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Examining Ideational Meaning through the Transitivity System in Easy Arabic Podcast

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ABSTRACT

Listening skills in Arabic language learning have often emphasized comprehension outcomes rather than the process through which meaning is constructed through language. A similar tendency is also seen in Arabic-language podcasts, which are generally focused on improving listening skills, even though Arabic's root-based morphological system makes the linguistic encoding of meaning particularly rich and analytically significant. The way meaning is constructed through linguistic elements in speech, therefore, still rarely receives attention. Based on those conditions, this research aims to examine how the ideational function is realized in Arabic spoken discourse through the transitivity system employed in the Easy Arabic Podcast. Using a qualitative descriptive approach and content analysis within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics, the research analyzes 288 clauses from the Easy Arabic Podcast Episode 1 Listening transcript, focusing on process types, participants, and circumstances. The analysis identified six process types, with mental processes appearing most frequently with 92 clauses (31.94%), followed by material processes with 73 clauses (25.53%). These findings suggest that learning experiences are represented primarily through learners' cognitive engagement, complemented by concrete learning actions. Relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential processes further complement the realization of ideational meaning by configuring participants and circumstances. Accordingly, this study highlights that Arabic podcasts function not only as resources for listening practice but also as sites where ideational meanings are constructed through linguistic choices. By applying the transitivity system to Arabic digital spoken discourse, this research extends the application of Systemic Functional Linguistics beyond commonly examined written texts and formal speeches, providing insights into how learning experiences are represented through spoken Arabic.

Keywords: *Arabic Podcast, Ideational Function, Istima', Systemic Functional Linguistics, Transitivity System*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Listening skills in language learning are widely understood as an active process of constructing meaning from what is heard rather than merely perceiving sounds or auditory signals (Nadzifah *et al.*, 2025; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). In classroom practice, however, listening instruction is often delivered through activities centered on listening to a text and answering comprehension questions, placing greater emphasis on comprehension outcomes than on the deeper process of interpreting spoken discourse (McAndrews, 2023). A similar tendency can also be observed in listening pedagogy that relies heavily on "listen and answer" activities, leaving limited space for the development of skills that support a more comprehensive understanding of utterances (Hasriani G *et al.*, 2026). Even though the main objective of listening lessons is to understand what is being said, listeners do not create meaning simply by extracting the information from the speech. It is because the information contained in speech is created through the speaker's linguistic decisions. In other words, understanding what is being said not only includes comprehending the message delivered but also

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understanding how it was created through language. As such, listening lessons that focus mainly on comprehension outcomes may not help learners understand how language use contributes to meaning-making.

A similar pattern can be observed in the use of podcasts as listening materials. Several studies on Arabic language learning have shown that podcasts are commonly used to improve students' *istima'* skills (Aulia *et al.*, 2025; Ikraama & Maslamah, 2023; Mumtaz *et al.*, 2024). These studies have primarily focused on learners' ability to understand spoken utterances and the messages they convey. Comparatively little attention has been given to how meaning is constructed through the linguistic choices embedded in podcast discourse. Podcast discourse, essentially, is a construction in which linguistic choices represent human experiences and thus make it a suitable basis for the investigation of meaning creation in discourse.

To explore how meaning is built up in podcast discourse, this research draws on the SFL approach, which regards language not only as a grammatical structure but also as a semiotic system for making meaning choices in a specific social setting (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013; Zhang & Hu, 2021). According to this theory, the human experience is encoded in the ideational metafunction, achieved through the organization of processes, participants, and circumstances in clauses using the transitivity system (Rafelina & Hermawan, 2022). The transitivity system is crucial for analyzing the podcast, as the grammatical options within it are used both to construct meaning and to represent experience in Arabic (Istiqomah *et al.*, 2026). As transitivity is manifested through lexicogrammatical options, it must be investigated in light of the grammatical features of the language under investigation. It is particularly important to investigate the Arabic language, which has a morphological system based on roots. This means that a single root can produce many forms with distinct grammatical meanings through derivational processes (Elgobshawi, 2024).

