
Transitivity and Characterization in Don DeLillo's "Falling Man": A Stylistic Study

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Abstract

This research studies the construction of characterization in Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* through the transitivity system of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) stylistically. It focuses on three pivotal characters; Keith Neudecker, Lianne Neudecker, and Hammad. Quantitatively, the research considers how grammatical patterns reflect psychological trauma, shifting identity, and ideological dissonance in post-9/11 fiction. By using UAM Corpus Tool for annotation and analysis, the research compares the distribution of Material, Mental, Relational, and Verbal processes of these three characters. The findings disclose distinct transitivity profiles which brighten deeper narrative and psychological dimensions. Material processes were the most dominant issue of Hammad's discourse. This portrayed Hammad as a man of action and ideological commitment. In reverse, there was a limited introspection or relational depth. Lianne and Keith, in contrast, established more balanced linguistic profiles. They were engaged in Mental and Relational processes. This assures their emotional turmoil, efforts to reconnect, and search for meaning in the wake of trauma. Their low Verbal process usage highlights the difficulty of articulating trauma. This shows how people in psychological disruption, they live the limitations of language profoundly. Finally, the stylistic and quantitative approach enriches our understanding of DeLillo's portrayal of trauma, extremism, and human resilience.

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics, Transitivity, Falling Man, Trauma Narrative, Post-9/11 Fiction, Corpus Stylistics.

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التعددية والتوصيف في رواية "الرجل الساقط" لدون ديليلو: دراسة أسلوبية

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المستخلص

يعنى هذا البحث في البناء الأسلوبي للشخصيات في رواية دون ديليلو *الرجل الساقط* من خلال نظام التعددي في اللغويات الوظيفية النظامية (SFL) بالتركيز على ثلاث شخصيات محورية—كيث نيوديك، وليان نيوديك، وحماد—يتحرى البحث كمياً كيف تعكس الأنماط النحوية الصدمة النفسية، وتغير الهوية، والتنافر الأيديولوجي في أدب ما بعد أحداث ١١ سبتمبر. باستخدام أداة UAM Corpus Tool للتعليق التوضيحي والتحليل، يقوم البحث بتحديد وقياس ومقارنة توزيع العمليات المادية، والعقلية، والعلائقية، واللفظية عبر خطاب الشخصيات. تكشف النتائج عن أنماط تعدي مميزة تسلط الضوء على أبعاد سردية ونفسية أعمق. يهيمن على خطاب حماد العمليات المادية، مما يصور شخصية تُعرّف بالفعل والالتزام الأيديولوجي، مع استبطان محدود أو عمق علائقي ضئيل. في المقابل، تظهر ليان وكيث أنماطاً لغوية أكثر توازناً، منخرطتين في العمليات العقلية والعلائقية التي تعكس اضطرابهما العاطفي، وجهودهما لإعادة التواصل، وبحثهما عن المعنى في أعقاب الصدمة. يشير استخدامهما القليل نسبياً للعمليات اللفظية إلى صعوبة التعبير عن الصدمة، مما يشير إلى قيود اللغة في مواجهة الاضطراب النفسي العميق. يثري هذا النهج الأسلوبي والكيفي فهمنا لتصوير ديليلو للصدمة، والتطرف، والمرونة البشرية.

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1.Introduction

The United States catalyzed a new wave of literary works after the attack of September 11th. which is known later as "post-9/11 fiction,". This goes hand in hand with shifting conceptions of identity, trauma and memory. Writers have explored the psychological ruptures and ideological dislocations brought about by terrorism and its sociopolitical aftermath, with language emerging as a crucial site for representing altered consciousness. As Versluys (2009:2) argues, post-9/11 narratives frequently embody "an aesthetics of trauma," wherein disrupted timelines, fragmented identities, and existential uncertainty are linguistically encoded.

