

FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF BEHAVIORAL CLAUSES DENOTING SMILING IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

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Abstract - In his framework of functional grammar, Halliday [4] determines three kinds of meaning: textual, interpersonal and experiential. The experiential meaning is expressed in 6 process types: *material, mental, relational, behavioral, verbal, and existential*. Among them, smiling belongs to *behavioral processes*. Smiling not only originates as part of a basic emotion process but also has significant communicative and social functions. Smiling is considered as a universal emotion of human beings. However, the language used to express smiling process could have dialects that differ subtly from each other. This paper focuses on interpreting the linguistic expressions related to the meaning of smiling and describing the patterns of behavioral processes found in the data based upon Halliday's [4] SFL *Experimental meaning analysis*. The data are carefully collected in eight short stories and novels. This paper in the light of functional grammar by Halliday presents (1) the patterns of smiling processes, (2) functional analysis of participants and processes "smile" in behavioral clauses and (3) social functions of smiling.

Key words - Functional grammar; smiling; behavioral clauses; processes; social functions.

1. Introduction

All forms of communication can be categorized as either verbal or nonverbal. Much of the communication that takes place between people is verbal; it is based on language whereas nonverbal includes the use of visual cues such as gestures, facial expressions basically known as body language. This paper focuses on transferring the meanings of smiling in the light of Halliday's functional grammar. Halliday [4] makes it very clear that his theory is intended to give an account of linguistic communication. Therefore, one of the fundamental tenets of functional grammar is that languages are primarily means of human communication.

1.1. Theoretical Background

"A Functional Grammar is one that construes all the units of a language-its clauses, phrases and so-on as organic configurations of functions." [4]. Thus, Halliday's aim is to develop a grammar system as instrument for people's communication, for social purposes. To him, there are three types of meaning within grammatical structures: Experimental, Interpersonal and Textual. Among them, Experimental meaning has to do with the ways language represents our experience of the world and the inner world of our thoughts and feelings. In other words, we have turned our experience of actions, happenings, feelings, beliefs, situations, states, behaviors and so on, into meaning and into wording. It construes the word into a manageable set of Process types and of Participants. Process refers to a semantic verb like doing, feeling...and anything that it expresses like event, relation...in the semantic system of the clause; due to functional features of

process, it is classified into material, relational, mental, verbal, behavioral, and existential and its Participants are labeled such as Actor, Goal; Senser, Phenomenon; Carrier, Behaver and other terms. In Halliday's transitivity system, the material process describes concrete and tangible actions involving participants as Actor and Goal, for example:

Thomas	sent	her book	to David.
Actor	Pro:	Goal	Beneficiary
	material		

Mental processes encode the inner world of cognition, perception and affection. There are two constant participants in a mental process: a Senser and a Phenomenon, even if the Phenomenon is not explicitly realized, for example:

He	Loved	his wife	at first sight.
Actor	Pro: mental	Phenomenon	Circumstance

Relational processes are processes of "being". That is to say, there are always two participants in relational processes which consist of two main modes: Attributive and Identifying: - Attributive: "A is an attributive of X"

- Identifying: "A is the identity of X"

Abraham Lincoln	Was	very tall and thin.
Carrier	Pro:	Attribute
	attributive	

Abraham Lincoln	Was	the 16th president of the United States.
Token	Pro: identifying	Value

Behavioral processes are processes of psychological and physiological process, like breathing, coughing, smiling, dreaming, chatting, watching, etc. These construe human behavior including mental and verbal behavior as an active version of verbal and mental processes.

She	is listening	to the radio.
Behaver	Pro: behavioral	behavioral circumstance

Verbal processes can be identified as the processes of saying which are expressed by verbs tell, say, ask, suggest, etc.

She	Talks	to him	about her childhood.
Sayer	Pro:	Receiver	Verbiage
	Verbal		

Existential processes represent experience by positing that "there was/ is something". There is only one participant known as the Existent.

