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Girl A: The Truth about the Rochdale Sex Ring by the Individual Who Stopped Them: A CDA of a Rape Victim's Testimony

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**Abstract**

As a result of one young woman's ability to speak out, nine men living in Greater Manchester were convicted in 2012 for sex trafficking of underage girls. Reports revealed that numerous vulnerable teenagers had been coerced into keeping quiet about this in exchange for various rewards, but, through one victim's account, we can visualise the torture endured at the hands of these men. In an interview on ITV, *Girl A* constructs her identity as a survivor who describes how she has been preyed upon. To show how she perceives her world, herself and other participants, this paper applies a CDA informed approach. The focus is on the TRANSITIVITY patterns (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014) employed in her discourse and that of the interviewers, with the aim of providing insights into how this system shapes the representation of a particular experience, in this case rape.

**Key words:** CDA, Hallidayan TRANSITIVITY, sexual violence, Girl A

## Introduction

Parliamentary documentation (Lipscombe and Beard 2014: 3) looking specifically at strategies adopted by the British government to handle human trafficking[1] indicates a lack of specific legislation in relation to sex trafficking in the UK prior to 2003. It was at this point that the *Sexual Offences Act 2003*[2] was approved, stipulating that trafficking for sexual exploitation would be classed as an offence in its own right. Previously, such cases were dealt with as instances of kidnap or false imprisonment.

In the last year, the press has published numerous reports of young girls being sexually trafficked in Peterborough[3], Oxfordshire[4], Sheffield[5], Rotherham[6], to name a few. This paper deals with one case which took place in Rochdale, Greater Manchester. In 2012 a group of men were convicted of rape, conspiring to engage in sexual activity with, and sex trafficking of, under-age[7] girls in Rochdale. *Girl A*[8], the subject of this paper, was one of their victims. Of the 12 men originally charged with sexual exploitation, 3 were acquitted and 9 eventually convicted of the crime and sentenced to between 4 and 19 years. Many of the criminals were married with children and well-respected in their communities, which is why, when these stories emerged, many found it difficult to believe. The sexual abuse suffered by *Girl A* and other victims, aged 13-15 at the time, took place primarily in Heywood, Rochdale between 2008 and 2009 at two takeaway shops where two of the offenders worked at the time. In 2008, *Girl A* reported what was happening to her, but she was not considered a credible witness by the Crown Prosecution Service. As a result, the investigation was suspended. Nevertheless, police soon resumed their enquiries when a second victim came forward with complaints of a similar nature in 2009 (see Girl A and Bunyan's 2013 biographical account for further details).

The teenage girls involved in this case were arguably an obvious target for these criminals, as they came from deprived and/or dysfunctional backgrounds. *Girl A* explains that, in her case, this all began because of problems she was having at home and how, as a result, she moved out. Soon afterwards, she found herself easily coerced when initially given free food, money, gifts and alcohol, unaware that these would shortly instead be rewards in return for sexual favours, either for gang members themselves or their acquaintances. Reports reveal how, on one occasion, another 15-year-old victim had to have sex with a member of the gang as a treat for his birthday, whilst other victims, *Girl A* included, described how they were plied with drugs and alcohol, and passed around to male friends and family members to be raped in various locations across the north of England[9].

When this case went to court in 2012, the defence argument was that the girls involved were willing participants and happy to have sex with hundreds of men who paid for this service. Nevertheless, the way in which *Girl A* talks about her ordeal in a televised interview on ITV[10] in 2013 contradicts this claim, which serves to emphasise how the same event can be represented in remarkably dissimilar ways. The aim here is to determine the way in which the experience of being trafficked and sexually exploited is depicted by *Girl A*, through a look at TRANSITIVITY (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014). Each of the grammatical choices within the system of TRANSITIVITY construes certain meanings and portrays the position of the interlocutor. Close attention will be paid to how *Girl A* opts for certain patterns as opposed to others to describe what happened to her and how she perceives those responsible for her torment. The way in which each interviewer (one male and one female) constructs their discourse will also be analysed to examine whether gender is potentially a factor that could influence their transitivity choices. This position derives from scholars (cf. Maltz and Borker 1982; Coates 1986; Tannen 1990; Holmes 1996) who have been working in the field of gender and language in recent decades and who have inferred that men and women adopt different communicative styles (i.e. a more cooperative style vs. a more competitive one).

At present, this is a pilot study that forms part of a larger research project devoted to the revision of TRANSITIVITY and its subsequent application to the autobiographical account produced by *Girl A* in which she gives a personal narrative of her torment as a victim of rape. The aim of this project is to examine the representation of rape and victimisation in discourse on a larger scale. That said, the findings from this paper are expected to illustrate how the use of particular (syntactic) choices can invoke certain meanings that may otherwise be less explicit or not even emerge (Fowler 1991; Fairclough 1995, 2003), and to act as a point of departure in casting light on the way in which sexual abuse is represented through the eyes of *Girl A.*

## Theoretical background

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA henceforth) primarily draws on the notions of representation, ideology, dominance and power in language (Fowler 1986; Fairclough and Wodak 1997; Wodak and Chilton 2005; Kress and van Leeuwen 2006; van Leeuwen 2008; Wodak and Meyer 2009). A key aim of CDA is to apply linguistic methods of analysis to different text types in order to expose ideologies present in discourse, disclose the way in which language can be employed for manipulation purposes (van Dijk 2006), as well as highlight the multiple constructions that exist concerning the same social reality (van Dijk 2001).

Several schools of CDA have emerged over the years, but perhaps the most influential is Fairclough's approach (1989, 1992, 1995). Fairclough elaborated an already existing theory, known as *Critical Linguistics*, originally proposed by scholars at the University of East Anglia in the late 1970s (Fowler, Hodge, Kress and Trew 1979). Central to Critical Linguistics, and Fairclough's follow-up approach to CDA, is *Systemic Functional Grammar* (SFG henceforth), in which language is argued to serve the purpose of making sense of our experience and enabling us to act out our social relationships (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 25).