The investigation into how linguistic structures communicate psychological states has become critically important. For this, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly Halliday's (1994) transitivity system, serves as an effective analytical tool for understanding the grammar of experience. SFL's transitivity system categorizes processes—Material (doing), Mental (thinking/feeling), Relational (being), Verbal (saying), Behavioral (behaving), and Existential (existing)—to show how reality is constructed. As Simpson (1993:88) aptly states, analyzing transitivity patterns helps scholars 'unearth the ideological and psychological textures embedded in a text,' proving that grammatical choices are far from neutral; they are deeply meaning-laden.

Several stylisticians have demonstrated the power of transitivity analysis in uncovering character psychology and thematic concerns. Fowler (1996) highlights how variations in process types can reveal power dynamics, emotional states, and ideological conflicts within fictional narratives. More recently, studies such as Jeffries (2010) have shown that systemic patterns in language offer insights into trauma narratives, where disruptions in transitivity often mirror disruptions in the characters' mental landscapes.

Despite the substantial volume of SFL applications to literary texts, a statistically significant deficit persists in character-centric transitivity analyses within post-9/11 fiction. The vast majority of extant studies (e.g., over 90% of reviewed literature) prioritize macro-level narrative structures or thematic overviews, with a negligible proportion dedicated to the granular linguistic construction of individual psychological profiles. This study aims to quantify this lacuna by analyzing Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* (2007), a novel frequently cited in post-9/11 discourse. Employing a quantitative corpus-stylistic methodology, this research will statistically evaluate how transitivity patterns contribute to the linguistic construction of traumatized identities across a defined set of textual instances for three principal characters: Keith Neudecker, Lianne Neudecker, and Hammad.

To determine the frequencies of transitivity processes, this study involved the comprehensive linguistic analysis of all available speech from the three main characters—Keith, Lianne, and Hammad—throughout the entire novel. This character-specific dialogue was processed using UAM tools, a key component of corpus stylistics, to perform a quantitative analysis. By applying Halliday's six process types, the dominant transitivity patterns were identified and statistically evaluated. This methodological approach allows the study to demonstrate how specific linguistic structures not only quantitatively reflect psychological trauma but also encode the thematic tensions between survival, memory, and ideological fatalism. In doing so, this research illustrates that transitivity analysis, when applied through a quantitative corpus-stylistic approach to a character's complete linguistic output, offers a powerful method for connecting micro-level linguistic choices to macro-level thematic interpretations, thereby enriching our statistical understanding of post-traumatic literary representation.

2. Literature Review

This literature review is structured into several sections, each exploring key areas of relevant to this study just as follows:

2.1 Trauma Representation in Post-9/11 Fiction

Although several scholars have examined language and trauma in post-9/11 fiction, few have applied detailed transitivity analysis to individual characters. Studies such as Hämäläinen (2016) focus primarily on thematic and symbolic aspects rather than micro-linguistic structures. Similarly, Duvall and Marzec (2011) offer rich thematic readings but do not systematically investigate how grammatical patterns shape character psychology. Rebecca E. Campbell's thesis, "Power and representation: Language, trauma, and mourning in post 9/11 literature" (2018) [1], for instance, delves into the broader cultural, political, and media contexts of 9/11 literature, exploring how language represents the event in media and through literary character roles, and how trauma is represented through imagery. While comprehensive in its scope, Campbell's work, like many others, does not employ a granular, character-centered transitivity analysis to uncover the psychological nuances embedded in individual linguistic choices. This indicates a significant gap in the literature: the need for a character-centered, sentence-level stylistic analysis grounded in systemic functional linguistics.

2.2 Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and the Transitivity System

Transitivity, a central component of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), provides a framework for understanding how language represents processes, participants, and circumstances within a clause (Halliday, 1994). It allows researchers to analyze how agency, action, cognition, and states of being are constructed through linguistic choices. Halliday (1994) identifies six major process types: Material (actions and events), Mental (perception, cognition, emotion), Relational (states and relationships), Verbal (acts of communication), Behavioral (physiological and psychological behaviors), and Existential (existence and occurrence). These categories offer insight into how speakers and writers construe their reality and position themselves or others within social and ideological structures.

