

## Trauma In Asika Ikechukwu's Tamara: A Transitivity Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

This study analyzed trauma in Asika Ikechukwu's *Tamara* by employing Halliday's transitivity. Trauma is real and many individuals/groups of individuals battle with trauma. Traumatic experiences are devastating and could lead to death. Most often, readers of literary works fail to realize the linguistic structures that reveal themes (main ideas) in a novel. This makes the reader to struggle with meaning/message the author wants to pass across to the audience, hence, this study, A Transitivity analysis of trauma in Asika Ikechukwu's *Tamara* with view of finding out the various ways traumatic experiences were represented in the novel through the lexico-grammatical choices of the author, to construe meaning. A total of Sixty (60) clauses were purposely extracted from the novel and the excerpts categorized into participants-processes-circumstances. Textual data were analyzed in line with the objectives of the study, research questions and principles of the theoretical framework adopted. The study reveals that the material process type is the dominant process counted as 22, mental 20, relational 13, verbal 3 and behavioral 2. The write's use of material process and other process types in the text unveils traumatic experiences of Tamara.

**Keywords:** Truama, Transitivity, Process Types and Clause.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This study examines Tamara through the lens of systematic functional linguistics (SFL) to explore the traumatic experiences of the protagonist Tamara, with particular focus on Halliday's Transitivity. *Tamara* presents an imaginatively epistolary account of the pains of a young girl, Tamara (the protagonist of the novel *Tamara*) and her traumatic experiences right from the home, society, school, and abroad. She was trapped, trampled upon, abused sexually, and robbed of love, life and dignity. These her traumatic experiences triggered the researcher's interest to find out the lexico-grammatical choices the author made in representing traumatic experiences of the protagonist in the novel under study, by applying transitivity process types on the clauses that reflect traumatic experiences, the study will reveal how lexico-grammatical choices made by the author portrays psychological, emotional, sexual violence among others.

Creative writers express their ideas, concepts and feelings through different forms of language use such as verbal and non-verbal, sign language, and texts with the sole aim of making meaningful messages (Eze et al 2023). Therefore, meanings are created when the audience read and understand fully what is read. So the creative writer considers his audience while constructing meaningful ideas and to create particular meanings in a particular context, creative writers make different choice of words to express their ideas and feelings. The choices of words and the meaning they construe in a certain context take us to what Halliday (1985) called "meta function" therefore, the analysis and interpretation of the three meta-functions of language in systemic functional linguistics facilitates the formation and understanding of meanings in various texts.

Halliday (1994) focuses on the possible connection between form and function. He believes that the formal analysis of a text should be able to reveal functions for the text and meanings, which the text communicates. All these functions of language he grouped under the three superordinate functional categories known as meta-functions. The term meta-function was adopted to suggest that function was an integral component of language use the three meta-functions are: interpersonal, textual and ideational. These three components of meaning are realized throughout the grammar of a language. Each of these components has its own system of choice. Although Halliday posits that the three strands of meaning (ideational,

interpersonal and textual) can be found simultaneously in any text from the perspective of grammar. The present study will focus on only the ideational meta-function. The ideational Meta function comprises experiential and logical Meta function. The experiential function deals with the constituents within the clause. It is realized by the lexico-grammatical features of transitivity. The structure forming elements of the transitivity is called participant-process-circumstance. This study will explore only the experiential ideational meta function and will be limited to the application of the transitivity of the traumatic experiences found in the novel under study.

Transitivity traditionally, is normal understood as the grammatical feature, which indicates if a verb takes a direct object; then it is described as transitive and it is called intransitive if it does not. Halliday, however, found a new concept of transitivity' This new concept represents a further development of the old concept. For Halliday (1985) "Transitivity" is the grammar of the clause as a structural unit for expressing a particular range of ideational meanings .... Its domain is the corner stone of the sematic organization of experience; it subsumes all participants' functions and all experiential functions relevant to the system of the clause" (134). Transitivity analysis represents experiential meta-function and it is subdivided into participants, processes and circumstances. The processes for different life events, occasions and experiences are further categorized into various types such as material, relational, mental, verbal, behavioral and existential. Also there is a participant in every process in a clause; actor, carrier, sensor, sayers, behavior and existent.

