Construing Transitivity through Material and Verbal Processes in the Bukusu Bible: In Light of Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory

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Abstract
The paper investigates transitivity marking in the Bukusu Bible in the Gospel of Matthew 21:1-46. Given the relevance of systemic functional linguistics theory in revealing meanings in texts, this study reveals the meanings generated in the Gospel through the material and verbal processes. The main objective of this study is to identify the clause types in Matthew 21:1-46, to evaluate the participant types in clauses and to explain the meanings construed through material and verbal process types in Matthew 21:1-46. The study employed a descriptive research design whose major goal is to identify data, analyse and interpret the findings. The data were purposively sourced from the Gospel of Matthew 21:1-46 to meet the objectives of the study. Data analysis was constrained in the System network approach of transitivity, an aspect of SFL theory which facilitates the identification of process types. The findings revealed the construction of Jesus' teaching through parables and performing healing miracles using material and verbal processes. The results further revealed that material processes were used to reveal the actions carried out by Jesus, disciples and tenants. Jesus employed material processes such as *atimania* (chased), and *afumalixaka* (overturned) to demonstrate his anger. It was also clear that verbal processes in the analysis were used by participants to ask or answer questions, for instance, *ßamureeßa* (asked) and *ßakoßosya* (answered). Both material and verbal processes were context-specific, meaning that the events and activities carried out by participants in the given environment dictated the choice of the process type. This study recommends a rigorous analysis of spoken and written texts in African languages for typology and language documentation

Key words: Actor, goal, material, sayer, verbal.

INTRODUCTION

This paper constructs varied meanings through transitivity in the Bukusu Bible, a translation of the King James version of the English Bible. In revealing meanings, material and verbal processes are employed by various speakers in specific contexts in Matthew 21:1-46. This study revealed how material process and other elements communicate Jesus's entry into Jerusalem and the healing miracle of the blind and the crippled. Moreover, the anger and emotion of Jesus are demonstrated through the material processes while in the temple. Notably, other aspects of emotions were also revealed by the tenants through a series of material processes. This study also noted the existence of verbal processes in organising the dialogue through responses that were revealed through questions and answers.

The Bukusu community use the Bible, a translation from the English version of the Bible, during church functions and other religious festivities. As a written text, the Bible is used during sermons in church and rites of passage such as birth and death. The translation of the Bukusu Bible to English was carried out by the Bible Society of Kenya and the United Bible Societies (Bible Society of Kenya, 2007). The Bukusu Bible translators based their translations on the 1952 Revised Standard Version. The translation of the Bukusu Bible commenced with the New Testament in 1992, followed by the Old Testament in subsequent years. Just like the Hebrew and English versions of the Bible, the Bukusu Bible is organised into chapters along with verses. This study is constrained to the Gospel of Matthew 21:1-46, using Systemic Functional Linguistics/Grammar.

Baker (1992) and Munday (2001) applied SFL in translation studies. As Chueasuai (2017) argues, a major reason for applying SFL is that this specific branch of linguistics provides a concrete and detailed analytical tool to study both fictional and non-fictional data. Apart from analysing the language that people use in various settings, SFL also analyses the language evident in novels, literature and poems (Chueasuai, 2010; 2017). It is with such an argument that SFL has been cast in Bible translations in the African context in the recent past. In the present study, the study is focused on SFL in the texts drawn from Matthew 21:1-46.

In African languages, there have been isolated studies in Bible translations. In the Dagaare language, spoken in Ghana, Mwinlaaru (2017) studies attributive and intensive clauses within Systemic Functional Linguistics theory, focusing on clauses from Matthew 16:13-16. The study revealed that Bible texts revealed Jesus's question to his disciples bordering on his identity (the Son of Man). Firstly, the disciples used a verbless clause to construe his perceived identity, in which he was identified as John the Baptist. The study also revealed that subsequent clauses are attributive, where Jesus is characterised according to the qualities of the Old Testament prophets. The study also revealed that the carrier as a participant in an attributive clause is realised as a nominal group while the attributive process is a verbal group.

Another study by Wangia (2003) identifies categories of the mistranslation of tense, aspect, and person markers in the Lulogooli Bible from the English version. Wangia (2014) attempted to illustrate, to some degree, how the intricacies of the grammatical categories, arising from the Bantu tense, aspectual and case affixes and/or phonemic distinctions, marked by supra-segmental features, are significant and relevant in translation. A study by Wakarĩndĩ (2018) employed Systemic Functional Grammar theory to analyse clause complexity in Gĩkũyũ, drawing samples from the Gĩkũyũ Bible, focusing on clauses from Genesis and Exodus. His study revealed three types of functional semantic relations in Gĩkũyũ clause complexes, listed as expansion, enhancement and projection. Based on the foregoing studies in African languages cast in SFL, this study addresses the construction of transitivity through material and verbal clauses. Although there is evidence of isolated cases of studies in SFL within Bantu languages, there are no studies in the Lubukusu language that have been cast in SFL.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on transitivity within political texts have been areas of research in African countries. Before we examine religious texts, we will explore how transitivity is portrayed in political and literary texts. A considerable number of studies on political texts have been conducted within SFL. However, there has been relatively little literature published on Bible texts in Indo-European languages and other languages of the world. Generally, it has been noted that the politicians deliberately follow a system network of transitivity in their political discourse since speech is used as a powerful tool to achieve specific objectives in diverse contexts (Medhurst, 2010). Politics and political texts are a social practice just like

