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## INTRODUCTION

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Art and expression as aspiration towards stylistic and artistic practices

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- To enhance the culture of research and academic publication among academician and artist for international recognition
- To promote intellectual, cultural and knowledge sharing through artistic expression
- To celebrate the diversity and differences in arts practices thus creating and intellectual platform for artist to express their interest in art

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# SPEECH AND SILENCE OF THE MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

*The Reading Of Dina Zaman's Text Utilising Transitivity Analysis*

a chapter by

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## Abstract

Feminism's contributions include bringing attention to the ways in which language has functioned to establish and maintain gender roles, one of which is the investigation of speech and silence. The objective of this paper is to analyse the speech patterns (if any) of the female characters categorized as the 'other' in Dina Zaman's short stories and chart to what extent they are given voices in a narratology. Sara Mills' feminist stylistic methodology of transitivity or linguistic structuring of actions and verbs in the language allow readers to see the participants' involvement via language. The analyses reveal that the author has deconstructed the ways in which Malay women characters are commonly represented in narrative texts. Writings by the likes of Dina Zaman should be an accolade to the unrepresented women who exist in our society and in fact do not wish to be marginalised.

## Introduction

Exploring speech and silence is one of the aspects that has been placed centre stage in the feminist critique of language. Naturally, one of the products of feminism is to highlight how women have been positioned by language. As affirmed by Deborah Cameron, contemporary feminism placed language on the political agenda (1990: 1). She further adds "feminists often paid detailed attention to language and discourse: our ways of talking about things reveal attitudes and assumptions we might well consciously disown, thus testifying to the deep-rootedness of sexism (16)."

Sara Mills (1998) proposes the term feminist stylistics, a politically motivated stylistic that exposes how gender is portrayed in texts via

the examination of language at three linguistic levels, the word, clause and discourse level. The theory that underpins this framework is Systemic Functional Linguistics. Developed by Michael Halliday in the 1960s, it concurs that language is a social construct where individuals not only learn things around them but also construe reality or make meaning around them via language.

## Objectives of the Study

The objective of this paper is first, to analyse the speech patterns (if any) of Malay female characters categorised as marginalised in Zaman's (1997) short stories. The corpus for this study is selected from Dina Zaman's anthology of short stories, *Night & Day* (1997). The chosen short stories are "The Kacang Puteh and Assam Lady", "Ani" and "The Fat Woman". Second, it intends to also chart to what extent they are given voices in a narratology. Specifically, I will use feminist stylistic methodology of transitivity to analyse language at clause level. The four types of transitivity choices used are material action processes, mental processes, verbalisation process and relational process.

In so doing, Zaman's ideological stand in relation to Malay women will be revealed. In addition, a stylistic analysis would provide the appropriate tools to study representations and the perspectives, motivations, thought processes, emotions, behaviours, needs and wants of the women characters. It will also enable me to study voice and agency through the language that is used in these texts. This explicit linguistic investigation can provide the reader with a rich source of understanding and comprehension of the lives of women often categorised as the 'other'. The process of "othering", first mooted by theorists in postcolonial study, and later

adopted by more recent feminist theorists, is the depiction or classification of another individual or group of people as markedly different from the writer's or speaker's own group—often with dehumanising overtones.

### Methodology

According to Crystal (1992), a clause refers to “a type of grammatical construction intermediate between a sentence and a phrase, containing such major functional elements as subject and verb (65).” The sentence “The kacang puteh and assam lady nods and cries loudly as she sees her mother flying up, up, up to the red sky” (Zaman 1997: 13) is a sentence that consists of three clauses “the kacang puteh and assam lady nods” and “the kacang puteh and assam lady cries loudly” and “she sees her mother flying up, up, up to the red sky” is coordinated with the conjunction and. The exemplified clauses can stand on their own or conjoined with an(other) clause(s) to produce a longer sentence. There are several ways how representation of women can be portrayed at clause level, for instance, through ready-made phrases, presupposition and inference, metaphor, jokes and transitivity choice (Mills 1998: 128-158). In relation to this study, the linguistic investigation which focuses on the clause level is transitivity choices.

