

---

# Transitivity Analysis of David Cameron's Speech in Retaining Scotland

Zhao Yuqiong, Li Fengjie

Foreign Languages Department, Tianjin University of Finance and Economics, Tianjin, China

**Email address:**

yyfx0901@163.com (Li Fengjie)

**To cite this article:**

Zhao Yuqiong, Li Fengjie. Transitivity Analysis of David Cameron's Speech in Retaining Scotland. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*. Vol. 6, No. 3, 2018, pp. 70-79. doi: 10.11648/j.ijll.20180603.13

**Received:** April 13, 2018; **Accepted:** May 8, 2018; **Published:** June 4, 2018

---

**Abstract:** This thesis adopts Systemic-Functional Grammar as its theoretical framework to conduct a transitivity analysis of David Cameron's speech in retaining Scotland. The aim is to work out the distributions and functions of the transitivity processes and the main participants. To attain this goal, two research questions are proposed. The first one is what the distributions of transitivity processes are and the main participants in David Cameron's speech. The second one is what the functions of transitivity processes and main participants in David Cameron's speech are. The quantitative and qualitative methods are adopted simultaneously in analyzing the whole text of David Cameron's speech. The analysis yields two major findings as follows: 1. all of the six process types can be found in Cameron's speech. Among them, the relational process and material process are the most frequently occurred process types in his speech, which makes his speech more objective and convincing; 2. The pronouns of the first plural forms "we, us and our" are the main participants in Cameron's speech, which shows he wants to shorten the distance with his audiences.

**Keywords:** Transitivity Analysis, Process, Participants, Cameron's Speech

---

## 1. Introduction

On November 15, 2013, the Scottish government released a white paper with a length of 670 pages, which elaborated on the specific details and the ways in which Scotland would like to become an independent nation from the United Kingdom. The referendum took place on September 18, 2014, voting for "Should Scotland be an independent country?". Voters can only vote "yes" or "no". Three days before the referendum, Cameron came to Aberdeen to give a speech to retain the Scottish people. This speech was highly praised by the society.

### 1.1. Research Significance

It is of great significance to study the language of David Cameron's speech in retaining Scotland. The situation was urgent when David Cameron made this speech. If the voters chose to say "yes", Scotland would be an independent country. The whole society of the United Kingdom would be greatly changed. Finally the majority of the people in Scotland chose to vote "no". It can be said that David Cameron's speech has good impact to the final result. A political speech usually

implies the speaker's political stand and view. David Cameron must be very careful to design his speech from its lexis choice to sentence organization and content arrangement in order to make people be in consonance with the spirits which are extracted from the speech. To study this speech is useful to know more about the history of the United Kingdom as well as learn how to make a successful speech.

It is also of great significance to study this speech by using the ideational function of language, or more exactly, the transitivity system in ideational function. It is through this function that the speaker or writer embodies in language his experience of the internal world of his own consciousness: his cognition, reactions and perceptions, and also his lingual acts of speaking and understanding [3]. Language is used to represent our experience of the processes, persons, objects, abstractions, qualities, states and relations of the world around us and inside us [4]. Transitivity is the foundation of representation: it is the way the clause is used to analyze events and situations as being of certain types. And transitivity has the facility to analyze the same event in different ways, a facility which is of course of great interest in ideational analysis [1].

## 1.2. Research Methodology

This thesis employs both quantitative and qualitative approaches in analyzing the ideational function and its realization in David Cameron's speech in retaining Scotland. On the one hand, quantitative approaches are taken to show the distributions and frequency of these six transitivity processes and personal pronouns in the selected speech. On the other hand, qualitative description is carried out to explain how the ideational function is realized through the transitivity processes and personal pronouns. Quantitative and qualitative approaches are used together to make the findings more convincing.

## 1.3. Overview of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five parts. Chapter One is the introduction of the thesis, which introduces the research background, research significance, research methodology and the organization of the thesis. Chapter Two presents the theoretical framework of this thesis. Chapter Three is literature review which reviews the previous studies towards Cameron's speech in retaining Scotland. In Chapter Four, the realization of ideational function is analyzed from transitivity processes and personal pronouns. Chapter Five summarizes the findings of this study and points out some limitations.

# 2. Theoretical Framework

## 2.1. Three Meta-Functions

Halliday's systemic grammar contains a functional component, and the theory behind his functional grammar is systemic. Halliday believes that language is what it is because it has to serve certain functions. In other words, social demand on language helps to shape its structure. And types of meanings or functions can be grouped into three meta-functions as follows: (a) The textual function. The textual function refers to how people organize information in the use of language. At the same time it shows the relationship between conditional information and other information, and also the relationship between the transmission of information and the communicative context in which the speaker locates. The textual function mainly consists of three components, the theme-rheme structure, the information structure and coherence. (b) The interpersonal function. The interpersonal function shows people use language to interact with other people, and establish and keep interpersonal relationship. At the same time they use language to influence the behavior of others and express their opinions about the world and even change the world. It mainly consists of mood, modality and tone. (c) The ideational function. The ideational function means that people use language to talk about their experience of the world (the physical world and the spiritual world), and describe the events and situations that occur around them. It mainly consists of transitivity system and voice.

According to Halliday's opinion, these three meta-functions are used as the basis of studying how meaning is created and

expressed. Different types of functions can be seen through particular types of wordings in language.