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religious texts, so both texts approach the analysis of ideational metafunction through a system network approach of transitivity. In this study, Material processes are constructed through the following obligatory participants: Actor (doer of the action), Goal (participant who is the receiver of the action).

A recent study about political texts by Ihsan et al. (2021) delved into the transitivity of five speeches by Mandela and revealed that the most dominant process is the material, while the least occurring was the existential process. Thus, it confirms Wang (2010)'s notion that in political speeches, the material process is a good choice. Another study on transitivity in political texts by Su (2021) focused on the transitivity of the 2018 address by the former president of the USA, Donald Trump. The speakers in the political arena employ short and long sentences, but in the study by Su (2021), Trump uses short sentences. The results of the study of the speech indicated that Trump uses short sentences to talk about the daily life of Americans. Trump's speech had three main processes presented according to the order of prominence in usage as follows: material (61.4%), relational (18%) and mental (13%).

Recent developments in the field of SFL in political discourse and narrative texts have led to a renewed interest in the investigation of transitivity in Biblical texts. One recent study on Transitivity within SFG was conducted by Ngongo (2021) in a bible translation of Matthew in a language called Kupang Malay, noting that transitivity comprises participant, circumstance and processes. Notably, the participants in texts are realised through nominal groups while circumstance is realised through time, location, reason, cause, and manner. Apart from the nominal groups, the realisation of processes is through verb groups such as material, relational, existential, behavioural and mental processes. In view of the findings, Ngongo's study revealed the composition of circumstantial elements and adjuncts in material processes as optional elements in the construction of transitivity.

A similar study by Al-Ebadi (2012) in the King James Bible revealed the existence of material, mental, and verbal processes in the Epistle of James, chapter 1, 1-27. Just like political texts, Al-Ebadi notes the dominance of material processes, noting that transitivity constructs and deconstructs meanings in texts. In employing process types in the text, the meanings revealed through

processes were people's tolerance for difficult situations, seeking divine wisdom, the necessity for obedience, forbearance, and statement of facts. Such a revelation of meanings is constructed through participants who are actors of activities and events at specified times. Therefore, the study findings showed that the dominant participant was Actor and the least were Sayer and verbiage, while most of the circumstances were distributed on time, manner, condition, quality, matter, accompaniment, result and place.

Still, the King James Bible reveals the existence of processes (Kim, 2023). His study affirms that the material processes in James 3:13; 4-10 are the most dominant, followed by behavioural. Still, his analysis provided contrasting findings in the book of James 4:11; 5:12 in terms of the most dominant and least dominant processes. Specifically, the contrasting results indicated that while there was dominance of material processes in James 3:13; 4-10, the text in James 4:11-5-12 indicated that the relational processes were the majority. As observed in the study findings, the former texts in James utilised all six processes, while the latter employed five process types. Although the results of the two studies demonstrate the occurrences of the processes, the meanings revealed by the data are not evident. In Lubukusu, most of the studies by Nasiombe 2000, Wasike 2007, and Marlo 2013 have focused on the description of morphological, syntactical and tone marking of the language using formal theories, but studies on the application of SFL are undocumented. This study, therefore, applies SFL to study the meanings constructed in a Bukusu Bible in Matthew 21:1-46.

METHODOLOGY
This study is approached through the descriptive research design. According to Kothari (2004), a descriptive design aims at the formulation of the objective of the study, designing data collection methods, selecting the sample, data collection, processing, analysing and reporting the findings. The data were purposively sampled from the Bukusu Bible. Podesva and Sharma (2013) argue that purposive sampling is mostly utilised in linguistics with a small population of linguistic paradigms. The data was purposively drawn from Matthew 21:1-46. Therefore, a total of 16 clauses were selected to meet the purpose of the study objectives. Specifically, five clauses were employed to reveal material processes, while 11 comprised verbal processes. Henceforth, the elements

that construct the material and verbal processes were identified from the 16 clauses identified.

The analysis comprised parsing simple clauses into specific clause components, then presenting them in simple tables. For instance, the material processes comprised: actor (participant), material (process), goal (participant) and optional circumstantial elements. On the other hand, the verbal processes had sayer (participant), recipient (participant) and verbiage (what was said). Podesva and Sharma (2013) posit that the small population has little interpersonal variation or that such a variation is inconsequential for the data collected due to the underlying representation across the entire population. The data analysis was constrained in the transitivity network of Systemic Functional Linguistics.