Transitivity concerns the ways in which syntax is ordered, reduced or removed in a text to create meanings (Reah 2003: 73). It is a grammatical tool popularly utilised within the critical linguistic tradition (Simpson 1993: 104, 2004: 22). It is used to encode the kind of processes and experiences that appear in text or according to the principle of “who does what to whom (Burton 1996: 227)” or “who or what does what to whom or what (Simpson 1993: 96). Halliday (1985: 81) defines transitivity as “the set of options whereby the speaker encodes his experience of the processes of the external world, and of the internal world of his own consciousness, together with the participants in these processes and their attendant circumstances.” It also functions to uncover how certain meanings are foregrounded while others are suppressed or obfuscated. In this way, the transitivity model provides one with the means of investigating how a reader's or listener's

perception of the meaning of a text is pushed in a particular direction and how the linguistic structure of a text effectively encodes a particular ‘world-view’ (Simpson 1993: 104).” This means the linguistic structuring of actions and verbs in the language allow readers to see the participants' involvement via language. Moreover, this analysis can also reveal to readers the mental change of a character in a text and development of a character as the story progresses, which may provide readers a clear theme of a text.

To analyse transitivity choices, clauses are grouped into respective categories that are material action processes, mental processes, verbalisation process or relational process. Then an extract of processes in terms of process, participants and circumstances will be analysed. Finally, linguistic effects upon the meaning of the text will be analysed.

According to Halliday (1985), the typical process involves three components that are the process that is expressed by the verb phrase in the clause, participants normally realised by the noun phrase in the clause and circumstances associated with the adverbial and prepositional phrases. There are many frameworks of transitivity models (Halliday 1985: 102-131, Downing & Locke 1992: 131-143, Simpson, 1993: 88-92, 2004: 22-26). This study will only employ four transitivity structures that are considered relevant, which are material processes, mental processes, verbalisation processes and relational processes.

### Material Process

Material processes are the processes of doing (Halliday 1985: 102, Simpson 1988: 89, 2004: 22) or causing (Downing & Locke 1992: 114). The words related to these processes are actions that can be observed. Examples of material processes as found in the selected short stories are ‘unlocks’, ‘touches’, and ‘scratched’. There are two important participant roles associated with material processes that are ACTOR/AGENT and GOAL/AFFECTED. Actor/Agent is an obligatory element that represents the ‘doer’. Goal/Affected is an optional element that represents the person or entity affected by the process (Halliday 1985: 102-103, Simpson 1988: 89, 2004: 22, Downing

& Locke 1992: 114-115).

Table 1: Sample of Material Process

No.	Actor/Agent	Material Process	Goal/Affected
1.	She (Ani)	unlocks	the door of the house.
2.	She (The kacang puteh and assam lady)	touches	the table that way.
3.	She (The fat woman)	scratched	herself with dirt-filled nails.

## Mental Process

Mental processes express the processes of sensing or internalised processes (Halliday 1985: 106, Simpson 1993: 91, 2004: 23). There are three types of mental processes (Simpson 1993: 91, 2004: 23, Downing & Locke 1992: 125-131); perception processes related to words such as 'see' or 'hear', reaction or affection processes are realised by words such as 'prefer' and 'hate' and lastly cognition processes refer to words such as 'think' and 'remember'. The two important participant roles associated with mental processes are SENSER (Simpson 1988: 91, 2004: 23) or also labeled as EXPERIENCER (Downing & Locke 1992: 125) and PHENOMENON (Simpson 1988: 91, 2004: 23, Downing & Locke 1992: 125). Senser/Experiencer refers to conscious being (human or animal) "that is perceiving, reacting or thinking (Simpson 1988: 91)" while Phenomenon signifies a second participant in a mental process "that is perceived, reacted or thought about (Simpson 1988: 91)." The example of mental processes and its constituent parts as found in the selected short stories are as follows:

Table 2: Sample of Mental Processes

No.	Senser/Experiencer	Mental Process	Phenomenon
1.	She (Ani)	sees (Mental Process: Perception)	an aborigine from the Pahang jungle, stark naked and with dandruff.
2.	I (Ani)	prefer (Mental Process: Reaction/Affection)	big eyes, ey!
3.	She (The Kacang Puteh and Assam Lady)	thought ((Mental Process: Cognition)	of pure thoughts.

## Verbalisation Process

Verbalisation processes are processes of saying (Simpson 1988: 90). The words associated with these processes, for instance, are 'call', 'utter' and 'tell'. The three important participant roles associated with verbalisation processes are SAYER (the person who is speaking), TARGET (the person to whom the process is directed) and VERBIAGE (that which is said). Some examples

of verbalisation processes in the selected short stories are:

Table 3: Sample of Verbalisation Process

No.	Sayer	Verbalisation Process	Target	Verbiage
1.	She (Ani)	calls	her (Puan Moony)	that (Kakak).
2.	Her lips (The fat woman's)	had uttered		honey-words.
3.	All the grandmothers in the neighbourhood	told	their grandchildren	"...that girl there, she got the loopest lips in town..."

## Relational Processes

Relational processes refer to the processes of being (Halliday 1985: 112, Simpson 1988: 91) or becoming (Downing & Locke 1992: 131). The two important participant roles associated with relational processes are CARRIER, which Simpson refers to "the 'topic' of a clause" and ATTRIBUTE which indicates "a description or comment about the topic (1988: 92)." Relational processes can be expressed in three ways as listed below:

Table 4: Sample of Relational Processes

No.	Carrier	Relational Process	Attribute
1.	She (The kacang puteh and assam lady)	is (Relational Process: Intensive)	not pretty.
2.	Nora	is (Relational Process: Circumstantial)	at Ameer's house.
3.	She (Ani)	never had (Relational Process: Possessive)	her own toilet.

## Analysis

### Analysis of Material Action Process

#### Analysis of Material Action Process ("The Kacang Puteh and Assam Lady")

Two thirds of the material processes of 'The Kacang Puteh and Assam Lady' involve the material action processes of the kacang puteh and assam lady. All these actions do not affect other people but only herself as she "weeps" and "nods and cries" or affect inanimate objects (furniture) such as "the table" when she "caresses", "wipes", or "touches" the wall (parts of building) where she "sits against". In other words, these actions have no repercussions on her affected self.

One third of the material action processes of this short story are of other people's actions affecting the protagonist. The urban inhabitants from various walks of life would (people) "pass", (schoolchildren, yuppies, prostitutes and drug

addict) “come to buy”, (the hungry customers of the Hainanese restaurant) “rush”, (restaurant owners) “barricade the doors”, (the police) “tie her up” and “send her to Tanjong Rambutan”. The first two verbs “pass” and “come to buy” are actions that do not harm the protagonist whereas the rest affects her either psychologically (“rush” and “barricade”) or physically (“tie her up” and “send”). The second group of actions, though not many in quantity, have damaging effects on the protagonist.

### **Analysis of Material Action Process (“Ani”)**

In ‘Ani’, the protagonist performs mostly masculine actions such as “stretches”, “grabs”, “throws”, “hails”, “scoots” and “scurries”. These actions are rather unfeminine and indicate roughness. These actions, however, affect the doer’s body parts (back and scalp) or inanimate entities (cloth and clothing, container and vehicle). The other action verbs are those that both female and male do habitually. On the whole most of the material actions verbs depicting Ani, a Malay woman show her briskness in actions suggesting her as an active person.

