (2) mental participants are senser and phenomenon; (3) relational participants are token, value, carrier, and attribute; (4) verbal participants are sayer, verbiage, receiver, and target; (5) existential participants are existent; (6) behavioral participants are behaver. The circumstances are divided into extent, cause, location, matter, manner, role, and accompaniment.

This study analyzes Riddler's utterances affected by his ideas and experience living in Gotham City. Therefore, the researcher uses the participant, process, and circumstances based on the transitivity process to describe Riddler's Ideology. Ideology refers to a set of ideas, attitudes, and social beliefs to influence people and social community behavior (Prishtina, 2018). To explore ideology, the researcher needs the context of the situation to relate the text to the context of culture. Hasan (2009, as cited in Lukin, 2017) also added that for a dominant



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ideology to survive, it needs every level of human experience, which can be observed through the context of the situation. Hence, transitivity system in SFL is one of considerable tool for revealing context of situation. Revealing ideology by using only transitivity is not enough. To support that, this research use the theory of participants' power hierarchy by Andrew Goatly's (2002). It explores correlation between language, ideology and social power through the hierarchy of participants in transitivity process. Power refers to someone capability to control and persuade others to accomplish something (Susilowat & Ulkhasanah, 2021). Language plays crucial role for social power (Wodak, 2001, as cited in Susilowat & Ulkhasanah, 2021). It provides articulated tools for power differentials in hierarchical social institutions According to Goatly (2002), the order of power hierarchy on participants are shown down below:

- 1. Actor in transitive material process
- 2. Actor in intransitive material process
- 3. Sayer in verbal process
- 4. Phenomenon in mental process
- 5. Senser in mental process
- 6. Recipient in material process

This research aims to find the transitivity processes and participants in Riddler's utterances and interpret them into his ideology by using power hierarchy theory. The benefits of this research are divided into theoretical and practical. The theoretical benefit of this research is giving academic contribution, which acknowledges that the transitivity process exists in utterances, expands the knowledge of systematic functional linguistics and explores the meaning of utterances in the movie. The practical benefits include adding new information about transitivity in the movie industry, giving further information about the systemic functional grammar in The Batman movie, and teaching the systemic functional grammar to students through the popular movie.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, the researcher implemented a qualitative research method. Researchers frequently use this method to interpret based on data from social and human problems. "Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 380). The particular qualitative research approach that the researcher uses is descriptive. Researchers use this method to describe and interpret things based on relationships and conditions. The items related to this research can be words, sentences, and utterances suitable for linguistic analysis.

The data for this research is received from the transitivity process of the clauses in Riddler's utterance and interpreted from his ideology. The researcher focuses on the processes, participants, and circumstances found in the research. The data source uses a third-order semiotic system, which is interpretant proposed by C.S. Peirce. The source was taken from the film titled The Batman, released in 2022. The data for this research is received from the transitivity process of the clauses in Riddler's utterances and interpreted from his ideology. The researcher focuses on the processes, participants, and circumstances found in the research.



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Realizing that the researcher needs to collect the data from the source, the following techniques are applied during this research: (1) Acquiring The Batman Movie from a streaming site. (2) Watching The Batman Movie multiple times. (3) Take a screenshot of the scenes and transcribe the utterance from the subtitle. (4) The screenshot and transcription can be used as the source of data analysis. After gathering the data, it needs to be analyzed using the ethnographic research technique Spradley proposed. According to Spradley (1980), the analysis processes consist of (1) domain analysis, (2) taxonomy analysis, (3) componential analysis, and (4) cultural theme analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Transitivity process is realized through clauses that contain finite verbs between participants and circumstances. However, not all clauses contain finite verbs. There are two kinds of clauses: minor and major clauses. A minor clause is an irregular sentence. It doesn't contain a finite verb, for instance, "Hello people," "Good," "Thanks", etc. In contrast, a major clause is a regular sentence that contains a finite verb. According to the movie, there are 47 minor clauses and 191 major clauses from 238 clauses. The clauses that contain finite verb has the process of transitivity. According to the research subject, the genre is considered narrative. It is because the utterances are intended to be made as a foundation for the story. It is divided into three phases: orientation, complication, and resolution.