Previous studies have consistently shown that the transitivity system plays an important role in representing experience across various types of discourse. In educational contexts, analyses of exposition texts demonstrate that the transitivity system reveals the realization of ideational meaning and the patterns of grammatical choices that contribute to the construction of arguments (Amalia & Emilia, 2025; Septianti & Kurniawan, 2023). The expansion of transitivity studies can also be observed in news discourse, where the selection of processes is used to represent events and construct the involvement of actors in texts (Asim Mahdi & Dua'a Hafidh Hussein, 2021; Fitriana *et al.*, 2025). In literary texts, particularly poetry, findings show that material processes are often dominant; however, they do not merely function to represent actions but also contribute to constructing symbolic meanings through linguistic choices (Chen & Zhong, 2022; Malik & Abbas, 2024). Taken together, these domains indicate that transitivity research has largely been confined to conventional discourse types such as academic writing, news reports, and literary texts, which generally display stable structures and predictable analytical patterns. In contrast, poetry reveals a more interpretive function in which transitivity extends beyond action representation toward symbolic and aesthetic meaning.

With regards to Systemic Functional Linguistics, the transitivity system is not one which only occurs in written language, but rather it is one which can occur in spoken language as well. This means that the expression of experience is not limited to written academic language; it also occurs in spoken language. One widely studied form of formal spoken discourse is political speech. In this context, transitivity analysis reveals the dominance of material processes, which function to represent the actions, agendas, and policies of political leaders and to express particular positions and views (Cabrejas-Peñuelas, 2023; Hardiyanti *et al.*, 2023). A similar analysis of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud's speeches within Arabic discourse reveals that the transitivity system plays an important role in the representation of action, authority, and social relations at the state level (Reflinaldi & Faisol,

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2023). The results imply that, in formal spoken discourse, transitivity can realize ideational meaning. The Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach has been applied in studies of comments on Arabic podcasts within the framework of critical discourse studies, particularly to examine the construction of identity and ideology in digital communication (Haryono *et al.*, 2025). However, such studies have not specifically focused on the transitivity system as the primary analytical framework for examining the construction of ideational meaning in Arabic educational podcast discourse.

This situation points to a contextual gap, as transitivity studies have predominantly focused on written texts and formal spoken discourse. At the same time, Arabic educational podcasts used in *istima'* learning contexts remain underexplored as a site for ideational meaning construction. Beyond this, a conceptual gap exists in the limited application of the transitivity system as a primary analytical framework for examining how ideational meaning is constructed in podcast discourse. Mavrodieva (2025) explains that podcasts have evolved into a hybrid genre, integrating the delivery of professional discourse with a conversational communication style, thereby fostering a sense of closeness between speakers and listeners. While formal speeches tend to follow a set rhetorical pattern, educational podcasts feature planned instruction delivered in a spontaneous style. This pattern has not been studied sufficiently in transitivity analysis. Accordingly, applying the transitivity framework to digitally mediated Arabic spoken discourse not only broadens the empirical scope of previous research but also extends the application of transitivity analysis to Arabic digital spoken discourse, which blends instructional monologue with conversational interaction, thereby differing from the written texts and formal spoken discourse that have traditionally been the primary focus of SFL research.

Against this background, ideational meaning in podcasts may be realized differently compared to more traditional discourse forms due to their hybrid nature, which combines educational content with conversational interaction. The present study therefore examines the transitivity system in the Easy Arabic Podcast to explore how ideational meaning is constructed in Arabic spoken educational discourse. By doing so, this study positions podcast discourse as a pedagogical resource for listening (*istima'*) instruction and shifts attention from outcome-oriented comprehension toward how meaning is constructed through linguistic choices in authentic spoken input. This study further extends the application of Systemic Functional Linguistics to digital spoken discourse and contributes to Arabic listening pedagogy through transitivity analysis.

2. METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with content analysis within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) developed by Halliday & Matthiessen (2013). A descriptive qualitative approach was chosen because it enables an in-depth interpretation of how ideational meaning is realized in natural spoken discourse through transitivity analysis. To maintain the lexico-grammatical structure of Arabic as the basis for realizing transitivity, the analysis was conducted directly on the original Arabic transcripts without translating them into English. Each clause was examined using the Systemic Functional Linguistics framework of transitivity through the identification of processes, participants, and circumstances, while consistently taking into account the clause-level characteristics of Arabic as the contextual basis for determining meaning. Clause boundaries were determined based on grammatical structure and the presence of a process as the central element of meaning and were verified through repeated listening to ensure consistency. In presenting the findings, SFL terms such as Actor, Goal, and Senser were used solely as analytical labels, while English glosses were provided to facilitate understanding for readers without an Arabic background.

