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Transitivity Choices in an Abridged Text: The Case of a Graphic Novel

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Abstract

This article investigates the application of Halliday's theory of transitivity to analyse the verbal structures of an abridged text in the form of a graphic novel. Having been condensed from the original classic Journey to the Centre of the Earth (JttCotE) by Jules Verne, the present study examines the link between these structures and how they represent the original text. The focus of the analysis concentrates on the verbal text contained in speech bubbles and caption boxes; common characteristics of the comics medium. Based on the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework of the ideational metafunction, this article discusses how linguistic formations are constructed and construed through transitivity in an abridged text. In addition, the analysis also looks into how the authors have adapted the original text into a graphic novel through the adoption of a few specific Processes. As such an exploration is limited, the current study fills the gap in this area. The analysis of data indicates that careful employment of linguistic choices forms the core of the novel which inherently is also supported through its visual representations. The results reveal that Material Processes are the most prominent in this adapted version of the novel, followed by Relational and Behavioural Processes respectively. This study highlights how linguistic choices support the original text, though an abridged version, specifically in the panels of Journey to the Centre of the Earth. The findings can serve to understand how authors construct their versions of abridged texts to adhere to the original text.

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics, transitivity, verbal analysis, graphic novels, classics.

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1. INTRODUCTION

A graphic novel embraces multimodality as the various elements of verbal and visual components interact in construing meanings. Verbal components include words, phrases, and texts. The visual components are various graphic elements like images, pictures, and other graphic elements. [Stafford \(2011, p. 54\)](#) opines that graphic novels were once known as “the enfant terrible of literature” but were eventually recognised as a constituent of modern educational literature as reflected by current developments in this field. Graphic novels are also considered “emerging new literature of our times” ([Campbell, 2007, p. 13](#)). Morphing from comic books, graphic novels embody an excellent interplay of both verbal and visual elements. The deep relationship of the English language with visuals that encompasses images and illustrations traces back a long-enduring tradition. Beginning from the time of manuscripts of medieval romance like Charles Dickens’ ‘*Oliver Twist*’ (1839) illustrated by George Cruikshank, Maurice Sendak’s modern picture books like ‘*Where the Wild Things Are*’ (1963), comics from DC and Marvel Publishers to the narratives of films, plays, and video games, the combination of various verbal and visual elements is symbiotic.

Various studies on graphic novels denote that they are still developing but the recent increase seen in scholarly contributions ([Chiao & Bateman, 2018](#); [Cunanan, 2019](#); [Kaur, 2019](#); [Kwon, 2020](#)) show that there is an emerging interest in exploring the medium. Nevertheless, existing studies lack research based on the content analysis of graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics. This study supports [Martin’s \(2009, p. 30\)](#) view that “today many authors and artists adapt works of classic literature into a medium more user friendly to our increasingly visual student population”. For the current study, a linguistics theoretical framework is used to analyse the textual component contained in speech bubbles and caption boxes. Hence, data from the analysis can inform how authors construct meanings in adapting a classic literature text into its graphic adaptation. This also addresses the research gap in this field which remains an open field for various explorations in different areas.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research in the field of graphic novels and comics has been steadily increasing in recent years. The use of graphic novels in the classroom has contributed to the surge of many studies ([Derbel, 2019](#); [Fenty & Brydon, 2019](#); [Kwon, 2020](#)) as the benefits are multifold. [Derbel’s \(2019\)](#) study stresses the benefits of graphic novels as an innovative pedagogical tool. The study looks into how learners explore and analyse extracts from Mark Twain’s ‘*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*’. Focusing on elements like setting, point of view, and characterization, comparisons to the narrative version were conducted. The findings reveal that these learners have a better understanding of the text. For [Fenty and Brydon \(2019\)](#), a study on students with learning disabilities shows the beneficial impact of the inclusion of graphic novels in a reading programme. The results support the efficacy of graphic novels in promoting the students’ engagement with the text while reading. They further add that the adoption of proper guidelines and well-planned instructions can contribute to strong oral reading fluency skills. The effectiveness of graphic novels is also explored by [Kwon \(2020\)](#) among his preservice art teachers, stressing the impact of popular visual

culture and multimodal literacy. The hybrid allure of a graphic novel makes it highly attractive to many readers. A classic literary text can be unappealing to read for some students, but an extremely exciting graphic novel might encourage them to progress to other types of books. For any educator, such an endeavour is truly a noteworthy achievement.

