



SOCIAL CRITICISM ANALYSIS ON BOB MARLEY'S SONGS LYRICS USING TRANSITIVITY SYSTEM

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PRONOUNCEMENT

The writer confirms that he does this final project by himself and the writer does not take any results from other studies that have been done by other researchers in S-1, S-2, S-3 and diploma degree from any university. The writer also confirms that he does not quote any material from other publications except from the references that have been mentioned in this study.

Semarang, December 2022

Yumna Aditya Prakoso

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

Hidup adalah misteri, yang terpenting percaya rezeki sudah ada yang mengatur

*I dedicate this final project to my
beloved family and everyone
who supported me in accomplishing this project*

APPROVAL

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I realize that this final project is still far from perfect. I will be glad to receive any criticism and recommendation to make this final project better.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRONOUNCEMENT.....	i
MOTTO AND DEDICATION.....	ii
APPROVAL.....	iii
VALIDATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
ABSTRACT.....	viii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	3
2.1 Ideational Meaning.....	3
2.2 Transitivity System.....	3
2.2.1 Material Process.....	4
2.2.2 Mental Process.....	4
2.2.3 Relational Process.....	4
2.2.4 Behavioural Process.....	5
2.2.5 Verbal Process.....	5
2.2.6 Existential Process.....	5
2.2.7 Participants in Transitivity.....	5
2.2.8 Circumstances in Transitivity.....	6
2.3 Social Criticism.....	6
3. RESEARCH METHOD.....	6
3.1 Type of Research.....	6
3.2 Method of Analyzing Data.....	7
4. FINDING AND DISCUSSION.....	7
4.1 Finding.....	7
4.2 Discussion.....	8
4.2.1 Relational Process.....	8
4.2.2 Non-Relational Process.....	9
4.2.2.1 Material Process.....	9

4.2.2.2 Mental Process.....	10
4.2.2.3 Behavioural Process.....	11
4.2.2.4 Verbal Process.....	11
5. CONCLUSION.....	12
REFERENCES.....	13

ABSTRACT

This final project deals with ideational meaning of song lyrics that contain social criticism. The song lyrics are all from Bob Marley's songs that have been selected. Transitivity system is used to analyze the data. From this study. The objectives of this study is to find out type of transitivity processes used in making song lyrics that contain social criticism and also to find out the ideational menaing of the selected lyrics. This study is descriptive study. In collecting the data, the writer used non-participant observation and taking notes. In analyzing the data, the writer used referential method. The results of the study show that there are 5 transitivity processes found in Bob Marley's song lyrics that contain social criticism. They are 1. material process, 2. mental process, 3. relational process, 4. behavioural process, 5. verbal process. Meanwhile existential process does not occur in the data that have been collected. Analysis of ideational meaning found that Bob Marley's song lyrics that have been represent social criticism expressed by Bob Marley.

Keywords: *Social Criticism, Ideational Meaning, Transitivity System, Song Lyrics*

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

In every song, there is a message that is expressed. The message is usually expressed in song lyrics. There are many kinds of message expressed in song lyrics such as the importance of love and moral value in our daily life even social criticism. Songs that contain social criticism always get huge attention from the public. It is because the songs can give representation of condition or situation in a society. The songs can also be used to express protests to a government's policy.

According to Oksinata (2010) social criticism is a form of communication in society that has function as control of social system in the society. Social criticism can be expressed either directly by making demonstration or indirectly by expressing social criticism in movie, song lyrics or literary works.

One of the musicians that expressed social criticism in song lyrics was Bob Marley. He had great influence in music especially in Reggae music. Most of Bob Marley's songs contain social criticism as the message.

Study in social criticism especially in song lyrics is always interesting since by analyzing the lyrics, We could understand the ideas that the songwriter would like to deliver in the songs, in this case the lyrics are from Bob Marley's songs.

Transitivity system is a theory proposed by Halliday. This theory can be used to find ideational meaning of a text by analyzing the process, participant and circumstances in a text including song lyrics.

In this study, the writer is interested in finding out how Bob Marley made song lyrics to express social criticism by using transitivity process. The use of transitivity process is chosen because this theory is infrequent to be used in analyzing social criticism in song lyrics.

In this study, the writer will focus on two research problems, they are:

1. What are the types of transitivity processes used in Bob Marley's song lyrics to express social criticism?
2. What are the ideational meanings of Bob Marley's song lyrics that contain social criticism?