SFG maintains that there are 3 language metafunctions: (i) the *ideational* metafunction (concerned with our inner and outer experiences as modelled through the system of TRANSITIVITY); (ii), the *interpersonal* metafunction (concerned with our interactive exchanges, expressed through the systems of MOOD and MODALITY); (iii) the *textual* metafunction (concerned with the internal organization of the message and expressed through the system of THEME) (Halliday 1985; Halliday and Matthiessen

2014). All three work in conjunction with one another constantly and concurrently (Halliday 1985: 53). For this piece of research, the focus will be on the ideational metafunction and, specifically, the notion of TRANSITIVITY.

The system of TRANSITIVITY has, to date, been proposed from two different perspectives, each designed to account for how language represents experience. The first is the Hallidayan approach (1985, 2014) and the second is Fawcett's Cardiff Grammar model (1987, 2000). In both cases, reference to *participant*, *process* and *circumstance* types is made; where these theories diverge is in their description of what these types are and how they are defined. For the analysis here, the former is employed as it is more widely used.

According to Halliday (1973: 134), TRANSITIVITY is 'the set of options whereby the speaker encodes his [sic] experience of the processes of the external world, and of the internal world of his [sic] own consciousness, together with the participants in these processes and their attendant circumstances'. Each individual has their own unique language usage, thus, not only expressing themselves differently from others, but also focusing on certain aspects when representing reality. Both the syntactic and vocabulary choices a person makes are a reflection of their positioning, based on the belief that we organize our discourse in terms of how we perceive a situation and the meanings we intend to convey (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 217).

Halliday's system of TRANSITIVITY comprises three sub-components, namely a process (usually expressed by a verbal group), as in (1); a participant involved in the process (mainly expressed by a nominal group), as in (2); and a circumstance (usually expressed by an adverbial group or prepositional phrase), as in (3) below.

(1) Evans was jailed for five years [...] (*The Mail on Sunday*, 26/10/2014)
(2) Evans was jailed for five years [...] (*The Mail on Sunday*, 26/10/2014)
(3) Evans was jailed for five years [...] (*The Mail on Sunday*, 26/10/2014)

Whilst circumstantial elements are regarded as an optional feature of a clause, participant types are considered inherent to the process. According to Halliday and Matthiessen, there are six different process types: *material*, *mental*, *relational*, *verbal*, *behavioural* and *existential* processes (2014: 215). The first three are known as the major types (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 215). *Verbal*, *behavioural* and *existential* processes are regarded as minor (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 215) and located on the border of two major process types because they have characteristics pertaining to both. Each of the six processes reflects a different kind of participant configuration, as illustrated below.

| Material | Mental | Relational | Verbal | Behavioural | Existential |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Actor | Senser | Carrier | Sayer | Behaver | Existent |
| Goal | Phenomenon | Attribute | Receiver | Behaviour | |
| Recipient | | Beneficiary | Verbiage | | |
| Client | | Attributor | Target | | |
| Scope/Range | | Identifier | | | |
| | | Identified | | | |
| | | Assigner | | | |

Table 1. Participant configuration according to Hallidayan TRANSITIVITY

Material processes represent actions or events and their corresponding participants may include an Actor (the one responsible for bringing about a change), as in (4); a Goal (the entity that finds itself changed or affected by the process), as in (5); a Recipient (the one goods are given to), as in (6); a Client (the one a service is carried out for), as in (7); and a Scope/Range (the domain over which a process takes place or the process itself), as in (8) (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 224-6).

(4) [...] what does that make a guy who *rapes* a young woman [...] (*The Sun*, 21/10/2014)
(5) [...] what does that make a guy who *rapes* a young woman [...] (*The Sun*, 21/10/2014)
(6) [...] he *gave* her an expensive present [...] (*Daily Mail*, 09/04/2013)
(7) […] he started talking about all the things he'd bought for me [...] (*The Telegraph*, 08/05/2012)
(8) I wanted *to have* a shower, to scrub the filth of those two men away (Girl A and Bunyan 2013: 72)

Unlike material processes which are concerned with our outer experiences, mental processes relate to our inner ones and, thus, how we perceive (mental *perceptive*), understand (mental *cognitive*), feel (mental *emotive*) and desire (mental *desiderative*) things and people in the world (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 248). A mental process also exhibits a different set of participants from a material process, namely a Senser (the conscious being that understands, likes, hears, yearns for, etc.), as in (9), and a Phenomenon (the entity, conscious or not, that is understood, liked, heard, yearned for, etc.), as in (10).

(9) _____ They *hate* her because she won [...] (*Daily Mail*, 10/04/2013)
(10) They *hate* her because she won [...] (*Daily Mail*, 10/04/2013)

Relational processes concern the notion of being and becoming (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 259), and comprise three subcategories: relational *intensive*, relational *possessive* and relational *circumstantial*. All of these are either of an attributive (e.g. Lucy is **sad**) or identifying nature (e.g. Emma is **the winner**). For attributive clauses, the semantic roles include a Carrier (i.e. Lucy) and an Attribute (i.e. sad), on the basis that one entity characterises another. For those constituting an identifying clause, the participants are labelled Identifier (i.e. Emma) and Identified (i.e. the winner); these are instances in which one entity denotes another.

*Verbal* processes lie between mental and relational processes. These refer to saying in a general sense, and 'may cover any kind of symbolic exchange of meaning' (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 303). The integral participant here is labelled Sayer (the one who exchanges meaning), as in (11), although an additional three roles may be accommodated. These include a Receiver (the one to whom the saying is directed), as in (12); a Verbiage (the content of what is said), as in (13); and a Target (the entity targeted by the illocutionary act), as in (14).