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The research data were obtained from the Listening episode of the Easy Arabic Podcast on the Learn Arabic with Khasu YouTube channel. The data were selected through purposive sampling because this technique allows selection of data sources based on specific research objectives (Tajik *et al.*, 2024). Easy Arabic Podcast presents spoken discourse that combines educational content with a conversational style. The Listening episode was selected because its primary focus is spoken-language comprehension rather than broader Arabic language-learning topics. Unlike many other podcast episodes that discuss dialects, travel experiences, language-learning strategies, or cultural issues, this episode consistently centers on how spoken Arabic is processed and understood. Its thematic consistency provides a coherent educational discourse with a high concentration of clauses related to listening activities and meaning construction, making it particularly suitable for examining the realization of ideational meaning through the transitivity system.

Data were collected through documentation and note-taking by repeatedly listening to the podcast, transcribing the utterances, and segmenting them into clauses for analysis. Each clause was analyzed using Halliday and Matthiessen's transitivity framework by identifying process types, including material, mental, verbal, behavioral, relational, and existential processes, together with their participants and circumstances. All identified clauses were analyzed according to the transitivity system, but only representative examples are presented in the findings section. The selected examples were chosen because they clearly illustrate the realization of each process type and its contribution to the construction of ideational meaning. The identified patterns were then interpreted to explain how ideational meaning is realized in the podcast discourse. This study is limited to a single episode of the Easy Arabic Podcast and focuses exclusively on the ideational metafunction.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Distribution of Transitivity Processes

The analysis identified six types of transitivity processes in the podcast discourse, comprising 288 clauses. Mental processes appeared most dominantly with 92 clauses (31.94%), followed by material processes with 73 clauses (25.53%) and relational processes with 64 clauses (22.22%). Lower frequencies were found in verbal processes with 26 clauses (9.03%) and behavioral processes with 24 clauses (8.33%). Existential processes occurred least frequently, appearing in only 9 clauses (3.13%). The overall distribution of process types is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Process Findings in a Podcast

Type	Amount	Percentage
Mental	92	31.94%
Material	73	25.53%
Relational	64	22.22%
Verbal	26	9.03%
Behavioral	24	8.33%
Existential	9	3.13%
Total	288	100%

Analysis within the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework revealed that ideational meaning in the Easy Arabic Podcast is realized through six types of transitivity processes with varying frequencies. This distribution indicates that learning experiences in the podcast are constructed through a combination of different process types, with mental processes occurring most frequently, followed by material and relational processes. These findings provide the basis for examining how each process type contributes to the realization of ideational meaning in the podcast discourse. The examples presented below were selected to represent the variation in realization patterns identified

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across the different process types. Accordingly, process types exhibiting greater variation in their realizations are illustrated with multiple examples, whereas a single representative clause represents those with relatively consistent realization patterns.

3.2 Transitivity Processes and Their Ideational Meanings

3.2.1 Mental Process

Human experiences such as thinking, understanding, and knowing are represented through mental processes (Pulungan, 2022). These processes typically involve a Senser who experiences a feeling, perception, or cognition and a Phenomenon that represents the object of the experience. The predominance of mental processes in the data indicates that the podcast constructs learning primarily through learners' internal experiences, such as desire, comprehension, and knowledge, rather than through mere information transmission. Mental processes account for 92 clauses (31.94%). Several clauses below illustrate this realization.

Data 1.

لِأَنَّهُ فِي هٰذَا الزَّمَانِ أَغْلَبُ الطُّلَّابِ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَفْهَمُوا اللُّغَةَ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ

(Because nowadays most students want to understand Arabic.)

In this clause, the mental process is realized through the verb يُرِيدُونَ. The Senser is represented by أَغْلَبُ الطُّلَّابِ (most students), while the Phenomenon is expressed through the embedded clause أَنْ يَفْهَمُوا اللُّغَةَ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ (want to understand Arabic), which represents the object of their desire. The circumstantial element فِي هٰذَا الزَّمَانِ (nowadays) situates the experience in the present time frame. The term 'Senser' refers to a group of students rather than an individual learner, showing that the desire to learn Arabic is constructed collectively.

Data 2.

فَهُنَاكَ طُلَّابٌ لَا يَفْهَمُونَ الْكَلَامَ لِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْرِفُونَ الْكَلِمَاتِ

(There are students who cannot understand spoken language because they do not know the words.)

The first clause realizes the mental process يَفْهَمُونَ (understand), in which طُلَّابٌ (students) functions as the Senser and الْكَلَامَ (spoken language) as the Phenomenon. This is followed by the causal clause لِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْرِفُونَ الْكَلِمَاتِ (because they do not know the words), which realizes a second mental process through يَعْرِفُونَ (know). The second clause shows that هُمْ, an implied pronoun referring to طُلَّابٌ (students), represents the Senser involved in the mental process. Meanwhile, الْكَلِمَاتِ (the words) is identified as the Phenomenon that becomes the focus of the students' experience. Together, the two mental clauses indicate that learners' difficulty in understanding spoken language is attributed to limited vocabulary knowledge.