The transitivity network classifies processes into material, verbal, mental, relational, behavioural and existential processes and focuses on participants, processes and circumstantial elements in the clauses. This study could not be generalised to other texts evident in Bantu languages, although generalisation should be done with caution since the context of some texts evident in the language has variations. More importantly, this study focused on texts in Matthew 21:1-46, analysing material and verbal processes in the temple, healing the blind and the cripled and the parable of the workers. In view of this, researchers are limited in their studies on elements of material and verbal processes, leaving out the context under which the events occur.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Table 1 provides a summary of events, material and verbal processes employed by participants at specific places and occasions.

Table 1: Occurrences of Material and Verbal processes

S/no	Event	Material	Verbal
1	Entry in Temple	9	0
2	Parable of Workers	7	0
3	Entry to Jerusalem	0	2
4	Jesus' Authority/Power	0	5
5	Parable of Two Children	0	4
	Total	16	11

Table 1 presents events evident in Matthew 21:1-46. Basically, it is revealed that material processes were 16, while the verbal processes were 11. A study by Nurlela et al. (2018) addressed the process types of the transitivity system in English department students' narrative texts. The study concludes that the frequency of material process is followed by mental and relational process. Still on narrative texts, Nurlela (2018) investigated the occurrences of material processes, noting the dominance of material processes in narrative texts. A further study by Kurniani (2017) explored the transitivity system of a Friday sermon in a Muslim context, within a systemic functional analysis that was delivered by Mufti Ismail Ibn Musa Menk. In his study results, the material processes were dominant in the text, followed by behavioural and verbal processes. From previous studies, the current study also reveals the dominance of material processes in Matthew 21:1-46.

Material Processes on Entry in Temple
Material processes are employed during Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the temple in Matthew 21:12-14. As presented in the data, the text that follows, Matthew 21:8, exhibits the activities that the crowd took part in during the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. In the temple, a clash existed between Jesus and the people carrying out varied activities, as evidenced in Matthew 21:12, 14.

Matthew 21:12
Yesu engila mu lukaangu mala Atimaniaβoosi βaapa ne βakusya ne βaakula, afumalixaka chimesa che babaandu βafunja tʃirupia ne tʃindeβe tʃapo βaβakusianga kamauusi kamaβaya.

Jesus went into the temple and chased all those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the money exchangers and stalls of those who sold the pigeons.

The findings in Matthew 21:12 reveal a repetitive nature of material processes just like the previous texts. According to Yoon (2019), the goal of this repetition is to highlight the points that the writer wants the reader to focus on in the discourse, which is determined by the verbal system's degree of grounding. Agbo et al. (2019) portrays the speaker as the active agent who has the overriding stake. In the current study, such an active Actor (Jesus) with an overriding stake over everyone is depicted in the material processes *engila* (entering), *atimania* (chased), βakusia (purchasing), *βaakula* (selling), *afumalixaka* (overturned), and *βaβakusyanga* (selling) all serve to illustrate this claim.

A similar concept drawn from Liping's (2014) study is also revealed in the current study, indicating many material processes depicting feelings of anger, just like

Jesus was to bring normalcy in the temple. Jesus's projection of anger was a result of people carrying out activities that were unexpected in the temple; the selling, buying and exchanging money. Therefore, he projects anger to the Goal that is, *βoosiβaapa ne βaakula ne βakusia* (those buying and selling), *βaβaandu βafunja tʃirupia*, (those exchanging money) in the temple. In line with a study by Thu and Nyein (2022), on the sermon material, clauses show that the sermon's content indicates concrete things that the pastor desires his audience to do and not do. Possibly, the temple being a holy place angered Jesus, and just like Thu and Nyein's (2022) findings, Jesus wanted to demonstrate concrete things that he wanted those in the temple to do. Jesus healed the blind man and the crippled in the temple, as evidenced in Matthew 21:14.

Table 2: Healing the Blind and Crippled

βaβoofu ne βaleme	βetʃa	nio a-li	mu lukaangu mala aaβaonia
The blind and the crippled	came	where he was	In the temple, he healed them
Actor	material	Goal	circumstance

Matthew 21:14.

Apart from acts of projecting anger to change the order of things in the temple, the data in Mathew 21:14 addresses the manifested power to heal. The material processes in the text elaborate on one such activity that is expected in the temple, departing from what people were doing in the temple in the earlier analysis. The material process *βetʃa* (came) *aaβaonia* (healed) shows that Jesus had authority over human health. In this text, the actors, who are the people that were healed, are the blind and the crippled. The text does not reveal the number that was healed, but from the Actor, then we can proclaim the plurality of the population. Based on the physical conditions of the Actors, who were blind and crippled, it can be asserted that their movement could have been a struggle to reach where Jesus was for a healing. A similar study by Iredele (2022) also reveals that the material

process describes God as being dutiful, creating, moving/shifting and making both physical and metaphysical things. It can be reaffirmed that this study, just like Iredele (2022), demonstrates that Jesus possessed such power over physical things through healing the blind and the crippled.