(11) "You don't get anywhere in this life without hard work", he'd *say* [...] (Girl A and Bunyan, 2013: 8)
(12) The first thing he *said* to me was […] (*The Mail on Sunday*, 21/04/2013)
(13) [...]another of her Cabinet members, spoke less fluently but with greater muscle about how those - eg the BBC - who describe her [...] […] (*Daily Mail*, 11/04/2013)
(14) […] John Healey *accused* the PM of making political capital out of Lady Thatcher's death. (*The Mirror*, 11/04/2013)

Behavioural processes lie between material and mental processes, typically denoting physiological or psychological behaviours (e.g. sneeze, smile). The main participant is a Behaver, who is often a conscious entity. These clauses also allow for a second element, termed Behaviour, as in (15).

(15) [...] one of the big sea lions […] gave a great big yawn [...] (Morrisette 2013: 27)

Finally, existential processes lie between relational and material types, and represent the existence of an entity, or Existent, which may be a person, an object, an institution, an abstraction, etc. An example of an existential clause is (16) below.

(16) *There was* only one enemy within [...] (*Daily Mail*, 10/04/2013)

The system of TRANSITIVITY has been applied to the analysis of different text types to include the press, political speeches, advertisements, literary works or legal proceedings (c.f. Thompson 1996; Gouveia 2005; Nguyen 2012), to acquire insights into the ideological stance of the speaker or writer. Before considering those focused specifically on the discursive representation of rape, a brief outline of other research on language and sexual violence is first provided.

Of those scholars working on language and sexual violence, Cotterill's and Ehrlich's contributions have been rather influential. Cotterill (2000; 2007) has examined the usage of particular terms of reference as well as certain lexical items during different stages of the court hearing (i.e. open vs. closing arguments) in order to establish the power relations that emerge during a court case. Examples of Ehrlich's work include investigations into what constitutes a rape victim (Ehrlich 2002; 2008) whereby she maintains that rape by a stranger and rape by a known assailant will often lead to different outcomes at trial, if not beforehand (i.e. during the police investigation). Furthermore, she has carried out work on rape cases in Canadian courts with a focus on particular lexical items, seemingly designed to conjure up a less violent image of the events alleged to have taken place, or even infer the notion of consensual sex in order to diminish or remove responsibility from the suspected rapist (Ehrlich 2001). Also in her research, Ehrlich (2008: 174) describes how rape victims often have difficulties when recounting their experience of sexual abuse and evade, where possible, the usage of particularly lucid terminology.

To now turn to research on sexual violence and TRANSITIVITY, we may first refer to a study by Adampa (1999). Adampa (1999) applies Halliday's model of TRANSITIVITY to examine how a male perpetrator of violence and his female victim are construed in articles across three different newspapers, and notes that, whilst minimal differences across newspapers emerge, the way in which the male aggressor and the female victim are portrayed sees some discrepancies come to light (Adampa 1999: 27). For example, whilst the male offender tends to be the Actor, argued to show his exertion of power (cf. Thwaite 1983: 145), the female victim is most frequently described as Sayer and, therefore, thought of as a less dominant participant. Another finding from this study is that the material processes employed to depict what the male criminal did are in the passive voice. This coincides with Clark (1992), who observes similar patterns when analysing accounts of rape in *The Sun* newspaper. Clark's (1992) application of Hallidayan TRANSITIVITY finds the rapist's guilt is often obscured and that the blame is transferred onto the victim or someone else through the use of passive sentences, thus masking the agent responsible.

A final piece of research worth considering is Figueiredo (1998), which looks at the TRANSITIVITY choices made by five appellants in rape cases. During the legal proceedings, the author discovered more material processes than any other type and argued that this was due to the evidence focusing on the events of the crime. As with Adampa's (1999) study, the victims also used verbal or relational processes most often, so that agency is deemphasised and as a result, the reader can sense their helplessness.

Meanwhile, the male attacker is portrayed as the Actor and, consequently, viewed as more active and more powerful (Figueiredo 1998: 108).

Having outlined the theoretical framework that forms the foundation of this paper, the following section outlines the materials and methodology employed before proceeding to relate the findings of this research to the literature on TRANSITIVITY in connection with sexual assault cases.

## Materials and methodology

The CDA approach adopted here invites a detailed, qualitative analysis of how a victim of rape perceives her experience of sexual violence and the people responsible for that abuse. Below a description is given of the sample under analysis followed by details of the TRANSITIVITY patterns examined in a televised interview with *Girl A*.

The data for this piece of research comprises a transcription of a spoken interview on the British TV channel *ITV* between *Girl A* and two interviewers, Holly Willoughby and Phillip Schofield. The interview comprises 77 turns. In view of the sample size (1,841 words) and the fact that the analysis was conducted manually in order to address the whole text in as much detail as possible, the approach adopted here is a micro-level one (Bednarek 2009: 19). According to Bednarek, the latter forms part of a three-pronged approach in which, any one of three approaches (micro-level corresponding to individual text analysis; meso-level corresponding to a small-scale quantitative analysis and macro-level corresponding to a large-scale quantitative analysis) may be implemented.

Following the guidelines of conversation analysis and prior to the transcription and analysis of individual turns (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974: 699), the codification of participants was carried out. Their assigned codes were based on their function in the interview and their gender (IM = Interviewer male; IF = Interviewer female; VF= Victim female). The language used for analysis was initially taken from a spoken dialogue and subsequently converted into written text, but paralinguistic features (e.g. pauses, gestures, facial expressions), whilst included within the transcription (Forrester 2002), will not be dealt with in this paper due to space constraints. The analysis carried out in this paper involved the identification of all three sub-components of the system: the process, the participants and the circumstances.

In order to differentiate between negative and non-negative instances, the semantic roles were assigned either a neutral/positive or negative evaluation in conjunction with the process in question. This was based on either the process itself, as in (17), or the overall context in which the process was used, as in (18) below.