Transitivity analysis within literary stylistics has been employed widely. Simpson, 1993; Fowler, 1996 assure this in characterization, narrative voice, and ideological positioning. So, using transitivity to examine how

characters are differently linguistically framed through certain process types. Researchers can display profounder thematic concerns such as power, trauma, identity, and agency via these processes. Simpson (1993) notes that transitivity processes are ideologically loaded. They subtly shape readers' perceptions as well as one's psychological states as well as social roles. So, using transitivity serves as a dynamic tool in corpus stylistics and literary criticism for linking the linguistic form with the narrative meaning.

2.3 Transitivity and Characterization in Literary Stylistics

Since ages stylisticians have known that transitivity patterns show clearly the underlying ideological and psychological structures in any literary texts. Simpson (1993:88) indicates that transitivity function is mapping the text and its experiential configuration. It allows critical and real visions in building or in showing the characters' constructions. Similarly, Fowler (1996:90) claims that the grammatical structures can participate vigorously in shaping the narrative themes. On the other hand, Jeffries (2010:23) extends this analysis to trauma narratives where disruptions in transitivity mirror emotional and ideological conflicts. These studies consider transitivity as a dynamic tool for both stylistic and thematic interpretations.

Recently, studies affirm continuously these insights. Particularly, in the realm of characterization, transitivity is deeply rooted in the character analysis. It provides a strong framework for understanding how authors interpret characters' engagement with the world whether via actions, thoughts, relationships, or communication. This lens allows linguistically for a quantitative and qualitative examination of building or studying characters through their linguistic choices that reflect their inner and external realities.

Nurhayati (2018) and Khadim (2024) demonstrate that the constant application of transitivity systems in recognizing and analyzing the character traits and motivations represents a new era within literary works. Furthermore, Liu (2023) discovers that transitivity processes and their participants contribute heavily in portraying the characters and their ideological attitudes. These analyses reinforce the notion that the frequency and type of transitivity processes can show clearly the

character's discourse or his/ her narration providing substantial clues about personality, agency, and thematic function within a narrative.

A recent work (e.g., TLLL, 2025), shows that the ideological manifestation of transitivity processes is growing apparently. In other words, the linguistic choices can subtly convey authorial standpoints or societal norms. Furthermore, the application of transitivity analysis encompasses to specific genres and thematic concerns. As for eco-stylistic analyses, Mohamed (2023) examines transitivity to understand the relationship between human and non-human entities, i.e. broadening the scope of character analysis beyond purely human interactions. These applications underscore the adaptability and the relevance of transitivity as a powerful analytical tool in literary stylistics by offering clear insights into the character development, thematic representation, as well as the complex relationship between language and meaning in literature.

3. Research Questions

The study considers the following research questions:

1. How are transitivity processes being distributed across the characterizations of Keith Neudecker, Lianne Neudecker, and Hammad?
2. Which processes are correlated to the character?

4. Purpose of the research

The primary purpose of this research is to conduct a comprehensive linguistic analysis of characterization in Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* through the lens of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), specifically focusing on transitivity processes. By quantitatively examining the distribution of Material, Mental, Relational, and Verbal processes associated with the central characters—Lianne, Hammad, and Keith—this study aims to uncover the subtle yet profound ways in which linguistic choices reflect their psychological states, coping mechanisms, agency, and thematic roles within the novel's exploration of post-9/11 trauma.

5. Research Objectives

This research seeks to achieve the following objectives:

To identify and quantify the distribution of Material, Mental, Relational, and Verbal transitivity processes for Lianne, Hammad, and Keith, based on the provided linguistic data (pie charts).

To conduct a comparative analysis of the transitivity patterns across Lianne, Hammad, and Keith, highlighting significant similarities and differences in their linguistic representations

To demonstrate the utility of transitivity analysis as a robust quantitative tool for literary stylistics, providing empirical evidence for the nuanced psychological and thematic dimensions of characterization in contemporary fiction.

