PARTING COMPANY WITH A DEAR ONE: A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL APPROACH TO A TRIBUTE DELIVERED BY MATILDA AMISSAH-ARTHUR

Charles Djorbua[1i],
Dorah Mensah[2],
Daniel Afrifah Yamoah[3]
[1]Presbyterian College of Education,
Akropong Akuapem,
Ghana
[2]Akrokerri College of Education,
Ghana
[3]Assistant Lecturer,
Akenten Appiah Menka University
of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development,
Ghana

Abstract:

Tributes are paid to the dead to eulogise them and also to re-echo their sterling qualities when they were alive. Language is used tactfully to play this functional role. This study employs the transitivity model of the Systemic Functional Grammar by Halliday and Matthiessen to analyse the tribute by Mrs. Matilda Amissah-Arthur to her late husband, the former Vice President of Ghana. The study, through both quantitative and qualitative means, aims at exploring the dominant process types and the participants used in the tribute to unravel their communicative functions. The results indicate that five of the process types which are material, verbal, relational, mental and behavioural are used in the tribute. Out of a total of 44 clauses identified in the text, the material process was the most used with a frequency of 18 representing 41% to underscore the actions carried out by the late Vice President when he was alive. This is given credence to by the preponderant use of the *actor* among the participants. The study concludes that the processes and the participants were employed to project their communicative effectiveness in presenting the message.

Keywords: transitivity processes, participants, systemic functional grammar, tribute

[i] Correspondence: email cdjorbua@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

Language is an effective means to communicate by giving out information, asking questions or issuing a command. Given this direction, language is said to be functional rather than merely being formal. Bloor and Bloor (2004: 2), believe that "*when people use language, their language acts produce or construct meaning".* For communication to be effective, language is so much essential whether verbal or in written form.

There are many domains in which language is used for a specific communicative function such as to persuade, convince, inform, educate, give instructions and also to express one's inner thoughts and feelings. One of such domains is funeral tributes in which language is employed to eulogise the dead as a way of paying one's last respect to the departed soul. Tributes have been paid to great people the world over to reveal their sterling qualities which underline their greatness, and also to bid them farewell on their journey to eternity.

The late Paa Kwesi Amissah-Arthur, the former Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, passed away on 29th June, 2018 at the age of 67. As the former Second Person in Ghana, many were the tributes given by both individuals and institutions to eulogise him and also to bid him a befitting farewell. Among the tributes delivered was the one by Mrs. Matilda Amissah-Arthur, the wife of the deceased. Tributes reveal the relationship that existed between the deceased and the eulogist.

2. Objectives

The study aims at exploring the language of the tribute from the perspective of functional grammar. It, therefore, seeks to do the following:
- To identify the predominant process types and participants used in Matilda Amissah Arthur's tribute to her late husband, the former Vice President of Ghana.
- To explore the communicative functions of these transitivity patterns in the tribute.

2.1 Research Questions
In view of the objectives stated above, the study provides answers to the following questions:
- Who/what are the predominant process types and participants used in Matilda Amissah Arthur's tribute to her late husband?
- What are the communicative functions of these transitivity patterns in the tribute?

2.2 Significance of the Study
The findings of this study will be useful since they will seek to affirm or contest earlier findings so as to contribute immensely to the scanty literature on the linguistic analysis of funeral tributes, specifically in Ghana. Again, it will add up to the existing literature in the field which will serve as a point of reference for other researchers who wish to embark on an analysis of funeral tributes.

3. Literature Review

A number of studies have been done the world over on funeral text types which includes death announcement in newspapers (Al-Khatib & Salem, 2011; Afful, 2012; Al-Zubaidi, 2012) and messages of condolence (Yahya, 2010; Tareq, 2013; Kongo and Gyasi, 2015; Kuang, 2017) but not much scholarly work has been done in the linguistic analysis of funeral tributes.

In a study, Yeboah (2017) analysed some tributes paid to the late Professor John Evans Atta-Mills, a former president of the Republic of Ghana by some private and public institutions in Ghana. Based on the Appraisal theory, the study investigated the linguistic features employed to construe grief in thirty (30) tributes. Fifteen (15) of the tributes were taken from private institutions and fifteen (15) of them from public institutions. The results of the study revealed that almost all the public institutions indicate grief, sorrow and sadness as the main areas on which the text hinged. Even though Yeboah's study was on analysis of tributes, it has a different orientation from the current research in that while Yeboah hinged his study on the appraisal strand of the Systemic Functional Grammar, the current study uses the transitivity model of the Systemic Functional Grammar to analyse the tribute.

Secondly, Akinyode (2019) examined the sociolinguistic features employed in a funeral tribute by Yoruba-English bilinguals to express their feelings towards their dead relatives. Drawing on some theoretical insights from certain sociolinguistic theories including Systemic Functional Grammar, ethnography and socio-pragmatics, the study used 30 recorded audio-visual funeral tributes of Yoruba-English bilinguals in Southwestern Nigeria. The outcome of the study indicates that the main communicative purpose of funeral tributes was to eulogise the dead. The research also brought to light certain linguistic features (lexical, syntactic) that helped in the communicative functions of tributes and concluded that language cannot be separated from culture. Akinyode's work and the current study both analyse linguistic features in tributes but while Akinyode depended on several theoretical backgrounds, the current study hinges on only the transitivity model of the Systemic Functional Grammar.

Moreover, Afrifa-Yamoah, Djorbua and Darko (2021) investigated how transitivity processes and their participants were employed in a tribute by Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings to her late husband and former president of Ghana, Jerry John Rawlings. Anchored in the Systemic Functional Grammar, the study examined the functional roles of the process types in the tribute and discovered that all the six transitivity processes: material, mental, behavioral, existential, verbal, and relational were used to project and present the message of the tribute. It also came to light that the behavioural process was the most used transitivity process in the tribute which runs counter to the notion by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) that the behavioural process is a minor process type.