(17) <IF>[...] your home life with your parents <u>was breaking down</u> [...]</IF> (material negative)

(18) <VF>[...] but I thought it was <u>*good*</u> cos we could do what we wanted, [...]</VF> (relational positive)

In addition to process types and their corresponding participant roles, the range of circumstances employed in the corpus were also considered. Table 2 below outlines the different circumstance types identified, all of which adhere to Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014: 313-314) system of TRANSITIVITY.

| Circumstance Element | Code | Question clues | Example |
|---|---|---|---|
| Enhancement Extent Duration | EXU | How long? | for two weeks |
| Enhancement Extent Frequency | EXF | How many times? | three times |
| Enhancement Location Place | ELP | Where? | in Spain |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Enhancement Location Time | ELT | When? | in January 2012 |
| Enhancement Manner Quality | EMQ | In what way? | in a dignified way |
| Enhancement Manner Comparison | EMC | What like? | unlike |
| Enhancement Manner Degree | EMD | To what extent? | considerably |
| Enhancement Cause Reason | ECR | Why? | because of |
| Enhancement Contingency Condition | EON | Under which conditions? | in the event of |
| Extending Accompaniment Comitative | EAC | Who/what with? | with/without |
| Extending Accompaniment Additive | EAA | And who/what else? | as well as |
| Projection Matter | PMA | What about? | concerning |
| Enhancement Manner Means | EMM | By which means? | by/through |
| Enhancement Cause Purpose | ECP | What for? | for the sake of |
| Enhancement Cause Behalf | ECB | Who for? | on behalf of |
| Enhancement Contingency Concession | EOS | Under what conditions? | despite / in spite of |
| Elaborating Role Guise | ERG | What as? | in the form of |
| Elaborating Role Product | ERP | What into? | into |
| Projection Angle Source | PAS | Who says? | according to ... |

Table 2. Circumstance types identified in the corpus

Subsequent to the identification of TRANSITIVITY patterns, quantitative results were obtained to establish where the focus of the interview lay (i.e. on what was done, what was thought, etc.). Attention was also paid to the way in which particular events and those involved were portrayed, (i.e. more positively/neutrally or negatively). Both are explored in more detail below.

## Results and discussion

This section first considers the findings obtained from the TRANSITIVITY analysis across the whole text. Subsequently, details of the TRANSITIVITY patterns employed by the two interviewers are given. Furthermore, in view of their gender difference, I briefly review some discourse particularities pertaining to each. Finally, the TRANSITIVITY patterns employed by *Girl A* are discussed alongside possible explanations for her version of events.

A natural starting point for the analysis was to look at the distribution of process types across the whole text to obtain a general idea of the picture portrayed, both by the interviewers and the victim. Quantitatively speaking, material processes feature as the most common process type in the text. This was quite unsurprising given that, as Figueiredo (1998: 105) also notes, material processes serve to represent the (criminal) activity engaged in as well as denote the *Actor* and the *Goal* participants.

The second most frequent category was the mental process type, relating particularly to what *Girl A* thinks (mental cognitive Senser), as in (19) or desires (mental desiderative Senser), as in (20).

(19) <VF>[...] I <u>thought</u> it was it was a bit strange [...]</VF>
(20) <VF>[...] she asked me if I <u>wanted</u> to go to the takeaway shop [...]</VF>

The use of mental desiderative processes also showed examples of the victim describing what the criminals wanted from her and other victims, as in (21), as well as of how the police wished to reassure the public that future victims will be listened to and treated with respect and compassion, as in (22).

(21) <VF>[...] saying that he wanted something in return for all the things what he's bought me [...]</VF>

(22) <IM>[...] Greater Manchester Police say that we want to make it clear that it's not acceptable for any police officer to appear disinterested in a victim [...]</IM>

Relational processes (15.8%) were the third most common type followed by verbal processes (12%). The former were employed primarily to describe the criminals involved as aggressive. Meanwhile, the latter showed twice as many verbal Sayers in comparison to verbal Receivers, thereby giving particular participants a voice. These overall findings[11] are illustrated in the graph below, which also indicates the low number of behavioural and existential processes in the dataset. Consequently, the findings for the latter two types will, from now on, be disregarded.

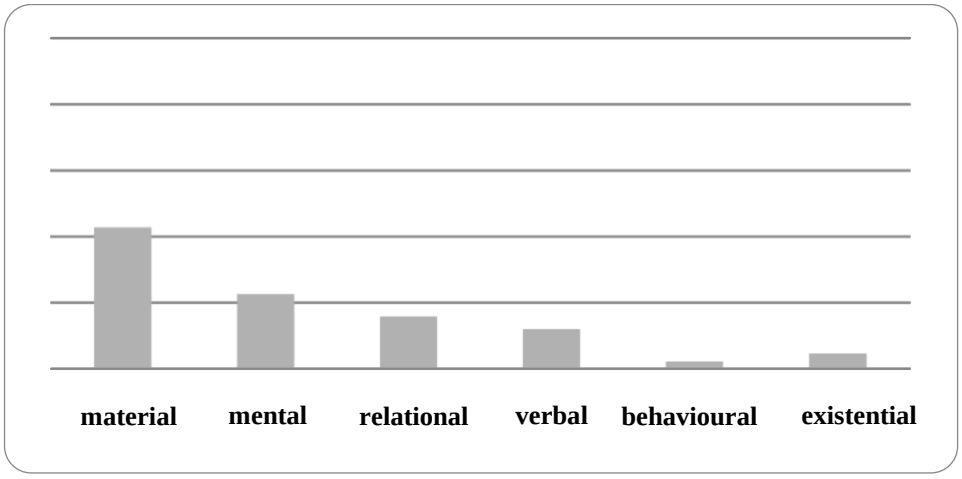


Figure 1. General distribution of process types in the corpus

The next stage of the analysis involved determining whether the discourse invoked a more or less negative reading. As indicated in Table 3, notable differences emerge across all four process types. Mental and verbal processes are more often associated with positive/neutral evaluations, whilst material and relational processes reveal a higher number of negative evaluations.

| Process | Positive | Negative |
|---|---|---|
| Material | 40.1% | 62.2% |
| Mental | 24.2% | 11.1% |
| Relational | 14.9% | 22.2% |
| Verbal | 13.4% | 2.2% |

Table 3. Distribution of positive/neutral (+) vs. negative (-) % process types in the corpus

The dominance of negative material processes may be explained by the fact that the interview in question relates what happened to the victim of a ruthless crime. Therefore, one anticipates an account of what atrocious actions and events took place. In a similar fashion, a greater amount of negative relational processes can be explained by the fact that a description of the individuals responsible for sexually exploiting these young girls was also thought unlikely to portray them as anything other than paedophile predators. As *Girl A* infers in her dialogue, the men responsible for these crimes were aggressive and callous and never gave a second thought to how they were behaving nor to how their actions were affecting their victims.