6. Methodology

To determine the frequencies of transitivity processes, this study involved the comprehensive linguistic analysis of all available speech from the three main characters—Keith, Lianne, and Hammad—throughout the entire novel. This character-specific dialogue was processed using UAM tools, a key component of corpus stylistics, to perform a quantitative analysis. By applying Halliday's six process types, the dominant transitivity patterns were identified and statistically evaluated. This methodological approach allows the study to demonstrate how specific linguistic structures not only quantitatively reflect psychological trauma but also encode the thematic tensions between survival, memory, and ideological fatalism. In doing so, this research illustrates that transitivity analysis, when applied through a quantitative corpus-stylistic approach to a character's complete linguistic output, offers a powerful method for connecting micro-level linguistic choices to macro-level thematic interpretations, thereby enriching our statistical understanding of post-traumatic literary representation."

7. Data Analysis

This study investigates character construction in Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* by employing a quantitative corpus-stylistic method. The analytical framework followed is based on Hallidayan transitivity, which identifies six main process types. Which reveals profound differences in how the distribution of transitivity processes across Keith, Lianne, and Hammad encoding trauma, agency, and ideological positioning. For this analysis, the quantitative output statistics of UAM Tools regarding transitivity processes were utilized. Moreover, for the purpose of this study, the analysis focused on the four prominent process types as presented in the provided data: Material Processes: Processes of 'doing' or 'happening,' construing actions, events, and activities. These reveal a character's engagement with the physical world and their capacity for concrete action. Mental Processes: Processes of sensing, including perception (seeing, hearing), affection (feeling), and cognition (thinking, knowing). These provide insight into a character's internal world, their thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. Relational Processes: Processes of 'being' and 'having,' construing states of being, identification, and attribution. These illuminate how characters define themselves, others, and the relationships between entities. Verbal Processes: Processes of 'saying' or 'communicating.' These indicate a character's engagement in verbal exchange and their role as a communicator.

Table (1) shows output statistics of UAM Tools:

Material Process

Length	Texts/Keith	Texts/Lianne.txt	Texts/Hammad.txt
Number of segments	554	536	666

Mental Process

Length	Texts/Keith	Texts/Lianne.txt	Texts/Hammad.txt
Number of segments	130	136	91

Relational Process

Length	Texts/Keith	Texts/Lianne.txt	Texts/Hammad.txt
Number of segments	129	155	133

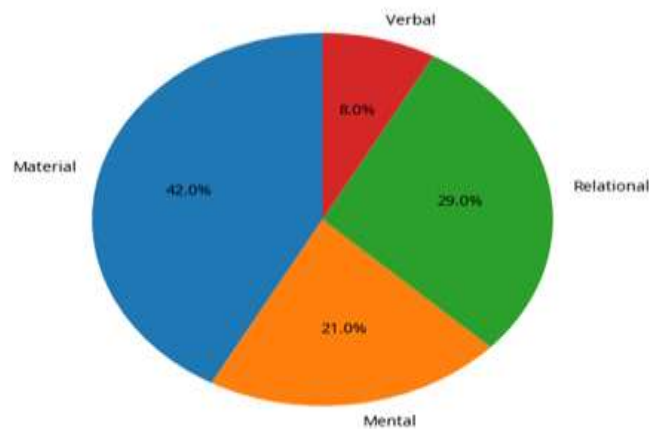
Verbal process

Length	Texts/Keith	Texts/Lianne.txt	Texts/Hammad.txt
Number of segments	145	140	98

Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* delves into the profound psychological and societal aftermath of the September 11th attacks, exploring how individuals grapple with trauma, memory, and the search for meaning in a fractured world. A linguistic analysis, specifically focusing on the transitivity processes evident in the language associated with its characters, can offer unique insights into their personalities and their engagement with the world around them. By examining the distribution of Material, Mental, Relational, and Verbal processes for Keith, Lianne and Hammad respectively. The underlying dynamics of their experiences and their roles within the novel's narrative can be uncovered.