Finally, Mwinwelle, Duah and Ernest Mensah (2021) examined how presidents employ language in their tributes to praise the dead. The study, using the transitivity framework by Halliday and Matthiessen, investigates the use of process types in Ghanaian presidential tributes. These tributes were delivered to the memory of Nana Afia Kobi Serwaa Apem II, the late Queen Mother of the Ashanti Kingdom. The study revealed that there was overwhelming use of relational processes, among other processes, to identify the sterling qualities of the late

Queen Mother which further brought to light the different kinds of relationships that existed between her and the presidents.

From the literature, it is evident that some work has been done on tributes as far as their linguistic analysis is concerned. While Yeboah (2017) used the Appraisal strand of Systemic Functional Linguistics, Akinyode (2019) dwelt on certain sociolinguistic theories including Systemic Functional Grammar, Ethnography and Socio-pragmatics in analyzing funeral tributes. However, Afrifa-Yamoah et al. (2021) and Mwinwelle et al. (2021) employed solely the Transitivity model of the Systemic Functional Grammar in their investigations of the linguistic features of the tributes. The current study shares the same theoretical basis in its analysis of funeral tributes with Afrifa-Yamoah et al. (2021) and Mwinwelle et al. (2021). The point of divergence is that the current study employs a funeral tribute by the second lady of Ghana to the memory of her late husband.

3. Theoretical Framework

Systemic Functional Grammar is a theory within the social semiotic approach to language use. Systemic Functional Grammar, unlike other grammars, posits that language is practical and expresses meaning by considering the context within which language is used (Matthiessen, 1995). The Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) theory by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) is a grammatical approach to the study of language that postulates that language is a system of choices from which language users make use of linguistic forms to perform a communicative function. SFG is basically focused on the functions of grammar rather than concentrating so much on the rule that leads to the production of accepted structures in the grammatical system. Rule-based grammar is generally within the domain of generative and structural grammars. Halliday describes grammar as a system rather than rules, in that, every grammatical structure has to do with the making of choices from a describable set of options (Li, 2019). According to Halliday (1967, p. 38) "*transitivity is the term given to a network of a system whose point of origin is the 'major' clause, the clause containing a predication*" and "*the transitivity systems are concerned with the types of a process expressed in the clause, with the participants in this process, animate or inanimate, and with various attributes and circumstances of the process and participants*".

Halliday (1967) identified three kinds of meta-functions of language which he termed ideational, interpersonal and textual. The ideational meta-function relates to transitivity and clause complexity, the interpersonal function has to do with mood and modality while the textual function deals with themes. According to Wiranto (2018), from the perspective of lexicogrammar, the ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings are construed at the level of word, groups, clause and discourse.

3.1 The Transitivity System
The transitivity system argues that our conception of reality comprises happening, feeling, being, "goings-on" of doing (Kondowe, 2014). These goings-on' are expressed through the grammar of the clause. The transitivity system is made up of six processes: material, mental, relational, behavioural, verbal and existential. The main and frequent processes used are

material, mental and relational while behavioural, verbal and existential are classified as minor process types (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). The process is usually associated with one or more participants and circumstances.

3.2 Material Process

This is the process of doing and happening. These verbs talk about an action or event. The material process involves verbs of physical actions such as throwing, eating, running, playing, singing, etc. Thompson (2014) avers that the material process is the largest and the most diverse of all the process types. The material process has the *actor* and the *goal* as its predominant participants.

Example: You *[Actor]* spent time studying *[Material]* the Bible *[Goal]*

3.3 Mental Process

Mental processes usually indicate what goes on in the mind rather than the external world. It has to do with perception – feeling, tasting, etc.; processes of cognition – knowing, deciding, remembering, etc.; processes of emotion or affection: liking, hating, loving, adoring, etc.; and processes of desideration (desiring, wishing, wanting, etc.). The mental process has *senser* and *phenomenon* as its participants. The senser is involved in the mental process while the phenomenon is the entity which is felt or thought about by the senser.

Example: I *[Senser]* know *[Mental]* that in life you touched so many people *[Phenomenon]*.

3.4 Relational Process

This is one of the major process types in the transitivity system. There are two types of relational processes, namely the attributive process and the identifying process. The attributive process usually expresses the kind of attributes or qualities an entity has whereas the identifying relational process expresses the related properties of two entities in the clause. The attributive relational process has *carrier* and *attribute* as its participants. The carrier refers to the topic of the clause that comes before the verb while the attribute which could be adjectival or nominal gives a description of the topic in the clause. The identifying relational process, on the other hand, has two participants: token and value (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Example: I *[Carrier]* am *[Rel. Attributive]* very proud of you *[Attribute]*.

3.5 Verbal Process

The verbal process is construed as the process that brings out the inner thought through saying. Verbal processes are basically verbal actions that are carried out through the use of verbs of saying. These include verbs such as say, report, tell, comment, admit, insist, announce, speak, intone, state, etc. The verbal process has *sayer*, *receiver* and *verbiage* as participants. The sayer is the entity that is capable of putting out a signal. The receiver is the beneficiary of the verbal message, occurring with or without a preposition. The verbiage normally describes some kind of verbal behaviour.

Example: When I *[Sayer]* asked *[Verbal]* that we go home *[Verbiage]*.

3.6 Behavioral Process

According to Halliday (1994), behavioural clauses are "*processes of (typically human) physiological and psychological behaviour, like breathing, coughing, smiling, dreaming and staring*" (p. 139). They are mid-way between material and mental processes. The behavioural process has two participant roles which are the *behaver* and the *behaviour*. This process type is classified as one of the minor process types which is partly material and partly mental (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Example: She [Behaver] tastes [Behavioural Process] the soup [Behaviour]

3.7 Existential Process

The last process type is referred to as the existential process. This process affirms the existence of something. It is usually realized by the verb *be*. The *existent* is the only participant. Existential clauses usually start with *there* as their subject (Thompson, 2014).