Once upon a time	there	Was	a little girl.
Circumstance		Pro: existential	Existent

1.2. Some Previous Studies

Halliday’sfunctional grammar has been studied and developed. Thomas Bloor and Meriel Bloor [1] present a short account to the analysis of English for those starting out with functional grammar. Eggins [2] introduces the principles and techniques of the functional approach to language. Martinez [6] examines objectivity in research articles with SFL application and proposes objectivity in the presentation of the text. Fowler [3] figures out that functional grammar is a semantic system to analyze representations of reality in a linguistic text and create the same experience through various lexico-grammatical options influenced by different mind styles or authorialideology.

In Vietnamese, Hoàng Văn Vân [5] considers ‘cú’ in Vietnamese as an equivalent unit ‘clause’ in English for the functional perspective. From this, he initiates a new way in the comparison between English and Vietnamese in terms of functional units in languages.

2. Method

2.1. Data collection

For this paper, in section 3.1, 3.3 and 3.4, the collected data are examined at clause level since functional analysis is concerned with the aspect of grammar which confines to clauses; whilst in section 3.2, writers discuss and interpret behavioral processes of smiling. So the selected data are put in both at clause level and textual contexts. In addition, this study employs verbs as the core of the clauses. The selection of clauses began with selecting verbs that realize process smiling in eight 19thand 20thcentury short stories and novels. The list of short stories and novels used in the research can be found in the appendix. We make decision to carry out the research in stories and novels but not in other genres since stories and novels reflect the reality via the lens and skillful wording of talented writers. Therefore, the participants, processes and circumstances which are paid to attention in this research are in a wide range of use. In addition, they are fruitful land of character’s behaviors. So they are rich in examples of behavioral clauses and we can explore more human’s behavior smiling via verbal channel. Finally, based on our set criteria to determine behavioral clauses denoting smiling, we thoroughly selected and obtained a list of two hundred behavioral clauses from English and Vietnamese short stories and novels.

2.2. Data analysis

Writers analyze and figure out these patterns in English and Vietnamese and categorize participants and circumstances. Then they investigate the similar and distinctive characteristics of behavioral processes denoting smiling. Finally, they interpret the findings in terms of instinct behavior and social behavior of smiling processes and draw some conclusions.

3. Results and Discussion

The most typical behavioral process clause pattern consists of a core participant, process and circumstance:

Behavior + Process: behavioral + Circumstance

3.1. Participant-Behaver

“It is the nature of the participants involved in the processes that determines the different process types.”[4].A typical clause realized by a behavioral process has only one participant: “Behaver” (*Beh.*).

(1)

<i>She</i>	is smiling	at me	with these coral lips
<i>Behaver</i>	<i>Pro: behavioral</i>	<i>Circumstance</i>	<i>Circumstance: Manner</i>

[1A]

(2)

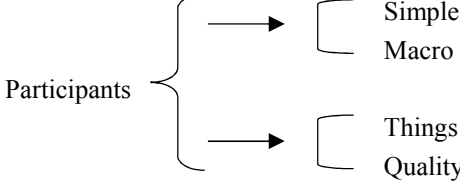
<i>I</i>	<i>smiled at</i>	<i>Bessie’s frank answer</i>
<i>Behaver</i>	<i>Pro: behavioral</i>	<i>Circumstance</i>

[1A]

(1)and (2) are behavioralProcess; “smile”is often used as an example of behavioural clauses and “she” is interpreted as “Behaver”.The entity displaying the behavior encoded in behavioral process clauses above is labeled “Behaver”. There is only one participant occurring inbehavioral process clauses. For example:

- (3) **He**(*Beh.*)smiled faintly. [4A]
(4)**Gerald** (*Beh.*)smiled grimly at this humorism. [4A]
(5)**They** (*Beh.*)both laughed, looking at each other. [4A]
(6)**He**(*Beh.*) laughed dangerously, from the blood. [4A]

Halliday [4] classify participants intosimple participants and macro-participants:



- (7)**The two women**(*Beh.*)were jeering at him. [4A]

It is clear to seein behavioral clause with process “smile”, “laugh”, “jeer”that “Behaver”is always endowed with a conscious being, namely *things* not*quality*. Like in English, “Behaver”in Vietnamese behavioral clause with process “*mỉm cười*”or “*cười*” is acted by a person.