Material Process about the Parable of Workers
Material processes are evident in the construction of incidents of supernatural occurrences. Apart from Jesus healing the blind and the crippled, as explored in the material process earlier, the demonstration of power over nonhuman objects is revealed here. The data, in Matthew 21:35, communicates a part of the information pertaining to the parable of workers that Jesus taught the disciples.

Table 3: Seizing the Slaves

βaxoli tʃana	βeβwaakala	nasioβi βewe βaaβa mulala, βeera okundi mala βaapa okundi kamaβaale.
Tenants the	Seized	Slaves his beat one, killed another, and stoned another
Actor	Material	Goal

Matthew 21:35

The tenants seized his slaves. beat one, killed another, and stoned another. The parable reveals emotions perpetuated by the tenants since material processes reveal

anger, and violent killings in future. The Actor *bakholi* (the tenants), initiates activities through the material processes. In regard to the idea of anger and destructive

nature, the material processes: *bebwaakala* (seized), *baapa* (beat), beera (killed) and *baapa* (stoned) reveal such a message of destruction, killing and causing injuries. Ali et al. (2021) studied Nelson Mandela's speeches, noting that Mandela uses material processes, revealing that the Africans' present state is not fated, but a creation of Whites. In view of Ali et al's (2021) findings, it is evidenced in the current study that the condition of the servants is not an act of fate but one that is conspired and executed, as evident in the material processes.

Material processes act upon different Goals, revealing that out of the three servants, one was beaten, killed, and the last one stoned, revealing the levels of meted out on servants. Material processes reveal the hostility of tenants towards the servants. Ramadan (2019), commenting on the ravages of war in his study, proclaims that nature reacts with war as leaves fall early in an abnormal behaviour, bringing death and fall, taking good people and valuable things. Ramadan study focuses on a real-life issue, but this study looks at teaching through the parable, which does not project reality but only a reference to life issues. Turning to other details of the parable of the workers, Jesus uses material processes, again to highlight the conspiracy towards more killings as pointed out in Matthew 21:38-39.

Matthew 21:38.
Ŋgá βaxoli abo ne βaβona omwana tʃana βaβolana βali, 'yuno ali omwana wewe yitʃa xumwire nefwe xukilexo!'

When those tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, this is his son. Come on, let's kill him, and we will get his property.

In Matthew 21:38, we note features evident in a material clause, but it is apparent that there is a sharp contrast with Matthew 21:35. Since this is a continuous message from the previous, such a contrast of clausal features is evident. Material processes in the parable reveal such a hostile tendency of the tenants upon conspiring to kill. Still, the actions are carried out by the tenants as Actors who conspire to kill the son of the tenant, as revealed in the material. This conspiracy of executing the killing is propagated through the material processes: *itʃa* (come) and *xumwire* (kill). In converging together to conspire to kill, the tenants through the process *itʃa* (come), call upon everyone to converge before executing the killing. This heinous act of killing, as revealed in the text, was fueled by their need to inherit the farm, as mentioned in the material process *xukilexho* (will get). Basically, the tenants' greed for property, having benefited from the farm, drove them to the helm of killing the son so that they have full ownership of the farm.

Table 4: Seizing and Killing the Slave

nio	βa-	mu	tila	*βamuyila enje we liruti, βamwira.'*
So	they	him	seized,	took him out of the vineyard and killed him
Adj	actor	Goal	process	circumstance

Matthew 21:39

The data in Matthew 21:39 reveals the level of their conspiracy. The material processes *βamutila* (seized), *βamuyila* (took), and *βamwira* (killed) confirm how the killing was executed. From the data, the role of the material process tends to communicate actions that reveal plans and conspiracies to execute the murder. The actions of murder, just like the text in Matthew 21:35, are conducted by the same tenants (Actors). In the text in Matthew 21:39, the Actor is the subject marker [*ba-*] referring to the tenants, which is embedded in the material process *βa-mu-tila* (seized him). The role of the Actor depicts their ruthless activities, perpetuating acts that lead to the death of the son. The tenants harass and then kill the son of the vineyard owner. In connection with the text in Matthew 21:38, it is noted that the reference of the Actor is through the object marker [*mu-*] embedded in the processes *βamutila (*seized) *βamuyila* (took him).

The Actor and the Goal in Matthew 21:35, 38-39 are the same individuals as construed from Matthew 21:35, and Matthew 21:38. The ruthless nature of the Actor is also revealed here, and it can be clearly seen that the Goal was harmless and unable to overpower the Actor in the execution of murder. In agreement with the current study, Ali et al. (2021) report that through the material processes, Africans aim to set in motion actions to turn down the Europeans' cruelties and set out their revolutionary principles through the processes of doing and actions. In this study, such a revolution kick-starts with the cruel tenants killing the servants and later the son, with a bleak intention of taking over the property.