Example: There [Subject] is [Existential Process] an old woman [Existent] in that village.

4. Methodology

The **s**tudy adopted the mixed method approach which encompasses both quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyse data so as to make the analysis complete. The mixed method is both feasible and useful to expose the different aspects of a study's validity (Lazaraton, 2005). The quantitative approach gives a statistical measurement of the analysis while the qualitative method gives a verbal description of the analysis. The data for the study was a tribute delivered by Mrs. Matilda Amissah-Arthur to her late husband – Paa Kwesi Amissah-Arthur. The study examined the process types and the participants in the transitivity theory. The selected text was analysed into clauses. The clauses, through the transitivity model, were analysed to bring out the experiences and thoughts of the speaker. Burton's (1982, cited in Awuku, 2018) steps of analysis were used: isolating the process types and identifying participants involved with each process; determining what sorts of processes they were, and which participant was engaged in which type of process; and finding out who or what was affected or seemed to be affected by each of the processes. Graphs were used to represent the statistics that were used for the discussion.

4.1 Analysis and Discussion

In this section, the statistical results of the data analysis are presented. Summarily, forty-four (44) clauses (process types) have been found as follows: material, verbal, relational, mental and behavioural clauses. All these processes were identified with their respective participants.

Table 1: Process types

Process	Number of occurrences	Percentage (%)
Material	18	41
Verbal	12	27
Relational	7	16
Mental	6	14
Behavioural	1	2
Total number of processes	44	100

The material process was the highest with 18 appearances (41%), followed by the verbal process with 12 occurrences (27%), the relational process with 7 occurrences representing (16%), the mental process with 6 appearances (14%) and finally, the behavioural process which was 1 (2%).
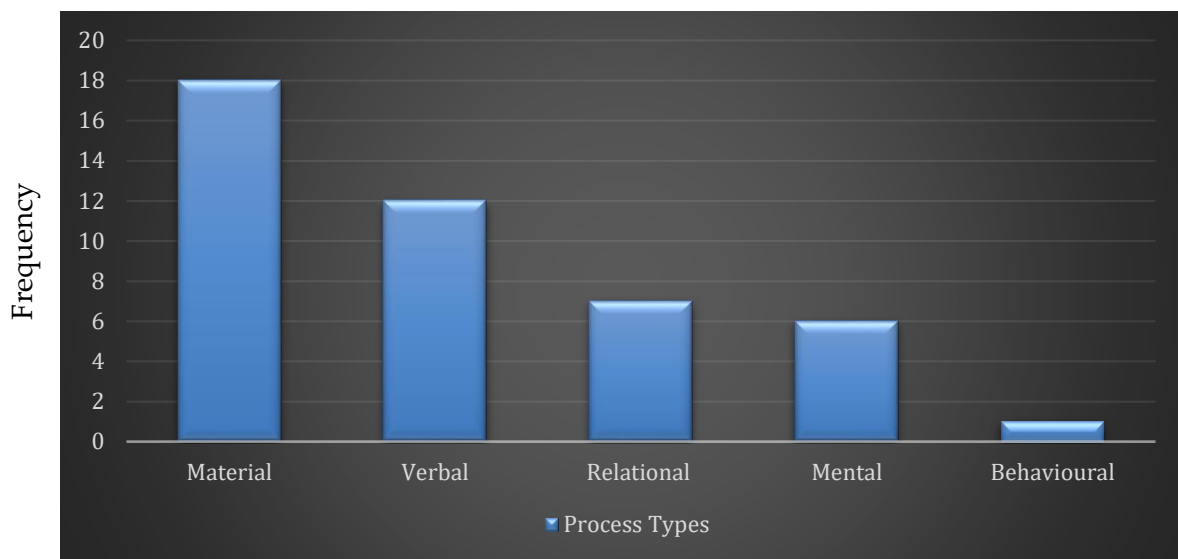
Figure 1: Process types

Table 2: Participants in data

Participants	Number of occurrences	Percentage (%)
Actor	18	19
Goal	14	15
Sayer	12	12
Verbiage	9	10
Carrier	7	8
Attribute	7	8
Receiver	7	8
Target	5	5
Senser	6	7
Phenomenon	6	7
Behaver	1	1
Total Number of Processes	92	100

The actor, goal and target participants of the material process occurred most frequently with (18) and (14) and (3) respectively. They were followed by sayer (12) and verbiage (9) and receiver