- (8)**Người đàn ông**(*Beh.*)cười hề hề [4A]
(9) **Thịnh**(*Beh.*)cười khanh khách. [7A]]
(10)**San**(*Beh.*)cười phì một cái ra đằng mũi. [5A]

The “Behaver”introduced above is the one that smiles. For example, “*Người đàn ông*”in “*Người đàn ông cười hề hề*”. “*Người đàn ông*”ishuman being, a conscious being. But as the following examples illustrate, a part of body (*face, eye*) can be construed as conscious.

- (11)**His eyes**(*Beh.*) smiled on her, boldly. [3A]

(12) *Buck Mulligan's face* (Beh.) smiled with delight [2A]

(13) *M'Coy's white face* (Beh.) smiled about it at instants [8A]

(14) *The face of the Italian* (Beh.) flashed with a non-comprehending smile. [2A]

Aside from the role of a process, process "smile" can be nominalized and plays a role as a participant. This role is characterized as a process Range labeled "Behavior"

(15) *A little social smile* (Behavior) came on her face. [4A]

(16) *A soft smile* (Behavior) fitted over her grave face. [1A]

(17) *Attractive smile* (Behavior) came over his eyes and brows. [4A]

(18) *The laugh* (Behavior) was repeated in its low, syllabic tone, and terminated in an odd murmur. [4A]

(19) *A slow mocking smile* (Behavior) dawned on Gudrun's face. [4A]

(20) *So many smiles* (Behavior) have been shed into Mr. Rochester's eyes that they overflow like two cups filled above the brim [1A]

(21) *A tolerant smile* (Behavior) curled his lips. [2A]

According to cognitive perspective, "Behavior" above is commonly called "cognate subject" which are derived from the process themselves or from a semantic unit with those processes. They are often coupled with a delexicalized verb, namely *come over, fit over, dawn, give, make....* Such verbs have lost their full lexical content and become "dummies" in the context. While the kind of action "behavior" is specified by the noun, as a participant function, the verb may be entirely general in meaning as in, *have a smile on his/ her face*.

Below is an example of process smile which is nominalized and labeled as a behavior in Vietnamese.

(22) *Nụ cười* đông đưa, tung tắp trên khóe mắt. [6A]

3.2. Interpretation of behavioral processes denoting smiling

Behavior is simply something you do in response to a situation. It can be determined by genetics, the environment, your own experience, or a combination of these factors. When we deal with smiling processes, two types of smiling behaviors are explored: instinct behavior and social behavior. How do you react when you are happy and excited? You probably smile or giggle. How do you react when you want to jeer at someone or let someone or something down? You just probably mock at him or it. These are both examples of smiling behavior. One is instinct the other is social. All these behaviors are coded in smiling processes.

(23) Xuân Tóc Đỏ lại *cười hí hí như ngựa*. [8A]

(24) To both of which questions the man *grinned*. [4A]

(25) Then she *chuckled* gleefully, and turning to ... [4A]

"Horse-laugh", "grin" and "chuckle" are kinds of instinct behaviors when you are full of joy or excitement.

It naturally comes to everyone that you smile or laugh when you are cheerful or blissful. In this case, smiling behavior belongs to instinct one. However, in some cases, it belongs to social behavior as follows:

(26) "You utterly misinterpret my words", I said, at once seizing his hand: "I have no intention to grieve or pain you - indeed, I have not". *Most bitterly he smiled - most decidedly he withdrew his hand from mine*. [1A]

(27) Instead of speaking, *I smiled*. [1A]

In (26) "He", Mr. Rochester- the main character of Jane Eyre, the "Behaver" of process "smile" is not happy or blessed to smile in this case. He smiles to show his terrible bitterness and disappointment when Miss. Eyre refuses his care and love. Interestingly, people tend to smile to hide their feelings when they are too disappointed and mentally or physically painful to speak out. In the light of meanings beyond clause, Process "smile" in (26) is completely different from one in (27). "I", Miss. Jane Eyre, is smiling when Mr. Rochester urges her to talk about her feelings, thoughts of their relationship. In this case, she smiles when she has no answer or she doesn't want to reply. Occasionally when people want to express a mental reaction, namely fear or anxiety, they smile. Language is not only what people write and speak, but also the means by which this is done: the sounds spoken, the signs written or read, and the meanings conveyed by them. That's meaning beyond the clause: functional grammar raised by Halliday [4]. Human behaviors become meaningful only in the context of social life and occur as language and through language. These cases are also found in Vietnamese clauses denoting smile as in:

(28) Chị *cười mếu máo*. [6A]

(29) Thăng Xuân *cười tỉnh*, nháy một cái. [8A]

(30) Tôi *cười khểnh*, nói lịch sự mỉa mai. [7A]

(31) Chúng tôi nhắm mắt lại *cười vào mũi lão* như thế thì lão cáu lắm. [7A]

In fact, it is impossible to have a clear border between instinct and social behavior. For example, as discussed above, smiling is neither 100% instinct nor 100% social. Sometimes, it becomes social showing people's sorrow, embarrassment, uncertainty, fear, surprise or disappointment and so on. This type of behavior may be called complex behavior. In this case, when we interpret complex behavior expressions, we should put them in certain textual contexts.

Clearly, human behavior cannot be understood if we separate language and social practice. Language without social practice and social practice without language are senseless. From this perspective, language, as an essential component of social practice, reflects our experience.

3.3. Circumstances

Halliday [4] classifies circumstances into nine types: *Extent, Location, Manner, Cause, Contingency, Accompaniment, Role, Matter, Angle*. Circumstances are very significant with special interpretations wherever they occur. Some circumstances just go with certain clauses. For example, circumstances of Matter are fairly popular with

mental, verbal and behavioral clauses but quite rare with the other process types.

After we thoroughly investigate and analyze the selected data based on Halliday functional grammar account, three certain types of circumstance are found: *Circumstance as Participant* and of *Cause and Manner*.

3.3.1. Circumstance as participant

Let us take a look at the following examples:

(32) The two sometimes bestowed a courteous word or smile **on me**. (*Circumstance: participant*) [1A]

(33) He smiled **at me** with a certain smile he had of his own (*circumstance: participant*) [1A]

(34) I smiled **at him**. (*Circumstance: participant*) [2A]

To Halliday [4], there are some difficulties in identifying circumstantial elements, especially prepositional phrases functioning as circumstance. Behavioral process “*smile*” usually features a prepositional phrase with on, at, with in the (32), (33), (34). In the above examples, circumstances are prepositional phrases, function as participant.

(35) Nếu mỗi lần cha nhìn đắm đắm và mỉm cười **với một người đàn bà mới** chúng tôi lại thất thểu. [6A]

In Vietnamese, in the above example “*với một người đàn bà mới*”, a prepositional phrase, is also labeled as Participant as in English.

3.3.2. Circumstance of cause

(36) I smiled **at the speaking likeness**. (*Circumstance: Cause*) [1A]

(I was amused by the speaking likeness)

(37) He smiled **at bronze's teabathed lips**. (*Circumstance: Cause*) [1A]

(He was amused by bronze's teabathed lips)

In (36) and (37), the prepositional phrases are labeled as circumstances of Cause which construe the reason why the process is actualized. Particularly, the prepositions above are closely bonded with verb “*smile*”.

(38) Tôi bấm bụng **nhìn cười thầy đồ Cốc** rồi dùng cái khoa giao thiệp hoa mỹ khôi hài đó đáp đùa lạ. [7A]

In the light of this analysis, the nominal group “*thầy đồ Cốc*” is considered as Circumstance of Cause.

3.3.3. Circumstance of manner

Halliday [4] figures out that there are four subcategories in Manner, namely, *Means*, *Quality*, *Comparison* and *Degree*.

a. Quality

Quality is typically realized by an adverbial group, with-ly adverb as Head. Phrasal expressions of quality in the following examples modify the specifications of manner of process “*smile*” in terms of *speed, shape, tone, sound and so on*.