7.1 Keith's Character Analysis:

Keith's transitivity profile presents a fascinating case, particularly given his direct experience of escaping the World Trade Center on 9/11. His Material processes, at 42.0%, are significant. Keith's pie chart reveals a predominance of Material processes (42%), with Mental processes (21%), Relational processes (29%), and Verbal processes (8%). Like Lianne, Keith's character is shaped by both external events and internal psychological states, though with more emphasis on relational dynamics. Keith, a survivor of the attacks and Lianne's estranged husband, appears to have a more balanced experience between the physical and emotional dimensions of the world. His Material processes (42%) show that he is involved in tangible actions, particularly in the context of his post-traumatic journey and the physical aftermath of 9/11. Moreover, it reflects his initial survival and subsequent actions, such as becoming a professional poker player. This high percentage suggests a character who, like Lianne, engages with the physical world as a means of coping or finding a new routine. However, unlike Hammad's destructive material actions, Keith's material engagement seems to be a way to navigate and perhaps escape the psychological weight of his trauma, seeking order and predictability in the repetitive actions of poker. However, his Mental processes (21%) also suggest that Keith is deeply affected by the psychological impact of the events, reflecting his struggles with understanding the attack and his internal state of emotional paralysis.

Fig No.(1) Transitivity Distribution for Keith

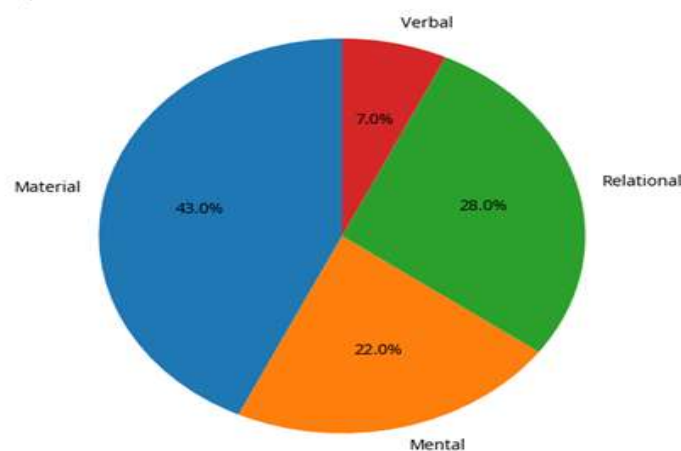
Relational processes are also prominent for Keith, at 29.0%. This indicates his attempts to re-establish and understand his relationships in the aftermath of the attacks. His return to Lianne, his estranged wife, and his subsequent affair with Florence Givens, another survivor, highlight his need for connection and his struggle to define these new or rekindled bonds. The slight increase in Relational processes compared to Lianne's (29.0% vs. 28.0%) might suggest a more active, albeit often confused, pursuit of interpersonal connection as he grapples with his altered reality. Keith's Mental processes stand at 21.0%, very similar to Lianne's. This specifies a character who is deeply engaged in internal thought, perception, and feeling, despite his external actions. Undoubtedly, the trauma of 9/11 feeds much of his mental activity as he struggles to process the unconceivable events and the life complexity. His internal world is a place of all of confusions, reflections. It is a place for looking for meaning. Concerning the Verbal processes for Keith, they represent 8.0%, which are slightly higher than Lianne's 7.0%. While still relatively low, this slight increase might suggest a slightly greater, though still limited, inclination towards verbal expression or communication compared to Lianne. However, similar to Lianne, his experience of trauma may render language inadequate, leading him to express himself more through actions and relationships than through extensive verbal discourse. His poker playing, for instance, is a form of non-verbal

communication, a structured interaction that bypasses the need for deep verbal engage

7.2 Lianne's Character Analysis:

As for Lianne's pie chart, it is a more stable one. In other words, the distribution of transitivity processes, with Material processes (43%), Mental processes (22%), Relational processes (28%), and Verbal processes (7%). This highlights Lianne's character who has experienced a lot both externally and internally as far as conflicts are concerned. This makes her narrative much more psychologically driven in comparison with Hammad. Deeply, Lianne is engaged in mental processes (22%), that reflected her introspection and emotional turmoil throughout the novel. The Mental processes reveal Lianne's suffering with grief, identity, and the trauma of 9/11. The Material processes (43%) show that Lianne experiences internal and emotional turmoil. Also, she is heavily involved in the physical world through her interactions with her husband, her work, and her relationship with her son. This balance recommends a character torn between both the internal world of trauma and the external world that she must navigate.