(7) of the verbal process. Then came carrier (7), attribute (7) and target (1) of the relational process. Senser and phenomenon of the mental process followed with (6) and (6) respectively and finally, behaver (1) and target (1) of the behavioural process followed.
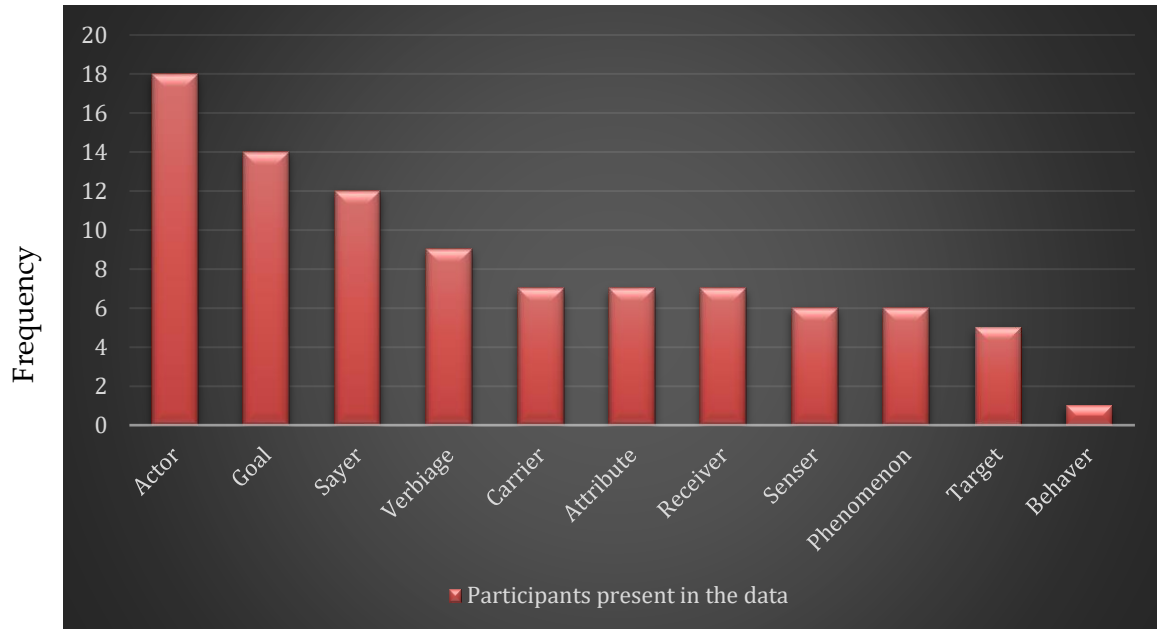

Figure 2: Participants present in data

4.2 Material process – discoveries

Material processes, as one of the major process types, are used to construe the actions carried out by the late Vice President of the Republic of Ghana – Paa Kwesi Amissah-Arthur in the tribute delivered by her wife, Mrs. Matilda Amissah-Arthur as a form of echoing his worth as a former Vice President. The use of constructions such as You *[Actor]* left *[Material]* your mark *[Goal]*; you *[Actor]* proved *[Material]* to all *[Target]* and you *[Actor]* took *[Material]* your work *[Goal]* seriously and discharged your duties as best as you cold *[Circumstance]* are crystal evidence of the former Vice President's selflessness and commitment in serving his country to the best of his abilities. The material processes *took*, *left* and *proved* as used in the clauses above buttress the fact that the late Vice President was hardworking. The predominant use of the *actor* and the *goal* underscore the action-oriented nature of the clauses which in turn refer to the action-packed services rendered by the deceased during his stewardship to his nation without involving himself in any negativity [If we needed a reminder of this, we *[Actor]* have *[Material]* it *[Goal]* in the outpouring of love shown us since 29th June *[Circumstance]*].

Mrs. Amissah Arthur also highlighted the close relationship that existed between her and her late husband through the material process *shared*, with the actor *we* underlining the kind of unity and closeness that they used to enjoy as shown in the ensuing clause [We *[Actor]* shared *[Material]* a closeness that was a source of amusement to our friends and family *[Goal]*]. The use of the actor "I" and the material process *will miss* signals the end of that close relationship they enjoyed. But she sharply comes to terms with the loss through the use of these material processes *won't*

bring and *have accepted* with the actor "I" showing the acceptance of the loss. The material clauses that follow provide backbone for the discussion above.

[MAT 14] *As a technocrat, you [Actor] took [Material] your work [Goal] seriously and discharged your duties as best as you cold [Circumstance].*

[MAT 15] *Above all else, you [Actor] proved [Material] to all [Target] that one could be a Christian and rise to the highest position without soiling one's hands [Goal].*

[MAT. CL 16] *If we needed a reminder of this, we [Actor] have [Material] it [Goal] in the outpouring of love shown us since 29th June [Circumstance].*

[MAT. CL. 17] *People from all walks [Actor] have come to visit and sympathize [Material] with us [Target].*

[MAT. CL. 18] *You [Actor] left [Material] your mark [Goal] – a simple, honest, principled, hardworking man of integrity.*

[MAT. CL. 1] *Forty years and five months [Circumstance] we [Actor] lived [Material] together.*

[MAT. CL. 2] *A thousand tears [Actor] won't bring [Material] you [Goal] back.*

[MAT. CL. 3] *So, I [Actor] have accepted [Material] this great loss [Goal].*

Mrs. Matilda Amissah-Arthur also eulogised the Christian and God-fearing attitude of her late husband through the actor *you*, the material process *spent time studying* and the goal *the Bible;* actor *you*, material process *would come up with* and the goal *very deep insights into the passages we read*. The material clauses above as used in the tribute reveal the religious nature of the late Vice President and the fact that he knew he would one day go back to his Maker. The clauses below give further supporting details.

[MAT. CL. 4] *Whatever you did, you [Actor] did [Material] it [Goal] as unto the Lord.*

[MAT. CL. 5] *You [Actor] spent time studying [Material] the Bible [Goal] over and over.*

[MAT. CL. 6] *In recent years, [Circumstance] you [Actor] took to reading [Material] the not so popular books of the Bible [Goal].*