## 2.2. Transitivity System

Different from the meaning of "transitivity" as a character of verbs, the "transitivity" here matches our experience of a real life event. The term "transitivity" in Systemic Functional Grammar is a semantic category, which is a reflection of human beings' recognition at the lexicogrammar level both in written and spoken form with the choice of process types and participant and circumstantial element [4]. The transitivity system construes the world of experience into a manageable set of process types. Each process type consists, in principle, of three components: a process unfolding through time, the participants involved in the process, circumstances associated with the process. And altogether there are six types of process. Material, mental, relational are the major types of process in the English transitivity system. And three minor ones are verbal, existential and behavioral.

Material clauses are processes of doing and happening. A material clause construes a quantum of change in the flow of events as taking place through some input of energy. Mental clauses are processes of sensing. And mental clauses are concerned with people's experience of the world of their own consciousness. A mental clause construes a quantum of change in the flow of events taking place in people's consciousness. Relational clauses are processes of being or having. And relational clauses serve to characterize and identify. These are processes of (typically human) physiological and psychological behaviour. They are the least distinct of all the six process types because they have no clearly defined characteristics of their own. Verbal clauses are clauses of saying. Such clauses are an important resource in various kinds of discourse. They contribute to the creation of a narrative by making it possible to set up dialogic passages. Existential clauses represent the idea that something exists or happens. Existential clauses are not very common in discourse, but they make an important, specialized contribution to various kinds of text.

# 3. Literature Review

Halliday calls for scholars to use the functional theory of language to analyze discourse. And he managed to analyze a novel of William Gerald Golding by using the transitivity system of Systemic Functional Grammar. It is the beginning with which scholars conduct discourse analysis by using transitivity system. And nowadays more and more scholars begin to use transitivity system to do discourse analysis.

Although scholars have conducted many discourse analyses by using transitivity system, it is still rare to use transitivity system in analyzing political speech discourse. Public speech is the process of speaking to a group of people in a structured, deliberate manner intended to inform, influence, or entertain the listeners [5]. A political speech may be a powerful vehicle used to effect change, inspiring and arousing feelings of great passion, motivating individuals to fight for a cause, to unite in

a common purpose. A memorable speech lives on in the hearts and minds long after it has been delivered. And scholars who use transitivity system to do political discourse analysis mostly focus on the inaugural speech. Until now there is no transitivity analysis of Cameron's speech in retaining Scotland.

Previous studies of transitivity analysis have provided significant implications to the present studies.

Present studies about David Cameron's speech in retaining Scotland mostly aim at the rhetorical features, critical discourse analysis and positive discourse analysis. With regard to the three meta-functions, in China, Zhou Lili [16] and Jin Juan [12] have conducted interpersonal function researches in analyzing David Cameron's speech in retaining Scotland. However, no research has been found on the ideational and textual function of this speech. And also, no meta-function analyses can be found towards Cameron's this speech. Therefore, It is the first time to use ideational, or accurately, the transitivity system function to analyze David Cameron's speech in retaining Scotland.

Through the analysis of the corpus of David Cameron's speech, this thesis tries to discover the characteristics of such political texts and see why this speech achieved success.

The present thesis applies transitivity system in Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar approach to the study of David Cameron's speech to retain Scotland to work out the transitivity distributions of six transitivity processes in this speech and pragmatic functions of each transitivity type. The interrelated research questions addressed in this thesis are as follows:

In carrying out the research, the thesis mainly deals with two research questions:

1. What are the distributions of transitivity processes and main participants in David Cameron's speech?
2. What are the functions of each transitivity process type and each involved participant in David Cameron's speech?

## 4. Transitivity Analysis of David Cameron's Speech

### 4.1. Distributions of Six Process Types in David Cameron's Speech

To conduct a transitivity analysis of David Cameron's speech, at first all the ranking clauses, which are the basis of the process types should be identified. When calculating the ranking clauses, the author follows the rules from Halliday. As for dependent clauses, the author only calculates the finite clauses (traditionally adverbial clauses, object clauses, non-defining relative clauses), excluding those non-finite clauses (traditionally to-infinitive clauses, present and past participle clause) and embedded clauses. For the paralleled or paratactic clauses or verb phrases, the author calculate them respectively.

Table 1 shows the total numbers of the different processes appear in the ranking clauses of this speech.

Table 1. Distributions of six processes.

Types of processes	Number of this process	Percentage of this process
material	109	34.60%
relational	123	39.05%
mental	40	12.70%
verbal	15	4.76%
existential	7	2.22%
behavioral	21	6.67%
total	315	100%

A total of 315 ranking clauses were found in this speech. And each of the six process type can be found in David Cameron's speech. As shown in table 1, the relational process is the most frequently used process type with a total occurrence of (123, 39.05%) and followed by the material process (109, 34.60%), the mental process (40, 12.70%), the behavioral process (21, 6.67%), the verbal process (15, 4.76%), the existential process (7, 2.22%) with a descending order of the occurrence frequencies. There are significant differences in the occurrence of each process type. And in the next section a further discussion will be made.

### 4.2. Distributions and Functions of Each Transitivity Process in David Cameron's Speech

This speech can be divided into five parts. The first part is *The United Kingdom*, which expounds what the United Kingdom means to its people. People of four nationalities have worked together to make the United Kingdom as a great country and the greatest example of democracy in the world. Table 2 shows the distributions of six process types in this part.

Table 2. Distributions of six process types in *The United Kingdom* part.

Types of processes	Number of this process	Percentage of this process
material	22	27.16%
relational	30	37.04%
mental	12	14.81%
verbal	7	8.64%
existential	1	1.23%
behavioral	9	11.11%
total	81	100%

The second part is *The Consequences of Yes Vote*. It is an end of the things that people of four nationalities share together. And their lives will be hugely changed in almost every way. Table 3 shows the distributions of six process types in the second part of the speech.

Table 3. Distributions of six processes in *The Consequences of the Yes Vote* part.

