

The Portrayal of Lilia in E. M. Forster's *Where Angels Fear to Tread*: A Transitivity-Based Perspective

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Abstract:

In this paper, I focus on the portrayal of the female protagonist in E. M. Forster's novel *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905) within the Hallidian transitivity system. This model has been applied to shed light on the portrayal of the novel's heroine through the text's specific choices of transitivity types and other related linguistic features. The aim is to explore how the choice of certain processes and their participants influences the making of meaning and contributes to the shaping of characterisation and theme making in the novel.

Keywords: *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, Forster, characterisation, Halliday, transitivity.

1. Introduction

Many critical studies have provided character analysis of the heroine of *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), Lilia, as well as other principal characters in the novel. Unlike previous studies which concentrate on character analysis by deploying traditional critical approaches, this study explores its character analysis by drawing on transitivity theory as expounded primarily by Halliday (1971, 1985, 2004) and secondarily by the more recent transitivity models, particularly Eggins (2004) and Thompson (2014). As Goatly (2000:75) observes: 'Linguistic analysis will reveal latent patterns which escape an ordinary meaning, and critical reading can benefit greatly from such analysis, precisely because it brings to light what is ordinarily latent or hidden'.

2. Theoretical Background:

In the Hallidian transitivity model, the concept of 'transitivity' is used in an expanded semantic sense to go beyond the traditional grammar where it is a way of distinguishing between verbs as to whether they have an Object or not. Transitivity, as conceived by Halliday (1971), is one of the systems available within the ideational component of language. Its function is that of 'representing processes or experiences: actions, events, processes of consciousness and relations' (Halliday, 1985:53). The semantic processes, expressed by clauses, have three components: (1) The process itself, which is expressed by a verb phrase; (2) the participants in the clause, normally realized by noun phrases; and (3) the circumstances associated with the process, typically expressed by adverbial and prepositional phrases (Halliday, 1985:101-102). Processes have been classified by Halliday (1985:131) on the basis of a combination of semantic and grammatical criteria into six different types: material, mental, relational, behavioural, verbal, and existential. These groupings are meant to represent the way we see the 'goings-on' around and inside us. However, this classification is not absolutely categorical as the processes might overlap, making the division between them 'more provisional than absolute' (Simpson, 2004: 22). Below is a brief description of these process types.

1. **Material processes:** material processes are clauses of doing and happening. The two main participants in this type are the Actor and the Goal. In addition to these two inherent participant roles, there is an extra element called Circumstance, which provides additional information on the 'when, where, how, and why' of the process. Sometimes, another participant called the Recipient, the participant benefiting from the doing, may be involved.
2. **Mental processes:** Mental processes encode meanings of thinking, perception, or feeling/reaction. The two participants are the Senser (the conscious being that does the sensing) and the Phenomenon (the entity being sensed).

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3. Relational processes: Relational processes are processes of 'being'. They serve to characterise and to identify. There are three types of relational process: (1) *intensive*, which establishes a relationship of sameness between two entities, (2) *possessive*, which indicates that one entity owns another, and (3) *circumstantial*, which defines the entity in terms of *location, time, or manner*. In the attributive processes, the two participants are labelled Carrier and Attribute, and in the identifying processes, the two participants are called Token and Value.
4. Behavioural processes: Behaviourals are processes of physiological and psychological behaviour. There is only one participant, the Behavior, the agent who behaves. In some cases, there may be another additional participant called Behaviour.
5. Verbal processes: These are clauses of saying and communication. The participant roles concerned are the Sayer (the producer of the speech), the Receiver (the entity to which the speech is addressed) and the Verbiage (that which is said).
6. Existential processes: They represent that something exists. Existential processes typically have the verb *to be*, and the word *there* is necessary as a dummy Subject, although it has no representational function.

3. Review of Related Literature:

One of the most important studies on transitivity is Halliday's article on William Golding's novel *The Inheritors* (1971). Halliday analyses the transitivity syntactic structure in the development of the novel's theme. He illustrates how power relations and world views are reflected in the language patterns of the text. Halliday (1985, 1994, 2004) proposed Systematic Functional Linguistics which envisions that human language makes three generalized kinds of meanings: experiential, interpersonal, and textual. One of its chief grammatical systems is transitivity, whose complex aspects can be utilised for text analysis.

Following Halliday's original model, there have appeared several introductory works designed mainly for pedagogical purposes but also providing useful theoretical insights into the functional language approach, including the transitivity model, such as (Burton, 1982; Kennedy, 1982; Carter, 1997; Simpson, 2004; Eggins, 2004; Downing and Locke, 2006; Thompson, 2014). Most of these scholars would agree with Halliday on his classification of process types, their participants and their circumstances.

One of the classic literary applications of Halliday's model is Burton's (1982), who applies it to a passage from Sylvia Plath's novel *The Bell Jar* (1963). In her feminist-stylistic reading, Burton aims at exploring power relations in Plath's novel. Her reading reveals that the novel's protagonist is not made an Actor in the material processes of the text, though she features prominently in the mental ones (in Simpson, 2004: 192).

Kennedy (1982) employs the transitivity notion to explore a key passage in Joseph Conrad's novel *The Secret Agent* (1907). He analyses the way the verb forms and material processes are used in the selected excerpt to produce the intended meaning. Simpson (2004) is not only a comprehensive pedagogical introduction to literary stylistics but also a useful source for academic researchers. He presents an updated approach, using many elements derived from Halliday's transitivity model. More recently, several empirical studies have been carried out, using transitivity system to explore characterisation in a variety of literary works. They all fall beyond the scope of this paper as they all deal with different works other than the novel in the current study.