[MAT. CL. 7] *You [Actor] enjoyed discussing [Material] them [Goal].*

[MAT. CL. 8] *During our Wednesday morning Bible studies, [Circumstance] you [Actor] would come up with [Material] very deep insights into the passages we read [Goal].*
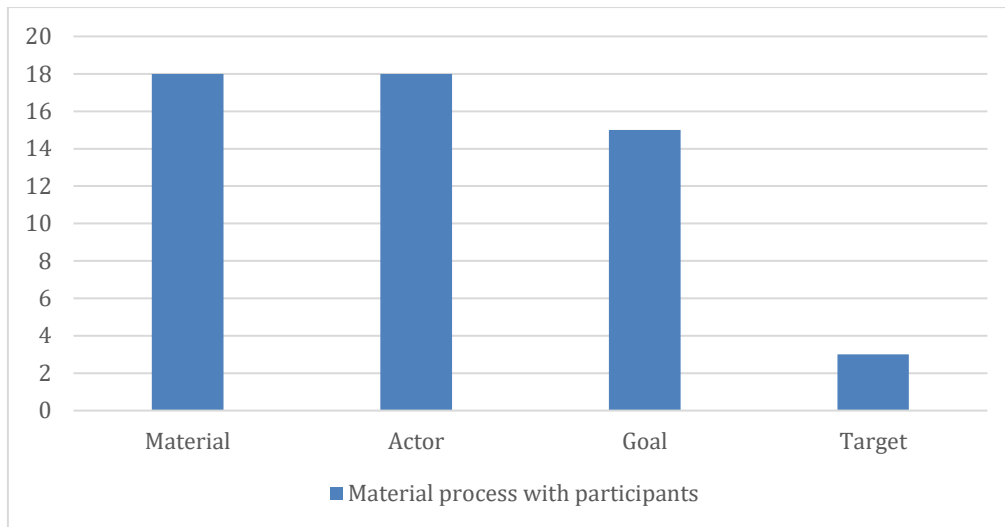
Figure 3: Material process with participants

4.3 Verbal process – discoveries

Verbal processes are usually employed in tributes to encode verbal actions so as to project the unique qualities of the deceased. This analysis finds relevance in the assertion by Thompson (2014) that the verbal process is the fourth major group of processes. The data of this study reveals a substantial amount of verbal processes. Mrs. Matilda Amissah-Arthur used verbal processes to demonstrate her late husband's close relationship with his Creator while on earth. In the tribute, [VERB. CL. 27] presents this: the sayer *You*, the verbal process *testified*, and the verbiage *of God's goodness in our lives.* This clause, anchored by the verbal process *testified*, paints a picture of the personal submission to and recognition of the mercy of God over the life of the deceased and his family. Clause [VERB. CL 28] has the following clausal roles: circumstance *Every morning during our prayer time*, sayer *you*, the verbal process *never ceased to thank*, receiver *God*, and verbiage *for His grace, mercy and favour*. The use of the verbal process *never ceased to thank* serves to create a verbal relationship between the sayer (the deceased) and the receiver *God* whom he served during his lifetime. This signifies appreciation and gratitude of the role of the Almighty God in his life. In the same manner, [VERB. CL. 25] expresses the indebtedness of the deceased and his family to the Almighty God for his protection.

Mrs. Amissah-Arthur, through the verbal processes, also highlighted the former Vice President's selfless service to his nation – Ghana. The sayer *you*, the verbal process *said* and the verbiage *that you did not go into politics, but that politics found you* [VERB. CL. 34] is ample testimony of the contributions of the late Vice President to his nation. He did not force himself into politics but rather his serviceable qualities made him noticed and pushed him into the political arena to serve. Mrs. Amissah-Arthur, in [VERB. CL. 35] We [Sayer] often *[Circumstance]* discussed *[Verbal]* how we could get people to think about Ghana first, stop being partisan and also give back to society *[Verbiage]*. Through the sayer *we* and the verbal process *discussed*, she projected her involvement in the political life of her husband for the development of the nation, Ghana. Consider some of the verbal clauses used in the tribute below:

[VERB. CL. 25] *In the good times, [Circumstance] we [Sayer] rejoiced and thank [Verbal] the Lord [Receiver].*

[VERB. CL. 26] *I [Sayer] thank [Verbal] God [Receiver] for your life and what He used you to do.*

[VERB. CL. 27] *You [Sayer] always testified [Verbal] of God's goodness in our lives [Verbiage].*

[VERB. CL. 28] *Every morning during our prayer time, [Circumstance] you [Sayer] never ceased to thank [Verbal] God [Receiver] for His grace, mercy and favour [Verbiage].*

[VERB. CL. 29] *So much so that, if the children [Sayer] asked [Verbal] one of us [Receiver] for advice without the other being there, often times our answers would be similar [Verbiage].*

[VERB. CL. 34] *Many times [Circumstance] you [Sayer] said [Verbal] that you did not go into politics, but that politics found you [Verbiage].*

[VERB. CL. 35] *We [Sayer] often [Circumstance] discussed [Verbal] how we could get people to think about Ghana first, stop being partisan and also give back to society [Verbiage].*

