



TRANSITIVITY PATTERNS IN THE INDONESIAN TRANSLATION OF SURAHS WITH THE THEME OF EASE AFTER HARDSHIP

Nur Hasyim Penu

Jurusan Administrasi Niaga, Politeknik Negeri Jakarta
e-mail: nur.hasyim@bisnis.pnj.ac.id

Article history:

Received
1 Mei 2025

Received in revised form
24 Mei 2025

Accepted
24 Mei 2025

Available online
Mei 2025

Keywords:

Transitivity Analysis;
Experiential Meaning; SFL;
Religious Text Translation;
Ease after Hardship.

Abstract

This study aims to investigate transitivity patterns in the Indonesian translation of Surah Asy-Syarah, focusing on the construction of experiential meaning. The study employs a descriptive qualitative approach within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The data consist of clauses in the translation, which are analyzed in terms of process types, participants, and circumstances. Data were collected using content analysis with a note-taking technique, while data analysis followed Spradley's model, including domain, taxonomic, componential, and cultural theme analysis. The findings reveal three types of processes: material (62.5%), relational (existential) (25%), and mental (12.5%), with material processes being dominant. The dominant participant pattern is Actor–Goal accompanied by beneficiary circumstances. In addition, the text exhibits a move structure progressing from rhetorical statements to affirmation and instruction. These findings indicate that experiential meaning is constructed through concrete actions, the existence of universal conditions, and human inner responses. Overall, the text represents the theme of “ease after hardship” as a universal, transformative, and inspirational principle.

DOI

[10.22216/kata.v9i1.3529](https://doi.org/10.22216/kata.v9i1.3529)

INTRODUCTION

Language, from the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), is not merely understood as a grammatical system, but as a resource for making meaning within social context (Halliday, Michael A. K.; Matthiessen, 2014) explain that language operates through three metafunctions: the ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions. Among these, the ideational metafunction functions to represent human experience of the world, which is realized through the system of transitivity. This system consists of three main elements—processes, participants, and circumstances—which together construct experiential meaning in a text.

In SFL studies, various review articles and synthesis studies indicate that transitivity analysis has been widely applied across different types of discourse. In general, these studies demonstrate that transitivity is not only a tool for syntactic analysis, but also an instrument for uncovering ideology, experience, and the construction of reality in texts. Previous studies have shown that transitivity analysis has been applied in political discourse (Ewusi-mensah, 2015), persuasive discourse (Heidari, 2014), educational discourse (Apendi & Mulyani, 2020), and digital discourse such as social media (Anake et al., 2025) and verbal violence (Husin & Saragih, 2025). Collectively, these studies suggest that the transitivity system is a highly productive analytical framework for examining experiential meaning across various social contexts.

Furthermore, several studies in translation have shown that transitivity plays a crucial role in meaning shifts between source and target texts (Heidari, 2014; Hidayat et al., 2018; Husin & Saragih, 2025; Suparno et al., 2025). Hidayat and Nababan (2019), found that shifts in transitivity processes occur in the translation of political speeches, which in turn affect

Corresponding author.

E-mail address: nur.hasyim@bisnis.pnj.ac.id

experiential meaning. These findings reinforce the view that translation is not merely a linguistic process, but also a reconstruction of experience.

Despite these contributions, review articles in SFL indicate that there remains a research gap at the level of religious texts, particularly the Qur'an, when examined through a transitivity-based thematic perspective. Most studies still focus on general discourse such as politics, education, or social media, while studies that specifically explore the structure of experiential meaning in Qur'anic translation based on particular themes remain limited. In other words, research integrating transitivity analysis with a theological thematic approach has not been extensively conducted.

In this context, Surah Asy-Syarh is highly relevant for investigation, as it explicitly conveys the theme of "ease after hardship." This theme is not only theological in nature, but is also realized through strong linguistic structures, including repetition, emphasis, and distinctive process constructions. However, there is still a lack of studies that specifically examine how this theme is constructed in the Indonesian translation through the transitivity system, particularly in terms of process distribution, participant configuration, and circumstances.

Based on this gap, this study offers a novelty in the form of a systematic analysis of transitivity patterns in the Indonesian translation of Surah Asy-Syarh, focusing on the construction of experiential meaning under the theme of "ease after hardship." This study not only identifies the types of transitivity processes, but also examines how participants and circumstances are configured, as well as the dominant patterns that shape the overall meaning of the text.

Therefore, this study aims to address three main research questions: (1) what types of transitivity processes are realized in the Indonesian translation of Surah Asy-Syarh; (2) how participants and circumstances are configured in each clause; and (3) what transitivity patterns are most dominant in the text and what do they reveal about construction of experiential meaning.

Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich SFL research within the domain of religious texts, particularly in the analysis of experiential meaning through transitivity. Practically, it also contributes to Qur'anic translation studies by offering a more systematic and thematic functional linguistic approach.

As in other research studies, this study has taken into account the aspects of accuracy, acceptability, and readability (Hasyim, 2020, 2021; Hasyim et al., 2025; Sukaesih et al., 2025). As with the signs of language research, research must be carried out by paying attention to linguistic aspects (Hasyim, 2025; Wiratno, 2018b)

RESEARCH METHO

1. Research Design

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design aimed at systematically describing linguistic phenomena within a text. This approach is used to explore the transitivity system in the Indonesian translation of Surah Asy-Syarh in depth, based on the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). This design follows the principles of qualitative research, which emphasize meaning, context, and the interpretation of linguistic data (Santosa, 2017).

2. Data and Data Sources

The data of this study are transitivity and the categories of participants and circumstance in the translation of Surah Ash-Syarh, the translation of the Kementerian Agama RI in 2012. The location of his research is on the Quran published by the Kementaerian Agama RI in 2012.

3. Data Collection Method

The data were collected using the content analysis method with a note-taking technique. The procedures of data collection were conducted through the following steps:

1. Carefully reading the Indonesian translation of Surah Asy-Syarh.
2. Identifying clauses that realize the transitivity system.
3. Classifying each clause based on process types, participants, and circumstances.
4. Recording the data into a coding table for further analysis.

This method enables the systematic and structured collection of linguistic data.

4. Data Analysis Method

The data were analyzed using an interactive qualitative analysis model developed by James Spradley (1980) (1980) and adapted by Santosa (2017) within the framework of SFL. The analysis was conducted through the following four stages.

a. Domain Analysis

This stage aims to identify the main domains in the data, namely the types of transitivity processes, including material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential processes.

b. Taxonomic Analysis

At this stage, each domain is further classified to examine its internal structure, including the relationships between processes, participants (e.g., Actor, Goal, Senser, Carrier), and circumstances in each clause.

c. Componential Analysis

This stage is used to compare and contrast the semantic features of different transitivity process types in order to identify more specific meaning patterns within the text.

d. Cultural Theme Analysis

The final stage aims to interpret broader conceptual meanings, particularly how the transitivity system represents experiential meaning and constructs the thematic message of “ease after hardship” in the text.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. RESULTS

1. Types of Transitivity Processes are Realized In The Indonesian Translation of Surah Asy-Syarh;

Based on the analysis of the eight verses in the Indonesian translation of Surah Asy-Syarh, three types of transitivity processes were identified, namely material, relational (existential), and mental processes. The frequency distribution and percentage of each process type are presented in the following table.

Tabel 1. Tipe Type of Transitivity in the Translation of Surah Asy-Syarh

No	Process Type	Frequency	Persentage
1	Material	5	62.5%
2	Relasional (Eksistensial)	2	25%
3	Mental	1	12.5%
	Total	8	100%

The Table 1 above shows that material processes are the most dominant type, with a frequency of 5 occurrences (62.5%), followed by relational and mental processes.

2. Describing The Participants and Circumstances are Configured In Each Clause

Based on the transitivity analysis of the eight clauses presented in the table, the configuration of participants and circumstances can be described as follows:

The Table 2 below presents the distribution of participant roles and the types of circumstances associated with each clause.

Table 2: Table of Distribution of Participant Roles and Circumstance Types on Each Clause

No	Translation Clause	Partisipant Configuration	Circumstance Type
1	Bukankah Kami telah melapangkan untukmu dadamu?	Kami (Actor) — dadamu (Goal)	untukmu (Beneficiary)
2	dan Kami pun telah menurunkan daripadamu bebanmu	Kami (Actor) — bebanmu (Goal)	daripadamu (Source)
3	yang memberatkan punggungmu	beban (Actor) — punggungmu (Goal)	(Tidak ada)
4	dan Kami tinggikan bagimu sebutan (nama)mu	Kami (Actor) — sebutanmu (Goal)	bagimu (Beneficiary)
5	Maka sesungguhnya bersama kesulitan ada kemudahan	kemudahan (Existent)	bersama kesulitan (Accompaniment)
6	sesungguhnya bersama kesulitan ada kemudahan	kemudahan (Existent)	bersama kesulitan (Accompaniment)
7	Maka apabila engkau telah selesai..., tetaplah bekerja keras	engkau (Actor)	dari sesuatu urusan (Source)
8	dan hanya kepada Tuhanmulah engkau berharap	engkau (Senser) — Tuhanmu (Phenomenon)	kepada Tuhanmu (Direction)

The findings on the dominant patterns in the configuration of participant roles and types of circumstances are presented in Table 3. The table shows that the Actor–Goal configuration accompanied by a Beneficiary circumstance emerges as the most dominant pattern.