The other popular area of research includes the exploration of conventions, implicit ideologies and discourse structures in content analysis related studies. To date, many studies have explored various elements of language in graphic novels. While a gamut of studies exists for both comics and graphic novels, this study focuses on the genre of adapted classics. El Refaie's (2010) analysis of David B's graphic novel 'Epileptic' through the adoption of semiotic resources reveals how the subjective experiences of temporality are constructed and conveyed. Additionally, Dallacqua (2012) investigates how literary devices like mood and symbolism are explored in graphic novels by analysing recurring themes. A multimodal analysis approach is adopted by Veloso and Bateman (2013) to analyse the embedment of controversial policies and propaganda in Marvel's 'Civil War'. Chiao and Bateman's (2018) study of both Paul Auster's 'City of Glass' and Karasik and Mazzuchelli's graphic adapted version reveals the differences in thematic shifts in both genres through a cross-media cohesion analysis. These studies denote that the dissection of different genres of graphic novels to uncover beliefs, propagandas, themes, and ideologies is the main focus. For Singer (2020), his investigation on Paula Bulling's German documentary comic book 'In the Land of Early Birds' and Shaun Tan's wordless graphic novel 'The Arrival' shows how the authors evoke a sense foreignness in their readers through the employment of visual cues like symbols and different modes like colours and frames.

Studies in the field of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) specifically transitivity have also been gaining popularity for it is an effective investigative tool and model for stylistics and critical linguistics. For Simpson (1994), transitivity bridges the exploration of narrative fiction and other types of discourse. Ji and Shen (2004) for example, adopt transitivity as an analytical framework to study Sheila Watson's 'The Double Hook' that explores the mental condition of James, the novel's protagonist. Cunanan (2011), on the other hand, explores 'Old Mrs. Grey' by Virginia Woolf and asserts the importance of a stylistic analysis in assisting ESL readers to understand the text by considering the author's linguistic choices. Nguyen (2012) also employs transitivity to dissect the personality of the main character in Hoa Pham's 'Heroic Mother', thus revealing the complexity of the character. Exploring the theme of violence in 'Cinderella', Alcantud-Diaz (2012) adopts transitivity and critical discourse analysis.

Afrianto et al. (2014) analysis on Shakespeare's sonnets namely 'The Time of the Year', 'Let Me Not to the Marriage of True Minds' and 'My Mistress' Eye' reveals the presence of only four Processes (Material, Mental, Relational and Existential). Rajendra and Taib's (2014) study of the graphic novel 'Black Beauty' by Anna Sewell identifies anthropocentrism through transitivity, indicating the author's careful choice of clauses supports this prevalent theme, further enhanced by the images in the panels of the novel. The dominance of Material Processes in 'Black Beauty' shows the need to construct the outer experiences of the characters to support the theme. Cunanan's (2019) analysis of James Joyce's short story 'Eveline' postulates the importance of a grammatical framework in helping students appreciate the worldview and perception of the author and the depiction of characters in the narrative. Additionally, Kaur (2019)

investigates how the characters of Marlow and Kurtz are represented in Joseph Conrad's novel 'Heart of Darkness', concluding that Marlow is more of a Senser and Kurtz represents the main Actor; indicating a contrast of each other's roles in the novel. These studies echo the efficacy of transitivity to investigate the creation of meanings in literary texts through critical linguistics.

As an analytical tool, transitivity also supports the dissection of numerous stylistic elements inherent in literary texts. More importantly, earlier studies have concentrated mainly on the analysis of conventional literary texts, thus neglecting the analysis of graphic novels notably from the lens of transitivity. The current study contributes to the vibrant interdisciplinary study of graphic novels by focusing on how linguistic choices are pertinent in the writing of a graphic novel specifically when it is adapted from the classics through the framework of transitivity. To illustrate how one classic is abridged into a graphic novel through linguistic choices, this study aims to answer the following question: How are textual elements represented in a graphic novel from the genre of adapted classics?