Trauma refers to those events or expenses that lead to death or loss of family members or loved ones, remaining in solitude due to specific circumstances, emotional, physical domestically and sexual abuse. Again trauma signifies an emotional response to an overwhelming event that disrupts previous ideas of an individual's sense of self and standards by which one evaluate a given society. These overwhelming events are usually very stressful, frightening, and very difficult to cope with or out of control. It could be one incident, or an ongoing event that happened over a long period of time Trauma can happen at any age. Trauma could also take any form; one can be directly harmed or neglected, witnessing harm to someone else, and living in a traumatic atmosphere of being affected by a family or community, including trauma that has happened before one was born.

Asika Ikechukwu's *Tamara* is a critically acclaimed novel that has been praised for its thought – provoking exploration of trauma, identify and cultural heritage. It is an imaginative epistolary account of the pains of a young girl *Tamara* (the protagonist of the novel *Tamara*). She was trampled upon, trapped, robbed of life and freedom, over-protected and harsh treatment melted on her by the father. These strictness of the father pushed Tamara into wrong decision making and relationships. The consequences of her wrong actions, decisions and relationships, left her devastated and almost ended her life. She fled to Italy for succor and in Italy, the worst happened, she became a professional prostitute. That hurt her the more but before she died, she picked up her pen and paper on her sick dying bed to write her father expressing her agonies, neglect, devastated nature and what we are reading today as a novel. The novel's use of non-linear narrative structures, multiple narrative voices and poetic language creates a complex and powerful portrayal of traumatic experiences of the protagonist

This study examines *Tamara* through the lens of Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) and transitivity in particular, to explore how the author, through the lexico-grammatical choices he made, reveals trauma as a major theme of the novel.

### Statement of the Problem

Literature is a mirror to the world. It reflects societal norms, values, attitudes, and inter- relationships among others. No society exists significantly without its literature and literature cannot function and blossom in isolation of the society. Literary writers are members of the society. They express their ideas, thoughts, feelings and happenings around them through language bearing their audience in mind. A close look at the society shows that many individuals/group of individuals' battle with trauma. Traumatic experiences are devastating and could lead to death.

Most often, readers of literary works fail to realize the linguistic structures that reveal themes in a novel. This makes the reader to struggle with the meaning/messages the author wants to pass across to the audience hence, this study, a transitivity analysis of trauma in Asika Ikechukwu's *Tamara*. This work seeks to investigate the various ways traumatic experience (an example of some happenings/experiences of reality, in an individual, family and society) were represented by the writer in the novel *Tamara* through the lexico-grammatical choices he made to construe meaning.

This study unveiled how the concept of transitivity reveals the thematic concern of trauma in Nigerian novel, *Tamara* with the following objectives:

1. To describe the portrayal of unique traumatic experience of the protagonists in the novel.
2. To find out how the process types in the novel reflect the psychological impact of trauma on the protagonist, and
3. To know what insights transitivity analysis offer in the representation of trauma in *Tamara*.

This study is significant to scholars, students and mental health professionals. The study contributes to the existing body of research on trauma representation in literature by providing a nuanced understanding of the linguistic strategies used to convey traumatic experiences. Students can build up/ expand their vocabulary /register by encountering words related to trauma, emotions and psychological experiences. Analyzing the novel through the lens of transitivity will expose and guild

students on clause analysis and many more benefits.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted Halliday's transitivity as an analytical framework to identify and analyze the dominant process type that represent the traumatic experiences of the protagonist Tamara in Asika Ikechukwu's novel, *Tamara*. The research design for this study comprises both qualitative and quantitative methods. The descriptive research design was adopted in order to help the researcher in explaining the major concepts and to give qualitative interpretation of the data obtained from the text under study. However, the quantitative research design will make use of number or statistical formula to determine the frequency of occurrence of the process types. The data for this study are excerpts drawn from Asika Ikechukwu's *Tamara*. The excerpts from the selected novels were purposively extracted and used for analysis, and the pages where the excerpts were extracted from were presented for ease of reification.

The researcher carefully read the novel, identifying expressions that reflect trauma. These expressions were broken down to clauses because the unit of transitivity analysis is the clause. The clauses were classified into process types – participants-circumstances, with the most frequent process types identified and the implications stated. Textual data were analyzed in line with the purpose of the study, the research questions and the theoretical framework adopted.