Each data set emphasizes a distinct dimension of the mental process. In Data 1, the mental experience is centered on learners' desire to understand Arabic. The desiderative mental process, through يُرِيدُونَ (want), represents desire as a motivational aspect in learners' *istima'* experience. This desire can be understood as a motivational factor that may encourage learners' engagement with Arabic learning activities. Kamaeva *et al.* (2022) indicate that motivation is one of the factors that affect listening ability among foreign language learners. In Data 2, however, understanding is represented as a cognitive activity closely tied to vocabulary knowledge. The use of يَفْهَمُونَ (understand) highlights comprehension as a cognitive activity that requires learners to process and interpret spoken input. It involves a sequence of cognitive operations, including recognizing lexical items, linking them to existing knowledge, and constructing overall meaning from the utterance. This relationship is reinforced by لَا يَعْرِفُونَ الْكَلِمَاتِ (they do not know the words), which suggests that limited vocabulary knowledge constrains comprehension. Limited knowledge of aural vocabulary may hinder

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learners' ability to comprehend spoken discourse, particularly when they struggle to recognize word forms in speech (Matthews & Lange, 2024). These mental processes indicate that listening comprehension involves the interaction between understanding spoken input and learners' vocabulary knowledge. It is a cognitive process in which learners not only receive information passively but also analyze it actively (Hiromori, 2023).

Overall, mental processes in the podcast do not merely represent learners' desires but also construct understanding as an internal cognitive experience. *Istima'* is therefore represented as a process that begins with motivational desire and develops into comprehension of spoken input. A similar tendency is noted by Reflinaldi & Faisol (2023), who found 17 mental processes in their data and represent participants' internal experiences in spoken discourse. However, while their study on Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud's speeches showed that mental processes were used to express viewpoints on global issues, the present podcast employs mental processes to represent learners' experiences, particularly motivation and comprehension during listening activities.

3.2.2 Material Process

Material processes are identified in 73 clauses, accounting for 25.53% of the data and placing them as the second most frequent process type after mental processes. While mental processes describe learners' internal experiences, material processes show how these experiences are expressed through observable actions. Within SFL, this process type generally involves an Actor who carries out an action and may also involve a Goal that receives the impact of that action. Activities such as learning Arabic, allocating time for study, and engaging in practice are represented as concrete practices that support *istima'* learning. The following clauses provide examples of this realization.

Data 1.

فَهُنَاكَ طُلَّابٌ يَتَعَلَّمُونَ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ

(There are students learning Arabic.)

The material process is realized in the verb **يَتَعَلَّمُونَ** (are learning). The Actor of this process is **طُلَّابٌ** (students), while the Goal is **الْعَرَبِيَّةَ** (Arabic). Thus, this arrangement portrays learning as a physical act done by the learners, with its Goal being Arabic.

Data 2.

وَلٰكِنِّي أَقْضِي وَقْتًا كَثِيرًا فِي الْيُوتُيُوبِ

(However, I spend a lot of time on YouTube.)

The material process in this clause is realized through the verb **أَقْضِي** (spend), which expresses the concrete action of allocating time. The Actor is realized through the first-person singular pronoun embedded in the verbal morphology (**أَنَا**), while **وَقْتًا كَثِيرًا** (a lot of time) functions as the Goal. The circumstantial element **فِي الْيُوتُيُوبِ** (on YouTube) indicates the location of the activity. Unlike Data 1, where the Actor is explicitly expressed as a noun, here it is encoded as a *ḍhamir mustatir* (implicit pronoun) integrated into the verb form.

These two realizations show that the podcast does not stop at constructing motivation and comprehension but extends toward concrete learning actions. After learners develop desire and awareness through mental processes, these internal experiences are manifested in observable learning practices. The variation in Actor realization further highlights Arabic's lexico-grammatical features. In Data 1, the Actor is explicitly expressed through a nominal form **طُلَّابٌ** (students), positioning learners as direct agents of learning. This aligns with the notion of active learning, which emphasizes learners' central role in constructing learning experiences (Hadawiyah *et al.*, 2025). In contrast, Data 2 realizes the Actor through a *ḍhamir mustatir* embedded in the verb **أَقْضِي** (spend). Although not overtly stated, the Actor remains recoverable through verbal morphology. In Arabic,

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verb inflection encodes not only action but also grammatical information such as person, number, and gender (Nur, 2010). In this case, the prefix أ- signals first-person singular (أَنَا), allowing the Actor to be identified without an explicit noun phrase. The transition from the explicit nominal Actor in Data 1 to the implicit pronominal Actor in Data 2 also indicates a change in discourse register, from a general statement about students as a whole to a more personal narrative of the speaker's practices. In this context, therefore, the grammatical construction is not coincidental. It is an echo of the larger trend in the podcast towards transitioning from referring to learners as a collective to relating from personal experience.