Verbal clauses
Verbal Processes on Entry to Jerusalem
Verbal processes evident at the time Jesus was getting into Jerusalem reveal the questions directed to Jesus and responses from the crowd about the identity of Jesus. The two clauses that emerged packaged with verbal processes were evident in Matthew 21:10 and Matthew 21:11. The analysis here does not concentrate on verbal processes alone, but also the Sayer, Receiver and verbiage as elements within the verbal clauses. This conversation commences immediately after Jesus entered Jerusalem, and it is at this point that the varied statements of who Jesus is were communicated. The data in Matthew 21:10 presents such a scenario of the question raised by people.

Table 5: Verbal Processes on Entry to Jerusalem

Ŋgá Yesu engila mu Yerusalemu, lutiri lwaβa mu lukoβa	βaβaandu	βareeb	βareeba βali nanu niye
When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was thrown into an uproar	People	asked	Who is he?
Verbiage	sayer	verbal	verbiage

Matthew 21.10

The data in Matthew 21:10 reveals a question raised pertaining to the identity of Jesus. Through the verbal process of asking, the text introduces the reader to a series of functional elements that illustrate the identity. The text presents the Sayer as *βaβaandu* (people) who were curious to know the person who was passing by. Such curiosity is demonstrated in the clause end through the verbiage which presents a question *βali nanu* (who is he)? His entry into Jerusalem, as mentioned in the second verbiage, threw the people into an uproar, and this can be attributed to material processes in Matthew 21:6-8 pertaining to his extraordinary entry to Jerusalem. The question form *nanu niye* (who is he) reveals a lack of knowledge pertaining to Jesus as revealed in the initial component of the verbiage about his entry in Jerusalem.

Mulyanti and Wati (2022) in their study proposed that in an English verbal clause, the function of the verbal process 'asked' is to project second-order representations of experience, showing the quoted or reported clause. The present study, just like the study by Mulyanti and Wati (2022), reveals the second order of events immediately after the verbal processes *bareeba* (asked). Another quick fact to make here is that both clauses have the circumstances of location in the verbiage, and there is a need to report that the circumstance in Matthew 21:10 is at the initial positions of the clause, while in the literature quoted, it is at the clause end (in the village).

The second order of events is evident in the verbiage at the beginning of the clause; *ŋgá Yesu engila mu Yerusalemu, lutiri lwaβa mu lukoβa* (When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was thrown into an uproar), and at the end position is *βali nanu niye* (who is he). The first part of the verbiage informs us that there was a pandemonium or a commotion when Jesus entered Jerusalem, but the last part is a question raised concerning Jesus' identity. It is such a commotion about his entry in Jerusalem that probed people to ask the question about his identity. The activities of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem and an abrupt stampede of the people led to such a question. Since the question in Matthew 21:10 is not a rhetorical one, the answer is given in Matthew 21:11.

Table 6: Verbal Process of Answering

βaβaandu bakali	βa-koβosya	βali yuno ali omuŋgáoosi owama Nazareti ya kalilaya
The crowd	answered	this is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee
Sayer	Verbal	Verbiage

Matthew 21:11

The data in Matthew 21:11 was in response to the question raised in Matthew 21:10. The verbal process of answering demonstrates that such is a reply to the question. Here, the verbal process *βakoβosya* (answered)

is a reply introducing the details of the response, which points to the person they sought to find out their identity. A major function of the verbal process in the above text is to provide a response, reply or an answer. From the clause, it is noted that the Sayer is a modification from the one in Matthew 21:10, that is *βaβaandu* (people) to *βaβaandu βakali* (the crowd). The content of the identity is framed in the verbiage which comes after the verb in the clause. Therefore, the people's reply revealed that the person passing by was Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth. Basically, from the material processes analysed earlier, based on his entry to Jerusalem, he probed them to give such a response that he was Jesus.

Verbal Process about Jesus' Authority/Power
The data in Matthew 21-23,24,27 explains the authority and supernatural power of Jesus. It is quite evident in varied verses that the conversations that surround the text point to miracles performed by Jesus and where Jesus acquired such powers to execute such miracles. Some questions are posed by the chief priests and teachers of the law, as it will be explained later in the analysis. In revealing that Jesus performed miracles, the text in Matthew 21:20 demonstrates such an ability to perform the miracles.

Matthew 21:20
Ŋgá   Baβeeka ne βabona kano βauka, mala' βareebana,   βali,'kumutulitʃana   Xwomile Xaŋgu βusa kuriena?

When   the disciples saw this, they were astounded   Asked, how did the fig tree wither?