## 3. REVIEW OF RELEVANT SCHOLARSHIP TRAUMA

Trauma refers to an emotional response to an overwhelming event that disrupts previous ideas of an individual's sense of self and the standard by which one evaluates a given society. (Ujowundu and Obi,) also, Asika () adds that trauma refers to experiences that cause intense physical and psychological stress reactions. That is to say that trauma results from an event, series of events or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has a lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional or spiritual well-being. This means that trauma has shades and causes.

Shades of trauma means different forms of trauma as experienced by different individuals under various circumstances and situations. Examples of different trauma according to Asika et al (2021) include "psychological and emotional trauma, physical trauma, religious trauma and mental trauma". Psychological and emotional traumas are the unique individual experience of an event or lasting conditions in which the individual's ability to integrates his or her emotional experience is overwhelmed or there's a threat to life (Pearlman & Saakritne, 1995). This means that harsh situation, rejection, neglect sexual abuse, lack of love and care, domestic violence... create psychological trauma. On the other hand, physical trauma is when an injury is inflicted on the individual and causes one to have mental or emotional problems, while religious trauma is the one caused as a result of the individual's belief.

The dominant causes of trauma in popular trauma- discourse are rape, war,... (Dalley, 2013) Kurtz (2014) also adds that:

*"Events other than war and sexual abuse are also labeled as traumatogenic including both events caused by humans as well as "acts of God" these may include natural disasters such as earthquakes or tsunamis, accidents, pandemics, environmental disaster such as oil spills, terrorism or persecution, sexual abuse, neglect betrayal of trust and even medical procedures and emergencies (20)".*

The above quotation by Kurtz goes to show the different cause of trauma. The above causes of trauma and traumatic experiences in individuals often have negative effect on them.

The effects of traumatic experiences are associated with significant increase in a

number of negative social, behavioral health, and physical health outcomes, including alcohol, drug abuse, depression, risky sexual behavior, sexual victimization, domestic violence, self-harm behaviors, cancer, sexually transmitted diseases.... (Dube et al, 2005, Dietz et al 1999). Also, Dube et al (2005) observed that women are more likely to sustain sexual abuse than men but the long-term consequences are similar for men and women.

### Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL)

SFL is a form of grammatical description developed by M.A.K Halliday (1961). It is the study of language use and its functions in social settings. That is to say that SFL places higher importance on the concept of "meaning as choice" and language function.

Halliday (1985) identified three meaning potentials known as 'meta functions' – ideational meta function, interpersonal meta function and textual meta function making resource and involves exchange of meanings in social context. Meaning is said to be an interface between contextual dimensions of field, tenor and mode; and lexico-grammatical dimensions of transitivity, mood and theme respectively and this simultaneously form what Halliday calls "social semiotic".

These three meaning potentials or meta-functions of language are realized throughout the grammar of a language. Each of these component has its own system of choice. Each choice results in a typical structure and according to Halliday (2004), the clause consists of three distinct yet interrelated meta-functions (the ideational, the interpersonal and textual). Each meta-

function is with a meaning and each meaning forms part of a different functional configuration, separate stand in the overall meaning of the clause.

Textual meta-function is concerned with clause as messages and deals with the organization information within separate clauses. Opara (2015) adds that “textual meta-function expresses the structure of information or how language is organized to archive its goal and produce cohesive text” Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) rightly noted that “the structure that carries this line of meaning is known as thematic structure” Halliday and Matthiessen describe theme as the point of departure or embarkation of the message. The theme position is usually at the beginning of the clause. Once the theme is identified, every other item in the clause is regarded as the Rheme.

Interpersonal meta-function is concerned with clause as exchange and the relationship between speakers in a given discourse. In an interpersonal meta-function, the clause is composed of two main parts: the mood and the Residue.

We use language to make an offer, command, statement and ask question. The part of clause that carries the argument forward is known as the mood (Ezeifeka, 2018). The mood consists of two parts: the subject, which is a nominal group and the finite operator, which is part of the verbal group. The residue is, the rest of the clause when the subject and the finite has been identified (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014).