2.1 Graphic Novels

The hybrid form of graphic novels combines texts (verbal) and images (visual) underpinned in the format of comics that is based on sequential art. They are defined as novels where narratives are communicated and conveyed through an assemblage and combination of art and text (Eisner, 2008). He further contends that the prevalence of images through sequential art hinders interpretation, thus simplifying the delivery of its messages. Brenner (2011, p. 257) further adds that graphic novels provide two varied styles of "telling and digesting stories, neither better nor worse than prose as a delivery method for stories, and as they challenge how reading is defined, their addition to can on increases the variety and reach of storytelling". Following the Aristotelian model which proposes a beginning, middle, and end, graphic novels are complete stories published in various genres. Weiner (2002) lists six different categories of graphic novels: adaptations or spinoffs, superhero stories, manga, satire, human interest stories, and non-fiction graphic novels.

Within the category of adaptation, literary texts which are considered classics have been successfully adapted into their graphic interpretations. The proliferation of adaptations preserves the act of storytelling with additions, differences, and "repetition without replication" (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 7). This reinterpretation through new recreation of the originals offers a choice to appreciate the classics both visually and textually. Sipe (2011) asserts that the diminishing distinction between both high culture and popular culture and the increasing artistic virtues of graphic novels are the two primary reasons for the decline of the numerous depreciating critiques on the genre. The numerous studies underpinning the positive pedagogical implications of reading graphic novels to develop multi-literacies support the need for the medium to be recognised as an emerging reading trend that seeks to rebrand the genre as one that is not associated as "humorous, fluffy stories for kids, unaware that comics have, for the past 30 years, been primarily aimed at adult readers" (Brenner, 2011, p. 262). More importantly, graphic novels are capable of functioning just like any works of great literature besides eliciting the reader's aesthetics and visual senses (Letcher, 2008). This assertion supports the adaptation of classics and literary works into graphic novels through simplifications and illustrations without jeopardising the storylines.

2.2 Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

The use of language is both functional and semantic, thus espousing the SFL approach to language where it represents a structure of meanings (Eggins, 1994). As a research tool and a framework, SFL provides insights into the internal organization of language in accomplishing three main functions (metafunctions). These metafunctions are termed as ideational, interpersonal, and textual. SFL helps in the understanding of why a text is written in the way it is. This study focuses on how linguistic choices are framed in a graphic adaptation through the isolation of its verbal text through transitivity. The six major processes and their constituents are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of processes, their representations, and participants (Butt et al., 2000, pp. 62-63).

Type of Process	Representation of Process	Participants
Material (MP)	Physical action, doing	Actor, Goal, Scope, Range Beneficiary
Mental (MenP)	Thinking, feeling, knowing	Senser, Phenomenon
Relational (RP)	Identifying the features of somebody/something	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attributive (ARP) • Identifying (IRP) 		Token, Value Carrier, Attribute
Behavioural (BP)	Physiological, psychological	Behaviour
Verbal (VP)	Speaking, telling	Sayer, Target, Verbiage
Existential (EP)	Signalling, the existence of something/someone	Existent

The focus on transitivity aims to investigate how the semantic organization of experience forms the base of the verbal representation of this graphic adaptation. The categories of Processes, Participants, and Circumstances interpret our experiences of the world through linguistic structures which are embedded in meanings (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Nevertheless, due to space limitations, the element of Circumstances will not be addressed in this article.

3. METHOD

This study establishes how verbal structures are represented in a graphic novel based on an adapted classic, specifically the novel 'Journey to the Centre of the Earth' (JttCotE) by Jules Verne. A qualitative approach grounded in the philosophy of interpretive research is utilised. Based on content analysis, it supports Bell's (2008) assertion that such analysis may include meaningful verbal or/and visual information materials which may be visual, textual, graphic, or oral. In addition, the items can be further divided into constituent elements. Figure 1 denotes the components to analyse verbal structures in JttCotE.