Types of processes	Number of this process	Percentage of this process
material	19	30.65%
relational	30	48.39%
mental	7	11.29%
verbal	3	4.84%
existential	2	3.23%
behavioral	1	1.61%
total	62	100%

The third part is *Efforts and Improvements*. The United Kingdom is not perfect and no country is. But all of the people are on a constant effort to change the country to the better. A white paper for a stronger Scotland Parliament will be out into draft legislation by January. And there are many improvements the government is going to make. Table 4 shows the distributions of six process types in the third part of the speech.

**Table 4.** Distributions of six processes in the *Efforts and Improvements* part.

Types of processes	Number of this process	Percentage of this process
material	31	45.59%
relational	27	39.71%
mental	4	5.88%
verbal	1	1.47%
existential	4	5.88%
behavioral	1	1.47%
total	68	100%

The fourth part is *We are Better Together*. The United Kingdom is a family of four nations and Scotland plays an important part in this family. And it is never a good choice to turn away from each other. Table 5 shows the distributions of six process types in the fourth part of the speech.

**Table 5.** Distributions of six processes in the *We are Better Together* part.

Types of processes	Number of this process	Percentage of this process
material	13	40.63%
relational	14	43.75%
mental	4	12.50%
verbal	0	0.00%
existential	0	0.00%
behavioral	1	3.13%
total	32	100%

The last part is *Vote to Stay*. David Cameron reiterated that they don't need to tear their country apart to get a bright future and begged Scottish people to vote no to stay. Table 6 shows the distributions of six process types in the last part of the speech.

**Table 6.** Distributions of six processes in the *Vote to Stay* part.

Types of processes	Number of this process	Percentage of this process
material	24	33.33%
relational	22	30.56%
mental	13	18.06%
verbal	4	5.56%
existential	0	0.00%
behavioral	9	12.50%
total	72	100%

These five parts will be taken a whole respectively to conduct an analysis of the transitivity processes.

#### 4.2.1. Distributions and Functions of Material Process in David Cameron's Speech

Material process in David Cameron's speech holds a percentage of 34.60% of all the processes. Although being less than those of the relational process, the percentage is far

higher than those of other processes.

Material processes are processes of doing. They express the notion that some entity does something, which may be done to the other entity [4]. Table 1 shows that material processes appear with a frequency of 34.60%, with the number of 109, which is second only to the relational process.

Through table 2 to table 6, it can be seen that in *The United Kingdom* part, the *Efforts and Improvements* part and the *Vote to Stay* part, material processes are strongly involved in. And a further analysis of the material process will be made in these three parts. Some of the material clauses are listed for analysis and the italics are used to distinguish verbs of material processes in a ranging clause from others.

The analysis of material process in the United Kingdom part will be made first. The material clauses from *The United Kingdom* part are as follows:

- 1) And you know what, we *built* this home together.
- 2) We *did* all this together.
- 3) This is a decision that could *break up* our family of nations, and *rip* Scotland from the rest of the UK.

In this part, David Cameron wants to remind his audiences how the United Kingdom has been what it is now. It is the people from four nations who work together to build such a great country. And Scottish people play an indispensable part in the construction of the country. The focus in this part is what the people of the four nations do to build the country. So the material processes are used frequently.

The analysis of material process in the *Efforts and Improvements* part will be made secondly. Material clauses in the *Efforts and Improvements* part are as follows:

- 1) Of course we must constantly *change* and *improve* people's lives.
- 2) But you can *get* real, concrete change on Thursday: if you *vote* No.
- 3) And we have *spelled* that change out in practical terms, with a plan and a process.

In this part, David Cameron wants to assure the Scottish people that the government is on a constant mission to change the United Kingdom for the better. And it means faster and better change. No country is perfect but the United Kingdom is trying constantly to be perfect. The focus is on the specific measures to change. So he uses a lot of material processes to state what the government is doing and what they will do.

The analysis of material process in the *Vote to Stay* part will be made lastly. Material clauses in the *Vote to Stay* part are as follows:

- 1) We've just *pulled through* a great recession together. We *are now moving forward* together.
- 2) *Vote* No- and you are *voting* for a bigger and broader and better future for Scotland and you are *investing* in the future for your children and grandchildren.
- 3) So please, from all of us: *vote* to stay together. *Vote* to stay. *Vote* to save our united kingdom.

The verb "vote", which stands for the material process appears many times. Cameron wants to recover the audiences' confidence, and with a final purpose to make them take action to vote "no".

#### 4.2.2. Distributions and Functions of Relational Process in David Cameron's Speech

Table 1 shows that relational processes appear most frequently in David Cameron's speech and the percentage of relational process is the highest of all the process types.

Relational processes are used most commonly to attribute qualities to entities, to classify them as one thing or the other, or to identify them.

In *The Consequences of Yes Vote* part, *Efforts and Improvement* part, and *We are Better Together* part, relational processes are strongly involved in. Some of them will be listed for analysis. The italics are used to distinguish verbs of material processes in a ranging clause from others.

Firstly, relational processes in *The Consequences of Yes Vote* part will be analyzed. Relational clauses in *The Consequences of Yes Vote* part are as follows:

- 1) But when something *looks* too good to be true- that's because it *is*. And it *is* my duty to be clear about the likely consequences of a Yes Vote.
- 2) Independence would not *be* a trial separation; it would *be* a painful divorce.
- 3) To warn of the consequences *is* not to scare-monger, it *is* like warning a friend about a decision they might take that will affect the rest of their lives- and the lives of their children.