The ideational meta-function is concerned with clause as representation. Its function is that of representing ‘processes’ or experiences; actions, events, process of consciousness and relations” (Halliday, 1985). Through this function, language provides a theory of human experience” (Halliday 2004). That refers to the way language conveys and recognizes the cognitive realities of experiences as a resources for reflecting our real world. That is, experiences are turned into wordings and meanings. In other words, we are concerned with human experience as a semantic system since language plays the central role not only in sharing and exchanging experience, but plays that role of language through which language encoded the cultural experience and the individual’s experience as a member of the culture (Halliday, 1978) the ideational function deals with what happens in the text. Halliday (2004) defines it as the junction that the speaker or writer embodies language in his experience of the phenomena of the real world. Ezeifeka noted that “ideational meaning in SFL has two facts; namely experiential and logical meaning” while experiential function deals with the constituents within the clause, the logical pertains to the type of relationship between the clauses within a clause complex. The experiential meta-function is realized by the lexico-grammatical features of transitivity.

The structure forming elements of the transitivity system is called the “participant- process – circumstances

### **Empirical Studies**

A good number of studies have been conducted on various genres of literature like short stories, novels, poems... by employing transitivity analysis. A lot has equally been done on trauma in literature. Some of these previous studies will be reviewed.

Ifechelobi and Akabuike (2021) investigated experiential meaning in Chimamada Adichie’s purple Hibiscus through the lens of transitivity with the aim of describing the experiential meaning of the text and how the experiences of reality and world view of Adichie were represented in her novel, purple Hibiscus. Textual data comprises excerpts purposively drawn from the novel under study. Clauses were identified and classified according to the participant – process – circumstances elements of transitivity. Data were analyzed based on the principles of the transitivity model of SFL, and the purpose of the study (objectives) and the research questions. The study revealed that Adichie utilized majority material processes to represent actions, events, happenings and doing of pa Eugene Achike and how he brutally/ harshly handled his family.

Also, Hassan and Bilal (2024) analyzed post – Traumatic Transformation in Tara Westover’s educated through transitivity and Richard Tedeschi’s posttraumatic growth theories with the aim of Studying the role of transitivity in Tara Westover’s memoir, educated to explore the post traumatic transformation of the female protagonist who experiences various traumas and distress. A total of 284 clauses were extracted from the text educated. The extracted clauses were categorized into processes and participants. The study revealed that material process is the dominant process. This is so because, Tara’s journey from victim to empowered woman reflect a linguistic and psychological shift.

Apart from transitivity an extensive amount of research has been done on Tamara and trauma as a concept. Odinye (2017) carried out a study of Asika Ikechukwu *Tamara* by identifying the social and moral values in African literature. This study explored the African family value system and morality. As documented by Asika in his novel, *Tamara*. The novel ideals with some social and moral issues which are interwoven around people in contemporary African societies that was achieved by placing the characters in an African setting in order to explore the values.

Likewise, Asika et al ( ) explored the trauma of exile and migration in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s Americana by employing the reader Response Theory to examine the various shades and untold stories of the African-diasporic experiences as seen from the prodigious lens of Adichie’s Ameneanah. The study revealed the varying socio-economics and most importantly, psychological trauma of exile on African immigrants forced by the interplay of socio political, economics and even religious ‘force’ to escape their countries in search of refuge and greener pasture abroad. The paper concluded on

racism, oppression, loneliness denigration as attendant psychological traumatic experiences of many of diaspora characters in Adichie's *Americana*.

Having interacted with scholarly ideas and views on transitivity, trauma and literary works. Extensive research has been conducted on many texts utilizing Halliday's transitivity analysis and other works had explored Asika Ikechukwu's *Tamara*. The focus of the previous studies is on thematic, social, economic and African value system, character construction and finding the most dominant processes in the text. Other than this, the text under study has been unexplored from the perspective of transitivity analysis. Thus, there seems a noticeable gap where transitivity and traumatic experience intercept. Hence, there is a need to introduce an innovative and novel perspective to the existing body of linguistic research especially to transitivity analysis. So, this study will analyze Traumatic experiences evident in the novel *Tamara* by employing transitivity.