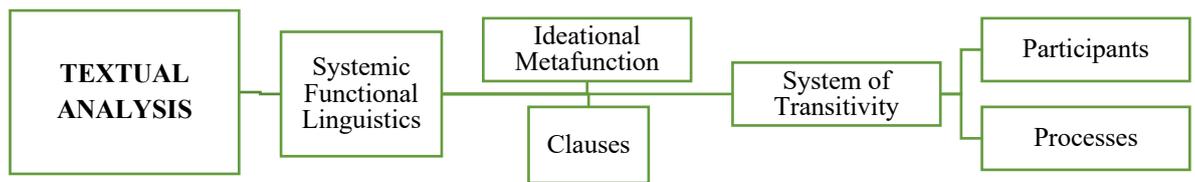


Figure 1. The theoretical framework of textual analysis (adopted from Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

3.1 The Novel

The bibliographic information of JttCotE is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Bibliographic information of JttCotE.

Title	Author	Retold by	Illustrator
Journey to the Center of the Earth (JttCotE)	Jules Verne	Davis Worth Miller Katherine Mclean Brevard	Greg Rebis

The graphic novel JttCotE is chosen for this study as it was used with two other graphic novels (‘Black Beauty’ by Anna Sewell and ‘The Boscombe Valley Mystery’ by Arthur Conan Doyle) in the Malaysian lower secondary English Language syllabus as part of the literature component. JttCotE is a science fiction fantasy novel based on the unusual journey of two Germans, Professor Lidenbrock and his nephew Axel, and Hans, their Icelandic guide. Their adventure begins with the deciphering of an encrypted message written by Arne Saknussemm which leads them to the centre of the earth. Traversing through various places, the journey sees many misadventures and heart-pounding thrills.

3.2 Stages of Research

The analysis was conducted in three main stages. Firstly, each panel was numbered accordingly and was coded P1 to P212 (total number of panels) to analyse the transitivity patterns. All verbal texts found in the 123 caption boxes and 159 speech bubbles were isolated, identified, and labelled. This was followed by the analysis and finally, interpretation of the clausal structures using the transitivity framework. Additionally, e-mail interviews were also conducted with the authors and illustrators to further substantiate data. The three stages involved here were the emailing of interview questions, transcribing data and interpretation, and discussion of data.

3.3 Data Analysis

The Process types were classified through transitivity analysis obtained from the clauses found in the caption boxes and speech bubbles of each panel (coded as P). In maintaining simplification, the analysis was conducted at a sentence level, contrary to the usual clause rank level. Each sentence was labelled numerically (coded as S) based on their sequence in the panels JttCotE. Table 3 exemplifies the analysis of the clause ‘Axel, follow me’.

Table 3. A transitivity analysis in JttCotE.

JttCoE/S1/P1	Axel,	follow	me.
	Par: Actor	Pr: Material	Par: goal

Triangulation was also performed with data retrieved from the interview scripts of the authors and illustrator. Their responses were analysed and categorised, followed by triangulation using data of the textual analysis. The next stage involved the interpretation of data to draw conclusions.

4. FINDINGS

To answer the research question, Table 4 presents the frequency of Processes with its corresponding percentages found in the novel JttCotE.

Table 4. The summary of the findings.

Types of Processes	Number and Percentage
Material (MPs)	186 (48.82%)
Mental (MenPs)	23 (6.04%)
Relational (RPs)	112 (29.4%)
*Identifying	*50 (13.12%)
*Attributing	*62 (16.27%)
Behavioural (BPs)	44 (11.55%)
Verbal (VPs)	7 (1.84%)
Existential (EPs)	9 (2.36%)
Category total	381 (100%)

The findings reveal the popularity of Material Processes (MPs) with 186 (48.82%) occurrences. Table 5 shows one example of an analysis which depicts an MP.

Table 5. A material process in JttCotE.

JttCoE/S2/P10	I	found	the secret.
	Par: Actor	Pr: Material	Par: Goal

In Table 5, the verb found depicts Axel being able to decipher the code of the note written by Arne Saknussemm, a famous Icelandic explorer. The choice of the authors of JttCotE to heavily rely on MPs denote the need to emphasize the Processes of 'doing' and 'happening' using physical experiences.

Relational Processes (RPs) are widely employed in the novel indicating the pertinence of Processes related to identifying and classifying. As such, it is the second-highest of the Process type used. The novel carries 112 (29.4%) RPs whereby they are further divided into 50 (13.12%) Identifying Relational Processes (IRPs) and 62 (16.27%) Attributing Relational Process (ARPs) respectively. Tables 6 and 7 exemplify an IRP and an ARP in JttCotE.