To retain Scotland, David Cameron must let the Scottish people know what the Yes Vote means to them. By frequently using the relational clauses to state the relationship between Yes Vote and the consequences, Cameron wants the Scottish people to know that voting "yes" means a "painful divorce", and it could not be remedied. So he used many relational processes to attribute painful qualities to the consequences.

Secondly, relational processes in *Efforts and Improvements* part will be analyzed. Relational clauses in *Efforts and Improvements* part are as follows:

- 1) The United Kingdom *is* not a perfect country - no country *is*.
- 2) Yes, every political party *is* different. But we *are* all of us- Conservatives, Labor, Lib Dems, Nationalists- on a constant mission to change our country for the better.
- 3) So a No vote actually *means* faster, fairer, safer and better change.
- 4) Scotland's identity *is* already strong.

The relational processes are of the same importance with the material processes in this part. The material processes expound how to change and improve. The relational processes focus on the reasons for change and the role of Scotland in the process of change. Why should they change and improve? Because their country is not perfect. And in the process of changing, Scotland is not an observer. It is a participant as well as the beneficiary.

Lastly, the relational processes in *We are Better Together* part will be analyzed. The relational clauses in *We are Better Together* part are as follows:

- 1) The United Kingdom *is* not one nation. We *are* four nations in a single country. That can *be* difficult but it *is* wonderful.

2) We *are* a family of nations.

3) A family *is* not a compromise, or a second best, it *is* a magical identity that makes us more together than we can ever be apart.

4) In human relations it *is* almost never a good thing to turn away from each other, to put up walls, or to score new lines on the map.

In this part, David Cameron is trying to tell the Scottish people that the four nations are not only a country but also a family. And a family is a magical identity. They help each other and will never turn their backs when their family members are suffering. By using relational processes most frequently, David Cameron wants to give an identity to the Scottish people. They are family members. And the four nations can never be apart. They are better together.

#### 4.2.3. Distributions and Functions of Mental Process in David Cameron's Speech

Mental process is a process of sensing. It involves phenomenon described as state of mind or psychological events. It expresses affection, cognition and perception. In David Cameron's speech, mental process is the third frequently used process type and largely distribute in the *Vote to Stay* part.

The italics are used to distinguish verbs of mental processes in a ranging clause from others. Mental processes in the *Vote to Stay* part are as follows:

- 1) Let no one *fool* you that 'Yes' is a positive vision.
- 2) We *want* you to stay. Head and heart and soul, we *want* you to stay.
- 3) If you don't *like* me - I won't be here forever. If you don't *like* this government - it won't last forever.

This part is the last part of Cameron's speech. And Cameron calls for the Scottish people to vote to stay sincerely. He asked the Scottish people to be positive of what their country can be and remember that they are part of their family. "We want you to stay. Head and heart and soul, we want you to stay", by using mental processes, the feeling of this speech is more sincere and it is easy for the Scottish people to be moved by the words so that they may take Cameron's suggestion to stay.

#### 4.2.4. Distributions and Functions of Verbal Process in David Cameron's Speech

Verbal process covers all modes of expression and indication which includes a potential verbal action. In David Cameron's speech in retaining Scotland, verbal process as well as existential process and behavioral process are not frequently used. Therefore, it is better to make analysis over the whole text when dealing with these three process types.

The italics are used to distinguish verbs of verbal processes in a ranging clause from others. Verbal processes in the Cameron's speech are as follows:

- 1) So I would *say* to everyone voting on Thursday, please remember. This isn't just any old country. This is the United Kingdom. This is our country.
- 2) And as Prime Minister I have to *tell* you what that (independence) would mean.
- 3) I *say* all this because I don't want the people of Scotland

to be sold a dream that disappears.

The use of “say, tell” makes the relationship between David Cameron and his audiences closer. It seems like Cameron is their friend and give them suggestions from their standpoint and for their own interests. It makes Cameron more reliable and his points of view more convincing.

#### 4.2.5. Distributions and Functions of Existential Process in David Cameron’s Speech

Existential process shows the existence of an entity. It involves existential construction which is introduced by a “there” in subject position and a typical verb “be” to mean that something exists or does not exist.

The italics are used to distinguish existential processes in a ranging clause from others. Existential processes in the Cameron’s speech are as follows:

- 1) *There’s* no going back from this. No re-run.
- 2) We must constantly change and improve people’s lives. No-one is content while *there are* still children living in poverty. No-one is content while *there are* people struggling, and young people not reaching their full potential.
- 3) We have agreed a timetable for that stronger Scottish Parliament: a time-table to bring in the new powers that will go ahead if *there is* a No vote, a White Paper by November, put into draft legislation by January.

It can be found that the existential process in the first example is not used to show existence of something but draw people’s attention that they should be alert to the present situation and be careful in making their decisions. The function of existential clauses is mainly to show existence, but occasionally to be an eye-catching technique.

#### 4.2.6. Distributions and Functions of Behavioral Process in David Cameron’s Speech

Behavioral processes are processes of (typically human)

physiological and psychological behaviour, like breathing, coughing, smiling, dreaming and staring. [4].

The italics are used to distinguish verbs of behavioral processes in a ranging clause from others. Behavioral processes in the Cameron’s speech are as follows:

- 1) The values that say we don’t *walk* on by when people are sick.
- 2) Please don’t think: I’m frustrated with politics right now, so I’ll *walk* out the door and never come back.
- 3) And as you *stand* in the stillness of the polling booth, I hope you will ask yourself this.

Most of the behavioral processes in Cameron’s speech are used when David Cameron presuming a situation from the Scottish people’s angle. It makes the Scottish people think twice before they make their decision. They would know that the situation is really urgent and the consequences of Yes vote is really painful.