#### 4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopted Halliday's framework of transitivity to analyze traumatic experiences of the protagonist, Tamara in the novel *Tamara*. The transitivity system is made up of various types of process for different life events and happenings. These processes are material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral and existential. All these process carry their participants in a clause such as an actor, behavior, sensor, sayers, carrier and existent.

The process of doing and happening is known as material process and it depicts concrete actions in a clause (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014) it has two participants; one who acts (actor) seen in the nominal position of the clause and the participant who receives the action of the actor known as the "goal" seen at the object position of the clause. The process is the verbal group (the action carried out). The second process is the mental process which is the process of sensing and experiencing the conscious world (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014) it has only two participants; sensor and phenomenon (simpson 1993). The mental processes are divided into four categories: cognition, perception, affection and desideration processes Bloor and Bloor (2004) states that relational processes are typically realized by the "verb be" or some of the verb known as copular verbs. Processes of 'being' and 'having' Halliday (2004) Identifies three main types of relational clauses "intensive, possessive and circumstantial" Butt et al (2003) defines relational process as a description of participants and its attribute in a clause. It has two types; relational attributive process and relational identifying process. The relational attributive process relates a participant in a clause to its characteristics or attribute and its participant is known as a "carrier". Whereas the characteristics is known as an "attribute" in a clause. The relational identifying clause has two participants namely a token and value' a token is the one that is being identified and a value is the one which identifies (Egins 2004).

Again, the verbal process is the process of saying and verbal action (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014; Thompson 2013; Eggin 2004) its participant is known as a 'sayer' who is responsible for what is said. The second participant is known as the 'receiver' who the verbalization is addressed. The last is the "verbiage" the content of what is said, represented by the quote, that is, the direct utterance of the sayer or the reporter (the sayers utterance as reported). The "sayer" can be both animate and inanimate. The fifth type of process according to Halliday (1994), is the behavioral process. It is concerned with physiological or psychological behavior like breathing, coughing, sighing, smiling, dreaming, snoring, staring....asof human beings. It is also an integration of material and mental processes in a clause. The behavior is the participant of the behavioral process.

Lastly, the existential process represents the happenings or the existence of something. It expresses the existence of an entity without predicting else of it. They are usually introduced by the word "there" and the verb "be" (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014) circumstance, according Bloor and Bloor (2004) is "the name given to those elements in the clause which carry a semantic load but are neither process nor participant". Circumstances, as the name suggests is realized mostly by the adverb which tells us something about location (time and place), extent (distance, duration, frequency), manner (degree, quality, comparison, means), cause (reason, purpose, behalf), contingency(condition, default) accompaniment(additive, commutative), role (guise, product) (pg. 83), matter and angle (source, viewpoint).

#### Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

Research Questions One: What are dominant transitivity processes that demonstrate the protagonist's traumatic experiences in the novel *Tamara*?

Here are the excerpts purposively selected to depict traumatic experiences in the novel under study:

##### Excerpt 1

Every new day and new breath on bed (Cir: location) makes (process: material) me (goal) sad and forlorn (emotional state). The only real breath I (participant: Actor) have enjoyed (process: material) for months (Cir: time) is (Relational) this breath which I write to you (Cir: accompaniment). I (participant: sensor) cannot wait (process: mental) to die (phenomenon). That is (process: relational) my only refuge (carrier) from this world of shame... (Cir: location)

The analysis above reveals that the dominant process types are material and relational indicating a focus on physical and emotional experiences. The relational process 'is' highlights the connections between the participant experiences, emotions



and circumstances. The participant '1' is prominent throughout the passage, emphasizing the personal and introspect nature of the text.

#### Excerpt 2

Amidst riches and affluence (Cir: manner), I (carrier) was (process: relational) alone (attribute), so empty and unfulfilled. There were many things (Cir: cause) I (participant: actor) lack (process: material) things miles away from what money can buy (Cir: location). I (participant: actor) lack (process: material) them all (goal) and they (senser) made (process: mental) me cry (phenomenon). Even now (Cir: time) I (senser) can feel (process: mental) the trace of tears in my voice (phenomenon). It was with deep regret that I (senser) realize (process: mental) how wrong your style of father-ship was (phenomenon) father, you (carrier) were (process: relational) a total stranger to me (attribute) (pg. 10).