Table 3 The Dominant Patterns in The Configuration of Participant Roles and Types Of Circumstances

Participant Configuratin Type	Circumstance Type	Frequency	Clausa Number
Actor — Goal	Beneficiary	2	1, 4
Actor — Goal	Source	1	2
Actor — Goal	(Tanpa Sirkumstan)	1	3
Existent	Accompaniment	2	5, 6
Actor	Source	1	7
Senser — Phenomenon	Direction	1	8
TOTAL		8	

3. Transitivity Patterns are Most Dominant in The Text and What Do They Reveal about Construction Of Experiential Meaning

This study finds that the Material Process is the most dominant, accounting for 62.5% of the total data. This indicates that in terms of expressing experiential meaning, the translation is constructed with a greater emphasis on concrete actions. This dominance reflects that the text prioritizes the representation of physical and observable events over abstract ideas. Furthermore, the intensive use of material processes serves to create a dynamic narrative flow through the transformations or changes performed by the actors upon their goals.

DISCUSSION

1. The Role of Process Types

The findings reveal that material processes are the most dominant type in the translation of Surah Asy-Syarh, accounting for 62.5% of the total data. This dominance indicates that experiential meaning in the text is primarily constructed through concrete actions and observable events. Material processes such as *expanding*, *removing*, and *elevating* reflect actions performed by an Actor upon a Goal. This suggests that the experiences represented in the text are dynamic and oriented toward transformation. In other words, meaning is not merely conceptual but is realized through tangible actions. This dominance reinforces the characterization of the text as an active and transformative representation of experience.

In addition, the presence of relational (existential) and mental processes contributes further dimensions to experiential meaning. The existential process, realized in the clause *there is ease*, emphasizes the existence of a universal condition. Meanwhile, the mental process in the final verse signals a shift from physical action to inner consciousness or psychological experience. The combination of these three process types demonstrates that the text constructs experience not only in physical terms but also in terms of states and cognition. Therefore, experiential meaning in the text is comprehensive, encompassing action, existence, and (Santosa, 2009; Wiratno, 2011, 2018a) This reflects the richness of meaning construction within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics.

2. The Role of Participant and Circumstance Patterns

The analysis shows that the dominant participant configuration is the Actor–Goal pattern, typically realized by “We” as the Actor and other elements as the Goal. This pattern indicates a unidirectional action relationship in which the Actor plays a dominant role in affecting the Goal. In this context, “We” represents divine authority acting upon human experience. This suggests that participant structure is not neutral but encodes relations of power and authority. As such, participant configuration plays a crucial role in shaping experiential meaning. This pattern reinforces the interpretation that the text emphasizes active intervention by the primary Actor.

In addition to participants, circumstances play a significant role in clarifying the context of experience. Circumstances such as *beneficiary* (for you), *source* (from you), and *accompaniment* (with hardship) provide additional information about how, to whom, and under what conditions actions occur. The presence of beneficiary circumstances, for instance, indicates that actions are directed toward the benefit of the recipient. Meanwhile, the accompaniment circumstance in verses 5 and 6 strengthens the conceptual relationship between hardship and ease. Thus, circumstances function not merely as optional elements but as essential components that enrich experiential meaning.

The interaction between participants and circumstances results in a more contextualized and meaningful representation of experience.

3. Move Patterns in the Text

Structurally, the text demonstrates a systematic pattern of moves from rhetorical statement to affirmation and finally to instruction. The first verse begins with a rhetorical interrogative form, functioning as a reminder of past experience. This is followed by a series of declarative clauses describing divine actions. Such a pattern creates a progression from reflection to affirmation. The repetition found in verses 5 and 6 serves as a strategy of emphasis on the central message. Therefore, the move structure reflects a carefully organized and persuasive construction of meaning.

Toward the end, the text shifts to imperative and mental moves. Verse 7 contains a command encouraging continuous effort, while verse 8 directs attention to an inner attitude of hope toward God. This shift indicates a transition from the representation of experience to the expected response of the reader. In other words, the text not only describes experience but also guides action and consciousness. This pattern reflects a strong rhetorical structure in meaning-making. Overall, the moves form a progression from past experience to future-oriented action and attitude.

4. Cultural Theme / Conclusion

Based on the overall analysis, the cultural theme that emerges from the text is the concept of “ease after hardship” as a universal life principle. This theme is realized through the integration of material, relational, and mental processes. The material processes represent concrete divine interventions in overcoming hardship. Meanwhile, the existential processes affirm that ease is inherently present alongside hardship. This suggests that human experience is conceptualized within a framework of balance and hope. Thus, the text reflects an optimistic and transformative worldview.