#### 4.3. Distributions and Functions of Main Participants in Cameron’s Speech

Participants is an important part in transitivity analysis. The interrelation between processes and participants might reflect the features of certain discourses [7]. The previous sections are mainly about the distributions and functions of the process types in David Cameron’s speech. In this part, the author is going to analyse the distributions and functions of the main participants of this speech.

There are different participants in every process. It is meaningless to count and analyze all the participants. The author only takes some regularly occurring participants into consideration. To be specific, the author only counts the frequencies of “I/ you/ your/ we/ our/ us/ they/ them” and find the hidden information of their functions.

The distribution of main participants are calculated as the following table shows:

Table 7. Distributions of the main participants.

participants	I/me/my	you/your	we/our/us	they/their/them	total
number	22	43	47	14	126
percentage	17.46%	34.13%	37.30%	11.11%	100%

The table shows that the average percentage of the pronouns “we/ us/ our” and “you/ your” are main participants in this speech. The pronouns most frequently occurred in this speech is “we/ us/ our”, with a frequency of (47, 37.30%), followed by “you/ your” (43, 34.13%), “I/ my/ me” (22, 17.46%), “they/ their/ them” (14, 11.11%). In next part the author will analyze the functions of the different participants respectively.

The analysis of “we/ us/ our” as participants will be made firstly. The examples of “we/ us/ our” as participants are as follows:

- 1) If Scotland vote Yes, the UK will split, and *we* will go our separate ways forever.
- 2) A family is not a compromise, or a second best, it is a magical identity that makes *us* more together than *we* can ever be apart.

- 3) This isn’t just any old country. This is the United Kingdom. This is *our* country.

“We/ us / our” are personal pronouns in plural forms, which represent a group of people. In Cameron’s speech, “we/ us/ our” are the most frequently used participants. It shows that Cameron wants to shorten the distance with his audiences. He is a member of them and can not be separated. Cameron always states that the four nations built the United Kingdom together. And the four nations are a family. Cameron and his audiences are the members of this family. They can never be apart. So he consciously chooses the pronouns “we/ us/ our” in order to achieve the identification with his audiences.

The analysis of “you/ your” as participants will be made secondly. The examples of “you/ your” as participants are as follows:

- 1) And *you* know what, we built this home together.

- 2) And *you* know what makes us truly great? It's not our economic might or military powers. It's our values: British values; fairness; freedom; justice. The values say wherever *you* are, whoever *you* are, *your* life has dignity and worth.
- 3) Vote no, and *you* are voting for a bigger and broader and better future for Scotland and *you* are investing in the future for your children and grandchildren.

"You/ your" in this speech refers to the addressees, or we can say the Scottish people. The participants "you/ your" have three levels of meaning here. Firstly, Cameron remind the Scottish people that Scotland is an inseparable part of the United Kingdom. And the UK means home to them. Secondly, Cameron wants to warn the consequences of the Yes Vote. Thirdly, Cameron retains them sincerely. "Head and heart and soul, we want you to stay." Cameron wants them to know, whether emotionally or intellectually, the Yes Vote is not a good choice.

The analysis of "I/ my/ me" as participants will be made thirdly. The examples of "I/ my/ me" as participants are as follows:

- 1) *I* believe *I* speak for millions of people across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and most in Scotland, too who would be utterly heart-broken by the break- up of the United Kingdom.
- 2) And it is *my* duty to be clear about the likely consequences of a Yes Vote.
- 3) And as you stand in the stillness of the polling booth, *I* hope you will ask yourself this: will *my* family and I truly be better off by going it alone? Will we really be more safe and secure? Do *I* really want to turn my back on the rest of Britain?

Pronouns "I/ my/ me" are singular forms. They have strong sense of expressing personal opinions or individual ideas. In this speech, most of the "I/ my/ me" refers to Cameron himself, but there are also some exceptions. "I/ my/ me" in some places of the speech refers to the Scottish people when Cameron let them ask themselves questions. "I/ my/ me" occur only a few times in this speech, which makes the political speech more objective, persuasive and impartial.

The analysis of "they/ them/ their" as participants will be made lastly. The examples of "they/ them/ their" as participants are as follows:

- 1) When people vote on Thursday *they* are not just voting for themselves, but for their children and the generations beyond.
- 2) To warn of the consequences is not to scare-monger, it is like warning a friend about a decision *they* might take that will affect the rest of *their* lives- and the lives of *their* children.

When Cameron uses "they/ them/ their", he looks like a bystander but not a relevant people of the event. He is presuming some possible situations. That makes his speech more objective and more reliable.

## 5. Conclusion

The study yields some findings as follows.

(1) The first is that all these six process types have been found to occur in this speech. The relational process is most frequently used, followed by the material process, mental process, verbal process, existential process, behavioral process. The last three processes are not frequently found in this speech. And in different parts of this speech, the frequency of each process type is also different.

(2) This speech is a political speech. It is with typical political aims. So the politician always chooses more objective and more persuasive processes to convey his ideas and reach his goals. There is no doubt that relational process and material process are both the best choices. Because material process and relational process always state the true events. That makes the speech more objective and more persuasive.

(3) In the analysis of the participants, "we/ us/ our" are the most frequently used participants in Cameron's speech. It shows that Cameron wants to shorten the distance with his audiences and try to act as their family members.

(4) "You/ your" are almost of the same frequency with "we/ us/ our". And most of "you/ your" in this speech refer to the Scottish people. At first, Cameron wants to let them know what the United Kingdom means to them. Secondly, he'd like to warn them of the consequences of the Yes vote. And at last he begged them to stay sincerely.