The dominant process types are mental, relational and material. These three processes showed the physical lacks, the emotional states and the connections between the participant's emotional states and their relationships.

#### Excerpt 3

The next day, (Cir: time) father, you (actor) broke (process: material) the news (goal). Our mother (carrier) was (process: relational) dead (attribute). Before you could get to the hospital (Cir: time and location), she (actor) had already given up (process: material) the struggle (range). I (senser) hate (process: relational) recall (phenomenon) that she (actor) died (process: material) alone (Cir: manner) without you or any of us at her side (Cir: contingency) I (senser) knew (process: relational) anything could shake you (phenomenon) up so hard (Cir: manner). I (senser) never knew (process: mental) you could be absent (phenomenon) from work (Cir: location) for weeks (Cir: time) and you will not die. Your mother (carrier) is (process: relational) dead (attribute). She (actor) died (process: material) this morning (Cir: time). That was all you (actor) told (process: material) us (goal) (pg. 29).

The most frequent process types are material, mental and relational. The frequent participants are the father and the narrator (the protagonist) with the mother being the affected participant circumstances of time and location were used by the author to describe and provide context or the events. The passage has a somber and reflective tone with the narrator expressing sadness, regrets and surprise. It also highlighted the relationships between the narrator, their father and their mother, emphasizing the emotional distance and absence.

#### Excerpt 4

It was that chance that (Cir: cause) brought (process: material) Obed (goal) my way (Cir: location). He (carrier) was (process: relational) a part time student (attribute) but the same level with me (Cir: comparison) In my search for companion, (Cir: cause (reason)) I didn't think (process: mental) twice before I (actor) accepted (process: material) his proposal (goal). We (senser) made (mental) love together (phenomenon) like there was not tomorrow (Cir: manner) (comparison). Obed (actor) left (process: material) one day (Cir: time) and never came (process: material) back. But unlike Dunga (Cir: manner/comparison) he (actor) did not leave (process: material) with a broken heart (Cir: manner) he (actor) left (process: material) me (goal) with a child (Cir: manner) in my womb (Cir: location), a pregnancy I (senser) knew (process: mental) nothing about (Cir: cause).

The dominant process types in the above passage from the text under study are material and mental processes. The narrator, obed and dungan were participants. Circumstances of time, location and manner provided the context for the events described. The passage described the relationships between the narrator and Obed, as well as the narrator's past experience with Dunga. The passage revealed emotional tone full of regrets and pain.

#### Excerpts 5

All efforts by Seniorita to put me (carrier) in the mood of gaiety (Cir: manner) were (process: relational) in vain (attribute). I (senser) knew (process: mental) I (behavior) to talk (behavioral) to someone and pour (process: marital) my heart to her (goal) she (behavior) suggested (process: behavioral) abortion. It (carrier) was (process: relational) over the next morning (Cir: time). Seniorita (actor) paid (process: material) the bills (goal) and I (senser) know (process: mental) that I (actor) owe (process: material) her for her life (Cir: time) father, the more I went close to her (Cir: cause) the more I knew (process: mental) I (carrier) was draining (process: relational) away (Cir: location) from you forever (Cir: time). Days later (Cir: time) she (actor) offered (process: material) a ticket (goal) to escape (Cir: cause) she offered (process: material) to take me to Italy (Cir: location) where she resides (Cir: location). (pg. 100).

Again material, mental, relational and behavioral dominated. We saw the actions embarked on in getting rid of the pregnancy (abortion) and the attachment to protagonist's new found friend, Seniorita. The author used the circumstance of time location and cause to show when and where Seniorita moved Tamara to (Italy).