The frequent occurrence of material processes suggests that, once learning is constructed cognitively, the podcast also represents learning through observable activities. The inclusion of Actors, whether explicitly expressed or implied through verbal morphology, places both learners and speakers in an active role during the learning process. Thus, *istima'* is represented not only as a process of comprehension but also as a series of learning activities. A similar pattern is observed in Fitriana *et al.* (2025), who identified 135 material processes (39.02%) in news discourse on the eviction of Rempang Island, used to represent concrete actions and events. However, in the present study, the material processes in Arabic-learning podcasts primarily represent learning practices, both through learners' actions and through educational experiences modeled by the speaker.

3.2.3 Relational Process

Relational processes are found in 64 clauses (22.22%), placing them third in overall distribution. In SFL, relational processes represent states of being, identification, and attribution by establishing relationships between entities. These processes are commonly realized through attributive relations involving Carrier and Attribute, as well as identifying relations involving Token and Value. In the present data, relational processes primarily function to construct concepts related to *istima'* and organize knowledge about listening as a learning skill. Here are some of those realizations, as shown in the clauses below.

Data 1.

الِاسْتِمَاعُ هِيَ قُدْرَتُكَ عَلَى فَهْمِ كَلَامٍ تَسْمَعُهُ

(Listening is your ability to understand the utterances you hear.)

A relational identifying process is realized in this example, where **الِاسْتِمَاعُ** (listening) functions as the Token and **قُدْرَتُكَ عَلَى فَهْمِ كَلَامٍ تَسْمَعُهُ** (your ability to understand the utterance you hear) as the Value. This Token-Value relationship defines *istima'* as a concrete ability rather than merely an abstract concept.

Data 2.

وَالِاسْتِمَاعُ إِحْدَى الْمَهَارَاتِ الْأَرْبَعِ لِلُّغَةِ.

(And listening is one of the four language skills.)

In this clause, the relational process is realized through the structure **وَالِاسْتِمَاعُ إِحْدَى الْمَهَارَاتِ الْأَرْبَعِ لِلُّغَةِ.** Here, **الِاسْتِمَاعُ** (listening) functions as the Carrier, while **إِحْدَى الْمَهَارَاتِ الْأَرْبَعِ لِلُّغَةِ** (one of the four language skills) serves as the Attribute, classifying listening as one of the four core language skills. This clause is therefore categorized as a relational attributive process. Unlike Data 1, which establishes an identifying relation between Token and Value, this clause constructs an attributive relation between Carrier and Attribute, positioning *istima'* as part of a broader competence system in language learning. The focus here is not definitional explanation but categorization within the framework of language skills. Through these relational constructions, the podcast does not merely provide definitions of *istima'*, but also organizes knowledge about listening by positioning it as both an individual ability and a component of broader language competence.

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Besides establishing relationships between concepts, the relational processes in the two data sets contribute to the gradual construction of the concept of *istima'*. First, in Data 1, the meaning of listening as the ability to understand spoken words is created, whereas in Data 2, it is introduced as one of the four language skills. This explanation moves from defining the concept of *istima'* to showing its position as one of the language skills. Moreover, it is important to note that in Data 1, the listener is engaged in the definition right from the start through the use of قُدْرَتُكَ (your ability), creating a sense of personal involvement in understanding listening as a learner-related ability rather than an abstract concept. By contrast, Data 2 focuses on classifying *istima'* as one of the four language skills rather than directly engaging the listener. Together, these relational processes establish a conceptual foundation that supports learners' understanding before they engage with more advanced discussions. This conceptual organization is realized through Token-Value and Carrier-Attribute relations. Providing such a framework allows learners to build a conceptual base that facilitates linking new knowledge with existing knowledge (Schneider & Simonsmeier, 2025). The use of relational processes in this podcast resembles the findings of Dani *et al.* (2025), who identified 666 relational process occurrences in SIB E-Commerce final reports. Explanations of concepts are constructed through relational processes in both situations. However, the object of analysis is different in both instances. In academic writing, relational processes are used to explain the attributes of objects and academic concepts, whereas in Arabic learning podcasts, they are used to introduce concepts.