(5) The first singular pronouns "I/ my/ me" are not frequently occurred in David Cameron's speech. It shows that Cameron wants to make his speech more objective, persuasive and impartial.

Undoubtedly, this thesis has its limitations. There is still much room for improvement. There is no analysis of the third component- the circumstantial element in transitivity system. The circumstantial element may add more enlightenment in transitivity system analysis.

## Appendix

*David Cameron's Last Speech in Scotland Before Referendum*

Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre in Aberdeen  
15 September 2014

1. BE: We meet in a week 2. MA: that could change the United Kingdom forever.

3. MA: Indeed, it could end the United Kingdom 4. ME: as we know it.

On Thursday, 5. MA: Scotland votes, 6. RE: and the future of our country is at stake.

7. MA: On Friday, people could be living in a different country, with a different place in the world and a different future ahead of it.

8. RE: This is a decision 9. MA: that could break up our family of nations, 10. MA: and rip Scotland from the rest of the UK.

11. RE: And we must be very clear.

12. EX: There's no going back from this. No re-run.

13. RE: This is a once-and-for-all decision.

14. MA: If Scotland votes Yes, 15. MA: the UK will split,

16. RE: and we will go our separate ways forever.

17. MA: When people vote on Thursday 18. MA: they are not just voting for themselves, but for their children and grandchildren and the generations beyond.

19. ME: So I want to 20. VE: speak very directly to the people of this country today about 21. RE: what is at stake.

22. ME: I believe 23. VE: I speak for millions of people across England, Wales and Northern Ireland – and many in Scotland, 24. RE: too who would be utterly heart-broken by the break-up of the United Kingdom. 25. BE: Utterly heart-broken to wake up on Friday morning to the end of the country 26. ME: we love, 27. ME: to know that 28. MA: Scots would no longer join with the English, Welsh and Northern Irish in our Army, Navy and Air Force, or in our UK-wide celebrations and commemorations, or in UK sporting teams from the Olympics to the British Lions.

29. RE: The United Kingdom would be no more. No UK pensions, no UK passports, no UK pound.

30. ME: The greatest example of democracy the world has ever known, of openness, of people of different nationalities and faiths coming together as one, 31. RE: would be no more.

32. RE: It would be the end of a country 33. MA: that launched the Enlightenment, 34. MA: that abolished slavery 35. MA: that drove the industrial revolution, 36. MA: that defeated fascism, 37. ME: the end of a country that people around the world respect 38. ME: and admire, the end of a country 39. VE: that all of us call home.

40. ME: And you know what, 41. MA: we built this home together. 42. RE: It's only become Great Britain because of the greatness of Scotland. Because of the thinkers, the writers, the artists, the leaders, the soldiers, the inventors 43. MA: who have made this country what it is.

44. RE: It's Alexander Fleming and David Hume; J. K. Rowling and Andy Murray and all the millions of people 45. MA: who have played their part in this extraordinary success story, 46. MA: the Scots who led the charge on pensions and the NHS and on social justice.

47. MA: We did all this together.

48. BE: For the people of Scotland to walk away now 49. RE: would be like painstakingly 50. MA: building a home-and then 51. BE: walking out the door 52. BE: and throwing away the keys.

53. VE: So I would say to everyone voting on Thursday, 54. ME: please remember.

55. RE: This isn't just any old country. 56. RE: This is the United Kingdom. 57. RE: This is our country.

58. ME: And you know 59. RE: what makes us truly great?

60. RE: It's not our economic might or military prowess – 61. RE: it's our values: British values; Fairness; Freedom; Justice.

62. VE: The values that say 63. RE: wherever you are, 64. RE: whoever you are, 65. RE: your life has dignity and worth. 66. VE: The values that say 67. BE: we don't walk on by 68. RE: when people are sick, 69. VE: we don't ask for your credit card in the hospital, 70. BE: we don't turn our backs 71. RE: when you get old and frail, 72. MA: that we don't turn a blind eye or a cold heart to people around the world 73. RE: who are

desperate 74. BE: and crying out for help.

75. RE: This is 76. RE: what Britain means. 77. RE: This is 78. RE: what makes our country the greatest on earth.

79. RE: And it's why 80. ME: millions of us could not bear to 81. BE: see that country ending – for good, for ever – on Friday.

82. ME: Now I know that 83. EX: there are many people across Scotland 84. ME: who are planning to 85. MA: vote Yes. 86. ME: I understand why 87. RE: this might sound appealing. 88. RE: It's the promise of something different. 89. ME: I also know that 90. MA: the people who are running the Yes campaign 91. BE: are painting a picture of a Scotland 92. RE: that is better in every way, 93. RE: and they can be good at painting that picture.

94. RE: But when something looks too good to be true – 95. RE: that's usually because 96. RE: it is. 97. RE: And it is my duty 98. RE: to be clear about the likely consequences of a Yes Vote.

99. RE: Independence would not be a trial separation; 100. RE: it would be a painful divorce. 101. VE: And as Prime Minister I have to tell you 102. RE: what that would mean.

103. RE: It would mean 104. MA: we no longer share the same currency. 105. RE: It would mean the armed forces 106. MA: we have built up together over centuries 107. MA: being split up forever. 108. RE: It would mean 109. MA: our pension funds sliced up—at some cost. 110. RE: It would mean 111. RE: the borders we have 112. RE: would become international and may no longer 113. MA: be so easily crossed. 114. RE: It would mean the automatic support that you currently get from British embassies 115. MA: when you're traveling around the world 116. MA: that would come to an end. 117. RE: It would mean over half of Scottish mortgages suddenly, from one day to the next, being provided by banks in a foreign country. 118. RE: It would mean that 119. MA: interest rates in Scotland are no longer set by the Bank of England—with the stability and security 120. VE: that promises. 121. RE: And it would mean—for any banks that remain in Scotland—122. RE: if they ever got in trouble 123. RE: it would be Scottish taxpayers and Scottish taxpayers alone 124. MA: that would bear the costs. 125. RE: It would mean that 126. MA: we no longer pool resources across the whole of the UK to 127. MA: pay for institutions like the NHS or our welfare system.