Mrs. Amissah-Arthur also used the verbal clause [VERB. CL. 29] to pay tribute to her husband by indicating the level of the growth of unity between her husband and her to the extent that in the absence of the other, one could easily offer a similar piece of advice as the other would have done.
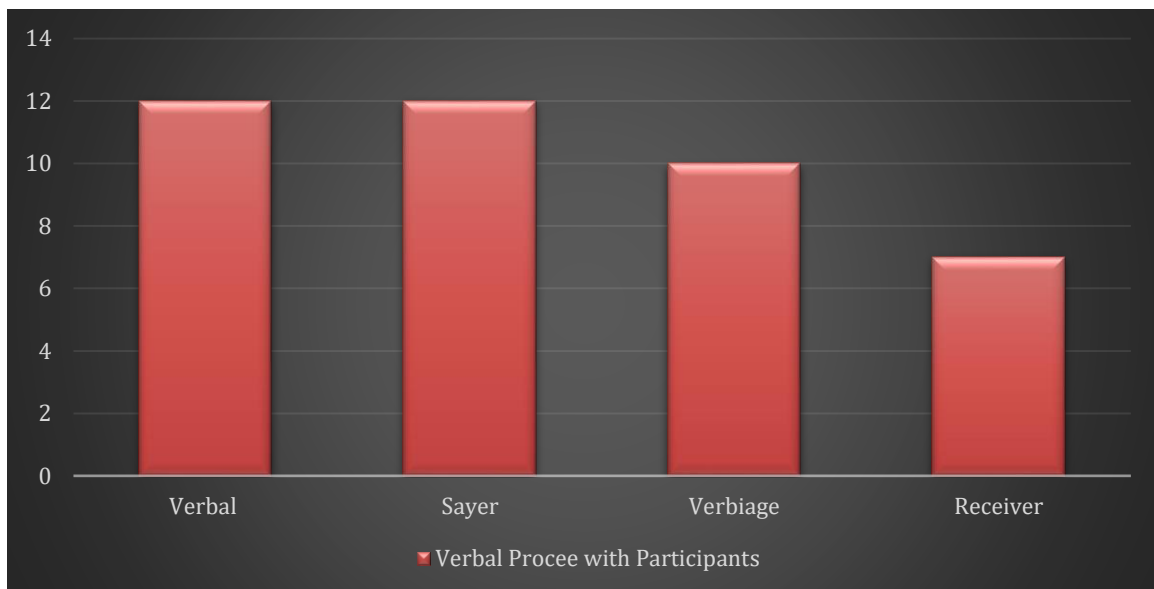

Figure 4: Verbal process with participants

4.5 Relational process – discoveries

Relational processes are usually used in tributes to indicate the qualities of the deceased when he or she was alive. The analysis of the relational process is based on only attributive relational

processes since there was no instance of the use of identifying relational processes in the tribute. The relational process is the third most used transitivity process with a frequency of 7 representing 16 % of the processes used in Mrs. Amissah-Arthur's tribute to her late husband.

In [REL. CL. 39], she used the carrier *You*, the attributive relational process and the attribute *the life and soul of my book launch* to stress the supportive qualities of her late husband towards her and in the work she does. The supportive qualities of her husband were further expressed in [REL. CL. 40] You *[Carrier]* were *[Rel. Attributive]* one of the last to leave *[Attribute]*. Mrs. Amissah-Arthur further underscores her admiration for her late husband through [REL. CL. 42] the carrier *"I"*, the attributive relational process *am* and the attribute *very proud of you.* As a result of the admirable qualities of her late husband, Mrs. Amissah-Arthur expressed that their relationship got better [REL. CL. 38]. Our relationship *[Carrier]* got *[Rel, Attributive]* better *[Attribute]* with age.

In her tribute, she also used attributive relational processes to epitomise the relationship that existed between her late husband, the former Vice President, and whoever came his way. For instance, the [REL. CL. 41] You *[Carrier]* were *[Rel. Attributive]* so many things to so many people, constantly giving selflessly to others *[Attribute]*. This gives flesh to his selflessness as a political figure. Below are some of the clauses that give support to the analysis above.

[REL. CL. 37] God [Carrier] has been [Rel Attributive] good [Attribute] to us as a family [Target]

[REL. CL. 38] Our relationship [Carrier] got [Rel, Attributive] better [Attribute] with age.

[REL. CL. 39] You [Carrier] were [Rel. Attributive] the life and soul of my book launch [Attribute] on Wednesday 27th June [Circumstance].

[REL. CL. 40] You [Carrier] were [Rel. Attributive] one of the last to leave [Attribute].

[REL. CL. 41] You [Carrier] were [Rel. Attributive] so many things to so many people, constantly giving selflessly to others [Attribute].

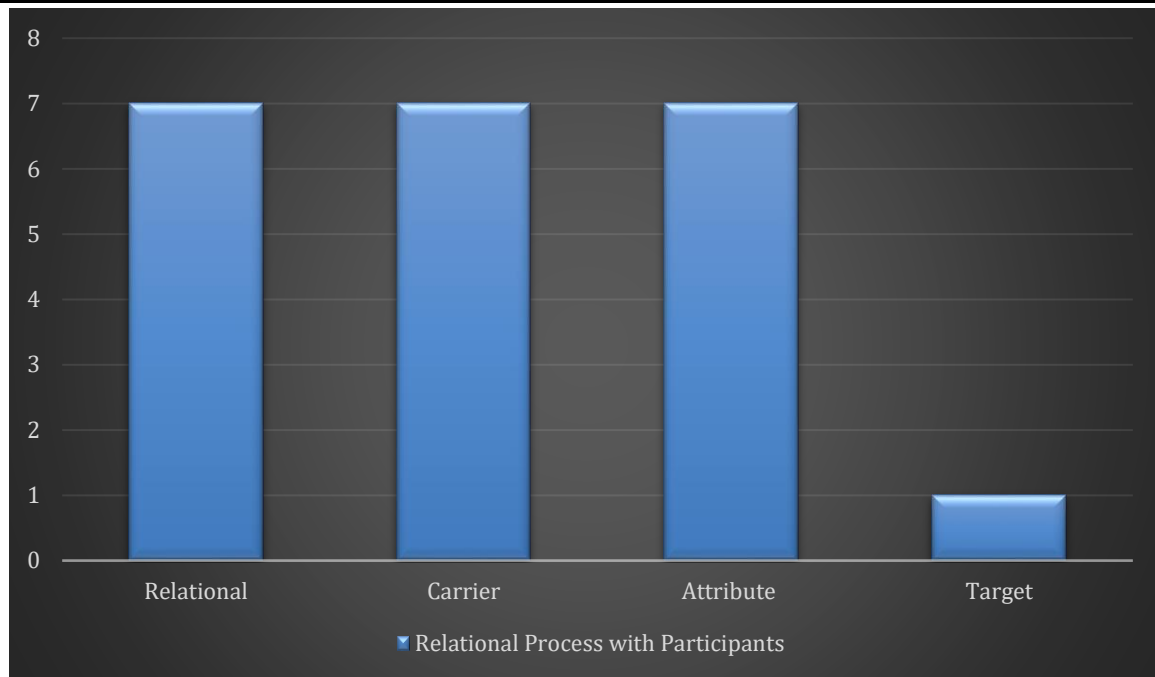*[REL. CL. 42] I [Carrier] am [Rel. Attributive] very proud of you [Attribute].*