The objectives of this study are to find out types of transitivity processes used in Bob Marley's song lyrics and to find out ideational meanings of Bob Marley's song lyrics that contain social criticism. Since this study focuses on analyzing social criticism in Bob Marley's song lyrics, the writer only chooses song lyrics that contain social criticism. It means that the writer will not analyze all lyrics in a certain song.

In this study, the writer uses five previous studies that have relation to this research as the references. The first study is an article from Arsen Nahum Pasaribu (2019) from HKBP Nommensen University entitled *Transitivity Analysis of Nahum Situmorang's Traditional Song Lyrics*. This study aimed at analyzing transitivity patterns used in 10 traditional songs of Nahum Situmorang in order to find out experiential meanings expressed in the song lyrics. The result of this study showed that all types of transitivity processes are used in the selected songs and the most frequent process used in the song lyrics is material process followed by mental process.

The second study is from Candradewi Wahyu Anggraeni (2017) from Tidar University entitled *Ideational Meanings in Students' Self-Introduction: What Are Realized?*. This study examined ideational meaning aspects in students' self-introduction using transitivity analysis. The result of this study explained that *senser (participant)*, *relational process (process)* and *place and cause circumstances (circumstances)* are the most used transitivity elements in students' self-introduction.

The third study is a study from Dr. Nancy Anashia Ong'onda (2016) from Mount Kenya University entitled *Transitivity Analysis of Newspaper Headlines on Terrorism Attack in Kenya: A Case Study of Westgate Mall, Nairobi*. This study aimed at identifying and explaining how the Al-Shabaab were portrayed and represented through language that was used by the reporters. From this study, it can be seen that material process and relational process are transitivity elements that used dominantly in the data.

The fourth study is from Hiace Vega Fernando Siahaan from Darma Agung University entitled *Transitivity Processes in Bon Jovi's Selected Song Lyrics*. In this study, he analyzed

transitivity processes used in Bon Jovi's song lyrics. In this study, he found that six types of transitivity processes are used in Bon Jovi's selected song lyrics. The most used process that he found is material process which means that most song lyrics on Bon Jovi are related to physical activity.

The fifth study is a study from Ani Afifah, Ria Nirwana, Hartono (2021) from Al-Ghifari University entitled *Transitivity of Lewis Capaldi's Songs Lyrics in Divinely Uninspired to A Hellish Extent Album*. In this study they analyzed transitivity elements used in three songs of Lewis Capaldi in *Divinely Uninspired to A Hellish Extent* album and also the ideational meanings of the song lyrics. From this study they found that there are 5 types of transitivity processes used in the song lyrics, they are relational process, mental process, material process, verbal process and existential process. Relational process is the most used transitivity process used in Lewis Capaldi's song lyrics.

Based on the previous studies that the writer uses, it can be seen that all studies analyzed transitivity process and ideational meanings many kinds of text but there are no studies that analyze social criticism. In this study the writer will focus on analyzing social criticism in song lyrics using transitivity.

Theoretical Framework

2.1 Ideational Meaning

According to Eggins (2004:12) ideational meaning is an idea about how we represent experience in language. Ideational meanings can be said as theory of human experience. Ideational meaning is realized through 3 main aspects, they are participant (ex. actor, goal, senser, phenomenon, carrier, attribute, behavior, range, sayers, receiver, existent) processes and circumstances (ex. Time, manner, place, cause, accompaniment, matter, role). According to Halliday (1994) there are six types of processes, they are 1. material process, 2. mental process, 3. behavioural process, 4. Verbal process, 5. relational process and 6. existential process.

2.2 Transitivity System

Transitivity system is a theory proposed by Halliday. This theory can be used to find ideational meaning of a text. In order to find out an ideational meaning of a clause or a text, there are three important aspects that need to be considered. These three important aspects are processes, participant and circumstances. In transitivity, processes have central role. Verbs can be used to recognize what kind of process used in a clause. According to Halliday (1994:138) there are three types of processes that are principal, they are material process, mental process and relational process. There are three other subsidiary types of process in transitivity, they are behavioural process, verbal process and existential process. The participants can be an actor, a behavior, a senser, a sayer, etc. Meanwhile circumstances are associated with the process and divided into some types such as time, place, manner, cause, accompaniment, matter and role.

2.2.1 Material Process

Material process is process of doing and happening. Material process shows things done physically in a text. The main participants in material process are actor and goal. Actor is the one who performs the action, while goal is the participant that is affected by the action. The other participants in material process are client and recipient.