Table 6. A relational process of identifying mode (IRP) in JttCotE.

JttCoE/S4/P21	Hans	will be	our guide.
	Par: Token	Pr: Relational	Par: Value

Table 7. A relational process of attributing mode (ARP) in JttCotE.

JttCoE/S2/P111	The slope	was	steep...
	Par: Carrier	Pr: Relational	Par: Attribute

In Table 6 the verbs-to-be will be identifies and acknowledges Hans as the guide while in Table 7, the verb-to-be was attributes the steepness of a slope. Both the elements of attribution and identification are important in clauses relating to being, becoming, or possessing.

The novel also contains 44 (11.55%) Behavioural Processes (BPs) and they signify the third-highest Process. One example of BP is depicted in Table 8.

Table 8. A behavioural process in JttCotE.

JttCoE/S2/P30	...these pits	had spit out	lava and poisonous gases
	Par: Behavior	Pr: Behavioural	Par: Behaviour

In Table 8, the verb had spit out is assigned to the pits which emit lava and poisonous gases. Here, the word had spit out functions as a personification. The use of literary devices succeeds in construing an analogy to represent distinctness and realism attributed to non-living things.

The use of 23 (6.04%) Mental Processes (MenPs) shows that the Process is trivial. The structure of JttCotE which focuses on actions supports the narration of adventures which rely on MPs. Thus, clauses related to the experience of one's consciousness are insignificant as illustrated in Table 9.

Table 9. A mental process in JttCotE.

JttCoE/S2/P122	My curiosity	got	the best of me.
	Par: Senser	Pr: Mental	Par: Phenomenon

Table 9 shows a sense of realisation as Axel became curious through the usage of the verb got. The use of MenPs shows that the writer has relied on the Process of wanting (cognitive sensing) to accentuate realism to the narrative.

A total of 9 (2.36%) Existential Processes (EPs) are evident in JttCotE. This Process is mainly used to describe the background, settings, and locations of the narrative as represented in Table 10.

Table 10. An existential process in JttCotE.

JttCoE/S2/P25	There are	no wild animals	where we are going.
	Pr: Existential	Par: Existent	Cir: Location

In Table 10, the phrasal verb There are denotes that there were no wild animals to the destination the travellers were heading. The EP is minimally deployed as the novel concentrates on physical and tangible actions.

JttCotE sees the employment of only 7 (1.84%) VPs, thus making it the least used Process. Table 11 depicts one example of this Process.

Table 11. A verbal process in JttCotE.

JttCoE/S2/P18	I	said	goodbye	to my dear Gretchen.
	Par: Sayer	PR: Verbal	Par: Verbiage	Pr: Receiver

The verb said in Table 11 signifies the account of a dialogue within a speech bubble whereby Axel wished goodbye to the love of his life, Gretchen. The minimal usage of VPs in a graphic novel is justified due to the feature of its verbal text. Speech bubbles are pertinent characteristics and are dialogic in nature.

The allocation of MPs as the highest and RPs as the second-highest number of Processes is integral in this adaptation of *JttCotE*. The use of BPs as the third-highest Process sustains the need to convey the state of emotions and minds of the Participants. EPs limited usage to represent backgrounds, locations, and settings enables readers to gain a better impression and view of the environment and surroundings represented in the novel. This is a requisite in the abridgment of the novel as the limitation of words requires simplification. VPs are the least popular because the characteristic of a graphic novel is that which requires speech bubbles to contain any forms of verbal utterances.

5. DISCUSSION

The analysis reveals that Material and Relational Processes are dominant in *JttCotE*. MPs are clearly important as they signify a series of happenings in a sequence of narration. This finding also concurs with [Halliday and Matthiessen \(2004, p. 174\)](#) for “the setting or orientation of a narrative is often dominated by ‘existential’ and ‘relational’ clauses but the main event line is construed predominantly by “material clauses”. The high occurrences of MPs also signify the emphasis to translate the experiences of the external and material world supported by the actions of related Participants (Goal, Scope, Beneficiary, and Attribute). Additionally, this finding concurs with [Moya-Gujerro’s \(2014\)](#) view that the contributions of Participants of MPs are significant through the movement and dynamism of the narrative.