3.2.4 Verbal Process

According to Halliday & Matthiessen (2013), verbal processes involve acts of speaking or utterance, typically involving a Sayer, a Receiver, and Verbiage. In the present data, verbal processes are identified in 26 clauses (9.03%). The following clauses provide examples of this realization.

Data 1.

وَالْيَوْمَ أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَتَكَلَّمَ مَعَكُمْ فِي مَوْضُوعٍ مُهِمٍّ

(Today, I want to talk to you about an important topic.)

Through this clause, the verbal process represented by the verb أَتَكَلَّمَ (to speak) positions the implicit first-person pronoun أَنَا (I) as the Sayer and مَعَكُمْ (with you) as the Receiver. The circumstance of Matter فِي مَوْضُوعٍ مُهِمٍّ (about an important topic) identifies the subject of the upcoming talk. The use of the Receiver to directly address the audience creates a more conversational interaction, while the circumstance establishes the main focus of the discourse from the beginning.

Data 2.

أَقُولُ لَهُ: اسْبَحْ كَثِيرًا

(I say to him: "Swim a lot.")

In this clause, the verbal process is realized through the verb أَقُولُ (I say), with the implicit first-person pronoun أَنَا (I) functioning as the Sayer. The element لَهُ (to him) functions as the Receiver, while اسْبَحْ كَثِيرًا (swim a lot) functions as Verbiage representing the content of the utterance. Rather than referring literally to swimming, the utterance operates as an analogy to illustrate that a skill develops through repeated practice. Through this verbal process, the speaker conveys an explanatory analogy, helping learners understand that listening skills in Arabic also require continuous and sustained practice. In this sense, the verbal process not only transmits speech but also functions as an instructional strategy grounded in everyday experience.

Across both data, verbal processes function not only as a means of conveying information but also as linguistic resources that support different forms of communication throughout the podcast discourse. Their use reflects the spoken nature of the podcast by helping establish a more interactive

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relationship between the speaker and the listeners. In Data 1, the verbal process is used to initiate discourse and establish direct engagement with the audience through the Receiver مَعَكُمْ (with you). Such direct address can be related to the concept of parasocial interaction, where audiences experience a sense of closeness despite the one-sided nature of communication (Huang *et al.*, 2025). In contrast, Data 2 employs verbal processes to deliver an explanation through analogy, using اسْبَحْ كَثِيرًا (swim a lot) to represent the idea that skill development requires continuous practice. It is important to note that the Verbiage in Data 2 uses the imperative mood. However, the presence of لَهُ (to him) indicates that the command is addressed to another person within a reported utterance rather than directly to the audience. Through this strategy, the speaker explains pedagogical concepts by using a familiar illustration, making the explanation more accessible to learners. This pattern aligns with Bashir *et al.* (2026), who found 12.8% of verbal process in the speech of Nouman Ali Khan as an illustration of communication acts. Nevertheless, the role of the verbal process varies depending on the context. While in religious speeches it is used to create authority and to convey doctrinal messages, in Arabic-learning podcasts it is only meant to foster interaction and to teach through conversation and analogy.

3.2.5 Behavioral Process

Behavioral processes in SFL represent physiological or psychological behaviors, such as seeing, listening, and other forms of conscious activity. Positioned between material and mental processes, this process type generally involves a Behaver as the participant performing the behaviour and may be accompanied by a Range that specifies the scope of the behavior. In the data examined, behavioral processes were identified in 24 clauses, representing 8.33% of the total data This realization can be observed in the following clauses.

Data 1.

اسْتَمِعْ إِلَى شَيْءٍ تَهْتَمُّ بِهِ

(Listen to something you are interested in.)

The behavioral process is expressed using the imperative verb اسْتَمِعْ (listen), where the second-person pronoun أَنْتَ (you) is encoded implicitly as the Behaver. The phrase إِلَى شَيْءٍ تَهْتَمُّ بِهِ (to something you are interested in) plays the role of the Range, which specifies the target of the listening activity. Using the imperative form indicates that the clause functions not only to provide information but also to encourage learners to engage in listening. In addition, connecting the Range to learners' interests makes it more relevant to them.

Data 2.

الْأُذُنُ تَتَعَوَّدُ إِلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

(The ear becomes accustomed to everything.)