Zaman also specifically employed passivised constructions to a string of actions that are at most time considered women’s duties and chores, “The living room has been vacuumed and mopped, the dining hall has been dusted and lunch is cooked and ready to be served, all set on the table (1997: 22).” The absence of “agent” or the “doer” from the sentence “suggest that such chores do not necessarily have to be sex specific duties, meaning that Zaman is debunking the fact that these actions are the duties of a specified gender.

### **Analysis of Material Process (“The Fat Woman”)**

The material process of the fat woman is represented in two ways. First, in the Affected/Material Process/Goal order and second, Actor (Agent)/Material Process/Goal order. In the Affected/Material Process/Goal order “She was beaten, beaten by Din (Zaman 1997: 55), the protagonist the fat woman is the affected body when the agent Din beats her after she questioned

his infidelity. The clause is ordered so as to focus on the victim’s condition, not on the doer. Though the process or the brutalisation only occurred once, it has a permanent effect on the fat woman’s perception; she chooses to be silenced from then onwards.

The material processes available are those that concern the fat woman and her body parts. Three quarters of the main character’s actions are those that affect herself. Those actions are daily actions executed recklessly as she “scratched herself with dirt-filled nails”, “cooked whatever she found in the refrigerator”, “threw whatever she had into her sole pot”, “ate the food right out of the pot” and “ate on her bed”. A quarter of the material processes are related to actions performed by her body parts. The actions shown are lacking in passion and are performed mechanically “her lips met, vacuumed and greeted” the various men that appeared in her life, “she took all the boys in the neighbourhood to her room and slept with them” and “her feet lumbered”. The actions of her body parts portray her as an active participant in a sexual scene. This departs from Sara Mills’s (1998) investigation of the writing of a sexual scene in Barbara Taylor Bradford’s *A Woman of Substance* (1981) where the female is portrayed as a sexually passive member or as the affected party. However, the usage of the parts of body as agents indicates detachment of her total self/being from her activities.

### **Analysis of Mental Processes**

#### **Analysis of Mental Processes (‘The Kacang Puteh and Assam Lady’)**

The short story ‘The Kacang Puteh and Assam Lady’ makes available both the experience of the protagonist and the other minor participants’ mental processes. The mental processes of the animate human beings of “we”, “other people”, “the senior citizens”, “passers-by” and “the hungry customers of the Hainanese restaurant” belong mostly to the mental processes of perception expressed by the word “see” (4 times) and “peer”. Both words refer to what Downing and Locke (1992: 126) categorise as “perception[s] [in] involuntary state[s] which [do] not depend upon the agency of the perceiver, who in fact

receives the visual and auditory sensations non-volitionally.” Not only that, words like “see” as shown in the examples “...other people see her as frustrated spinster (11)” and “The senior citizens pretend not to see her (11)” refer to casual or careless acts of seeing, as opposed to the serious act that appeared once in words “peer” in “The hungry customers of the Hainanese restaurant ... peer at the banshee (15).” The mental processes exhibited in “see” show that people who surround her do not take a conscious effort to think about her and take her for granted generally.

Animate events such as a physical atmospheric event (Nida 1975: 184) “the wind” and emotive events (184), “this new emotion” and “a fat and strong hand” are also given mental processes of “finds”, “rams”, “rushes”, “spreads” and “grabs” respectively affecting the parts of body of the main character (sphincter, stomach, mouth, brain, breast, fingers, heart and arm). These inanimate agents or forces express a ‘psychological state’ (Downing & Locke 1992: 115) that affects the central character’s body parts. This would suggest that the character is not in control of her environment, which in turn leads her to the state of helplessness and powerlessness.

The kacang puteh and assam lady mental processes involve processes of cognition as suggested by the words, “knows” (2 times), “remembers”, “wishes”, “thought”, “counts” and “feels”. Zaman highlights the woman’s identity by making her role significant by allowing the protagonist’s mental makeup to surface, thus allowing readers to understand the character and her life better. After all, the protagonist is “an institution in the area (1997: 13)” and “a taken fixture, like a DBKL wastebin which dots the city’s roads (8)”.