The prominence of RPs supports the descriptive nature of the novel. As the second-highest process, the Participants of Attributes and Values (Identifiers) thoroughly describe both animate and inanimate beings and locations. The distribution of RPs echoes with [Halliday and Matthiessen’s \(2004\)](#) assertion that RPs function to identify and characterize. The significance of these identifiers and descriptors are important to truncate the original version of the novel closely through the medium of comics. In providing elements of attributes, identification, and possession, the use of RPs is vital to realise the needs of a graphic adaptation that is dominated by images. The utilisation of RPs and their respective Participants denote the preference of the authors to reveal the distinctness of these Participants. Their descriptive nature reinforces the vividness and clarity of the narrative through the portrayal of the characters. Being a novel meant for young readers, the details of the characteristics are crucial to elicit a sense of connection towards the characters. This also prevents the overload of implicit literary styles that might confuse younger readers.

The deployment of BPs involves emotional and physical actions which are related to physiological and psychological aspects. As images and visuals better represent physiological and psychological forms, BPs are not as significant as MPs. This revelation concurs with [Rajendra and Taib’s \(2014\)](#) postulation that low reliance on physiological and psychological clauses is due to the representation of these clauses through images. The adoption of BPs is also based on the necessity of having a ‘half-way house’ specifically between an MP and a MenP, as put forth by [Eggins \(2004\)](#).

JttCotE depends on BPs to enrich the characteristics of inanimate entities such as sea giants and colossal flora and fauna. Stylistic elements like personification further accentuate the human-like features of these inanimate entities.

The use of MenPs in JttCotE reveals the importance of insights and perceptions though they are not as popular as MPs. MPs help readers comprehend experiential meanings better through distinct linguistics visualisation such as the identification of tone and mood. Through his own stream of consciousness, the author's experience of the world is probed by MenPs which often directly represent the Participants. The sights and sounds in the novel are achieved through the process of perception that enables readers to visualise the events of the story. This accentuates the understanding of the classics where major characters often affect the stream of consciousness of a narrative, thus intensifying mental imageries. Interior monologues of Participants invoke a sense of emotional behaviours like empathy and sympathy within readers. For Dujardin, an interior monologue is important as a "direct introduction of the reader into the interior life of the character, without any interventions in the way of explanation or commentary on the part of the author" and as "the expression of the most intimate thoughts, those which lie nearest the unconscious" (as cited in [Wellek & Warren, 1949, p. 233](#)). As such, the act of consciousness in construing meanings through the roles of the Participants is significant in JttCotE.

The scarcity of EPs signifies a vague outline and much depends on the interpretation of the readers through visualisation. The EPs signify entities without assuming additional information about them. As an obligatory Participant, no extra elaborations are needed to the narrative in relation to the roles of the Existents as Participants. They remain solely individualistic without any connection and function to complement and provide readers with only the necessary information. The analysis reveals that the roles of both animate and inanimate Participants are related to specific Processes. [Hasan's \(1989\)](#) view on dynamism buttresses the depiction of Participants as active figures.

Though the least deployed, the adoption of VPs suggests the importance of texts within the speech bubbles which represents reported clauses. While speech bubbles are prerequisites in the medium of comics, the utilisation of non-dialogic VPs using words such as uttered, said, and told is crucial. VPs elaborate the narrative further, in addition to foreshadowing the subsequent panels. Although speech bubbles are not considered as VPs, this study reveals that the verbal phrase within its text makes it a VP most times. More importantly, the analysis of VPs decides who gets a voice, even during flashbacks in the text.

The findings also reveal careful and informed textual choices by the authors through the deployment of Process types that denotes experiential meanings and their construction of meanings. In adhering to [Butt et al. \(2000, p. 47\)](#), the assertion of "who does what to whom under what circumstances", the authors made informed choices into deciding what is important to be included in the text to support the graphic adaptation. The findings imply that the semantico-grammatical choices may also be attributed to a 'semantic pressure' ([Halliday, 1994, p. xxiv](#)) as they had a specific number of pages and panels to work on. This assertion concurs with one of the authors of the novel as shown in Extract 1.