2.2.2 Mental Process

According to Eggins (1994) on Emilia (2014), mental process can be said as sensing verbs which encode meaning of thinking or feeling. There are three types of processes in mental process, they are: cognition (process of thinking, knowing and understanding), perception (process of seeing and hearing), affection (process of liking or fearing). In mental process, the participants are senser and phenomenon. Senser is the one who feels, thinks and perceives, while phenomenon is what the senser feels, thinks or perceives.

2.2.3 Relational Process

Relational process can be said as the processes of being (Halliday, 1994 on Emilia, 2014). In relational process, it is required to have two participants. There are two types of processes in relational process, they are attributive and identifying. In attributive process, the participants are carrier and attribute. Meanwhile in identifying process, the participants are token and value.

2.2.4 Behavioural Process

Behavioural process deals with physiological or psychological behavior (Halliday, 1994 on Emilia, 2014). Some examples of behavioral processes are smiling, breathing, listening and watching. In behavioural process, there is behavior as the obligatory participant.

2.2.5 Verbal Process

Verbal process is the process of saying. According to Eggins (2004:235), verbal process is process of verbal action including symbolic exchanges of meaning. Some verbs that indicate verbal process are say, tell, yell, scream. The main participant in verbal process is the *sayer*. There are other participants in verbal process which are receiver (the one whom saying is directed), verbiage (correspond to what is said) and target (entity targetted by the process of saying).

2.2.6 Existential Process

Existential process is process of existence. This process can be identified by looking at verbs of existing such as 'be', 'exist' and 'arise.' In existential process, the participant is called existent. The 'existent' is simply that which is construed existentially.

2.2.7 Participants in Transitivity

In transitivity, there are many types of participants. In each kind of process, there is particular participant involved. The participants are realized by nominal groups. The table below shows the participants of each process in transitivity:

Table 1. Types of process in transitivity

No.	Types of Process	Participants
1.	Material	Actor, goal, client, recipient, scope, attribute
2.	Mental	Senser, phenomenon
3.	Relational	Carrier/attribute, token/value
4.	Behavioural	Behaver, range
5.	Verbal	Sayer, receiver, verbiage

6.	Existential	Existent
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2.2.8 Circumstances in Transitivity

In transitivity, circumstances give additional information about time, place, manner, cause, accompaniment, matter and role in the text. Circumstances can answer such questions as when, where, why, how, how many and as what.

2.3 Social Criticism

According to Mahfud (1957:5) social criticism is evaluation or assessment of state of society in certain time. Social criticism can happen because of problems that happen in the society. According to Soekanto (2010:365) there are eight social problems that happen in society which are poverty, crime, disorganization of family, problems of young generation, war, violation of social norms in society, problems of population and problems of natural environment.

Research Method

3.1 Type of Research

This study is descriptive qualitative study. It is because in this study, the writer will observe the data by looking for the data, collecting the data, then analyzing the data and making the conclusion of the analysis of the data.

In this study the data are Bob Marley's song lyrics that contain social criticism. The writer collected the song lyrics from lirik.kapanlagi.com. In this study, the writer collected the data using non-participant observation. It is because the writer are not involved in making the lyrics.

The steps in collecting the data are:

1. The writer collected Bob Marley's popular song lyrics from lirik.kapanlagi.com.
2. The writer chose 10 popular songs that contain social criticism

3. The writer collected the transcripts of the song lyrics
4. The writer selected clauses of Bob Marley's song lyrics that contain social criticism.

3.2 Method of Analyzing Data

In this research, the writer used distributional method (agih) to analyze the data that are collected. It is because the object of the study is the language itself. Referential identity method is also applied in this research because the writer would like to analyze ideational meaning of Bob Marley's song lyrics that contain social criticism.

These are the steps in analyzing the data:

1. Making transcripts of Bob Marley's song lyrics that have been selected.
2. Selecting song lyrics that contain social criticism.
3. Identifying the transitivity elements of the song lyrics which are participants, processes and circumstances.
4. Presenting ideational meaning of social criticism in the song lyrics
5. Making the conclusion of the data that have been analyzed.

Finding And Discussion

4.1 Finding

After analyzing the data, the writer finds that the most used process in the data is material process. Other processes that are found in the data that have been analyzed are mental process, relational process, behavioural process and verbal process.