With reference to the bolded verbs “She asks her mother... (12), “Her mother tells her...(12) and ...she (her mother) tells her daughter...(12-13), these actions are categorised as mental processes and not verbalisation processes because they are not verbal processes but of quasi-verbalisation or imaginary discourses between the protagonist and her deceased mother that are present in the protagonist’s mind. Society at large disregards her existence and her condition. She does not

bottle up her feelings but compensates her lack of verbalisation process in life to those that exist in her mind. The protagonist adopts mental verbal communication, as it would be free from unwarranted abuse if she were to communicate with people in her surroundings. Through these processes, readers are made aware of her inner emotions such her poverty and sexuality.

### **Analysis of Mental Processes (“Ani”)**

Ani engages in many mental processes, one belonging in the category of processes of perception and the other of cognition. Mental processes of perception are realised by the verbs connected with “seeing” as in the word “look” (5 times), “see” (2 times) “stare”, “peers” and “hearing”, in the word “hear” (2 times). Since the protagonist engages in many actions related to seeing, her Arabic name meaning “eyes” is aptly assigned to her name. The mental processes that concern cognitive processes can be retrieved from the example, “feels” (4 times), “thinks” (2 times) and “remembers”.

### **Analysis of Mental Processes (“The Fat Woman”)**

The fat woman is involved in two types of mental processes: the mental process of perception and mental process of cognition. The former process is portrayed in the verbs “felt”, “saw”, “heard” and “looked” which present more current actions. From them, readers can deduce her state of unhappiness when she was being treated unfairly due to her physical looks and her way of life. While in the mental process of cognition the words “knew”, “remembered” and “thought” represent actions that are mostly reminiscences of her later past feelings, “life”, “a lot before”, “her childhood days” and “a long time” which were portrayed as joyful moments. Her recent past however is absent of mental processes suggesting these actions do not take place anymore. Other participants’ mental processes are unavailable signifying her insignificance to them.

## Analysis of Verbalisation Processes

### Analysis of Verbalisation Process (“The Kacang Puteh and Assam Lady”)

The Malay woman in ‘The Kacang Puteh and Assam Lady’ performs only two verbalisation processes, “Jangan nak ‘ngada. Saya tak main diskaun-diskaun” (Zaman 1997: 7) and “... she screams and screams and screams (15). One is when people try to bargain for her nuts and preserved fruits and the other her screams (twice), out of heavily suppressed feelings. Both actions can be read as actions that occurred when being ‘challenged’ by others. The other verbalisation processes are mostly by others in her surroundings. People surrounding her “laughed” and gossiped (“tell”) about her. In addition, they “jabber” and “whisper”, both acts of talking that are unclear, the former too quick and while the latter too soft. These happen because they do not know about her or her life as suggested in “it is a human trait to lie about people’s lives, no matter how mundane, gossip is a delicious sin (Zaman 1997: 9), thus concocting stories concerning her. The communicative excitement expressed in jabbering is likened to animals” communicative sounds, of “monkeys whooping...cicadas clicking [and] snakes hiss[ing] (16)”, suggest animal-like behaviours of the locals and tourists. These dehumanising attachments of animal and animal sounds show how heartless and uncivilised, people are towards the kacang puteh and assam lady.

### Analysis of Verbalisation Process (“Ani”)

Of the three Malay women from the selected corpus, Ani engages in the most verbalisation process. Ani engages in a stream of light conversation with Ah Chong China Ikan talking about the products sold. She voices her disapproval when her maid friends discuss their sexual fantasies explicitly. In these relationships only, she voices her opinion openly as they share the same socio-ranking. The main character is also portrayed to be making communicative sounds, which can be taken as unladylike sounds in “tut-tuts”, “sighs”, “yawns”.