No	Narrative	Processes Type							
No	phases	Materi al	Menta	Verba	Behavior al	Relation	Existenti	1	
		aı	1	1	al	al	al		
1	Orientation	5	1	0	1	3	1	11	
2	Complicati on	53	34	14	18	55	5	180	
3	Resolution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Tota	al	59	35	14	19	58	6	191	
Pero	centage	30.9%	18.3%	7.3%	9.9%	30.3%	3.1%	100 %	

Table 1. Number of Transitivity Process Found in Narrative Phases

According to the result, Riddler used a variety of processes, namely material with 30.9 % percentage, relational at 30.3% percentage, mental with 18.3% percentage, behavioral with 9.9% percentage, verbal with 7.3% percentage, and existential with 3.1% percentage. Riddler used the material process the most. The material process usually shows how the speaker wants to convey actions of themselves or other beings. There are five material processes found in the orientation phase. Three actors of the processes represent Riddler himself, while others represent other people. These processes show that Riddler wanted to tell the people of Gotham what he did. The character's action is essential to introduce what they do in the story. Bates (1994, as cited in Riedl & Young, 2010) explained that the action performed by a character



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should be believable so it does not cause audiences to have the suspension of negative disbelief in the character.

In the complication phase, the process is dominated by a relational process followed by material and mental processes. In most transitivity analyses, material, relational, and mental processes are frequently found in the text. They are the root of the transitivity process (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 215). While the material was used to explain the action of Riddler or other beings, relational was primarily used by Riddler to relate something to another. This finding is reasonable since, in the story, he intended to be an observer, always giving exposition about the plot and setting of the story. Even though Riddler played a considerable part in the movie as the main antagonist, he seldom uttered regular sentences through the resolution phase. He mostly spent his time in jail while the resolution phase happened, and the story primarily focused on Batman.

According to the story, Riddler has always had conversations with other people. He never spoke to himself and always had people to talk to, whether face to face in near distance or far. Determining his ideology is not simply concluded by the process but his perception and reaction to anyone he referred or talked to. For instance, when he said "we're such a good team," in context "we" refers to Riddler and Batman. Therefore there are two entity take a part in the relational process as token. There also hidden participants, for example "just hold still." It has hidden participant "you" and it refers to attorney. The number of Riddler participants of the character in the movie can be seen in the following figure:

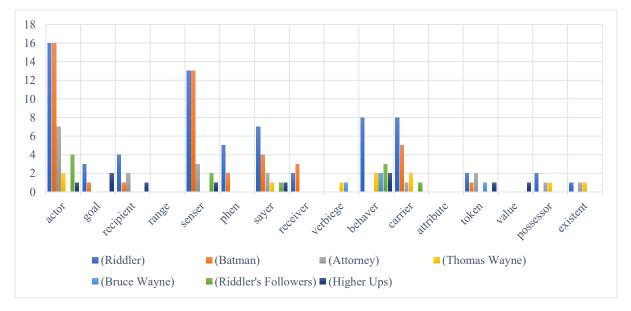


Figure 1. Chart of Riddler's Transitivity Process Participants

From the chart, it can be observed that Riddler mostly uttered the participants of character from the material, mental, and relational processes. According to Derewianka (2002, as cited in Oktoma, 2017), some narrative elements involve characters with defined identities and use processes and participants to build up the story. Riddler mostly referred to himself as a participant, which took 41.5 % percentage among other characters. Then it, followed by Batman with 26.9 % percentage, an attorney with 11.1 % percentage, and the other character such as Thomas Wayne with 5.8 % percentage, Riddler's follower with 6.4 % percentage, and higher ups with 5.8 % percentage.



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Sample of the data

Some samples can be observed to see deeper into the transitivity process. The material process deals with the physical or abstract action of an entity doing something (Eggins, 2005, p. 215). It represents the process of doing and happening. The participants of this process are actor, goal, recipient, client, and scope. An example of material process analysis can be observed in the following datum:

We	Will give	Them	real,real change now			
Actor	Material process	Recipient	Goal			
Table 2 Example of Material Process						

 Table 2. Example of Material Process

Unlike material, a mental process cannot be seen and felt through the senses. It was more concerned with our consciousness than the material world (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 245). The process is divided into perspective, cognitive, and affective. This process only has two participants, namely the senser and phenomenon. An example of a mental process can be seen in the following datum:

I	have always loved	little puzzles
Senser	Mental process (affective)	Phenomenon

 Table 3. Example of Mental Process

A verbal process happens when some entity utters or says the word. It lies between the process of mental and relational. Symbolic relations are formed in the mind and expressed through language, such as words that have meanings (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 215). The participants of this process are sayer, verbiage, receiver, and target. The sayer is the person who utters the word, the verbiage is the message, the receiver is the person who gets the message, and the target is someone who is targeted in the talk. The example from the research can be seen in the following datum:

She	Promised	real change
Sayer	verbal process	Verbiage
	Table 4 Example of Verbal Pro)CESS

Table 4. Example of Verbal Process

A behavioral process combines physical and psycho aspects of the process. It is a representation of the external manifestation of inner workings, such as the acting out of conscious processes (for example, laughter) and physiological states (for example, sleep) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 215). These processes lie on the boundary between material and mental processes. The participant in the behavioral process is a behaver. An example of the process can be seen in the following datum:

Ι	Have been waiting	For this day
Behaver	Behavioral process	Circumstances

Table 4. Example of Behavioral Process

The relational process has two types of process, namely, attributive relational process (ARP) and identifying relational process (IRP). ARP means the process that gives quality to the entity, meaning' x is a member of group a'. There are two participants of ARP, namely carrier and attribute. An attribute is the quality attached to the carrier (Eggins, 2005, p. 240). There is also another participant called possessor, meaning 'x has a'. It is indicated by the use of 'have,' own,' deserve,' etc. An example of ARP can be seen in the following datum:



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Since	Your justice	Is	so select					
circumstances	carrier	Relational process	Attribute					
(attributive)								

 Table 4. Example of Attributive Relational Process

On the other hand, IRP has a function to identify, not classify or ascribe something (Eggins, 2005, p. 241). It has the meaning of 'x is intended to identify a'. It has two participants, such as token and value. Unlike ARP, the participants of IRP can be switched, and the meaning would still be the same. It is because of whether the token or value of IRP can be used in passive form (Eggins, 2005, p. 241). An example of the process can be seen in the following datum:

This	Is	Your legacy too				
token	Relational process (identifying)	Value				
Table 4. Example of Identifying Relational Process						

The existential processes are acknowledged by 'existences' or 'occurrences' (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 215). It can be noticed by its usage of "there" noun. The process can be expressed by the usage of verbs that mean to exist or happen. The participants of this process are called existent. The example can be seen from following datum:

w as	Ihere	That day
Existential process		Circumstances
	Existential process	Existential process

Table 4. Example of Existential Process

Influence of participants to shape ideology

Realized the ideology of character can be seen by the power by participants, it is important to know the position of the character based on their position on a person's perception. Goatly (2002, as cited in Haig, 2012) purposed that the power that character inherit can be seen by the uses of participant on them. He recommends the use of participant's hierarchy from the most to least powerful by the list:

- 1. Actor in transitive material process
- 2. Actor in intransitive material process
- 3. Sayer in verbal process
- 4. Phenomenon in mental process
- 5. Senser in mental process
- 6. Recipient in material process

From the participants that Riddler use in his utterances, the power hierarchy can be observed through the number of how much it used. The hierarchy power can be seen from following datum:

		Participants Type							
No	Characters	Actor (trans)	Actor (intrans)	Sayer	Phen	Sens	Rec	Total	%
1	Riddler	10	6	7	5	13	4	45	41.3%



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2	Batman	10	6	4	2	13	1	36	33.0%
3	Attorney	2	5	2	0	3	2	14	12.8%
4	Thomas Wayne	1	1	1	0	0	0	3	2.8%
5	Bruce Wayne	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
6	Riddler's Followers	2	2	1	0	2	0	7	6.4%
7	Higher Ups	0	1	1	0	1	1	4	3.7%

Table 5. Number of Participant's Power

According to result, Riddler has highest power among other character with total 41.3% percentage followed by Batman with 33% percentage and attorney with 12.8% percentage. The fact that Riddler being the apex participant leads to the assumption Riddler is a somewhat narcissistic individual. Fausiah & Widury (2005, as cited in Aljauzy, A. F., 2021) stated that narcissism is the strange feeling of someone who feel themselves important and hoping they got special treatment. Although he had a rough life, he wants everyone to know that. There are examples in the material process where he said "no one ever gave me a chance" or when he relates himself as a weak person in "I am not physical." This is the case where characteristics of a person might be told from their perspective.