4. Discussion:

The story of *Where Angels Fear to Tread* revolves around Lilia, a widowed English lady who has been told by Mrs. Herritons, her mother-in-law and Philip, her brother-in-law, to travel to Italy after Mrs Herriton suspected a growing warm relation with a new lover, Mr. Kingcroft. Later, the shocking news comes that Lilia intends to marry again, with the approval of Lilia's travel companion, Caroline Abbott (henceforward, Caroline). Mrs Herriton, a domineering woman, dispatches Philip to Italy to stop the marriage. Philip learns that Lilia has already got married to Gino, an Italian several years her junior. Philip returns with Caroline to Sawston, a fictional English town. The marriage ends in failure, and Lilia dies in childbirth, after giving birth to a baby boy.

The Herritons decide to retrieve the baby from his father, and Philip is dispatched again together with his sister, Harriet to bring it. In Italy, they meet the guilt-ridden Caroline, who intends to adopt the baby. Gino is found to be a devoted father, and they give up their rescue mission, but Harriet kidnaps the baby. On the way home, their carriage is involved in an accident which results in the death of the bay. Philip tells Caroline that he is in love with her, but she informs him that she herself is now in love with Gino. As the heroine dies midway through the story, the ensuing discussion will center on the first five chapters of the novel. For conducting the discussion, I have selected for close analysis two representative passages from each one of the first four chapters and one passage from the fifth chapter. Each selection is followed by an analysis, with participant functions, circumstances, and process types given within square brackets.

Every analysis is followed by a statistical table in which only the processes containing significant participant roles are provided. Abbreviations include: Pr.: Process; Cir.: Circumstance.

Passage 1. 1:

They were all at Charing Cross to see Lilia off—Philip, Harriet, Irma, Mrs. Herriton herself. Even Mrs. Theobald, squired by Mr. Kingcroft, had braved the journey from Yorkshire to bid her only daughter good-bye....

“Quite an ovation,” she cried prawling out of her first-class carriage. “They’ll take us for royalty. Oh, Mr. Kingcroft, get us foot-warmers.”

The good-natured young man hurried away, and Philip, taking his place, flooded her with a final stream of advice and injunctions—where to stop, how to learn Italian, when to use mosquito-nets, what pictures to look at. “Remember,” he concluded, “that it is only by going off the track that you get to know the country. (Chapter 1: 2)

Analysis 1. 1:

They [Carrier /identified] were all [Pr. relational] at Charing Cross [Cir.] to see Lilia off [Cir.] —Philip, Harriet, Irma, Mrs. Herriton herself [identifier]. Even Mrs. Theobald [Actor], squired by Mr. Kingcroft [Cir.], had braved [Pr. material] the journey from Yorkshire [Goal] to bid her only daughter good-bye [Cir]. ...

“Quite an ovation,” [Verbiage] she [Sayer] cried [Pr. verbal], prawling out of her first-class carriage [Cir.]. “They [Actor] ’ll take [Pr. material] us [Goal] for royalty [Cir.]. Oh, Mr. Kingcroft [Actor], get [Pr. material] us [Recipient] foot-warmers [Goal].”

The good-natured young man [Actor] hurried away [Pr. material], and Philip [Actor], taking his place [Cir.], flooded [Pr. material] her [Recipient] with a final stream of advice and injunctions [Goal] —where to stop, how to learn Italian, when to use mosquito-nets, what pictures to look at [Cir.]. “Remember,” [Pr. mental: cognitive] he [Sayer] concluded [Pr. verbal], “that it is only by going off the track [Verbiage] that you [Sensor] get to know [Pr. mental: cognitive] the country” [Phenomenon].

Table 1.1: The occurrence of participant functions of Lilia versus the Herritons

Participant Role	Lilia	other characters
Actor in Goal-directed material processes	0	3
Actor in Goal-directed material processes	0	1
Goal/Recipient in material processes	3	0
Senser in mental processes	2	0
Carrier in relational processes	0	1
Sayer in verbal processes	1	1
Receiver in verbal processes	1	0

As demonstrated in the statistical table above, Lilia features three times as Goal/Recipient in material processes while other characters are ascribed the role of Actor four times in such clauses. Most of the clauses associated with Lilia show her being affected by, rather than affecting, the other characters. Lilia’s passive role is juxtaposed with that of the more powerful players such as Philip and Mrs. Herriton, whose power and influence are highlighted by a different set of transitive verbs. Apart from being “flooded” with Philip’s injunctions, Lilia is bombarded with Mrs. Herriton’s repeated orders and is confronted with face-threatening acts from both of them, as indicated in the set of the transitive, imperative verbs used. Additionally, Lilia functions as Receiver in the verbal clause in which Philip performs the role of Sayer, thus underlining her role as addressee rather than addresser.

The question of power relations permeates not only this passage but also the whole text. Carter (1997: 12) maintains that language use is not independent ‘from the power of those who use it or control its use or enforce its use on others’. Thus, different patterns of language can impact character portrayals. In the extract above, Goal-directed processes are associated with the Herritons while Lilia is not assigned any role in them. As a marginalised outsider, Lilia is portrayed as a weak character dominated by the more powerful Herriton family. Lilia is also depicted as Senser in Philip’s injunction to her to “remember” his advice and to ‘know the country’. A similar description recurs in the passage below.