128. RE: This is not guesswork. 129. EX: There are no question marks, no maybe this or maybe that.

130. ME: The Nationalists want to break up UK funding on pensions, the UK funding of healthcare, the UK funding and comprehensive protection on national security.

131. RE: These are the facts. 132. RE: This is what would happen. An end to the things 133. MA: we share together.

134. ME: And the people of Scotland must know these facts before 135. MA: they make this once-and-for-all decision.

136. RE: To warn of the consequences is not to scare-monger, 137. RE: it is like warning a friend about a decision 138. MA: they might take 139. MA: that will affect the rest of their lives – and the lives of their children.

140. VE: I say all this because 141. ME: I don't want the people of Scotland 142. MA: to be sold a dream 143. MA: that

disappears.

144. ME: Now I know that 145. VE: some people say: 146. BE: we've heard about the risks and the uncertainties, 147. ME: but we still want change.

Look. 148. RE: The United Kingdom is not a perfect country - 149. RE: no country is.

Of course 150. MA: we must constantly change 151. MA: and improve people's lives.

152. RE: No-one is content while 153. EX: there are still children living in poverty.

154. RE: No-one is content while 155. EX: there are people struggling, and young people not reaching their full potential.

Yes, 156. RE: every political party is different.

157. RE: But we are - all of us - Conservatives, Labor, Lib Dems, Nationalists - on a constant mission 158. MA: to change our country for the better.

159. RE: The question is: 160. MA: how do you get that change?

161. RE: For me it's simple.

162. MA: You don't get the change 163. ME: you want 164. MA: by ripping your country apart.

165. MA: You don't get change 166. MA: by undermining your economy 167. MA: and damaging your businesses 168. MA: and diminishing your place in the world.

169. MA: But you can get real, concrete change on Thursday: 170. MA: if you vote No.

171. RE: 'Business as usual is not on the ballot paper. 172. RE: The status quo is gone.

173. MA: This campaign has swept it away.

174. EX: There is no going back to the way things were.

175. RE: A vote for No means real change.

176. MA: And we have spelled that change out in practical terms, with a plan and a process.

177. MA: If we get a No vote on Thursday, 178. MA: that will trigger a major, unprecedented program of devolution with additional powers for the Scottish Parliament.

Major new powers over tax, spending and welfare services.

179. MA: We have agreed a timetable for that stronger Scottish Parliament: a time-table 180. MA: to bring in the new powers 181. MA: that will go ahead if 182. EX: there is a No vote, a White Paper by November, 183. MA: put into draft legislation by January.

184. RE: This is a timetable 185. MA: that is now agreed by all the main political parties 186. MA: and set in stone, 187. RE: and I am prepared to 188. RE: work with all the main parties 189. MA: to deliver this during 2015.

190. RE: So a No vote actually means faster, fairer, safer and better change.

191. RE: And this is a vital point: 192. RE: Scotland is not an observer in the affairs of this country.

193. MA: Scotland is shaping 194. MA: and changing the United Kingdom for the better - more so today than at any point in the last three hundred years 195. MA: and Scots will continue to help shape the constitution of our country.

196. ME: And Scottish people can enjoy the additional powers its Parliament gives without losing the UK pension, the UK pound or the UK passport.

197. RE: Real change is Scotland's for the taking.

The power 198. MA: to set your own course 199. MA: and make your own decisions with the security of being in the UK and without the risks of going it alone.

200. RE: It's the best of both worlds.

201. RE: Scotland's identity is already strong. strong Scottish culture, strong Scottish arts, a strong Church of Scotland and in the last 15 years 202. MA: you have built a strong Scottish Parliament, not a fleeting institution but a permanent one.

203. RE: So the vote on Thursday is not about 204. RE: whether Scotland is a nation. 205. RE: Scotland is a proud, strong, successful nation. 206. RE: The vote on Thursday is about two competing visions for Scotland's future. The Nationalists' vision of narrowing down, going it alone, breaking all ties with the UK. Or the patriotic vision of a strong Scottish nation allied to the rest of the United Kingdom with its own stronger Scottish Parliament at its heart and with the benefits of working together in the UK on jobs, pensions, on health care funding, the currency, interest rates.

207. RE: It really is the best of both worlds 208. RE: and it's the best way 209. MA: to get real change 210. MA: and secure a better future for your children and your grandchildren, which is 211. RE: what the vital debate is all about.

212. RE: And speaking of family - that is quite simply 213. ME: how I feel about this. 214. RE: We are a family.

215. RE: The United Kingdom is not one nation. 216. RE: We are four nations in a single country. 217. RE: That can be difficult 218. RE: but it is wonderful. Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland, different nations, with individual identities, competing with each other, even at times enraging each other while still being so much stronger together.

219. RE: We are a family of nations.

220. MA: And why should the next generation of that family be forced 221. MA: to choose whether to 222. MA: identify only with Edinburgh or only with London choose which embassy 223. ME: they want 224. MA: to go to 225. RE: when they are in trouble abroad or 226. MA: pack their passport 227. BE: when they're going to see friends and loved ones.

228. RE: A family is not a compromise, or a second best, 229. RE: it is a magical identity 230. RE: that makes us more together 231. RE: than we can ever be apart.