(39) He smiled, **uncomfortably, cynically**. (*Manner: Quality*) [3A]

(40) Mr Bloom smiled **joylessly** on Ringsend road. (*Manner: Quality*) [2A]

She raised her small gloved fist, yawned ever so gently, tip tapping her small gloved fist on her opening mouth and smiled **tinily, sweetly**. (*Manner: Quality*) [2A]

(41) He smiles **uneasily**. (*Manner: Quality*) [2A]

In Vietnamese, a lot of adverbial groups served as Circumstance: *Quality* are found in this study since they are all-purpose devices which help writers describe their character's behavior efficiently. Some examples follow:

(42) Phó Đoan nhìn trộm nó mà mỉm cười **toe toe**. [8A]

(43) Anh cười **nhạt**. [7A]

(44) Anh tôi cười **khẩy**. [7A]

(45) Lão ngoác mồm ra cười **khà khà rồi** nói [7A]

(46) Tôi giận lắm, nhưng chỉ cười **thầm**. [7A]

(47) Mấy đứa trẻ xem chọi để cười **ha hả**. [7A]

As the examples illustrate, circumstance of *Quality* plays a crucial role in demonstrating the different types of smile and they may embody the interpersonal metaphor that contains the attitude of the *Behaver*.

b. Comparison

Comparison is typically expressed by a prepositional phrase with like or unlike. For example:

(48) He smiled **like a weather man, like an ecstatic patron of recurrent light** (Jane Eye). (*Manner: Quality*)

In Vietnamese, circumstance of Comparison is always realized by the word “*như*” as in the following example.

(49) Bà Phó Đoan cười **như trong rạp hát mà rằng**: [8A]

3.4. Troubleshooting

Material or behavioral processes

The distinction between a material and behavioral process is sometimes vague and difficult to have a clear borderline. Let us consider the following examples.

(50) He is putting on a cheerful smile. [4A]

(51) She gave a wry smile. [2A]

If we analyze these two examples above in terms of grammatical labels with core element of process “*put*” and “*give*”, they are material processes. When we examine them in terms of semantic domain, they belong to behavioral processes. Consider the two pairs of clauses (50a) *He is putting on a cheerful smile*, (50b) *He is smiling cheerfully* and (51a) *She gave a wry smile*, (51b) *She smiled wryly*. These are synonymous in terms of semantic but are completely different in the choice of participant and process.

(50a)

He	is putting	on a cheerful smile.
Actor	Pro: material	Circumstance: behavior

(50b)

He	is smiling	Cheerfully
Behaver	Pro: behavioral	Circumstance: manner

(51a)

She	gave	a wry smile.
Actor	Pro: material	Participant

(51b)

He	Smiles	Wryly
Behaver	Pro: behavioral	Circumstance: manner

Halliday [4] states that “*grammatical and semantic categories are not in one-to-one correspondence, then if we use grammatical terms that are semantic in import, we cannot expect them to be appropriate for all instances. The reason is quite valid; grammatical labels are rarely appropriate for all instances of a category*”. Likewise, some Vietnamese clauses are either material or behavioral in terms of grammatical or semantic categories. For example,

(52) Nương ôm bụng bầu **nở nụ cười** [6A]

Actually, the verb “*nở*” itself is the common verb in material process, but in the expression “*nở nụ cười*”, it contains the meaning of behavior “*smile*” and it should be analyzed as a behavioral process. Here are some more examples.

(53) Chúng tôi nhắm mắt, nhắm mũi lại **lăn ra cười**. [7A]

(54) Nói tới chỗ này tôi **mắc cười** muốn chết. [6A]

4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the selected data, firstly, it is shown that the typical pattern of behavioral processes denoting smile is *Behaver + behavioral process + circumstance*. Besides, *Behaver* almost functions as participant in behavioral clauses, there is also a case of nominalization of process “*smile*” typically labeled as Behavior. Secondly, when we deeply interpret the meaning of process “*smile*”, we find out that although process “*smile*” belongs to behavioral clauses, there are two different kinds of meanings, namely instinct and social behavior. The former is inborn. As we are happy, satisfied or excited, we smile. We react on our basic instincts. But the latter is social. We cannot simply interpret human’s behaviors on their natural instincts

because in many cases, people try to hide their true feelings and behaviors via common behaviors. To deal with them, we suggest interpreting human’s behavior smiling in the context of social life. That’s what Halliday states in his work [4]. Finally, there is troubleshooting when we analyze behavioral clauses denoting smiling meaning. That is whether it is material or behavioral. Once again, in this paper, we do believe that there is a tight and mutual relationship between human language and human behavior. In other words, in real life, human behavior is coded in words and expressions and these words and expressions are clearly interpreted and encoded based on Halliday’s functional grammar account.

Appendix

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