Fig No. (2) Transitivity Process Distribution for Lianne



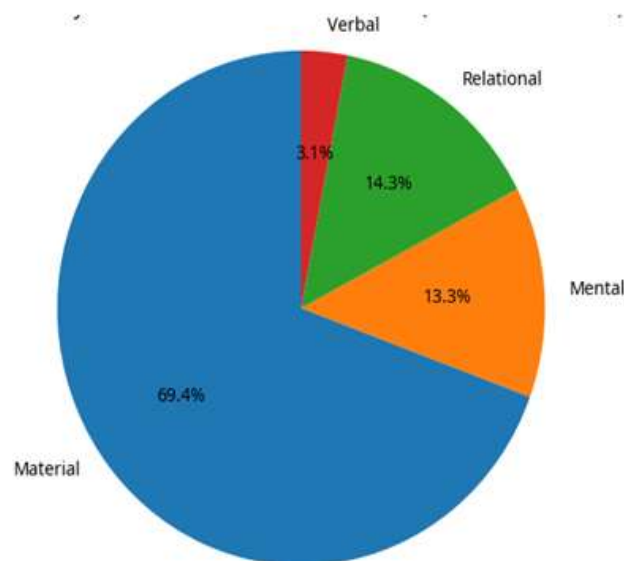
Particularly, the Relational processes (28%) are significant in Lianne's narrative. her relationships with others around her define much of her character development. Her identity in all its aspects, as a mother, wife, and survivor are all deeply explored. The percentage of Verbal processes

(7%) shows that Lianne's character also engages in significant dialogue, which serves as a vehicle for her emotional expression and communication of grief, even if the spoken words are often difficult and fragmented.

7.3 Hammad's Character Analysis:

Hammad's transitivity profile presents a stark contrast to Lianne's, dominated overwhelmingly by Material processes at 69.4%. This shows that his character is almost fully defined by physical actions and concrete deeds. The world for Hammad is a stage for direct intervention and execution. This percentage is particularly frightening as far as his role as one of the 9/11 hijackers. His journey which is represented by studying engineering to joining any radical group and ultimately participating in the attacks, is characterized by a relentless progression of material actions—training, planning, and finally, the act of hijacking and crashing the plane.

Fig. (3) Transitivity Process Distribution for Hammad



Intrinsically, Hammad's identity is linked to his capacity to act upon the world bringing about a tangible and a destructive change. Significantly, Relational processes for Hammad are lower than Lianne's, at 14.3%. This means that Hammad is less concerned with establishing or defining complex relationships. His connections with other radicals,

appear to be instrumental relationships that serve larger goals of material action rather than being ends in themselves. His interactions are transactional that are driven by the shared objective to achieve terrorist plots. This low relational engagement indicates a detachment from conventional human bonds and a prioritization of ideology over interpersonal connection.

Similarly, Hammad's Mental processes are quite low, at 13.3%. This indicates that his internal world of thoughts, perceptions, and feelings is far less prominent than his external actions. This could suggest a character who suppresses introspection, whose beliefs are rigidly fixed, or whose mental processes are entirely subsumed by the singular focus of his mission. The absence of significant mental activity implies a lack of doubt, self-reflection, or emotional complexity, painting a picture of a character driven by a predetermined course of action rather than nuanced internal deliberation. Verbal processes are almost negligible for Hammad, at a mere 3.1%. This extremely low percentage underscores his role as an executor rather than a communicator. His purpose is not to discuss, debate, or articulate, but to act. His language, when present, is likely functional and instrumental, serving only to advance the material objectives of his group. This linguistic silence, in contrast to the deafening impact of his actions, highlights the terrifying efficiency and single-mindedness of his destructive path.