In the story, Batman is the one who inspired him to take vigilante as the life way. Batman's actions and thought are matter for him. Moreover he used participant 'we' and 'us' to refer himself and Batman, so he could be equal to him. In the analysis, he lifted Batman's through the most powerful participants like Riddler possessed which are actor in both transitive and intransitive material process. He also always wanted to respect and be humbled by Batman. This humbled act can also be proven through his relational process, where he said, "Me? I'm nobody." And "I am just instrument". But in the end, Batman is confused with Riddler's message and still threatens him as an enemy, even after Riddler's explanation. This betrayal is caused by opposition of what Batman and Riddler believe. Batman believes that punishment achieves justice, while Riddler thinks it is execution. The lack of clearance on the process can confuse, for instance, "you (Batman) will see" or "you (Batman) are part of this too".

After Batman betrays Riddler for saying he is not his partner, the story tells Riddler's followers to do a coup d'etat. He placed them on high participant with total 6.4% higher than Thomas Wayne, Bruce Wayne, and Higher ups. Therefore Riddler made them dominant because they are matter the most than people he despised. Moreover he include them two times in higher participant which is actor in transitive material process. It can be concluded that Riddler really value people who is on his side.

Batman himself and Riddler were also involved higher up in his utterance. The attorney, Mr. Colson, holds the highest participant among higher up. He acted as 2 actor in transitive material process and 5 in intransitive material process. It is because of his involvement in the beginning of the complication phase. Riddler was never respected him due to his corruption in defending the mafia boss and his involvement in Gotham's lowest club. Therefore, in context, he used to process with high-power participants to interrogate and verify what he had done, for example, "You deserve to be dead after what you did, "or "which vermin you're paid to protect."



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Giving attorney power in Riddler's utterance is significant in pointing out where the story will go. It motivates Batman to investigate the criminal that an attorney defends.

There are some higher ups that hold powerful participants in Riddler utterances. Thomas Wayne appeared as an actor, sayer, and other higher-ups as actors and senser. Even though he talked about Bruce wayne in some conversation, unlike other higher ups, he never used high participants on him. Despite that, they play a vital role in shaping Riddler's hatred of the government, for example, when Riddler put Thomas Wayne as a sayer in a sentence, "The day the great Thomas Wayne announced he was running for mayor made all those promises." or Bella Real "She promised real change." There is some build-up of anarchism through distrust of major candidate promises. Even though Thomas did not directly cause Riddler to suffer, his experience of abandonment after Thomas' promise made him distrust the government. This can also be proven by how little he uses participants of Thomas and other higher-ups compared to himself and Batman.

According to Berkman (2003, as cited in Baker, 2022), anarchists believe that no one has the right to dominate other people or interfere with their freedom. In Riddler's case, anarchism happens not because of strict rule or tyranny but because of abandonment. The government is too busy putting its best frame on media and spending their corrupted money on their satisfaction rather than taking care of the lower class. Therefore, Riddler thinks it is useless to be on top if they never care about what is beneath them. It can be proven on how low he uses powerful participants on higher up compare to how he used on himself or his friend.

Anarchism is nothing new. In real life, sometimes unreasonable promises are created by a political candidate when the election campaign happens, then the promise is never fulfilled. This movie is a satire of a case like that. There will always be a chance for an anarchist like Riddler to rise when people are disappointed with the government. If no better change or aspiration from people is fulfilled, anarchism might be realized through demonstration, vandalism, or even terrorism. Undoubtedly, the most significant loss is not from higher up but innocent people caught up in that violence and destruction.

CONCLUSION

By using transitivity analysis and power hierarchy, it can be revealed that participants in process can shape ideological mindset in a person's mind. It can shape their trust in other people, leading to their actions. High power over people can mean positive trust, making them respect others like Riddler and Batman. However, overly trusting is surely not good since it might lead to confusion and misunderstanding among trusted people. It also can lead to distrust. Using as little participant with high power in conversation means a person cannot trust them to have so much power in their utterance. It also can be concluded that Riddler has a narcissistic character and inherited anarchism ideology. Both of them have a connection to shape someone who cannot trust a high-ranking ruler rather than themselves. This research is not to promote anarchism, but to see the example of a case that can be learned and avoided for better political and social life. People should trust the government, and the government should be responsible for that trust by prospering who they rule. Other than that, the research could be beneficial for people who want to write character dialogue so it can be more meaningful. This research is far from perfect. Therefore another research is highly recommended to be held to enrich and improve Systemic Functional Linguistic research for English education in future.



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