After exploring the overall frequency of process types, the distribution of different circumstance types was examined (see Table 2 above). Within the interview data, 80% of

circumstance types were found to comprise the following subcategories: (i) *enhancement location time* (35.8%), as in (23); (ii) *enhancement location place* (21%), as in (24); (iii) *enhancement extent frequency* (9.3%), as in (25); (iv) *enhancement extent duration* (7.4%), as in (26); and (v) *enhancement cause reason* (6.8%), as in (27).

(23) <VF> [...]it happens at night times [...] </VF>
(24) <VF> [...] they'd pick me up from school [...]</VF>
(25) <IF>[...] you were being raped up to 20 times a night</IF>
(26) <VF>[...] I was there for an hour or so, [...]</VF>
(27) <IM>[...] the case was thrown out because there wasn't enough evidence [...]</IM>

Therefore, what is deemed most relevant in this interview is the time something occurred, where, how often, for how long and the reason why it occurred. Having verified the most recurrent circumstances in the data, the three participants were then compared in terms of their usage of the top 2 subcategories[12] (i.e. ELT: Enhancement Location Time and ELP: Enhancement Location Place). The results are shown below.

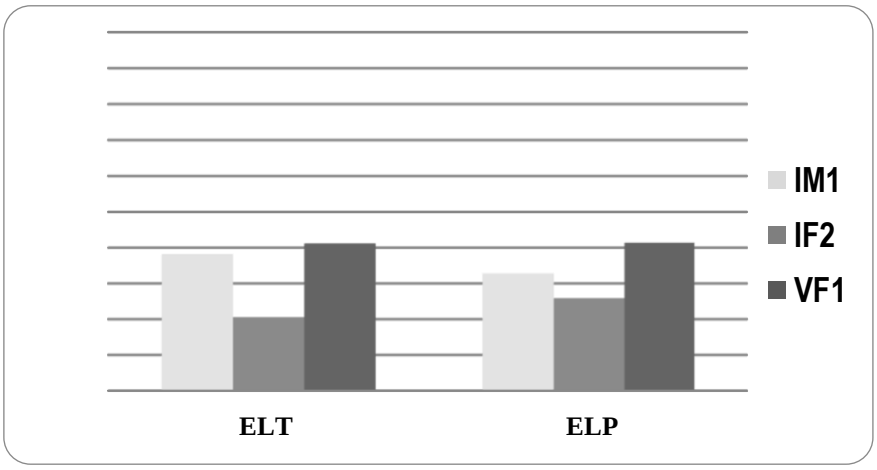


Figure 2. Participant usage of most frequent circumstance types in the corpus

Figure 2 reveals how the victim is the one who employs slightly more circumstances of place and time in her discourse, thereby insinuating that this information, for her, is central when narrating the events that took place. Matthiessen (1999: 17) found similar results when looking at patterns across general English corpora, which would indicate that the frequency of these two circumstances in discourse is not uncommon. Nevertheless, in *Girl A*'s discourse, it is apparent throughout that she tends towards a more factual account in favour of an emotive one when describing what happened to her.

The patterns of both interviewers when questioning *Girl A* are now considered. As detailed above, research into language and gender has inferred that, potentially, two different communicative styles (cooperative vs. competitive) exist. The former is designed to ensure the flow of communication, whilst the latter to retrieve information. If we revert back to Figure 2 above, we witness the male interviewer use more circumstances of place and time by comparison to his female colleague. It is possible that the male interviewer deems this information highly relevant and that *Girl A*'s frequent usage results from her replying in accordance with his line of questioning. This higher frequency of time and place circumstances in the male interviewer's line of questioning would seem, nevertheless, to reflect a more competitive style and, in view of this, it is worth drawing the reader's attention at this point to the interruptions as well as question types employed by both interviewers given that, to some extent, they also differ. The male interviewer is found to interrupt three times more often than his female counterpart

throughout the communicative exchange, which is typical behaviour of someone employing a more competitive style during communication. The interlocutor will attempt to maintain the audience's attention and assert a dominant role in the conversation. The male interviewer also asks twice as many questions (18 yes/no and 8 open-ended questions) as the female interviewer (who asked 9 yes/no questions and 3 open-ended questions), which, again, reiterates the idea that he adopts a more assertive position in the interaction. Unlike the male, the female interviewer in her line of questioning appears to sympathise and understand what the victim has gone through, by providing details in the questions she poses that, presumably, *Girl A* is unable to. However, the latter may have one of two possible interpretations or, arguably, both interpretations may apply. On the one hand, the female interviewer may be trying to control the direction of the discourse or, alternatively, she may be trying to ensure the flow of communication. To accept the latter would be in line with Maltz and Borker (1982: 197-198), who maintain that the cooperative style, often adopted by women, is one through which a closeness with the interlocutor(s) is maintained and, in turn, a relationship of equality. In addition, they argue that those using a cooperative style are also able to sensitively interpret what is being said to them.

To turn our attention back to TRANSITIVITY and specifically, the process types employed, the main differences observed between the two interviewers relate to the number of mental and verbal processes used by each of them, as illustrated in figure 3[13].