232. MA: So please - do not break this family apart.

In human relations 233. RE: it's almost never a good thing 234. MA: to turn away from each other, 235. MA: to put up walls, or 236. MA: to score new lines on the map.

237. MA: Why would we take one Great Britain 238. MA: and turn it into separate smaller nations?

239. RE: What is that an answer to?

240. MA: How will that help the ambitious young people 241. ME: who want to 242. MA: make their mark on the world or the pensioner 243. ME: who just wants security or the family relying on jobs make in the UK?

244. ME: Let no-one fool you that 245. RE: 'Yes' is a positive vision.

246. RE: It's about dividing people; 247. MA: it's closing

doors; 248. RE: it's about making foreigners of our friends and family. 249. RE: This isn't an optimistic vision.

250. RE: The optimistic vision is of our family of nations staying together there for each other in the hard times coming through to better times. 251. MA: We've just pulled through a great recession together. 252. MA: We're now moving forward together.

253. RE: The road has been long 254. MA: but it is finally leading upwards and 255. RE: that's why 256. VE: I ask you 257. MA: to vote No to walking away.

258. MA: Vote No – 259. MA: and you are voting for a bigger and broader and better future for Scotland 260. MA: and you are investing in the future for your children and grandchildren.

261. RE: So this is our message to the people of Scotland. 262. ME: We want you 263. BE: to stay.

Head and heart and soul, 264. ME: we want you 265. BE: to stay.

266. MA: Please don't mix up the temporary and the permanent.

267. ME: Please don't think: 268. RE: I'm frustrated with politics right now, 269. BE: so I'll walk out the door 270. MA: and never come back.

271. ME: If you don't like me – 272. RE: I won't be here forever. 273. ME: If you don't like this Government – 274. MA: it won't last forever. 275. MA: But if you leave the UK – 276. RE: that will be forever.

277. BE: Yes, the different parts of the UK don't always see eye-to-eye.

278. ME: Yes, we need change – 279. MA: and we will deliver it.

280. MA: But to get that change, 281. MA: to get a brighter future, 282. RE: we don't need 283. MA: to tear our country apart.

284. RE: In two days, this long campaign will be at an end.

285. BE: And as you stand in the stillness of the polling booth, 286. ME: I hope 287. VE: you will ask yourself this.

288. RE: Will my family and I truly be better off by going it alone? 289. RE: Will we really be more safe and secure? 290. ME: Do I really want 291. BE: to turn my back on the rest of Britain, 292. RE: and why is it that 293. VE: so many people across the world are asking: 294. ME: why would Scotland want 295. MA: to do that? Why?

296. ME: And if you don't know the answer to these questions – 297. MA: then please vote No.

298. MA: At the end of the day, all the arguments of this campaign can be reduced to a single fact. 299. RE: We are better together.

300. MA: So as you reach your final decision, please, please:

301. VE: Don't let anyone tell you that 302. RE: you can't be a proud Scot and a proud Brit. 303. ME: Don't lose faith in 304. RE: what this country is – 305. RE: and what we can be. 306. ME: Don't forget what a great United Kingdom 307. RE: you are part of. 308. BE: Don't turn your backs on 309. RE: what is the best family of nations in the world and the best hope for your family in this world.

So please, from all of us:

310. MA: Vote to 311. BE: stick together.

312. MA: Vote 313. BE: to stay.

314. MA: Vote to 315. MA: save our United Kingdom.

## References

- [1] Fowler, R. (1991). *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the News*. London: Routledge.
- [2] Halliday, M. A. K. (1967). 'Notes on transitivity and theme in English'. *Journal of Linguistics*.
- [3] Halliday, M. A. K. (1971). *Linguistic Function and Literature Style: An Inquiry into the Language of William Golding's The Inheritors*. London: Oxford University Press.
- [4] Halliday, M. A. K. (2008). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. 3rd ed. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- [5] Lucas, S. E. (2000). *The Art of Public Speaking*. 8th ed. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- [6] Dong Baohua, Quan Dong. The Ideational Function Analysis of "there" in Existential Sentences [J]. *Foreign Language and Literature*, 2018, 01: 96-105.
- [7] Hu Zhuanglin. *Discourse Cohesion and Coherence* [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1994.
- [8] Huang Guowen. *Summary of Discourse Analysis* [M]. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 1999.
- [9] Huang Guowen. *Discourse Analysis and Construction of Systemic Functional Linguistic Theories* [J]. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching*, 2010, 5: 1-4.
- [10] Huang Guowen. *Theory and Practice of Discourse Analysis: Study of Advertising Texts* [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2001.
- [11] Huang Guowen. A Review of the 40-year Development of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics [J]. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching*, 2000, 1.
- [12] Jin Juan. *Interpersonal Function Analysis of Cameron's Speech in Scottish Independence Referendum* [J]. *Journal of Yanbian Institute of Education*, 2016, 30(5): 24-26.
- [13] Wang Huijing. Several Core Issues of Transitivity System and Their Cognitive Interpretation [J]. *Journal of Southwest University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 2017, 03: 135-143.
- [14] Wang Huijing, Wen Xu. Research of Transitivity System: Review and Reflection [J]. *Journal of Xi'an International Studies University*, 2017, 01: 12-16.
- [15] Wang Li. *Transitivity Analysis of American President Barack Obama's Inaugural Address* [D]. Jilin: School of Public English Education, Jilin University, 2009.
- [16] Zhou Lili. *Discourse Analysis of Interpersonal Functions in Lectures--A Case Study of Cameron's Speech in Retaining Scotland in 2014*[J]. *Journal of Young Writers*, 2015, 14: 104-105.