Adj   Sayer Verbiage Verbal verbiage

More precisely, in Matthew 21:20, the verbal process of asking introduces us to a feeling of surprise upon the tree withering. Although such an action is replicated in Matthew 21:19, here the focus is to outline the verbal processes in the clause to reveal the messages evident.The verbiage in the clause *'kumutuli tʃana xwomile xaŋgu βusa kuriena*' (That the fig tree withered very first how) explicates the ultimate results of the curse of the tree drying abruptly.

In the clause, there is also evidence that the second verbiage implies surprise on the part of the Sayer (the disciples), which arose as a result of the tree drying. Still, in the conversation pertaining to the miracle of the fig tree, Jesus makes a reply upon seeing the disciples astonished at the miracle, but the reply was meant to reassure them to have faith and be hopeful that they can do greater things. The data in Matthew 21:23 presumes teachings of Jesus and the questioning directed towards Jesus pertaining to his extraordinary powers regarding miracles.

Yesu akoβola mu lukaangu, ne ŋgá aβa ne ekisya, βasaayi βaxulu ne βaβemeelesi, βetʃa mala βamureeβa bali, 'βuŋyali siina niβwo olixo oxholelamo βiβindu βino lundi naanu owaxuelesyaβunyali βwewe oβu?'

Jesus came back to the temple, and as he taught, the chief priests and the elders came to him and asked, 'What right have you to do these things? Who gave you this right?'

The extraordinary powers pertaining to miracles in Matthew 21:23 raise a question directed to Jesus. Basically, the verbal process of asking *βamureeβa* (asked) reveals a search for information about miracles. From the data, it is revealed that the question is directed towards *Yesu* (Jesus), as the Client. The detailed content of the interrogation is packaged in the verbiage, that is, to find out where Jesus gets the power to perform all the miracles. Earlier on, Jesus assumed the role of answering and responding to questions for clarity, but a contrasting aspect is ensured here, as Jesus is put to the task of responding to the question. It can be assumed that the chief priests and the teachers of the law were also powerful and possessed the courage to direct such a question to Jesus.

Yujie and Fengjie (2018) raise the question of authority and propose that President Trump's use of verbal processes reflects the authority of the presidential status, helping Americans to create a sense of responsibility. In line with the present study, Jesus had a responsibility to confirm to the people that he possessed supernatural powers to perform miracles. Although from the text, the chief priests and elders questioning Jesus about his powers reveal that they, too, had authority and powers. Even still, the verbiage mentions such tendencies of power, permission and authority to conduct activities by Jesus. There was an instant response proposed to the question in Matthew 21:23, within Matthew 21:24, sufficing still as a question from Jesus.

Table 7: Verbal process of answering

Yesu	a-βa	*Kobosia*	*Ali ese sesi ndamureeba lireeba lilala, ne mungobosia aba sesi ndamubolela bunyali Nibwo Kholelamo bibindu bino*
Jesus	them	Answered	That 'I will ask you one question, and if you give me an answer, I will tell you what right I have to do these things
Sayer	Recipient	Verbal	verbiage

Matthew 21:24.

The text in Matthew 21:24, as earlier mentioned, is a response to the question in Matthew 21:23, but interestingly, the respondent proposes a question before providing the answer. Therefore, turning to the text, three verbal processes emerge that project at the question and reveal the source of such miraculous power. As observed, to respond to the question, the Sayer *Yesu* (Jesus), using the verbal process, *aβakoβosya* (answered), makes an introduction to the response. Basically, at the mention of the verbal process (answered), then the questioners keenly expected a response, but contrastingly, the Sayer suggests raising a question through the verb of asking *ndamureeβa* (will ask). Again, Jesus proposes a condition of revealing the source of supernatural power only if they validly provide an answer to the question that he was yet to ask them. A response is directed to the chief priests and the elders, so the subject marker [-a] in the verbal process *aβakoβosya* (answered) makes reference to the two. This was a rebuttal to their question, but still in reply, Jesus wanted to challenge them and demonstrate that, despite the miracles, he was still powerful.

Iredele's (2022) analysis about the creation account, systemically points out that God uses the verbiage 'said' for instance, 'And God Said Let there be light:' the main proposition by Iredele (2022) is that he sets the natural law of reproduction in motion through His verbiage, delegating authority and empowering. As the discussion on creation account ensures this study also looks at the Sayer *Yesu* (Jesus), who has the powers of what is called into being. The results of the study indicated the dialogic nature of the versus. The dialogic nature of the texts is communicated through the verbal processes of responding to questions *aβakoβosia* (answered), which is utilised in Matthew 21:24. The text in Matthew 21:25 still raises a question towards the chief priests and the elders, but such a text, since it carries the verbal processes, only helps us understand the flow of the interaction. Therefore, it is not provided here for verbal clause functional element analysis. Jesus proposes in Matthew a question directed to the chief priests and the elders about where John got the power to baptise. Such a question threw them into a disarray of argument, wondering the question they would provide, and later in Matthew 21:27 they wholesomely replied that they do not have information about where he gets the power.