Furthermore, this cultural theme embodies religious values that emphasize the relationship between human effort and reliance on God. The commands to strive and to hope indicate an integration of action and spirituality. This reflects a cultural value system that prioritizes both effort and faith. From the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics, this theme is the result of a complex construction of experiential meaning. Therefore, the findings contribute not only to linguistic analysis but also to the understanding of cultural values in religious texts. Overall, the text constructs meaning that is not only descriptive but also normative and inspirational.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that transitivity patterns in the Indonesian translation of Surah Asy-Syarah are predominantly realized through material processes, which construct experiential meaning through concrete actions. The dominant Actor–Goal configuration reflects a hierarchical action relationship in which the primary Actor plays an active role in influencing the Goal. The presence of relational and mental processes complements this representation by incorporating dimensions of existence and consciousness. Furthermore, circumstances enrich the meaning by providing contextual details that clarify how and under what conditions actions occur.

Moreover, the move structure of the text reveals a systematic rhetorical organization, beginning with the recall of past experiences, followed by affirmation, and culminating in directives for action and inner attitude. This indicates that the text functions not only descriptively but also persuasively and normatively. Thematically, the study confirms that the concept of “ease after hardship” is constructed as a cultural and religious value emphasizing

the balance between effort and faith. Therefore, this study contributes to the development of functional linguistic analysis, particularly in understanding experiential meaning in religious texts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to Prof. Tri Wiratno, Prof. Riyadi Santosa, and Taufik Nur Hidayat, M.Hum., for their inspiration in conducting research on Systemic Functional Linguistics.

REFERENCES

- Anake, S. A., Chimuanya, L., Evaristus, A., Kayode, O. A., Ogbulogo, C. U., Studies, G., Studies, D., & Africa, S. (2025). *Article A Linguistic Investigation of Mental Health Discourse on Instagram : A Transitivity Approach*. 07(06), 737–750.
- Apendi, T. L., & Mulyani, E. R. (2020). *The Analysis Of Transitivity Process Of Students ' Descriptive Texts*. 3(3), 359–366.
- Ewusi-mensah, L. (2015). *Transitivity in Political Discourse – A Study of the Major Process Types in the 2009 State-of-the-Nation Address in Ghana*. 16, 23–32.
- Halliday, Michael A. K.; Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203431269>
- Hasyim, N. (2020). Navigating Genre-based Writing Model for Academic Purposes. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 24(4), 5995–6005. <https://doi.org/10.37200/ijpr/v24i4/pr2020409>
- Hasyim, N. (2021). a Guide To Translating a Research-Relating Term. *Epigram*, 18(2), 170–174. <https://doi.org/10.32722/epi.v18i2.3825>
- Hasyim, N. (2025). *Bahasa Indosia Multirepresentasi*. Tahta Media Grup.
- Hasyim, N., Bestri, E., Siregar, A., Hidayat, T. N., Nur, Z., & Shomami, A. (2025). Bridging translation gaps : a model for translating emotional Intelligence terms in derivative forms. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2025.2598649>
- Heidari, L. (2014). Persuasive style and its realization through transitivity analysis : A SFL perspective. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 158, 179–186. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.12.066>
- Hidayat, T. N., Nababan, M. ., & Djatmika, N. (2018). Teknik Penerjemahan Jenis Proses Pada Pidato Pelantikan Presiden Obama & Trump (Translation Technique of Process Type in Inauguration Speeches of Obama'S and Trump'S). In *Metalingua: Jurnal Penelitian Bahasa* (Vol. 16, Issue 1, p. 95). <https://doi.org/10.26499/metalingua.v16i1.102>
- Husin, M., & Saragih, A. (2025). *Experiential Meanings Analysis of Teacher Verbal Abuse*. 07(05), 774–782.
- Santosa, R. (2009). *SFL and problems of equivalence in translation*.
- Santosa, R. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Kebahasaan*. UNS Press.
- Spradely, J. P. (1980). *Participant Observation.*, James P. Spradley; *The Ethnographic Interview.*, (pp. 526--530). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2392270>
- Sukaesih, I., Humolungo, F., Indrayani, S., Kurniawati, D., & Edel, E. E. (2025). Lost in translation: Strategies for preserving cultural elements in the translation of Sundanese short stories to English. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 14(3), 461–471. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v14i3.75539>

- Suparno, D., Rokhim, M., Chairul, S. F., Atih, I., Halim, W., Nubowo, A., & Burhanuddin, J. (2025). *Islam Nusantara in Song: Transitivity Benchmarking on*.
- Wiratno, T. (2011). *Pengantar Linguistik Umum*. Universitas Terbuka.
- Wiratno, T. (2018a). *Pengantar Ringkas Linguistik Sistemik*. Pustaka Pelajar.
- Wiratno, T. (2018b). *pengantar Ringkas Lingusitik Sistemik Fungsional*. Pustaka Pelajar.