The behavioral process in this clause is achieved using the verb تَتَعَوَّدُ (becomes accustomed). The noun الْأُذُنُ (the ear) acts as the Behaver while إِلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ (to everything) acts as the Range, showing the extent of the habituation process. Unlike data 1, where the imperative mood was used to give a directive for an act, this clause conveys the behavior as a result of continuous experience and practice. Using the verb تَتَعَوَّدُ (becomes accustomed), listening capability results from habituation, meaning that understanding is influenced not only by competence but also by exposure and listening practice.

The use of the imperative mood in Data 1 reveals that, apart from serving as a source of information, the podcast is also used as an incentive to initiate the listening process immediately. In doing so, the learners are not only treated as passive recipients of the message but also as active participants in the process of learning. This idea aligns with the constructivist theory of learning,

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which holds that learners actively engage in the process of acquiring knowledge through educational media such as podcasts (Ejupi & Ajdini, 2024). Furthermore, the selection of Range in اسْتَمِعْ إِلَى شَيْءٍ تَهْتَمُّ بِهِ (listen to something you are interested in) reveals the fact that the listening process is based on the personal interest of learners (Tsang, 2022). Meanwhile, in Data 2, the verb تَتَعَوَّدُ (becomes accustomed) indicates a process of habituation. The clause portrays becoming accustomed to spoken Arabic as a process that develops gradually through repeated listening. This interpretation is consistent with Prasongngern & Soontornwipast (2023), who argue that intensive and extensive listening provide opportunities for learners to develop listening skills through repeated engagement with oral materials. Therefore, the behavioral process in the podcast does not merely represent listening activity as an action, but also reflects the formation of habits that constitute an important part of listening skill development. Read together, these two clauses illustrate complementary stages of listening. Data 1 encourages learners to begin listening, whereas Data 2 highlights habituation as an outcome of continued listening practice. A comparable use of behavioral processes has also been reported in studies conducted in different contexts. Prasetyo & Sajarwa (2024) found 36 behavioral processes in the short story Nouvelles Vertes, which were used as a means of depicting behaviors of the characters. This is similar to how behavioral processes were used to represent observable behaviors. However, their function in the Arabic learning podcast differs. Beyond representing listening-related activities, the behavioral processes also encourage learners to engage immediately in listening practice through imperative forms and portray becoming accustomed to spoken Arabic as an outcome of continued listening practice.

3.2.6 Existential Process

According to Halliday & Matthiessen (2013), entities in discourse are represented through existential processes, typically marked by there is/are. These processes usually involve only one participant, namely the Existent, which represents the entity or phenomenon whose existence is being expressed. Existential processes occur least frequently among the six process types, appearing in only 9 clauses (3.13%). One realization is illustrated in the following clause.

لَا يُوجَدُ هُنَاكَ حَلٌّ سِحْرِيٌّ

(No instant solution.)

In this clause, the existential process is realized through the verb يُوجَدُ (there is/exists), while حَلٌّ سِحْرِيٌّ (instant solution) functions as the Existent. The presence of the negation particle لَا shifts the meaning from existence to non-existence. The clause communicates that there is no instant way to master listening skills in Arabic.

Although existential processes appear infrequently in the data, their use in this case serves an important rhetorical function. By expressing the absence of an immediate solution, the clause presents listening as a process that requires sustained commitment rather than instant achievement. This form of negation encourages learners to develop realistic expectations about listening by emphasizing that improvement takes both time and effort. Instead of guiding learners toward a particular course of action, the existential construction draws attention to the absence of an immediate solution. As a result, the message is framed as a general reality of the learning process rather than as an individual's personal experience. Santi (2023) likewise identified 15 existential processes (approximately 2%) in English textbook reading passages. In that study, existential processes were used to represent the phenomenon of existence in the delivery of information. The use of existential processes in this podcast shows similarities, as both contexts function to introduce a particular condition or idea. The difference lies in the context of their use. In reading texts, existential processes are used to present phenomena that become the focus of discussion. In contrast, in an Arabic learning podcast, existential processes are used to convey ideas related to the

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listening learning process, including the emphasis that mastering this skill requires gradual development and cannot be achieved instantly.

3.3 Discussion

The findings indicate that the podcast presents learning experiences through the linguistic choices employed by the speaker. These choices illustrate the way listening materials represent experiences and create meaning within spoken discourse. As highlighted by McAndrews (2023), listening instruction has often focused on improving learners' comprehension through activities designed to support understanding of spoken texts. The present study addresses this issue by showing that listening materials can also be examined through the linguistic resources speakers use to construct meaning. Applying transitivity analysis in listening activities may encourage learners to pay closer attention to the ways language represents experiences and shapes meanings in spoken discourse.