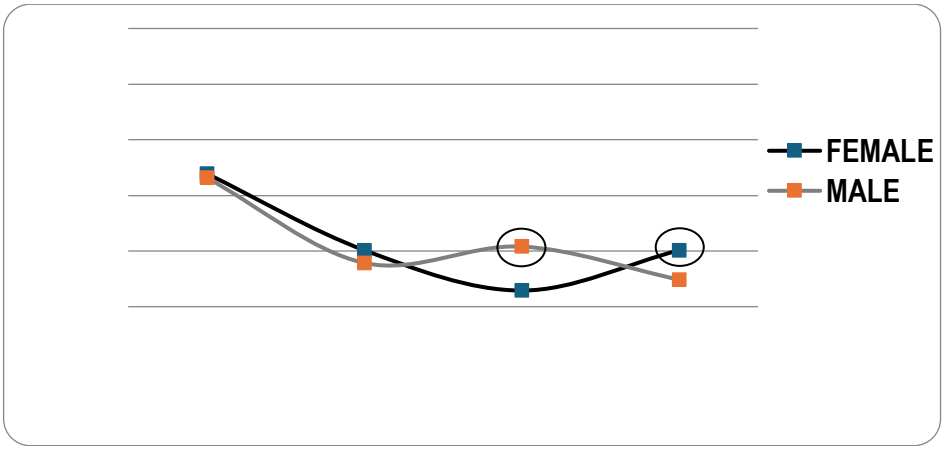


Figure 3. A comparison of male and female interviewer's usage of process types in the corpus

As evidenced above, mental processes were used more frequently by the male interviewer (22%) in comparison to the female (6%). He did so to make reference to the police as cognitive Senser, as in (28); to *Girl A* as cognitive Senser, as in (29); to himself as cognitive Senser, as in (30); or to *Girl A* as cognitive Phenomenon, as in (31).

(28) <IM>[...] a CPS spokesperson said <u>we</u> *acknowledge* that the decision in 2009 [...]</IM>
(29) <IM>what made <u>you</u> *trust* them?</IM>
(30) <IM>this is uhm, <u>I</u> *know*, a very big step for you</IM>
(31) <IM>At what point [...] or did it happen that, that <u>you</u> *were taken seriously*</IM>

In addition, the male interviewer employs mental perceptive processes (17.2%) with respect to *Girl A* as a witness, as in (32) below.

(32) <IM1>[...] Were there other girls that you *saw*, either close to you or off in the distance that you thought that this is happening to them as well? [...]</IM1>

The female interviewer, unlike the male, opts for more verbal processes, among which 28.6% included cases of Receiver roles (referring to *Girl A* or the authorities), whilst 71.4% were of the semantic role Sayer. All of the latter concerned the victim exclusively, implying that the female interviewer gives *Girl A* a voice. Whilst at first sight, this may appear positive, if we adopt the stance of Adampa (1999: 25), who argues that the role of Sayer renders the victim less dominant in comparison to the perpetrator, then this finding may be instead somewhat negative. All in all, the fact that both interviewers employ different TRANSITIVITY patterns in their questioning adheres to the notion that men and women may, to some extent, communicate differently. Nevertheless, many would agree with Hidalgo-Tenorio (forthcoming), who argues, '[...] while communicating, people adjust to the requirements of the situational context and the social practices they are engaged in [...] irrespective of the speaker's sex and gender.'

Turning now to the TRANSITIVITY patterns in the discourse of *Girl A*, we find a similar distribution to that of the overall discourse, in which the most common process type is material (37.8%), followed by mental (14%) and, thirdly, relational (30.5%). Verbal processes were the least frequent of the four (10.4%). These findings are illustrated below.

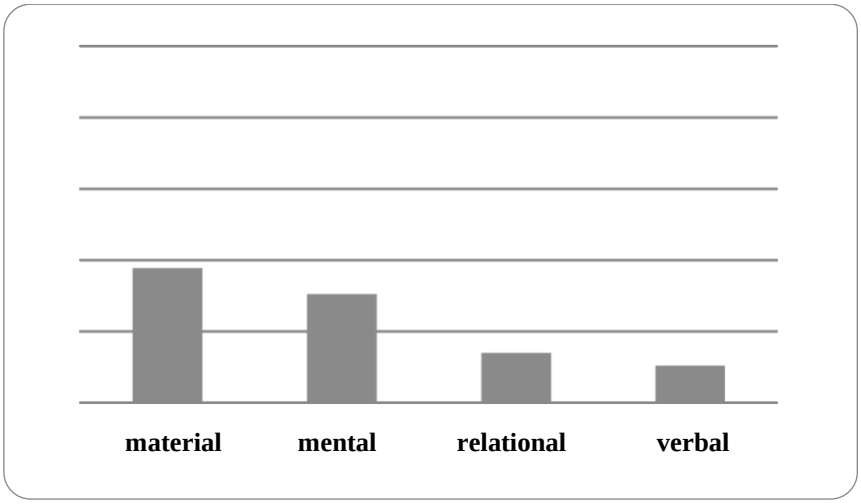


Figure 4. Distribution of process types used by *Girl A*

Once again, material processes were most common in the victim's discourse, which coincides with the topic of discussion, i.e. of actions carried out, both by whom and to/on whom (cf. Figueiredo 1998: 108). Another finding was her frequent usage of mental and relational processes, intended to express her feelings and thoughts as well as describe those involved. However, the amount of positive/neutral vs. negative TRANSITIVITY process types employed by *Girl A* proved surprising with a significantly low number of negative examples (6%). A comparison of positive/neutral vs. negative patterns can be seen below.