Table 2: Percentage of Transitivity Analysis

No.	Type of Processes	Number (Frequency)	Percentage
1.	Material Process	12	54%
2.	Mental Process	3	14%
3.	Relational Process	3	14%

4.	Behavioural Process	3	14%
5.	Verbal Process	1	4%
	Total	22	100%

From the table above, it can be seen that material process is used the most in social criticism found in Bob Marley’s song lyrics that have been selected. Meanwhile mental process, relational process and behavioural process have the same number of processes used in social criticism found in Bob Marley’s song lyrics. Verbal process occurs only once in the data that have been analyzed.

4.2 Discussion

In this section, the writer will explain ideational meaning in social criticism found in Bob Marley’s song lyrics that have been selected. From the data that have been analyzed, material process dominates the data which is 54% of percentage. From that data, it can be seen that social criticism found in Bob Marley’s song lyrics that have been selected is dominantly expressed using physical movement or actions. The other processes are mental process, relational process, behavioural process that occur three times in the data and verbal process that occurs only once in the data.

4.2.1 Relational Process

In the data that have been analyzed, relational process occurs three times. These processes can be identified by looking at the process, participants or circumstances. The analysis of the song lyrics can be seen below:

Datum 1: Hate is your reward for our love

This lyric is from Bob Marley’s song entitled *Crazy Baldheads*. This song is about people that are called *Crazy Baldheads* that do bad things to black people. This lyric is using relational process. It can be seen from the verb *is* that is the attributive. The participant which is carrier is *Hate* and *your reward for our love* is the attribute. The carrier and attribute represents social criticism as *hate* which is a negative thing becomes *reward* which is usually good thing. In this lyric Bob Marley tries to express social criticism by

saying that *hate* which is a negative thing as the reward for the love that black people have given to the *Crazy Baldheads*.

Datum 2: Babylon System is the vampire

This lyric is from Bob Marley's song called *Babylon System*. This song is about rejection from people that Bob Marley supports against a system that is called Babylon System. This lyric is relational process. It can be seen from the verb *is* which is the attributive. Participant in this lyric is *Babylon System* which is the carrier and *the vampire* is the attribute. In this lyric Bob Marley expresses social criticism about a system that tortures innocent people. The system that Bob Marley criticized in this song lyric was in United States. The carrier and the attribute represent social criticism since *Babylon System* is equated as *vampire*.

4.2.2 Non-Relational Process

Social criticism in Bob Marley's selected song lyrics also can be found in non-relational processes. These processes are material process, mental process, behavioural process and verbal process.

4.2.2.1 Material Process

Based on the data that have been analyzed, there are 12 data of song lyrics that use material process. Here are some analysis of the material process:

Datum 3: Cost of livin' gets so high

This lyric is from Bob Marley's song called *Them Belly Full, But We Hungry*. This lyric is using material process. It can be seen from the word *gets* as the process. Then the participant, *Cost of livin'*, is actor and *so high* is the quality circumstance. In this lyric Bob Marley expresses the social criticism directly through the reality that happens in the society. The raise of cost of living in United States are portrayed by Bob Marley in this lyric.

Datum 4: Political violence fill ya city

This lyric is from Bob Marley's song entitled *Rat Race*. This song is about criticism to something that is called Rat Race. This lyric is using material process. It is identified by looking at the verb *fill* as the process. Then the participant which is actor is *Political violence*

and *ya city* is the goal. In this lyric the social criticism expressed by Bob Marley is really clear about the Rat Race that is making the city filled by political violence.

Datum 5: Some people got everything, some people got nothing.

This lyric is taken from Bob Marley's song called *Survival*. The material process in this lyric can be seen from the process *got*. In this lyric there are two sentences. However the actors are the same, they are *Some people*. The processes of the two sentences are also the same. However the goal of each sentence is different. The first sentence the goal is *everything* and the second sentence the goal is *nothing*. From this lyric it can be seen that Bob Marley tries to express social criticism directly from the reality in a society in which there are people who can get everything while there are other people who get things just a little or even nothing. In this song, Bob Marley tried to explain social inequality that happened in United States which made poor people could not live their life well

4.2.2.2 Mental Process

From the data that have been analyzed there are 3 data of song lyrics that use mental process. The analysis can be seen below:

Datum 6: They will always want to control you forever.