Figure 5: Relational process with participants

4.6 Mental process – discoveries

Mental processes are usually used in tributes to indicate what goes on in the internal world of the mind rather than the external world. The activation of the minds and emotions of the mourners is done through the use of mental verbs. In the tribute, mental verbs such as *know*, *loved, remember, knew*, etc. have been employed to indicate the mental attachment of the mourners to the deceased. In [MENT. CL. 20] You *[Senser]* loved *[Mental]* the Lord deeply *[Phenomenon],* Mrs. Amissah-Arthur used the *senser*, the *mental process* and the *phenomenon* to reveal the emotional relationship that existed between the deceased and his Lord. This same relationship is exhibited between the mourner and her late husband as revealed in this clause of mental construction [MENT. CL. 21] People *[Senser]* wondered *[Mental]* why we were always chit-chatting when we went out to functions and even at church *[Phenomenon]*. The mourner, in the following clauses [MENT. CL. 19], [MENT. CL. 23], [MENT. CL. 24], used the senser *"I"* to show how she was personally affected by the loss of her husband while the mental processes *know* and *remember* indicate her mental conviction of the impact of the late Vice President on her life and that of others. The following mental clauses give credence to the analysis above.

[MENT. CL. 19] I [Senser] know [Mental] because I have cried [Phenomenon].

[MENT. CL. 20] You [Senser] loved [Mental] the Lord deeply [Phenomenon].

[MENT. CL. 21] People [Senser] wondered [Mental] why we were always chit chatting when we went out to functions and even at church [Phenomenon].

[MENT. CL. 22] *With most people who [Senser] knew [Mental] you well, there is some story or some inside joke to share [Phenomenon].*

[MENT. CL. 23] *I [Senser] will always [Circumstance] remember [Mental] how, at Apostle Jude Hama's book launch in May, you encouraged Christians to get into politics to help serve our country [Phenomenon].*
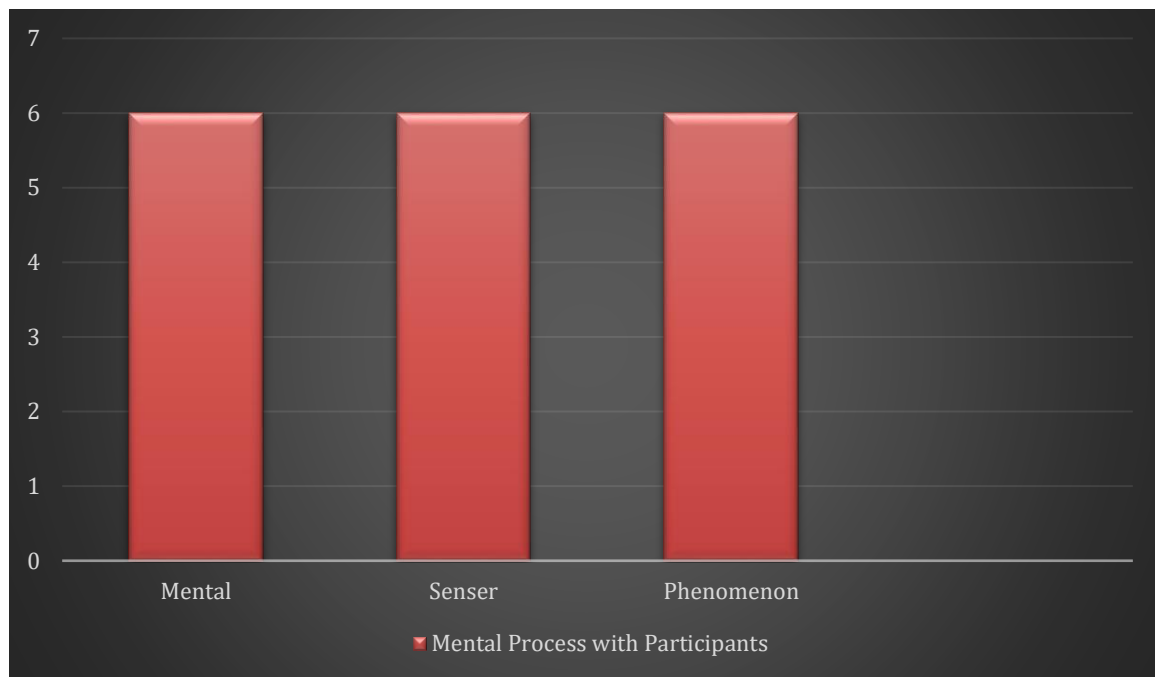

Figure 6: Mental process with participants

4.7 Behavioural process – discoveries

Adjei and Ewusi-Mensah, (2016) believe that behavioural processes represent outer manifestations of inner workings. This is the acting out of processes of consciousness and physiological states. The behavioural process is the least used process type in the tribute. Clause *[BEH. CL. 44]* is a behavioural clause made up of three clausal roles: the behaver, behavioural process and a target, structured as follows "Our children *[Behaver]* laughed *[Behavioural]* at us *[Target]* often, remarking that, even at public functions, our heads were often together.

Mrs. Matilda Amissah-Arthur used the only behavioural clause to re-echo the close relationship and the kind of unity that existed between her and her late husband.