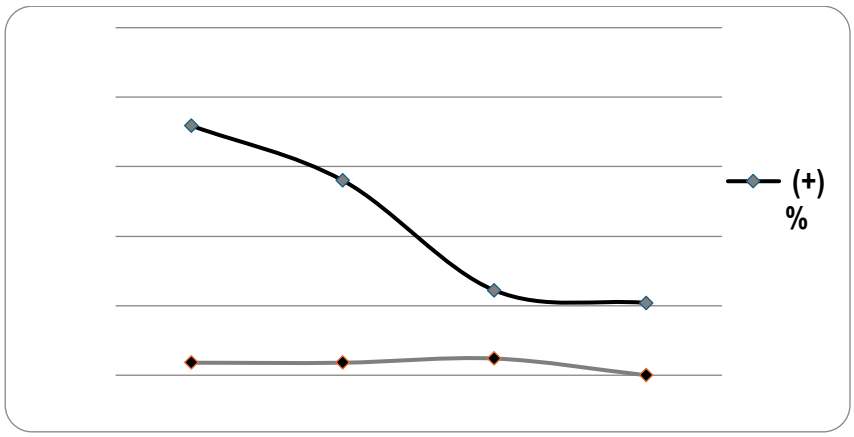

Figure 5. Distribution of positive/neutral (+) and negative (-) process types used by *Girl A*

As evidenced, the victim adopts an apparent positive/neutral stance when retelling her experience of sexual exploitation. When negative cases appear, they are almost equally distributed across material (1.8%), mental (1.8%) and relational (2.4%) process types. *Girl A* uses negative material processes to refer to herself as the affected participant (i.e. Goal) (see example (33)), with one exception when she comments on the criminals themselves as Goal participants, as in (34).

(33) <VF>Yeah, I *was [raped]*</VF>
(34) <VF>I think, there's 9 men, uhm, *was convicted* [...]</VF>

The latter is considered a negative example within the dataset given that one is sent to prison for something which society would consider a wrongdoing.

The negative mental processes used by *Girl A* are often instances of mental emotive or mental cognitive subtypes. When used for the former, the criminals are those represented as Sensers of negative emotions, as in (35). In the latter, however, the mental cognitive Senser most often denotes the victim herself, as in (36) where she refers to the situation in which she found herself.

(35) <VF>[...] they *didn't care*, really</VF>
(36) <VF>I just *didn't think* anything like that really happened</VF>

Finally, all of the relational negative processes used were ascriptive whereby *Girl A* describes the criminals responsible for her suffering, as in (37) or, alternatively, the ordeal she underwent (see example 38).

(37) <VF>[...] he started being *aggressive*</VF>
(38) <VF>[...] cos it is *wrong* and you might think it's great at first [...]</VF>

The examples are not difficult to anticipate given the topic under discussion. Rather, what is surprising is that so few negative examples emerge in *Girl A*'s discourse. On the other hand, when taking a closer look at some discourse particularities of the victim, potential explanations emerge regarding why, on the surface, her representation of this experience may appear more neutral than initially anticipated.

When *Girl A* recounts her experience of consecutive rape over a two year period, she avoids using explicit terminology that may otherwise have produced different results. To elaborate, the victim repeatedly steers clear of the term *rape* in her discourse, as illustrated in the following examples:

(39) <VF>he did what he did.</VF>

(40) <VF>[...] I wouldn't even know it was them, even after they've what they've done to me [...]</VF>

Example (39) is a clear example of the victim employing a nominal relative clause to avoid using vocabulary that is less ambiguous for the listener to conjure up an image of what happened to her. In example (40), we note *Girl A* backtracking on what she says in order to deliberately avoid using more explicit terms that denote sexual violence. Through avoidance of certain words, *Girl A* demonstrates her resistance to open up in more detail about the events that shaped her world for some time, or at least during this televised interview. Interestingly, this tendency emerges in other literature on language and the representation of sexual violence. Wood and Rennie (1994), for instance, analyse open-ended interviews with women raped by people they knew and find that women have tremendous difficulty referring to their experience as rape. Furthermore, Ehrlich (2008: 162) asserts that women who have sought compensation in court for experiences of sexual abuse have also displayed difficulties in representing themselves as a victim of sexual violence, observing how rape victims often struggle to use vivid, explicit terminology to describe their experience of sexual abuse. In view of this, then, whilst *Girl A* appears to report on the events that took place in a more neutral way, it may actually be that she finds it tricky to disclose details of the sexual abuse or even that she fails to see herself as a victim. As Ehrlich (2008: 169) recognises, 'the process of naming an experience as sexual abuse is an important and complex aspect of coming to terms with the abuse'. Therefore, *Girl A* may still be struggling to do this because it is simply too painful and horrific for her to relive.

Another example is (41) below where we witness the victim evade articulating her emotions. As illustrated, the male interviewer poses a mental emotive question, asking the victim about her feelings when the case against her assailants was not solid enough to proceed to trial, to which *Girl A* replies with a mental cognitive process.

(41) <IM>the case was thrown out because there wasn't enough evidence, how did that make *you* feel?</IM>
<VF>*I* just thought there is no point anymore [...]</VF>

In example (41), we see the male interviewer attempt to touch upon the feelings of *Girl A*, perhaps to try and understand how a woman may feel having gone through such a traumatic time. In addition, we witness how *Girl A* reacts to his emotive question with a cognitive response, which also serves to highlight the close connections that exist between each of the different subcategories within the mental process type. Secondly, and more interestingly, though, is that whilst the surrounding cotext of *Girl A*'s response implies that she reached the point of despair, this is not overt in the TRANSITIVITY process she employs. *Girl A*, through employing a cognitive verb (i.e. *think*) in her reply, although both adequate and permitted in English, ensures that she does not have to convey her more intimate feelings. This type of avoidance when talking about painful experiences is, according to those working in clinical psychology (c.f. Carter 2002), not at all uncommon.

Based on all of the above, then, it is clear that through a detailed, qualitative analysis of TRANSITIVITY patterns, which also accounts for discourse particularities, it is possible to gain valuable insights into the way in which the experience of rape is represented.