Passage 2.1:

It was now nearly ten years since Charles had fallen in love with Lilia Theobald because she was pretty, and during that time Mrs. Herriton had hardly known a moment’s rest. For six months she schemed to prevent the match, and when it had taken place she turned to another task—the supervision of her daughter-in-law. Lilia must be pushed through life without bringing discredit on the family into which she had married. ...

Lilia tried to assert herself, and said that she should go to take care of Mrs. Theobald. It required all Mrs. Herriton’s kindness to prevent her. A house was finally taken for her at Sawston, and there for three years she lived with Irma, continually subject to the refining influences of her late husband’s family. She was aided by Charles, by her daughter Harriet, and, as soon as he was old enough, by the clever one of the family, Philip. (Chapter 1, pp. 4-5)

Analysis: 2. 1:

It was now nearly ten years [Cir.] since Charles [Senser] had fallen in love with [Pr. mental: reaction] Lilia Theobald [Phenomenon] because she was pretty [Cir.], and during that time [Cir.] Mrs. Herriton [Senser] had [Pro-] hardly [Cir.] known [- cess: mental: cognitive] a moment’s rest [Phenomenon]. For six months [Cir.] she [Actor] schemed [Pr. material] to prevent the match [Cir.], and when it had taken place [Cir.] she [Actor] turned to [Pr. material] another task—the supervision of her daughter-in-law [Goal].Lilia [Goal] must be pushed [Pr. material] through life without bringing discredit on the family into which she had married [Cir.]. ...

Lilia [Actor] tried to assert [Pr. material] herself [Goal], and said [Pr. verbal] that she should go to take care of Mrs Theobald [Verbiage]. It [Actor]t required [Pr. material] all Mrs. Herriton’s kindness [Goal] to prevent [Pr. material] her [Goal]. A house [Goal] was [Pro-] finally [Cir.] taken [-cess: material] for her [Recipient] at Sawston [Cir.], and there for three years [Cir.] she [Actor] lived [Pr. material] with Irma, continually subject to the refining influences of her late husband’s family [Cir.]. She [Goal] was aided [Pro. material] by Charles [Actor], by her daughter Harriet [Actor}, and, as soon as he was old enough [Cir.], by the clever one of the family, Philip [Actor].

Table 2.1: The occurrence of participant functions of Lilia versus the Herritons

Participant Role	Lilia	Other characters
Actor in Goal-directed material processes	1	5
Actor in nonGoal-directed material processes	1	0
Goal/Recipient in material processes	5	2
Senser in mental processes	0	1
phenomenon in mental Processes	1	0
Sayer in verbal processes	1	0

In the table above, Lilia is assigned only one role as Actor in Goal-directed material processes and another one in nonGoal-directed processes. The first occurs when she tries to ‘assert herself’. It is very rare that Lilia tries to act in a positive and self-assertive manner, and when she does, it is usually to no avail, in front of the strong power of her oppressors. The other characters are presented five times as Actor in Goal-directed material processes while Lilia is assigned a Goal/Recipient role in five material processes and a Phenomena role in one mental process. Such assignment in type of role participation parallels Lilia’s and the other characters’ actual roles in the story. While the Herritons belong to the upper strata of society, or at least they act as they do, Lilia belongs to a lower class, or is treated as if she does. The obvious difference in clause selection demonstrates the wide gap between the upper and lower classes at Sawston. Mrs Herriton tries hard to educate and moralise Lilia, who seems to have succumbed to Mrs Herriton’s orders without any protest. However, in Chapter 2, we begin to see a different image of Lilia. When Philip tries to urge Lilia to stop the marriage on the grounds of his considering it as a stupid act, she refuses and suddenly bursts into an impassioned speech teeming with feelings of indignation and misery and revealing her strong resistance and defiance. Below is an excerpt from her speech:

Passage 1. 2:

“For once in my life I’ll thank you to leave me alone. I’ll thank your mother too. For twelve years you’ve trained me and tortured me, and I’ll stand it no more. Do you think I’m a fool? Do you think I never felt? Ah! when I came to your house a poor young bride, how you all looked me over—never a kind word—and discussed me, and thought I might just do; and your mother corrected me, and your sister snubbed me, and you said funny things

about me to show how clever you were! And when Charles died I was still to run in strings for the honour of your beastly family, and I was to be cooped up at Sawston and learn to keep house, and all my chances spoilt of marrying again. No, thank you! No, thank you! ‘Bully?’ ‘Insolent boy?’ Who’s that, pray, but you? But, thank goodness, I can stand up against the world now, for I’ve found Gino, and this time I marry for love!’ (Chapter 2: 18)

Analysis: 1. 2:

“For once in my life [Cir.] I [Actor]’ll thank [Pr. material] you [Goal] to leave [Pr. material] me [Goal] alone [Cir.]. I [Actor]’ll thank [Pr. material] your mother [Goal] too. For twelve years [Cir.] you [Actor]’ve trained [Pr. material] me [Goal] and tortured [Pr. material] me [Goal], and I [Actor] ’ll stand [pr. material] it [Goal] no more [Cir.]. Do [pro-] you [Sensor] think [-cess: mental: cognitive] I’m a fool [Phenomenon]? Do [Pro-] you [Senser] think [-cess: mental: cognitive] I [Senser]never felt [Pr.mental: cognitive]? Ah! when I [Actor] came[Pr. material] to your house a poor young bride [Cir.], how you all [Actor] looked [Pro-] me [Goal] [over [-cess: material] —never a kind word [Cir.]—and discussed [Pr.verbal] me [Receiver/Target], and thought [Pr. mental/cognition] I might just do [Phenomenon]; and your mother [Actor] corrected [Pr. material] me [Goal], and your sister [Actor] snubbed [Pr. material] me [Goal], and you [Sayer] said [Pr. verbal] funny things [Verbiage] about me [Receiver/Target] to show how clever you were [Cir.]! And when Charles died [Cir.] I [Behaver] was still to run [Pr. behavioural] in strings for the honour of your beastly family [Cir.], and I [Goal] was to be cooped up [Pr. material] at Sawston [Cir.] and learn [Pr. material] to keep house [Goal], and all my chances [Goal] spoilt [Pr. material] of marrying again [Cir.]. No, thank [Pr. verbal] you [Receiver]! No, thank [Pr. verbal] you [Receiver]! ‘Bully?’ [Attribute] ‘Insolent boy [Attribute]?’ Who’s that [Value/identifier], but you [Token/identified]? But, thank [Pr. Verbal] goodness [Receiver/Target], I [Actor] can stand up [Pr. material] against the world [Goal] now, for I [Actor]’ve found [Pr. material] Gino [Goal], and this time [Cir. I marry [Actor] for love [Cir.]”

Table 1. 2: The occurrence of participant functions of Lilia versus the Herritons

Participant Role	Lilia	The Herritons
Actor in Goal-directed material processes	5	5
Actor in nonGoal-directed material processes	2	0
Goal/Recipient in material processes	8	2
Senser in mental processes	1	2
Phenomenon in mental processes	2	0
Token in relational processes	0	1
Carrier in relational processes	0	2
Sayer in verbal processes	1	2
Receiver in verbal processes	2	2
Behaver in bhaviourial processes	1	0

Lilia is here involved as Actor in five Goal-directed and two nonGoal-directed material processes while the Herritons appear in five such processes, where their Actor role is totally rejected by Lilia. This shows that Lilia’s initial position has radically changed. For the first time, Lilia takes the initiative in her aggressive stand against the Herritons. Now, she is able to impact and (temporarily) take control of the events. She protests the Herritons’ accusation that she is a ‘fool’. She also appears clear and forceful in her demand that the Herritons should stop repressing and othering her, and is keen on getting her way. Lilia’s appearance as Goal/Recipient in eight materials and as Phenomenon in two mentals is meant to highlight her rejection of the Herritons’ previous derogative treatment of her and underlines her determination to steer a new course in search for her freedom.

Relational-attributive clauses are used here to illustrate the Herritons’ bad treatment of Lilia in the past and to shed further light on the portrayal of Lilia’s character by showing how she is now able to turn the table on the Herritons. Verbal processes are used to construe the symbolic activities of ‘saying’ on both sides and to encode the physical act of speaking.

Passage 2.2:

“Yes! and I forbid you to do it! You despise me, perhaps, and think I’m feeble. But you’re mistaken. You are ungrateful and impertinent and contemptible, but I will save you in order to save Irma and our name. There is

going to be such a row in this town that you and he'll be sorry you came to it. I shall shrink from nothing, for my blood is up. It is unwise of you to laugh. I forbid you to marry Carella, and I shall tell him so now."(Chapter 2: 18)

Analysis: 2. 2

"Yes! and I [Actor] forbid [Pr. material] you [Goal] to do it [Cir]! You [Actor] despise [Pr. material] me [Goal], perhaps, and think [Pr. mental: cognitive] I [Carrier]'m [Pr. relational] feeble [Attribute]. But you [Carrier]'re [Pr. relational: intensive] mistaken [Attribute]. You [Carrier] are [relational: intensive] ungrateful [Attribute] and impertinent [Attribute] and contemptible [Attribute], but I [Actor] will save [Pr. material] you [Goal] in order to save Irma and our name [Cir.]. There is going to be [Pr. existential] such a row [Existent] in this town [Cir.] that you [Carrier] and he [Carrier]'ll be [Pr. relational] sorry [Attribute] you came to it [Cir.]. I [Actor] shall shrink [Pr. material] from nothing [Cir], for my blood [Carrier] is up [Pr. relational]. It [Carrier] is [Pr. relational] unwise of you to laugh [Attribute] . I [Actor] forbid [Pr. material] you [Goal] to marry [Pr. material] Carella [Goal], and I [Actor] shall tell [Pr. verbal] him [Receiver/Target] so [Verbiage] now [Cir.]."

Table 2. 2: The occurrence of participant functions of Lilia versus the Herritons

Participant Role	Lilia	The Herritons
Actor in Goal-directed material processes	1	3
Actor in nonGoal-directed material processes	0	1
Goal/Recipient in material processes	2	1
Senser in mental processes	1	0
Phenomenon in mental processes	0	1
Carrier in relational processes	6	1
Sayer in verbal processes	0	1
Existent in existential processes	0	1

Lilia's strong protestation has been offset by Philip's prompt reply. Philip's response consists mainly of material and relational clauses. Philip behaves as Actor in four material processes, compared with Lilia's single Actor role. The material clauses construe events and actions with Philip as Actor, while the relational ones serve to characterise Lilia, Philip and Gino. There is only one verbal clause representing Philip as Sayer and serving as a report of what has been said. Philip's response contains no behavioural processes simply because the main line of events in such cases is usually 'construed predominantly by material clauses' (Halliday 1985: 174). Philip's frequent association of Lilia with pejorative attributes in relational processes reflects his desperate attempt to blame her for all that happened. He gives her no the time to respond. This explains the absence of verbal and behavioural processes on Lilia's part, thereby leaving enough space for the major ones to be developed. Lilia appears in the role of Senser in one mental process while Philip is not ascribed any single role in this type. This kind of representation reflects a typical female protagonist who is the passive recipient of the male character's actions. The dominance of material and relational processes shows less concern with the psychological aspect of the protagonist's development, providing thereby a more objective view of the character, based on outward behaviour. Hence, the portrayal of Lilia can be considered realistic and lifelike.