In Puan Moony’s family, only Nora (Moony’s

youngest daughter) was depicted to engage in verbalisation processes with Ani. She confides in Ani her problems. However, Ani was shown to reply to Nora’s comments in a monosyllabic “ya?”, “hush!”, “no!” and “what?”. Ani, in her relationship with her employer’s daughter, however, chooses to be reserved because she observes the power relations between them. Furthermore, Ani’s short answers and silences give space to Nora to voice her opinions that she lacks in her relationship with her mother.

### Analysis of Verbalisation Process (“The Fat Woman”)

The three verbalisation processes of the fat woman in “...her lips had uttered honey-words (54), “She once had said to ...Aziz that his eyes shone like the Christmas lights... (54) and “She had confessed to Aleng that she loved him very much (54) during her “once upon a time” happy days, when she was in love. The usage of past perfect tense verbs, “had uttered”, “had said” and “had confessed” denotes remote events in the past. After undergoing a series of mishaps in her life, she chooses to be muted. The first and second verbalisation processes are those of the neighbourhood children where their processes of speaking resulted in the derogatory labelling of the fat woman as “Mek Bab” and “Jabba The Hutt”. Their term of address towards her fail to conform to the Malay adat of respecting elders as posited by Awang Sariyan (2007: 5) and thus considered rude. Female elders’ words also have damaging effects because the young normally believe unquestioningly in those who have more experience in life. The words of the grandmothers shape the children’s perception of the protagonist.

## Analysis of Relational Process

### Analysis of Relational Process (“The Kacang Puteh and Assam Lady”)

From the relational process of the kacang puteh and assam lady, readers are made aware of her state of physical being. One-third of the processes concern her specific body parts that are her skin, eyes, nose and her nipples. One-third concern her work and sleeping area, which is far from grand. The last one-third concerns her state of mind. The

relational processes of the protagonist reveal the notion of being something (her physical state) or somewhere (her work and sleeping area). The minor characters' relational processes are not present, signifying their absence in thinking about her.

### Analysis of Relational Process (“Ani”)

From the relational processes readers are made aware of Ani's have-nots, in this case the constant referral to the modern lavatory. Normally in texts, toilet activities are not described, but in the case of Ani, possessing a personal toilet is the aspect of modernity that she is most grateful for. This is contrasted to her inconvenient kampong toilet. Other aspects of modern living such as modern dressing and free sex are those that she opposes.

### Analysis of Relational Process (“The Fat Woman”)

Relational processes focus on the fat woman and her body parts, her eyes, face, lips, skin, breasts, stomach, backsides and legs. The fragmentation of the female body parts suggest that the woman is still viewed as a sexual object, not from her total self/being. However, the descriptions are far from the usual state of adulation of the female body where often women are described based on male gaze. Her state of body is vilified to food shapes such as “watermelon” and food texture in “a sack filled with porridge”. Other attributes that mock the woman's body parts are “not a pretty sight”, “ugly” and “totally unbalanced”. The mental processes still conform to the fragmentation of the female body, but part of it has moved away from treating the female body in the most alluring way.

### Summary of Findings

The analysis of the transitivity patterns in the selected fictive works functions to illustrate how particular views of the Malay women are constructed in the text via the various processes i.e. material, mental, verbalisation and relational. The summary of the findings can be represented in the following tables:

Table 5: Overall Material Process

Material Processes	Protagonist to Herself	Protagonist to the Other People	Other People to the Protagonist	Other People to Themselves
The kacang puteh and assam lady	√		√	
Ani	√			
The fat woman	√		√	

All the protagonists are shown to engage in material action processes and all their material action processes affect only themselves. These actions are everyday actions that serve to fulfil their day-to-day needs. Interestingly, the other half of these actions are those considered manly. However, all these actions never affect others only themselves.