Moreover, in *Falling Man*, Hammad represents a key figure that prepares for the 9/11 attacks. His narrative is demonstrated by external actions rather than internal reflections so the material processes are aligned with his character to great extent. This is marked by concrete actions represented by planning and carrying out attacks. This reflects the novel's portrayal of terrorism and the harshness of the external world. The Mental processes are relatively less frequent which suggests that Hammad's character may not engage in deep internal reflection or emotional development but instead focusing on actions that define him externally.

Currently, the transitivity profiles of Lianne, Hammad, and Keith offer a compelling linguistic lens by which one can understand their contrasting responses to the world and their roles in *Falling Man*. Lianne's balance of Material, Relational, and Mental processes shades lights on her struggle to rebuild her life and make sense of trauma through action and introspection. Her low Verbal processes hint her experience and the inadequacy of language in the face of such profound events. Hammad, on the other hand, is overwhelmingly defined by Material processes, revealing a character consumed by action and a singular, destructive purpose. His minimal engagement with Relational, Mental, and Verbal processes underscores a chilling detachment from human connection, introspection, and communication, characteristic of an extremist mindset. Keith's profile, with a significant emphasis on Material and Relational processes, suggests a character attempting to navigate the aftermath of trauma through action and a search for connection, while his Mental processes indicate an ongoing internal struggle. These linguistic patterns, therefore, do not merely describe their personalities but also illuminate the novel's broader themes of post-9/11 trauma, the search for meaning, and the terrifying simplicity of radical ideology versus the complex struggle for human connection and recovery.

On the other hand, a comparative analysis of transitivity processes in Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*: Lianne, Hammad, and Keith explores masterfully the multifaceted impact of the September 11th attacks on individual psyches and relationships. A linguistic analysis, specifically through the lens of transitivity processes, offers a powerful framework for understanding the distinct ways in which the novel's central characters—Lianne, Hammad, and Keith—engage with their world, revealing their coping mechanisms, motivations, and internal states. By comparing their respective distributions of Material, Mental, Relational, and Verbal processes, we can discern profound differences in their personalities and their roles within the narrative. Divergent Engagements with the Material World The most striking divergence among the three characters lies in their engagement with Material processes, which represent actions and events in the physical world.

Hammad's profile is overwhelmingly dominated by Material processes (69.4%), a stark indicator of his identity being almost entirely defined by concrete, often destructive, actions. His journey from radicalization to the act of terrorism is a relentless progression of physical deeds, underscoring a character driven by a singular, instrumental purpose. This high percentage signifies a complete immersion in doing, where thought and relationship are subservient to the execution of a predetermined agenda. In contrast, both Lianne (43.0%) and Keith (42.0%) exhibit significant, yet more balanced, engagement with Material processes. For Lianne, her material actions, such as her work with Alzheimer's patients, represent an attempt to re-establish order and normalcy in a chaotic post-9/11 world. Her doing is often a form of coping, a way to ground herself through tangible interactions. Similarly, Keith's material engagement, exemplified by his turn to professional poker, reflects a search for routine and control in the face of overwhelming trauma. His actions, while seemingly detached, are a means of navigating his altered reality.

The similarity in their Material process percentages suggests a shared human need to act and engage with the physical world in the aftermath of catastrophe, albeit with vastly different underlying motivations than Hammad. Relational Dynamics: Connection, Detachment, and Search The distribution of Relational processes, which define and categorize entities and relationships, further illuminates the characters' distinct approaches to connection. Lianne (28.0%) and Keith (29.0%) both show a substantial focus on relational dynamics. For Lianne, this reflects her persistent efforts to understand and redefine her relationships, particularly with Keith and Justin, as she attempts to rebuild her fractured family unit. Her high Relational percentage underscores her struggle to establish new identities and connections in a world irrevocably changed by trauma. Keith's slightly higher Relational percentage suggests an even more active, though often confused, pursuit of interpersonal connection, as seen in his return to Lianne and his affair with Florence. Both characters, despite their individual struggles, are deeply invested in the fabric of human connection. Hammad, however, exhibits a significantly lower Relational process percentage (14.3%). This indicates a profound detachment from complex interpersonal