The function of the existential process used by Philip in 'There is going to be such a row in this town ...' is to announce the potential existence of the conflict with Lilia, thus providing a first step for talking about it later and for keeping a narrational flow in the text. The scene ends with a shift from Lilia to Gino as Goal. This shift in participant as well as in tense, from present to future, opens up space for other participants and further interaction.

Passage 1. 3:

"Now, Gino, don't be silly. Go and see your friends, and bring them to see me. We both of us like society."

He looked puzzled, but allowed himself to be persuaded, went out, found that he was not as friendless as he supposed, and returned after several hours in altered spirits. Lilia congratulated herself on her good management. I mean to have real English tea-parties."

"There is my aunt and her husband; but I thought you did not want to receive my relatives."

"I never said such a—"

“But you would be right,” he said earnestly. “They are not for you. Many of them are in trade, and even we are little more; you should have gentlefolk and nobility for your friends.”

“Poor fellow,” thought Lilia. “It is sad for him to discover that his people are vulgar.” She began to tell him that she loved him just for his silly self, and he flushed and began tugging at his moustache.

“But besides your relatives I must have other people here. Your friends have wives and sisters, haven’t they?”

“Oh, yes; but of course I scarcely know them.” (Chapter 3: 22)

Analysis: 1. 3

“Now, Gino [Carrier], don’t be [Pr. relational] silly [Attribute]. Go [Pr. behavioural] and see [Pr. mental: perception] your friends [Phenomenon], and bring [Pr. material] them [Goal] to see me [Cir]. We both of us [Senser] like [Pr. mental: reaction] society [Phenomenon].”

He [Senser] looked [Pr. mental] puzzled [Cir.], but allowed [Pr. material] himself [Goal] to be persuaded [Cir.], went out [Pr. material], found [Pr. material] that he [Carrier] was not [Pr. relational] as friendless as he supposed [Attribute], and returned [Pr. material] after several hours in altered spirits [Cir.]. Lilia [Actor] congratulated [Pr. material] herself [Goal] on her good management [Cir.]. I [Actor] mean [Pr. mental] to have [material] real English tea-parties [Goal].”

“There is [Pr. existential] my aunt [Existent] and her husband [Existent]; but I [Senser] thought [Pr. mental: cognition] you [Senser] did not want [Pr. mental: reaction] to receive my relatives [Phenomenon].”

“I [Sayer] never said [Pr. verbal] such a— [Verbiage]”

“But you would be right [Verbiage],” he [Sayer] said [Pr. verbal] earnestly [Cir.]. “They [Carrier] are [Pr. relational] not for you [Attribute]. Many of them [Token/identified] are [Pr. relational] in trade [Value/ identifier], and even we [Token/identified] are [Pr. relational: intensive] little more [Value; identifier]; you [Carrier] should have [Pr. relational: possessive] gentlefolk and nobility for your friends [Attribute].”

“Poor fellow,” [Phenomenon] thought [Pr. mental: cognition] Lilia [Senser]. “It [Carrier/identified] is [Pr. relational: reaction] sad for him [Attribute/identifier] to discover [Pr. mental: cognition] that his people are vulgar [Phenomenon].” She [Sayer] began to tell [Pr. verbal] him [Receiver] that she loved him just for his silly self [Verbiage], and he [Actor] flushed [Pr. material] and began tugging [Pr. behavioural] at his moustache [behaviour].

“But besides your relatives [Attribute] I [Carrier] must have [Pr. relational: possessive] other people [Attribute] here [Cir.]. Your friends [Carrier/identified] have [Pr. relational: possessive] wives and sisters [Attribute/identifier], haven’t [Pr. relational: possessive] they [Carrier/identified]?”

“Oh, yes [Verbiage]; but of course [Cir] I [Senser] Scarcely [Cir.] know [Pr. mental: cognition] them [Phenomenon].”

Table 1. 3: The occurrence of participant functions of Lilia versus Gino and relatives

Participant Role	Lilia	Gino and relatives
Actor in Goal-directed material processes	2	3
Actor in nonGoal-directed material processes	0	2
Goal/Recipient in material processes	1	3
Senser in mental processes	3	4
Phenomenon in mental processes	0	5
Carrier in relational processes	2	7
Token in relational processes	0	2
Sayer in verbal processes	2	1
Receiver in verbal processes	0	1
Behaver in behavioural processes	0	2

The above table reveals Lilia being assigned two roles in Goal-directed material processes. This is further enhanced by her employment of the imperative/directive mood, where the participant is not explicitly mentioned but is understood.

In such imperatives like: ‘Go and see your friends, and bring them to see me’, it is understood that Gino is the subject directly addressed by Lilia. Here, Lilia is the Agent who is directing the action, with Gino as ‘doer’ to carry out her instructions. As Downing and Locke (2006:129) observe: ‘Material processes express an action or activity which is typically carried out by a ‘doer’ or Agent. By ‘Agent’ we mean an entity having energy, volition and intention that is capable of initiating and controlling the action’. Initially, Lilia is brought out as the source of information and financing, while Gino is presented as a dependent man whose social class is lower than that of his wife.