Table 8: Verbal Process of Answering

Nio	*βa-*	*koβosya*	*Yesu*	*βali sexumanya ta*
So	they	answered	Jesus	that they don't know
Adjunct	Sayer	verbal	Recipient	verbiage

Matthew 21:27

Still, in Mathew 21:27, it is clear that the process *bakobosia* (answered) is a process of answering presented in plural form. Therefore, following up on the earlier discussion, the Sayer is the chief priests and the elders referred to through the subject marker [*βa-*] in the verbal process *βakoβosy*a (answered). In such a text, the verbal process is directed to the Recipient, possibly the questioner, who in this case is *Yesu* (Jesus). In the text, the details of the question are detailed in Matthew 21:25, when Jesus asked them where John got the power to

baptise. Such a form of questioning without directly revealing the answer by Jesus was to test their knowledge about the source of power to perform the miracles. That lack of information from the chief priests and elders revealed that Jesus was more powerful and more knowledgeable, which is why he questioned them several times to show such inadequacies in the possession of information. Having failed to conclusively and rightfully reply, unexpectedly, Jesus, through the verbal process, tells them that he will not reveal his source of power.

This failure to provide the answer is presented in Matthew 21:27 as communicated and introduced through the verbal process.

In Matthew 21:27, it is demonstrated that Jesus failed to provide an answer when they failed to tell him where John got the power to baptise in Matthew 21:25.

Table 9: Verbal Process of Telling

Yesu	a-βa	a-βa-βoolela	ali, 'sesi se muβoolela βunyali siina niβwo xolelamo βiβiindu βino tawe.
Jesus	them	told	that I am also not telling you, by what right I do these things
Sayer	Recipient	Verbal	verbiage

Matthew 21:27

Here, the verbal process of telling *aβaβoolela* (told) introduces the negative reply that is contrary to the chief priest and elders' expectations. Though there is no mention of the chief priests and elders in the text, they are made reference to, through the subject marker [βa-] (them) in the verbal process aβaβoolela (told them). A second revelation of referring to the subject marker [βa-] as chief priests and elders is that the ongoing discourse right from Matthew 21:23-26 revealed so. Graber (2001), in his studies, notes that studies in Matthew, Luke and Mark in the past century have been cast in parables. In Matthew 21:29-31, Jesus taught the parable titled the parable of the two children, immediately after his interaction with the elders and the chief priests.

Verbal Process about the Parable of Two Children
A brief overview of the parable, Jesus mentions a certain man and his two sons as he teaches the chief priests and elders. His teaching employs symbolism referring to a certain man with two sons, who then sends the elder son to work in the vineyard plantation. The elder son said he would not go, but later went. Later, the man also sent the younger one to work in the plantation, but he failed to go. Jesus' teaching through parables employed question-answer techniques. Having provided a brief foundation of the parable, the analysis here focuses on verbal processes along with the clause elements with hidden tones.

Matthew 21:29
omundu aβa ne βaβaana βewe βasoleeli βaβili, atʃa xu muxulu aaloma ali, mwana wase luno tʃa oxole kimilimo mwiruti lie kimisaβiβu.

A man had his two male children and went to the elder one and told him, 'My son today go and work in the vine yard plantation.'

In Matthew 21:29, Jesus, in his teaching, mentions the key players in the parable as a man and two sons. Jesus uses the verbal process *aaloma* (said) to present the information that there was a certain man who had two sons and sent one to work in the vineyard plantation. From the background information of Jesus's earlier teaching, it is highlighted that this is a continuous teaching directed to the chief priests and elders. The Recipient in the text is *omuxulu* (elder one), and the message directed to him as verbiage is omwana wase *luno tʃa oxole kimilimo mwiruti lie kimisaβiβu* (my son go and work in the vineyard plantation). Here, the communication is directed to the elder son; this insinuates that there might be other sons not mentioned here in the parable. The message depicted in the verbiage is that the father had a responsibility of assigning duties to the sons, but it is not clear if they can be resistant or take up the duties assigned. The text in the same verse in Matthew 21:29 offers a response, but later the answer was met with a little bit of resistance; the son later agreed to do what the father had sent them to do.

Table 10: Verbal process of answering

omwana oyoo	mukobosia	ali, 'Senja tawe ne kakhali akelao ebiya mala acha.'
That child	answered	that, he was not going but he later blamed himself and went.
Sayer	Verbal	Verbiage

Matthew 21:29

As a response to the assignment divulged by his father, the data in Matthew 21:29 above provides an answer. In the parable, the specific names of the family members are

not mentioned, so the Sayer in the text is *omwana oyoo* (that child). In response to the father's message, the son uses the verbal process of answering *amukobosia*

(answered). The process of answering signals the listener to expect an answer that is presented in the verbiage. In reply, the details provided in the answer meant negating the duty given by the father through the verbiage; *Senja tawe ne kakhali akelao ebiya mala acha*.' (I will not go, but later blamed himself and went). Therefore, investigating the response of the son, a clear picture was depicted that there was some iota of resistance, and the son later blamed himself, possibly because he was regretful, and that is why he later took up the father's assignment. Here, the hidden picture is that the son was resistant, but later on became remorseful and showed some respect by taking up the duty bestowed on him. Therefore, focusing on the text in Matthew 21:30 sets the ground for the second part of the parable that Jesus taught the people, from which he asked the chief priests and elders about the parable.