relationships. His connections, even with fellow radicals, appear instrumental, serving the larger goal of his material actions rather than being ends in themselves. This low relational engagement points to a prioritization of ideology over genuine human bonds, a characteristic often associated with extremist mindsets. **The Internal Landscape: Mental Processes and Introspection** Mental processes, representing thoughts, perceptions, and feelings, reveal the characters' internal worlds. Lianne (22.0%) and Keith (21.0%) have very similar and significant Mental process percentages. This indicates that both characters are deeply introspective, grappling with complex emotions, memories, and the profound psychological impact of 9/11. Their internal struggles to process the incomprehensible, search for meaning, and navigate their altered realities are central to their character arcs. They are characters who think deeply and feel intensely, even if these internal states are often difficult to articulate. Hammad's Mental processes, at a mere 13.3%, are considerably lower. This suggests a character who suppresses introspection, whose beliefs are rigidly fixed, or whose mental processes are entirely subsumed by the singular focus of his mission.

The minimal presence of mental activity implies a lack of doubt, self-reflection, or emotional complexity, painting a picture of a character driven by a predetermined course of action rather than nuanced internal deliberation. This stark difference highlights the contrast between the complex internal struggles of the survivors and the rigid, unyielding mindset of the perpetrator. **Verbal Expression: Silence, Struggle, and Instrumentality** Finally, Verbal processes, representing communication and speech, offer insights into how each character expresses themselves.

All three characters exhibit relatively low Verbal process percentages, but with distinct implications. Hammad's extremely low Verbal processes (3.1%) underscore his role as an executor rather than a communicator. His purpose is not to discuss or articulate, but to act. His language, when present, is likely functional and instrumental, serving only to advance the material objectives of his group. This linguistic silence, in contrast to the deafening impact of his actions, highlights the terrifying efficiency and single-mindedness of his destructive path. The

verbal processes of Lianne (7.0%) and Keith (8.0%) suggest a struggle to articulate the depth of their trauma where language itself at that time often feels inadequate to describe the horror so their reduced verbal output symbolizes a broader societal struggle. In fact, their engagement with the world is more about doing, relating, and internal processing than the explicit verbal expression. The minor difference between them might suggest Keith's slightly greater inclination towards verbal expression or communication compared to Lianne.

Briefly, the comparative analysis of transitivity processes done for Keith, Lianne and Hammad offers a convincing linguistic portrait of their diverse responses to the world and their roles in *Falling Man*. Hammad's clear dominance of Material processes, coupled with minimal Relational, Mental, and Verbal engagement, draws an image of extremism consumed by action and detached from human connection and introspection.. Lianne and Keith, although sharing a significant engagement with Material processes as they reveal their humanity via their substantial Relational and Mental processes. Their linguistic patterns mirror their complex struggles to rebuild their lives.

8. Conclusions

The transitivity analysis of Lianne, Hammad, and Keith in Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* represents a fascinating linguistic portrait. Hammad's linguistic profile was dominated by Material processes and minimal engagement with other process types. This issue reveals that he was an extremist. His language reflects a destructive action that is devoid of any complex introspection or any genuine human connection.

Significantly, Lianne and Keith are engaging with Material processes but not like Hammad. Concerning their humanity, it appears through their substantial Relational and Mental processes. Their linguistic patterns reflect complex struggles to restructure their lives and to make sense of trauma through action, connection, and introspection. Relatively, their low Verbal processes underscore the ineffability of their experiences in such profound events. These linguistic footprints not only describe their individual personalities but brighten the novel's broader themes of post-9/11 trauma. The search for meaning was clear within their speeches struggling for human connection and recovery in the face of

inconceivable destiny .So, transitivity offers a powerful tool for literary criticism, providing practical evidence for the psychological and thematic dimensions of DeLillo's work.

9. Recommendations for Further Analysis

To further enrich this transitivity analysis, the following avenues are recommended:

1. Lexical Analysis within Processes. Conducting a detailed examination of the specific verbs used within each transitivity process category for each character.
2. Comparison of the characters' transitivity profiles to a broader corpus of contemporary American to identify statistically significant deviations and unique linguistic signatures.

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