In teaching practice, transitivity analysis can be applied to develop learners' awareness of how meaning is constructed in *istima'* material. Once learners have understood the general idea of the audio text, teachers can guide them to analyze how experiences in the discourse are represented through the process types selected by speakers. For example, in the clause أَغْلَبُ الطُّلَّابِ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَفْهَمُوا اللُّغَةَ العَرَبِيَّةَ, learners would not only understand the message that most students want to understand Arabic, but also recognize how the mental process يُرِيدُونَ represents the experience of desire toward learning Arabic. Through this analysis, learners can understand that audio materials are interpreted not only through the information conveyed but also through the linguistic choices used by speakers to construct meaning in discourse. Examining other clauses in the podcast may further help learners recognize that each process type performs a different function in representing experiences related to cognition, action, or states within discourse. As explained by Bril *et al.* (2022), listening comprehension is a real-time process that involves the processing of linguistic information from oral input. Therefore, examining how linguistic factors influence listening processing is important for understanding second language comprehension. This approach may foster more reflective listening practices by helping learners develop greater awareness of the relationship between linguistic choices and the representation of experience in spoken discourse. Through this perspective, listening activities can include not only understanding the information conveyed by speakers but also examining how meaning is constructed through the linguistic choices found in spoken texts.

Beyond its role in listening instruction, the findings of this study also show that the analyzed *istima'* material represents learning experiences through various linguistic choices. In the analyzed podcast, the material functions not only as a means of delivering information but also as a medium that guides listeners through a gradual learning process. In line with this perspective, Sastromiharjo *et al.* (2025) highlight that pedagogical communication involves not only information delivery but also interaction that supports learners' engagement in the learning process. This pattern can be seen throughout the podcast, where listeners are guided to understand fundamental concepts, recognize learning difficulties, follow instructions, and reflect on their learning process. For example, the behavioral process اسْتَمِعْ (listen) encourages listeners to engage in listening activities, while the verbal process أَتَكَلَّمُ (I speak) establishes a direct communicative relationship between the speaker and listeners. These choices illustrate how podcast discourse positions listeners not merely as recipients of information but as participants involved in the learning process through explanation, interaction, and instruction.

These results differ from previous studies on formal spoken discourse. Cabrejas-Peñuelas (2023) and Reflinaldi & Faisol (2023) identified the dominance of material processes in political and state speeches because such genres primarily represent actions, commitments, and social agendas. Unlike previous studies, the present study identified mental processes as the dominant process type in the

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Arabic learning podcast, suggesting that learning experiences are represented primarily through cognition, understanding, and internal engagement. This difference demonstrates that the distribution of transitivity processes is influenced not only by linguistic characteristics but also by the communicative purposes of a discourse. Therefore, transitivity analysis of educational podcasts provides a distinct perspective on the realization of ideational meaning compared with analyses of formal discourse.

4. CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings indicate that *istima'* in the Easy Arabic Podcast is represented not merely as an activity aimed at achieving comprehension outcomes, but as a gradual process of meaning construction in which learners develop understanding through spoken discourse. This representation is realized through complementary transitivity processes. Mental processes primarily portray learners' cognitive engagement, while material processes represent learning-related actions that transform cognition into observable practice. Relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential processes further support this representation by organizing conceptual understanding, facilitating instructional interaction, encouraging listening-related behaviors, and establishing learning conditions. Collectively, these process types demonstrate that *istima'* is represented as a multidimensional learning process rather than a passive act of receiving spoken information.

This study provides a linguistic perspective on listening instruction by demonstrating how transitivity analysis can reveal the ways meaning is constructed in spoken discourse. The findings suggest that educational podcasts can function not only as sources of listening input but also as linguistic resources that expose how speakers organize learning experiences through processes, participants, and circumstances. Theoretically, this study extends the application of the transitivity system within Systemic Functional Linguistics to Arabic digital spoken discourse, particularly in the context of educational podcasts, which remains relatively underexplored. Pedagogically, the findings highlight the potential of integrating transitivity analysis into *istima'* activities to encourage learners to recognize how linguistic choices contribute to the construction of meaning in spoken texts. However, this study is limited to analyzing one episode from the Easy Arabic Podcast. Future research may examine larger podcast corpora, compare different types of Arabic educational podcasts, or investigate other metafunctions of SFL, such as interpersonal and textual meanings, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of meaning construction in Arabic digital spoken discourse.

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