Lilia also acts as a Sayer in two verbal processes, and a Senser in two mental processes. This means that she has a voice and that she can decide and express her viewpoint clearly and fluently and consequently can influence others, as she seems to be trying to in her attempt to persuade Gino to bring his relatives so that the couple can socialise with them. The association of Lilia with two mental processes indicates that the presentation of the events is rendered primarily from her viewpoint and that she seems to have a sense of purpose.

Lilia is also ascribed a Carrier role in two possessive relational-attributive clauses and Gino and his relatives appear in seven others. The abundance of relational processes in the text indicates Lilia’s search for social connections, even though Gino is not responding positively to her demands and is attempting to give different alternatives as to what can be done. It also draws attention to the significance of the theme of relations in the novel. The function of relational clauses is, as Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 214) have pointed out, to assign roles, identity, and class membership. Through such clauses, much is revealed about Lilia-Gino relationship.

After her marriage to Gino, Lilia undergoes further change in her social relationships. She becomes less rash, less sensual, less adventurous, and more docile. The marriage encompasses the interaction of the conflicting values of their opposite cultures evidenced in the obvious conflict between English gentility and Italian vitality. Gradually, Lilia realises that ‘Italy is such a delightful place to live in if you happen to be a man (Chapter 3:24). As the wife of an Italian, she consequently loses her freedom and has to conform to a life restricted to home and church. She cannot walk or receive visits on her own. Not before long, Gino gets the upper hand in this power struggle as indicated in the following extract.

Passage 2. 3:

Now that he knew her better, he was inevitably losing his awe: no one could live with her and keep it, especially when she had been so silly as to lose a gold watch and chain. As he lay thoughtful along the parapet, he realized for the first time the responsibilities of monied life.

He must save her from dangers, physical and social, for after all she was a woman. “And I,” he reflected, “though I am young, am at all events a man, and know what is right.”

He found her still in the living-room, combing her hair, for she had something of the slattern in her nature, and there was no need to keep up appearances.

“You must not go out alone,” he said gently. “It is not safe.

.....

“Very well,” smiled Lilia, “very well”—as if she were addressing a solicitous kitten. But for all that she never took a solitary walk again, with one exception, till the day of her death (Chapter 3: 24).

Analysis: 2. 3

Now that he [Senser] [knew [Pr. mental: cognition] her [Phenomenon] better [Cir.], he [Carrier] was [Pr. relational: intensive] inevitably [circumstance] losing his awe [Attribute]: no one [Actor] could live [Pr. material] with her [Recipient] and keep [Pr. material] it [Goal], especially when she [Carrier] had been [Pr. relational] so silly as to lose a gold watch and chain [Attribute]. As he [Behaver] lay [Pr. behavioural] thoughtful along the parapet [Cir.], he [Senser] realized [Pr.mental: perception] for the first time [Cir.] the responsibilities of monied life [Phenomenon].

He [Actor] must save [Pr. material] her [Goal] from dangers, physical and social [Cir.], for after all [Cir.] she [Carrier/identified] was [Pr. relational: intensive] a woman [Attribute/identifier]. “And I [Carrier/identified],” he [Senser] reflected [Pr. mental: cognition], “though I am young [Cir.], am [Pr. relational: intensive] at all events [Cir.] a man [Attribute/identifier], and know [Pr. mental: cognition] what is right [Phenomenon].”

He [Actor] found [Pr. material] her [Pr. Goal] still in the living-room, combing her hair [Cir.], for she [Carrier/identified] had [Pr. relational: possessive] something of the slattern in her nature [Attribute/identifier], and there was [Pr. existential] no need to keep up appearances [Existent].

“You must not go out alone,” [Verbiage] he [Sayer] said [Pr. verbal] gently [Cir.]. “It is not safe [Verbiage]. ...

“Very well [Verbiage],” smiled [Pr. behavioural] Lilia [Behaver], “very well Verbiage [Verbiage]”—as if she were addressing a solicitous kitten [Cir.]. But for all that [Cir.] she [Actor] never took [Pr. material] a solitary walk [Goal] again [Cir.], with one exception [Cir.], till the day of her death [Cir.].

Table 2. 3: The occurrence of participant functions of Lilia versus Gino

Participant Role	Lilia	Gino
Actor in Goal-directed material processes	1	2
Goal/Recipient in material processes	3	1
Senser in mental processes	0	3
Phenomenon in mental processes	1	0
Carrier in attributive relational processes	3	2
Sayer in verbal processes	0	1
Behaver in behavioural processes	1	1

In this table, Lilia appears as a passive participant. Her single appearance as Actor in the clause ‘she never took a solitary walk again’ pictures her obedience to Gino’s order not to go out. She is also presented as Goal in three material processes and as Phenomenon in one mental process, a clear evidence of her deteriorating power. Lilia’s appearance as Carrier in three relational clauses enables us to know more about her life and her character-traits. She has begun to lose her influence on her husband, whose role as Carrier in such clauses helps establish the new relationship between the couple. Lilia does not appear as Senser, in contrast with Gino, whose appearance as Senser in three mental clauses in addition to his appearance as Actor in two material processes projects him as a thoughtful and considerate person and highlights his growing power. Gino appears as the one who can know, feel, and understand the situation better than Lilia: ‘You must not go out alone,’....‘It is not safe’. With this prevention, Lilia’s life has been brought under Gino’s control. She becomes increasingly isolated in a strange culture she cannot adjust to and, consequently, she becomes miserable and dies alone, after giving Gino the ‘son’ that he has craved for.