Table 6: Overall Mental Processes

Mental Processes	Protagonist to Herself	Protagonist to the Other People	Other People to the Protagonist	Other People to Themselves
The kacang puteh and assam lady	√		√	
Ani	√	√		
The fat woman	√			

The material processes of the other participants in the more marginalised protagonists (as in the case, the kacang puteh and assam lady and the fat woman) are also disclosed. Though these actions are limited in terms of quantity, they are very detrimental in terms of quality. The consequences of these powerful patriarchal actions result in the former being locked up in a mental asylum while the latter in her ultimate silence.

As illustrated in Table 6, all the main characters are made participants of mental action processes which affect only themselves. The kacang puteh and assam lady and the fat woman rely on their mental processes because they lack avenues to release their disappointment in life. The only way they can articulate their frustration is through their mental actions. Ani, on the other hand, being a moralistic person mentally criticises not only herself but also those in her surroundings. The kacang puteh and assam lady who is positioned in a public space receives mental processes from other participants in her surroundings.

Table 7: Overall Verbalisation Process

Verbalisation Processes	Protagonist to the Other People	Other People to the Protagonist
The kacang puteh and assam lady	√	√
Ani	√	√
The fat woman	√	√

All main characters are given verbalisation processes. However, these are minimal in number. The kacang puteh and assam lady expresses her anger when people bargain over her snacks while the fat woman expresses her feelings towards her former lovers. Of all the Malay central characters, Ani was given the most verbalisation processes. This is because she lives in a more 'privileged' setting than the others. Ani's verbalisation processes towards her friends are very assertive as ways of protest towards their sinful thoughts. Ani's replies to Nora's questions might be curt, but this only suggests that she is a good listener.

The minor characters express a more verbalisation process in comparison to the central characters. However, their verbalisation processes are merely acts of gossiping about the protagonists. This depicts the power relation between them, that is, those in the position of power have more 'authority' and are braver to make available their voices. To exercise outspokenness on the part of protagonists would only intensify their discrimination by society.

Table 8: Overall Relational Process

Relational Processes	Protagonist of Herself	Protagonist of Other People	Other People of the Protagonist	Other People of Themselves
The kacang puteh and assam lady	√			
Ani	√			
The fat woman	√			

All the main characters' relational processes are exposed in the texts (Table 8). From the relational processes of the kacang puteh and assam lady and the fat woman especially, readers are made aware of the women's current state – what they possess and more often than not, what they do not have. From the relational processes, we sense their debilitating state. Their physical selves, trade area and dwelling are portrayed as mismatches against the other beings and the modern cityscape. From these as well, readers come to sympathise and empathise with the challenges faced by the

protagonists for being the minorities.

Among the Malay women protagonists, Ani is given the least relational processes. The fact that Ani is a religious person, she accepts whatever Allah bestows on her. Therefore, readers see very little relational processes that highlight her dissatisfaction.

## Conclusion

Transitivity analysis enables readers to see clearly the various participants' (the protagonists, other people and nature) roles and actions in the language used. In other words, meaning making is depicted through the four selected processes: material, mental, relational and verbalisation. The protagonists are conferred with high material, mental and relational processes. The results of the data analysis show a strong correlation between the transitivity pattern Zaman uses and her representations of the Malay women. In the material processes, the Malay women are often illustrated as the agents of actions. Zaman depicts high mental processes of the Malay women in selected short stories. They are indicators of characters' feeling, thinking and perception. The findings of this study indicate that relational processes found in Zaman selected short stories include mostly the protagonists' physique; the descriptions of the women's bodies do not pander to the idolised state of women's beauty or the male gaze. The protagonists' verbalisation processes are very limited in Zaman's texts, but they are certainly not muted. It does not mean that they are receptive towards the unfairness done unto them. To express their hostility or to be confrontational would only perpetuate further hurt. As a result, they express their dissatisfaction mentally. The methodological analysis attempted in this study motivates readers to interrogate represented realities/worldviews and help to sensitise readers and foreground pressing issues that concern the marginalised society in today's Malaysia.

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