## Conclusion

This piece of research is a pilot study designed to determine the way in which one victim of rape represents her experience during a televised interview. Each individual case is

evidently unique and it is important to bear in mind the potential influence that the context may have had on how *Girl A* gave her account of what happened. To explain, one must acknowledge that the language employed in this piece of discourse is likely to have been affected by the fact that the data is taken from a televised interview. Lorenzo-Dus and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2013: 13-14) have analysed discourse in reality TV shows and argue that discourse is essentially a system in which communication is influenced by the public towards whom it is aimed. Any given public will have ideas and beliefs that pertain to a particular ideology, which, in turn, is thought likely to shape the language used both on television and on a given television programme with presumably a particular purpose. In further support of this idea is Smith's (2007: xvii) argument that the popular media appropriates survivor testimony for its shock value and eroticizes traumatic memories of abuse in order to attract and maintain the audience's attention. With this in mind, a comparison of this particular piece of discourse with, for example, *Girl A*'s narrative/biographical account would certainly merit attention in the future to verify the extent to which the context had an impact on this communicative exchange.

Another potential research avenue would be to look in more detail at the question types employed in the discourse under analysis. In this paper, it was noted that 71% of questions asked by both interviewers were closed-ended, eliciting either an affirmative or negative response and again, this may well have impacted upon the portrayal of *Girl A*'s experience. Other research has been carried out, specifically in the field of forensic linguistics, in which similar findings have emerged (cf. Conley and O'Barr 1998; Ehrlich 2002; Heffer 2010). Nevertheless, this initial finding is merely a point of departure in this particular paper and one that warrants further attention when conducting an analysis of how the experience of rape is represented by a victim.

I now conclude with the focus of this study, i.e. the TRANSITIVITY patterns uncovered during the analysis, in which material processes were found to be the most common type to occur. This finding coincides with other research into TRANSITIVITY patterns across general English corpora, which has also shown that material processes are the most frequent process type to emerge (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 215). That said, in this case and given the subject matter of the text, it is not difficult to envisage that not only the events that took place, but also the way in which the victim was treated, will constitute a large part of what is discussed in the interview and, therefore, account for a considerable number of material processes. Similarly, when distinguishing between those processes evaluated as either positive/neutral or negative, and given what *Girl A* went through, it came as no surprise to find a greater number of material and relational processes concerning examples of unpleasant experiences.

To turn our attention to the TRANSITIVITY choices of each of the interviewers, the main difference was that the male tended to opt for more mental processes whilst the female showed a preference for verbal processes. The latter may be accounted for by the fact that the female interviewer perceives *Girl A* as the more fragile participant (see Adampa 1999). In the case of the former, the use of more mental emotive processes by the male interviewer is arguably more difficult to explain. In fact, there appears to be a contradiction between interactional patterns and the transitivity processes (factual/emotive) that he employs. On the one hand, he enquires about the facts of the case, whilst on the other hand, tends towards asking more emotive questions than his female counterpart. The more frequent use of mental emotive processes could be the result of a man's inability to understand what women go through as victims of rape. As a result of this lack of understanding or inability to express true empathy, the male may automatically revert to a more basic approach of finding out firstly what happened and, in turn, what the victim then thought or felt about it. A notable similarity that emerged between the two interviewers and worthy of mention was that both appeared to adopt a story telling style (cf. Schiffrin 2006) in their questioning of *Girl A*, presumably with two

main aims in mind: (i) to ensure that the discussion flowed, thus showing signs of a cooperative style (Maltz and Borker 1982) and (ii) to manipulate the direction of the conversation, i.e. by posing questions that simply required confirmation or rebuttal of the facts by *Girl A*.

To finish with, we turn to the victim of this story, *Girl A*, who somewhat unexpectedly gives an overall positive/neutral account of what happened to her. On the few occasions when she invokes a negative attitude towards the events that took place and the individuals responsible for her suffering, she employs negative relational ascriptive processes to describe her assailants, as in example (37) above, or negative material processes in which she describes herself as the affected participant (Goal), evidenced in (33) above. Whilst initially difficult to anticipate that someone who suffered from the kind of physical and mental torture that *Girl A* had been through could provide such an impartial version of events, a more exhaustive analysis of the data led to a viable explanation. *Girl A* appears to consciously avoid the use of more explicit terms (e.g. rape, sexual abuse) to describe what went on (c.f. Ehrlich 2008 for similar findings). This may be because what she experienced is just too agonizing for her to acknowledge, thus leaving her unable to provide more explicit details. An alternative interpretation, however, is that the interviewers were very much in control of the interview and, therefore, the ones retelling the 'exterior story' (Schiffrin 2006: 215). Consequently, the direction of the discourse may well have been manipulated to some extent, and in turn, have restricted the victim in what she was actually free to say. With the latter in mind, an examination of the way in which *Girl A* narrates her experience in her autobiographical narrative *Girl A: The truth about the Rochdale sex ring by the victim who stopped them: My story* will provide the opportunity to confirm the results obtained so far in this paper.

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[1] The definition for trafficking here is taken from Article 3 of the Palermo Protocol which states that trafficking 'shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.'

[2] http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN04324/human-trafficking-uk-responses

[3]http://www.independent.ie/world-news/europe/child-sex-ring-handed-50year-jail-term-in-britain-30028926.html

[4] http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/oxford-grooming-gang-jailed-dogar-and-karrar-brothers-get-life-for-abuse-and-rape-of-young-girls-8677159.html

[5] http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/amanda-spencer-found-guilty-of-running-child-sex-ring-in-sheffield-9318958.html

[6] http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-28955170

[7] The legal age of consent in the UK is 16 years old for men and women (see for instance, http://www.fpa.org.uk/factsheets/law-on-sex)

[8] The victim in question goes by the pseudonym Girl A.

[9] See http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/rochdale-gang-of-11-men-plied-682509

[10] ITV is the oldest commercial TV network in the United Kingdom, initially launched in 1955 as an Independent Television network to provide competition to the BBC(see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ITV_(TV_network)).

[11] The findings in all figures and tables are expressed in percentages

[12] The percentages reflect the number of circumstance types employed by each participant in relation to the total number of circumstances.

[13] The percentages reflect the number of individual process types employed by each participant in relation to the total number of each process type.

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