This ending brings to the fore the relevance of feminist stylistics. Viewed from a feminist stylistic perspective, the male characters (Gino and Philip) are allowed a more participatory role than the more passive one of the female protagonist. In the above excerpt, almost all the Actor roles are assigned to the male. Out of the seventeen processes in the text, the male is the actor in thirteen while the female’s role is restricted to events that show her as ‘silly’, ‘a woman’, ‘combing her hair’ or ‘[having] something of the slattern in her nature’. The result is that the female protagonist is ultimately reduced to a diminutive, passive entity. Such actions and events do not enable her to move forward, and so she dies before the novel has run its course.

Passage 1.4:

At no one moment did Lilia realize that her marriage was a failure; yet during the summer and autumn she became as unhappy as it was possible for her nature to be. She had no unkind treatment, and few unkind words, from her husband. He simply left her alone. In the morning he went out to do “business,” which, as far as she could discover, meant sitting in the Farmacia. He usually returned to lunch, after which he retired to another room and slept.... She began to see that she must assert herself, but she could not see how. (Chapter 4, p. 28)

Analysis: 1. 4:

At no one moment [Cir] did [Pro-] Lilia [Senser] realize [-cess: mental: cognition] that her marriage was a failure [Phenomenon]; yet during the summer and autumn [Cir] she [Carrier] became [Pr. relational: intensive] as unhappy as it was possible for her nature to be [Attribute].

She [Carrier] had [Pr. relational: possessive] no unkind treatment, and few unkind words [Attribute], from her husband [Cir]. He [Actor] simply [Cir.] left [Pr. material] her [Goal] alone [Cir.]. In the morning [Cir.] he [Actor] went out [Pr. material] to do “business [Cir.],” which, as far as she could discover [Cir.], meant [Pr. material] sitting in the Farmacia [Goal]. He [Actor] usually [Cir.] returned [Pr. material] to lunch, after which he [Actor] retired [Pr. material] to another room [Cir.] and slept [Pr. behavioural].... She [Senser] began to see [Pr. mental: perception] that she [Actor] must assert [Pr. material] herself [Goal], but she [Senser] could not see [Pr. mental: perception] how [Phenomenon].

Table 1. 4: The occurrence of participant functions of Lilia and Gino

Participant Role	Lilia	Gino
Actor in Goal-directed material processes	1	1
Actor in non-Goal-directed material processes	0	3
Goal/Recipient in material processes	1	0
Senser in mental processes	3	0
Phenomenon in mental processes	1	0
Carrier in attributive relational processes	2	0

Lilia is here projected as a character whose freedom and power are now extremely circumscribed. Her actions are involuntary and her aspirations are ultimately defeated. This is evidenced by her rare appearance as Actor in the material processes. Her most frequent roles occur as Senser in three mental processes and as Phenomenon in one mental process besides two more as Carrier in relational processes. This is indicative of a great change in her role and character. Apparently, she seems to have become a center of consciousness that can react to events without having the power to participate positively in them. Downing and Locke (2006: 140) observe that ‘mental processes are typically stative and non-volitional’. The mental processes frame the material processes; we see a great part of the action through Lilia’s eyes and consciousness. Mental processes also help strike a sympathetic chord in the heart of the reader and establish Lilia as the figure with whom the audience can sympathise, thus making her the undisputable heroine of the story.

Passage 2. 4:

So she gave up hope, became ill, and all through the autumn lay in bed. Gino was distracted. She knew why; he wanted a son. He could talk and think of nothing else. His one desire was to become the father of a man like himself, and it held him with a grip he only partially understood, for it was the first great desire, the first great passion of his life. (Chapter 4: 33)

Analysis: 2. 4:

So she [Senser] gave up [Pr. mental: reaction] hope [Phenomenon], became [Pr. relational: intensive] ill [Attribute], and all through the autumn [Cir.] lay in bed [Pr. behavioural]. Gino [Carrier/identified] was [Pr. relational: intensive] distracted [Attribute/identifier]. She [Senser] knew [Pr. mental: cognition] why [Phenomenon]; he [Senser] wanted [Pr. mental: reaction] a son [Phenomenon]. He [Sayer] could talk [Pr. verbal] and think [Pr. mental: cognition] of nothing else [Verbiage/Phenomenon]. His one desire [Carrier] was [Pr. relational] to become the father of a man like himself [Attribute/identifier], and it [Actor] held [Pr. material] him [Goal] with a grip [Cir.] he [Senser] only partially[Cir.] understood [Pr. mental: cognition]], for it [Token/identified] was [Pr. relational: intensive] the first great desire, the first great passion of his life [Value/identifier].

Table 2. 4: The occurrence of participant functions of Lilia and Gino

Participant Role	Lilia	Gino
Goal/Recipient in material processes	0	1
Senser in mental processes	2	3
Phenomenon in mental processes	0	0
Carrier in attributive relational processes	1	2
Token in identifying relational processes	0	1
Sayer in verbal processes	0	1
Behavior in behavioural processes	0	1

In the above table, the two predominant processes are mental and relational. The obvious scarcity of material processes points to the protagonist’s present despondence, isolation and inactivity. Lilia is ascribed the role of Senser in two mental clauses and one role as Carrier in relational clauses. She seems to have withdrawn from the outside world of action and gone down into an inner state of thought, feeling and reaction. Despite Lilia’s endeavour to preserve her marriage, all her attempts have proved futile, and her unfortunate and untimely death deprives her from every opportunity to develop any successful relationship.