Extract 1

“I studied the original work, made an outline of key plot points, and wrote the story to conform to the length and reading-level guidelines spelled out in my contract with the publisher”.

The Processes also show genre-related choices as revealed by the analysis. Although the interaction of text and image is an important feature in a graphic novel, there is no predominance of text over images in this adaptation. Thus, the composition of clauses is focused on the central components of the narrative structure (denouement, rising actions, climax, falling actions, and resolution). This finding echoes with the view expressed by another writer as indicated in Extract 2:

Extract 2

“The written text should be tight and should convey to some extent the images. The images should extend the written text”.

This study’s findings reflect Halliday’s (1994) view that the combination of Processes, Participants, and Circumstances (though the latter element is not discussed here) is crucial to conjure a mental image of reality. This study reveals that the authors and illustrator of the novel did not collaborate in producing the novel. Hence, the authors adapted the original text while the illustrator worked on the adapted text. The mediator between both writers and illustrators was the publishing company. The authors concentrated on writing the text to remain as close as possible to the original text through the selection of episodes defining the original plots of the novel. Informed choices were also made by the illustrator in visualising these events as close to the original. Thus, the authors and illustrator were conscious of the need to adhere closely to the original version while fitting the text and the visual into the panels of a graphic novel.

6. CONCLUSION

The study’s textual analysis based on transitivity denotes the meaning-making potential that mediates between language and reality. The findings reveal that the authors of the graphic version of *JttCotE* express their choices at clause rank levels through linguistic structures that encapsulate the adaptation to remain true and close to the original works of Jules Verne.

The significance of the study supports a few explorations. Transitivity analysis itself can be a tool to accentuate language teaching. The grammatical system of transitivity reinforces the construction of the adapted version by construing the world of experiences of that of happening, doing, meaning, being, and becoming by relying on careful linguistic choices through the focus on clauses. The SFL is an effective tool for dissecting the linguistic structure that the authors had employed in adapting the text. The verbal representations of the graphic adaptation support the original version of *JttCotE* through an emphasis on the fundamental elements of a narrative. These elements encompass orientation, setting, complication, climax, and resolution of a story.

From an academic perspective, the current study hopes to add to the limited body of research on graphic novels and transitivity analysis. As studies in this area are limited, the subject of adapted classics still remains a blind spot within academia. Most

recent studies in the field of graphic novels have focused on pedagogical implications, ideologies, analytical frameworks, and content analysis.

The approach of retelling the narratives through the interplay of text and image by adopting graphic novels provides a great introduction to the world of great literature. This study further shows that though JttCotE the graphic novel is based on an adapted classic, the adaptation embraces the various convention of comics like bubbles, caption boxes, gutter, bleed, and panels. Although the novel is an abridged version, the narrative does not suffer any major changes. The original vision of Jules Verne in exploring and understanding the subject of science and incorporating this in his writings remains. These elements are distinctly depicted textually and visually through the fantasy-filled adventures in the graphic adaptation. Even though the authors and illustrator of the novel were restricted by word and page limitations, the analysis shows that their version remains true to the original. In addition, the study reveals that within the bigger picture, the assimilation of different modes contributes to the construction of meanings through their presentations and representations in this genre of adapted classics.

The present study has shown the Material, Relational and Mental processes are inherent in JttCotE than the other four Processes. Nevertheless, it is only limited to the analysis of one graphic novel from the genre of adapted classics. As such, it is not representative and definitive of other graphic novels from a similar genre. Future research can investigate other graphic adaptations which are widely available in bookstores these days. Also, this study investigated the ideational metafunction in terms of transitivity, thus excluding both interpersonal and textual analyses. The inclusion of interpersonal and textual metafunctions as investigative tools on the genre of adapted classics would be able to add on to the body of knowledge in this area. Such research provides a wholesome perspective on SFL and its relationship in the construction of the language of an abridged graphic adaptation.

Some purists may brushoff graphic novel adaptations as the finer nuances of reading a bona fide literary classic might be missing. Nevertheless, the interplay of text and images provides a memorable visual experience which can be absent from linear texts which many are accustomed to. Graphic novels which are rich in aestheticism and symbolism offer a myriad of textual and visual cues that make-reading a meaningful and enriching experience.

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