5. Summary of Findings and Conclusion

The aim of this study is to use the transitivity model by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) to find out the processes and participants that were employed in the tribute of the late Vice President of Ghana, Mr. Amissah-Arthur by his wife, Mrs. Matilda Amissah-Arthur and how they contribute in projecting the message of the tribute. The results indicate that five of the processes – material, verbal, relational, mental and behavioural – were used in the tribute. Out of the 44 clauses, the material process occurred the most with a frequency of 18 representing 41% of the

total number of clauses, followed by the verbal process with 12 occurrences (27%), relational process with 7 occurrences representing (16%), mental process with 6 appearances (14%) and finally, the behavioural process which was 1 (2%). The findings of the process types are not in consonance with the assertion by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) that the major and frequently occurred process types are material, mental and relational since the verbal process has appeared among the major process types in the data while the mental process finds itself among the minor process types.

The material processes were used to demonstrate the positive actions that were taken by the deceased when he was alive and their impact on society. The successful use of the material process was hinged on participants such as actor, goal and target. Verbal processes were used to reveal the late President's close relationship with his creator and also his selfless service to his nation. The tribute dwelt on the relational processes to highlight the unique qualities of the deceased. This process was also used to reveal the relationship between the deceased and his spouse as well as anyone else who came his way. Mental processes were used to reveal the mental and emotional outbursts of the mourner and other sympathisers. Finally, the behavioural process was used to re-echo the close relationship and the kind of unity that existed between the mourner and her late husband.

The transitivity processes through the use of the process types and the participants have been successful in helping to express the message of the tribute in eulogising the late Mr. Amissah-Arthur, a former Vice President of Ghana by his wife, Mrs. Amissah-Arthur.

Acknowledgment

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

About the Authors

Charles Djorbua is a Tutor in the Department of Languages at the Presbyterian College of Education, Akropong Akuapem, Ghana. His research interests include Language Policy, Discourse Analysis, Stylistics, Transitivity Analysis.

Dorah Mensah is a Tutor in the Department of Languages at the Akrokerri College of Education, Akrokerri, Ghana. Her research interests include Applied Linguistics, Academic Writing, Pragmatics, Discourse Analysis, Language Education.

Daniel Afrifa-Yamoah is Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies at the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Development, Ghana. His research interest is in Phonetics and Phonology, Intonation, Pronunciation, Transitivity.

References

Adjei, A. A. & Ewusi-Mensah, L. (2016). Transitivity in Kuffour's 2008 Farewell Speech to the Ghanaian Parliament. *British Journal of English Linguistics.* Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org) Vol.4, No.1, pp.36-49.

Afrifa-Yamoah, D., Djorbua, C. & Darko, I. D. (2021). Bidding Farewell to a Lover: A Transitivity Analysis of a Tribute by Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings. *East African Journal of Education and Social Sciences.* Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 219-233.

Afful, J. B. A. (2012). Genre analysis of death announcements in Ghanaian newspapers. *Language Discourse & Society*, 1 (2), 118-137.

Akinyode, T. O. (2019). *Sociolinguistic features of English language usage in funeral tributes by selected Yoruba-English bilinguals in southwestern Nigeria.* (MPhil thesis). Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

Al-Khatib M., Salem Z. (2011). Obituary announcements in Jordanian and British Newspapers: A cross-cultural overview. *Acta Linguistica.*

Al-Zubaidi N. (2012). *Expressions of Gratitude in American English and Iraqi Arabic: Interlanguage and Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing.

Awuku, B. O. (2018). *Agency and Processes in Religious Discourse: A Transitivity Analysis of the Sermon on the Mount*. Mphil Thesis, University of Ghana.

Bloor, T. & Bloor, M. (2004). *The Functional Analysis of English*. 2nd Ed. London: Arnold.

Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, Article 67.

Halliday, M. A. K. & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *Halliday's An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (4th ed.). London and New York: Routledge.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1994). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1967). Language structure and language function [A]. Lyons, J. (ed.). *New Horizons in Linguistics*[C]. Middlesex: Penguin.

Kondowe, W. (2014). Presidents and Ideologies: A Transitivity Analysis of Bingu wa Mutharika's Inaugural Address. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics,* 2(3), pp.174-180.

Kongo, A. E., and Gyasi, K.W. (2015). Expressing grief through messages of condolence: A genre analysis. *African Journal of Applied Research.* 2(2), 61-71.

Kuang, C. H. (2017). Features of language in Facebook condolence messages. *International Journal of English Research.* 3(5), 22-30.

Lazaraton, A. (2005) 'Quantitative research methods', in E. Hinkel (ed.), *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning.* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Li, X. (2019). Analysis of Discourse from Perspective of Systemic Functional Grammar. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 9*(8), 1049-1054.

Matthiessen, C. (1995). *Lexico-grammatical cartography: English systems*. Tokyo: International Language Science Publishers.

Mwinwelle, P., Duah, I. and Ernest Mensah, S. (2021). Eulogising the Dead: A Systemic Functional Exploration of Tributes Delivered by Ghanaian Presidents. *International Journal of Technology and Management Research (IJTMR),* Vol. 6 (2): Pp.38-58.

Tareq, M. M. (2013). May Allah not let you experience another sorrow: Condolence strategies used by lecturers who are native speakers of Arabic L1 toward their colleague who is native speaker of Hebrew in Hebrew L2. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(3), 17-22.

Thompson, G. (2014). *Introducing functional grammar*. London: Routledge. (P29-92).

Wiranto, T. (2018). Teaching News Writing in English: From Genre to Lexicogrammar. *Pertanika Journal, 26*(2), 909-928.

Yahya, E. M. (2010). A study of condolences in Iraqi Arabic with reference to English. *Adab AlRafidayn*, 57, 47-70.

Yeboah, N. A. (2017). Expressing grief through institutional tributes: An appraisal theory approach. *Language in India.* 17(12), 401-408.