Chapter 5 presents Caroline’s memories of Lilia’s behavior during their tour in Italy. Through these memories we get to know more about Lilia’s character. In the passage below, Caroline tries to define her position regarding Lilia’s hasty marriage, feeling remorseful for her role in promoting Lilia’s engagement.

Passage 1. 5:

“Now Lilia,” she went on, “though there were things about her I didn’t like, had somehow kept the power of enjoying herself with sincerity. ... If they wanted to marry, why shouldn’t they do so? Why shouldn’t she break with the deadening life where she had got into a groove, and would go on in it, getting more and more—worse than unhappy—apathetic till she died? Of course I was wrong. She only changed one groove for another. ... I can never trust myself to judge characters again. But I still feel he [Gino] cannot have been quite bad when we first met him. Lilia...must have been cowardly. He was only a boy...and she must have mismanaged him.” (Chapter 5, p.38)

Analysis: 1. 5:

“Now Lilia [Actor],” she [Sayer] went on [Pr. verbal], “though there were things about her I didn’t like [Cir.], had [Pro-] somehow [Cir.] kept [-cess: material] the power of enjoying herself [Goal] with sincerity [Cir.]. ... If they [Senser] wanted to marry [Pr. mental: cognition], why shouldn’t [Pr.] they [Actor] do [Pr.material] so [Goal]? Why shouldn’t[Pro-] she [Actor] break with [-cess: material] the deadening life [Goal] where she [Actor] had got into [Pr. material] a groove [Goal], and would go on [Pr. material] in it, getting more and more—worse than unhappy—apathetic till she died [Cir]? Of course [Cir] I [Carrier/identified] was [Pr. relational: intensive] wrong [Attribute/ identifier]. She [Actor] only changed [Pr. material] one groove for another [Goal]. ... I [Actor] can never trust [Pr. material] myself [Goal] to judge [Pr. mental] characters [Phenomenon] again [Cir]. But I [Senser] still feel [Pr. mental: perception] he [Carrier] cannot have been [Pr. relational] quite bad [Attribute: identifier] when we first met him [Cir.]. Lilia [Carrier/identified]...must have been [Pr. relational: intensive] cowardly [Attribute/identifier]. He [Carrier/identified] was [Pr. relational] only a boy [Attribute: identifier]...and she [Actor] must have mismanaged [Pr. material] him [Goal].”

Table 1. 5: The occurrence of participant functions of Lilia and Gino in Caroline’spostmortem narrative

Participant Role	Lilia	Gino
Actor in Goal-directed material processes	6	2
Actor in non-Goal-directed material processes	0	0
Goal/Recipient in material processes	1	1
Senser in mental processes	1	1
Carrier in attributive relational processes	1	2

Caroline’s account of Lilia and Gino’s marriage ascribes to Lilia an Actor role in six Goal-directed material processes. From Caroline’s viewpoint, Lilia had the power to control the events and to decide what she wanted. Nevertheless, she did not know how to deal with him, and the failure of the marriage was her own fault. Caroline’s account also assigns one Senser role and two Carrier roles for Lilia. By this, she defines some of the main character-traits of Lilia, particularly her cowardice, mismanagement, and ‘the power of enjoying herself with sincerity’. However, Lilia is not the only one to blame for her tragic death. As Chelliah (2018:4) observes: ‘Lilia would probably have escaped her Italian misadventure and premature death had the Herritons shown the right kind of attention and sympathy where she lived’.

To recapitulate, participant roles are of crucial importance in our response to the portrayal of Lilia’s character. As Hasan(1988:65) rightly observes: ‘Part of the basis of our perception of what a person is like derives from knowing what sort of participant roles are ascribed to that person’. Table 6.below represents the participant roles and the processes types Lilia is involved in, compared with the Herritons and Gino.

Table 6: Total occurrence of participant functions of Lilia versus the Herritons and Gino

Participant Role	Lilia	Herritons	Gino
Actor in Goal-directed material processes	17	16	8
Actor in non-Goal directed material processes	3	2	5
Goal/Recipient in material processes	24	5	6
Senser in mental processes	10	3	11
Phenomenon in mental processes	3	1	5
Carrier/Token in relational processes	13	5	13
Behaver in behavioural processes	2	0	4
Sayer in verbal processes	3	4	4
Receiver in verbal processes	3	2	1

As far as Lilia is concerned, the dominant process type she features in is material (44), with the mentals and the relationals coming second, with (13) each. Lilia's role as Goal/Recipient in (24) clauses compared with her role as Actor in (20) processes is not only an indication of her suffering and weakness, but also a proof of her fruitless resistance. Lilia's transitivity profile also portrays her as a major senser of the events and a key player in the relational-attributive processes that occur around her. Her representation as a Goal/Recipient and Actor in material processes, a Senser/Phenomenon in mental processes, and a Carrier in relational processes makes her character portrayal realistic and sympathetic. As the omniscient narrator notes: 'Lilia had achieved pathos despite herself' (Chapter 5: 30).

5. Conclusion:

This research has shown that by applying the Hallidgian transitivity system to Forster's *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, many aspects of the heroine's character and the novel's theme/s can be uncovered. Contrary to previous views that assign Lilia a secondary role, this research has demonstrated that Lilia is the central figure in the novel. The dominance of material, mental, and relational processes in the text illustrates that the writer's language choice is akin to that found in everyday language, thus making the heroine's portrayal realistic and lifelike.

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