Matthew 21:30
Omukeexe aloma ali, 'Yee βaapa ndatʃa, 'ne kaxali se atʃa tawe.
The young one said that, yes father I will go but he did not go.

Still in Matthew 21:30, again, an investigation revolves around the reply, but at this level, the younger son's reply. Earlier on, in the text in Matthew 21:29, the Recipient of the message was the elder son, but in Matthew 21:30, we note that the Sayer is the younger son. Jesus sought to bring about a contrast between the two versions pertaining to the sons' responses, from which he will raise a question later. Contrasting the text with Matthew 21:29, it is observable that here the Sayer is *omukeexe* (young one) who employs the verbal process of saying *aloma* (said) to provide the reply to the father.

An investigation of the verbiage reveals that the younger son agreed to pick up the assignment, but he never went where he was sent, bringing about a further contrast to the earlier text. From the response in the verbiage, a quick observation is that the (Sayer) son is deceitful for convincing the father that he will take up the duty, but he failed to fulfil it. The response pertaining to the question is captured in the text in Matthew 21:31, which states that the elder son did the right thing based on the duty that the father gave the sons.

Table 11: Verbal Process of Answering

βa	*mukobosia*	*βali,'omuxulu.'*
They	answered	that the elder one
Sayer	verbal	verbiage

Matthew 21:31

The data in Matthew 21:31 reveals the response of the chief priests and elders with precision and brevity. Basically, the subject marker [*βa-*] refers to the chief priests and elders, and this is foregrounded because of the earlier mention in texts analysed above. Commenting on the Sayer in their study, Yujie and Fengjie (2018) mention that one participant in any verbal process is the Sayer - the person who speaks, though sometimes it need not be explicitly mentioned in the clause. It is notable that the Sayer is implicitly mentioned here, but the background information divulges that it was the chief priests and the elders. Here, another role of the chief priests and elders, apart from listening to the teaching by Jesus, was to respond to the questions raised by Jesus. Such response/s were in line with the details of the teaching (parable), so the brief verbiage *omuxulu* (the elder one) informs Jesus that it was the elder son who did the right thing.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Conclusion: The findings of this study demonstrate the existence of material and verbal processes in Matthew 21:1-46. Systemic Functional Grammar handles the context of events, for instance, during Jesus's entry into Jerusalem, the material and verbal processes are employed. At another level, material processes are used during the teaching of the parable of the workers, while verbal processes depict Jesus's authority, and the parable of two children. Material processes are constrained to the following obligatory elements: Actor, process and goal, while the optional elements are circumstance and adjunct. The verbal processes comprise mandatory elements: sayer, process and verbiage. In Matthew 21:12, the material processes *atimania* (chased), *afumalixaka* (overturned) reveal Jesus's emotions in the temple, while the parable of the workers in Matthew 21:35; still the processes *bebwaakala* (seized), *baapa* (beat), *beera* (killed), and *baapa* (stoned) communicate the tenants' anger.

The verbal processes are processes of asking, telling or answering. In the temple, people used the processes *Bareebana* (asked themselves) *ßa-koßosya* (answered) to ask and answer questions about Jesus's identity. Upon cursing the tree, the disciples, the chief priests and elders used the verbal processes *ßareebana* (asked themselves) and *ßamureeßa (*asked him) to raise questions. Although the disciples raised questions among themselves, the chief priests and the elders directed the questions to Jesus, demonstrating their authority. Jesus's reply to the chief priests was introduced through the process *aßakoßosya* (answered them). In the parable of the two children, it is evident that the children used the processes *aloma* (said) βamukobosia (answered him).

Recommendations: The study calls for more research on transitivity in Bukusu spoken and written texts under the framework of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar to validate the argument that the theory is rich in the analysis of any text in Lubukusu. By integrating a full metafunctional analysis, spanning from material, mental, behavioural, existential, and relational to verbal processes- future studies will contribute to meaning construction in religious texts within Lubukusu. The current study only delved into texts in Matthew 21:1-46, addressing the occurrences of material and verbal processes, but future studies should focus on sample texts from other books in the Bible to reveal messages and meanings realised through transitivity. More importantly, we acknowledge that the results presented in this paper may not be representative of other texts in the Bible. At most, the findings may provide a basis for further studies of other texts in the Old and New Testaments, focusing on meanings constructed in the Bukusu Bible.

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