#### Excerpts 6

It was (process: relational) towards the night (Cir: time) that the reality of it dawned on me (process: mental) (Phenomenon) It (carrier) was (process: relational) when a knock (Cir: time) came (process: material) at the door (Cir:

**location**), in my bewilderment (**Cir: manner**) I (**actor**) prostrated (**process: material**) in deference (**Cir: cause**). “Are you looking for Seniorita?” (**Verbiage**) I (**sayer**) had asked (**process: verbal**) in my innocent state of mind. (**Cir. manner**) No, I (**sayer**) am here to fuck you (**verbiage**). Fuck me? (**Verbiage**) The words sent shivers to my spine (**sayer**) and I (**senser**) felt (**process: mental**) like strangling the intruder (**phenomenon**). You of course (**Cir: accompaniment**) you (**carrier**) are (**relational**) Tamara (**attribute**) the youngest of the girls that came from Nigeria (Cir: identification and location). It’s you, I (**senser**) want (**process: mental**). You (**senser**) must know (**process: mental**) I (**actor**) paid ((**process: material**) heavily (**cir:manner**) to have you . So you (**actor**) must give (**process: material**) me (**goal**) a good treat, a worth for my money (**cir: reason**). “you must be out of your mind, now leave before I call the mop.” (**verbiage**) I (**sayer**) threatened him (**verbal**) (pg. 109).

Material process type, relational, mental and verbal dominated. The narrator and the intruder (Mr. Bruce) were the participants. The passage highlighted the circumstances of threat and power imbalance between the narrator and the intruder exerting control over the narrator. They successfully navigated through with the aid of verbal process.

The excerpts above and many more in the text under study were the ways the authors represented the real world experiences and goings –on in the society by employing Halliday’s transitivity.

## 5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

A detailed analysis of transitivity of trauma in *Tamara* by Asika Ikechukwu was carried out and a total of sixty clauses were examined. The study revealed that material process (40%) type dominated followed by mental (33.5%), relational (20.5%) and verbal (5%) . This finding is in agreement with Ifechelobi and Akabuike (2021), Hassan and Bilal (2024), who found out also that material process type dominated in their studies as well. The result is so, because the author selected words like: have enjoyed, broke, died, told, accepted, left, came, prostrated, paid, give.... To depict the actions of Tamara. Tamara’s pains and regrets were those of not being by her mother’s side while in the hospital before she died. Again, Tamara’s emotions were shattered when she failed to find genuine love and companionship in Nigeria coupled with the father’s harsh attitude that pushed her into travelling out of Nigeria to Italy. To Tamara, the journey is a movement away from emotional abuse and liberation from her father’s abusive attitude but along the line, even outside Nigeria, she is exposed to more violence and sexual abuse. These facts were revealed by the material, mental and relational lexico-grammatical choices that the author made.

Asika used anxiety, fear, depression, guilt, regret, shame, disassociation, flashbacks, distorted thinking among others to portray the mental trauma Tamara went through in the novel.

The mental process is the second dominant process type with 35% out of 60 processes. The writer used mental processes to show the psychological and emotional trauma of the character, Tamara in the novel by choosing words like hated, want, felt, thought, think, made, knew, wait... Tamara was mainly the participant known as senser. It was observed that Asika assigned the participants role mostly to the protagonist, Tamara. Instances of this abound in the excerpts by the use of “I” .... Asika made the most use of personal pronoun. The reason lies on the fact that he used the first person narrative technique point of view. We saw Tamara, the protagonist, narrating the story.

The relational process type is the third dominant process in the excerpts analyzed. There are 13 relational processes of 60 processes. The relational process: is, was, were .... highlights the connections between Tamara, her experiences, emotions at home, with the father, mother, Dunga, Obed, Mr. Bruce, Carlos among others and the attending circumstances. The relationships and experiences were not pleasant at all. They were that of betrayal, denial, abuse (sexual, drug) violence and so on. It was full of anguish and regrets.

## Conclusion

The transitivity analysis of trauma in *Tamara*, by Asika Ikechukwu revealed that the author used mostly material, mental and relational and scantily, verbal and behavioral processes. He did not use existential process type at all. These processes collectively depicted the neglect, regret, rape, injuries sustained, abortion, guilt/shame, anxiety and fear, depression, self/blame, disassociation, perception and intense emotions of Tamara in the novel. The transitivity analysis of the extracted excerpts shows that the author employed material processes more than others followed by the mental process. This highlights the physical and emotional violence inflicted upon the protagonist, Tamara. The mental processes showed the psychological experiences of Tamara. The relational process highlights the connections between the protagonist’s emotional states and her relationships.

The participants ‘I’ is prominent throughout the text, emphasizing that the author adopted the first person narrative point of view. The circumstances of time, location and manner among others provide the context for the participant’s experiences and emotions.

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