This lyric is from Bob Marley's song entitled *Revolution*. This song is about rebellion to corrupted politician. This lyric contains mental process. It can be identified by looking at the process *want* which is affective mental process. The senser is *They* which refers to the corrupted politician. In this lyric there is also material process that is identified by process *control*, then *you* as the goal and *forever* as time circumstance. In this lyric the social criticism is expressed really clear using the mental process and material process that can be seen from *want to control you forever*. It indicates that the corrupted politician will do everything to get what they want by controlling civilians using the laws and rules created by the politician. The corrupted politician in this song refers to politician in United States since Bob Marley was a citizen of United States. Senser and circumstance of time in this lyric represent social criticism as the senser *They* would like to control people and circumstance of time *forever* indicates the senser would like to have the power forever.

Datum 7: I could not recognize the faces standing over me, they were all dressed in uniforms of brutality, brutality.

This lyric is from Bob Marley's song entitled *Burnin' and Lootin'*. This lyric uses mental process. It can be seen from the process *recognize* which is cognitive mental process. The senser is *I* and *the faces standing over me* is the phenomenon. There is also material process in this lyric. It can be identified from the process *were all dressed*. The actor is *they* and *uniforms of brutality, brutality* is manner circumstance. Social criticism expressed in this lyric is identified by circumstance of manner *in uniforms of brutality, brutality*. In this song, Bob Marley would like to give representation of negative things that happen in prison. The difficulties of living in prison is represented by Bob Marley in this song.

4.2.2.3 Behavioural Process

Based on the data that have been identified, there are 3 data of song lyrics that contain behavioural process. Here are some analysis of the data:

Datum 8: Now you look me with that scorn.

This lyric is from Bob Marley's song called *Crazy Baldheads*. This lyric contains behavioural process. It can be identified by looking at the process *look*. The behavior is *you*. The range is *me*. *With that scorn* is circumstance of manner and *now* is circumstance of time. In this lyric Bob Marley expresses social criticism to *you* which refers to the Crazy Baldheads. The social criticism can also be identified from the circumstance of manner *with that scorn*. In this lyric it is clear that Bob Marley wanted to show people bad things about *crazy baldheads* who always wanted to dominate the society. *Crazy baldheads* is represented as arrogant people by Bob Marley since they feel that black people are despicable.

4.2.2.4 Verbal Process

Based on the data that have been analyzed, there is only one datum of song lyric that contain verbal process. Verbal process can be identified from the verbal, senser, phenomenon, receiver and verbiage. Here is the analysis of the datum:

Datum 9: Now they say that we are free only to be chained in poverty.

This lyric is from Bob Marley's song called *Slave Driver*. There are 3 processes in this lyric, they are verbal process, relational process and material process. The verbal process is identified from the verb *say*. Relational process is identified by verb *are* and material process is identified from verb *to be chained*. The senser is *they* which refers to slave drivers. The carrier is *we* which refers to slaves. There is also circumstance of time *now* and circumstance

of manner *in poverty*. This social criticism expressed by Bob Marley is clear to protest the slavery done by slave drivers. In this song, Bob Marley tried to give representation of what was happening in United States, especially what happened to black people who were treated like as slaves by people called *crazy baldheads*. These *crazy baldheads* are represented by Bob Marley as people who wanted to intimidate black people in United States.

Conclusion

From the analysis of social criticism in Bob Marley's selected song lyrics, there are total 22 data which are analyzed. From those data there are some processes that are found. They are 1. material process, 2. mental process, 3. relational process, 4. behavioural process and 5. verbal process. Material process dominates the data found in the song lyrics. Mental process, relational process and behavioural process share the same number of data. Verbal process occurs only once in the data that have been analyzed. Meanwhile existential process does not occur in the data that have been analyzed. Participants that the writer found in the data are 1. actor, 2. goal, 3. sener, 4. phenomenon, 5. sayer, 6. carrier, 7. attribute, 8. behavior, 9. range. Meanwhile there are some circumstances occur in the data, they are 1. circumstance of time, 2. circumstance of manner.

From this study, the writer finds that social criticism expressed by Bob Marley in his song lyrics are vary. The criticism targets mostly to the corrupted government, slave driver, corrupted politician and people who have power to do negative things in a society. The criticism is also about social injustice in the society.

From this study, the writer also found that participants, processes and circumstances hold important role in finding ideational meaning of texts such as song lyrics. By analyzing the data the writer finally found that song lyrics that have been analyzed represent social criticism expressed by Bob Marley.

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