The Effect of Gender on the Discourse of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*

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To my loving mom and to my sincere soul mate, I dedicate this work
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Abstract

The Effect of Gender on the Discourse of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*

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Supervised by

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This study aims at analyzing the influence of gender on the discourse of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* within Halliday’s Transitivity Theory framework. For this objective, an attempt has been made to apply the processes of Transitivity Theory as proposed by Halliday (1994) on thirty one speeches of three female characters, Elinor, Marianne, and Margaret to show the feasibility of the effect of gender and feminism on the language throughout the novel within such framework. The focus of the analysis has been on the types of the processes, such as mental, material, and relational
processes, and the functions of the participants in the provided dialogues. The study has analyzed the speeches literarily and statistically.

The analysis has mainly applied Transitivity Processes in the discourse of three of female characters in the novel successfully in order to testify the feasibility of feminist characteristics and the influence of gender to be understood and revealed, which asserts the ability of Transitivity framework to analyze feminist literary texts. The analysis has also noted that Austen utilizes gender and the discourse of the novel to express feminist principles and female psycho. It can be said that this study has been made so that readers can experience a concrete application of Halliday’s Theory and see how Transitivity Processes and participants functions are conveyed to female speeches within the Transitivity Theory.

**Key words**: Feminist Movement, Gender, Discourse, Jane Austen, The Novel, *Sense and Sensibility*, Halliday’s Transitivity Theory.
Chapter One
Introduction and Theoretical Background

1.1 Introduction

This study aims to investigate the influence of the Feminist Movement on the discourse of Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility, showing how gender affects language and vice versa. This impact is revealed by using the Transitivity Theory.

Austen’s Sense and Sensibility is a masterpiece which forms a rich discourse that can be used to reveal the traces of the feminist movement. In order to discuss and investigate the foot prints of gender in novel’s language, Transitivity Theory is used.

Austen tries to introduce women’s struggle to gain their rights by highlighting the role of female characters in her novels. She employs language to reveal the specific characteristics of female gender. As a literary work, this novel depicts the principles of feminism; however, to follow this impact in linguistics, the researcher uses Halliday’s (1994) Transitivity Theory, since it is concerned with representing the meaning and ideational notions of the syntactic elements in the sentences. Hence, woman or female identity represented by spoken or written sentences in the novel is searched by exploiting the components of Transitivity Theory.

Feminism and its principles are depicted in Austen’s Sense and Sensibility discourse. This study traces some feminist signs that are
shown highly throughout the discourse of Austen’s novel. It shows that ideology of a woman can apparently affect her writings by using the language.

In this chapter, the researcher introduces an overview for every key word in this study, respectively: The Feminist Movement, the novelist, Jane Austen, the novel, Sense and Sensibility, gender, discourse, and Transitivity Theory.

1.2 The Feminist Movement

1.2.1 Definition and History of Feminism

The Feminist movement is a key issue in this study, so an overview of it is necessary. In the past, women have been degraded, subjugated, enslaved, suppressed and sexually abused in most parts of the world (Cameron, 1992: 17). In modern times, women have struggled for their emancipation, equality and complete freedom, which appeared in the form of different feminist movements (ibid, 18).

Feminism can be defined as a movement which calls mainly for empowering women. The thrust of the feminist movement is self-reliance, as well as psychological and intellectual autonomy for women. To define Feminism, Cameron (1992: 4) points out that it is a movement calling for the full humanity of women. The Feminist movement, or women’s movement, promotes gender equality and opposes the perpetuation of gender discrimination in economic, political, legal, and social structures (Riley, 1988: 71). Besides, Stone (2007: 203) tends to define feminism as a “movement to end sexist oppression” which means that this movement appeals to stop the oppression upon women who
suffer as females. Therefore, Stone (2007: 203) insists that "Feminists should -or already do -resist oppression and discrimination in various forms," mainly based on gender. Yavuz (2008: 525) confirms that feminism is a philosophy in which women and their contributions are valued. It can also be described as a movement or a revolution that includes women and men who wish the world to be equal without boundaries. Feminists view the world as being unequal. They wish to see the gender gap and the idea that men are superior to women decreased, or even abolished. In general, feminist movement aims to attain two main things: the first is equal rights for women and the second complete freedom. It is also stated that feminism has been one of the most important forces in shaping our modern-day society.

Women`s movement began in Great Britain and the United States. Though it started when the first Women's Conference was held in Seneca Falls, America, in 1848, it had its roots in the 18th century modernization, humanism and Industrial Revolution (Steeves, 1987: 103). Although women's movement has several waves, it is highly noticeable that it is a movement working to obtain women's rights at all levels. Many female authoresses and writers trace and reflect women`s lives in their writings which forms a basis of this movement. Women, in the old feminism, were still stereotyped and denigrated; however, the ‘new feminism’ reflects the revolution that women hold to get their rights, which basically is mainly based upon the free choice. It largely seems that several issues have absorbed the old feminism for decades, such as women still only get less than men’s average wage in the same occupations, or they still do not achieve a basic equality of representation in parliament, on governing bodies and advisory boards.
However, women in Islam are respected and honored in all their statues as being a sister, a daughter, or a mother, since they have been given their rights in heritage, expanses, marriage, and motherhood. Islam succeeded to fulfill the equity for women by giving them what is suitable to their physical bodies and spiritual psychos. Although Islam does not guarantee equality for women with men, because this causes harm for women concerning working in different jobs, this is for women’s goodness and their status in Islam.

Regarding western Feminism, recently a wave of articles and books has emerged that reassesses the women's movement of the 1970s. These discussions exhibit a significant disconnection from the developments within academic feminism in the past twenty years. It is noticeable that the majority of female participants in this discussion are heterosexual, white, middle to upper middle class and highly educated; notably absent are the voices of minority and working-class women (Kinser, 2004: 130). These texts also reflect little or no awareness of developments in gender studies; instead they often rely on essentialist understandings of male and female nature.

1.2.2 Waves of Feminism

Since its beginning, Feminist Movement has continued to merge to form three main waves. The “first wave” which referred to women’s liberationists who cared about uncovering the truth about how much feminist activism has been hidden from history. This wave appeared very early in New Zealand, while the Women’s Liberation Movement is a new and distinctive form of feminism. The “Second wave” of feminism refers sometimes to the Women’s Liberation Movement, because it represents a level of organization and militancy amongst women which have not been
seen since the “Suffrage Movement” of the nineteenth century. The “third wave” of feminism can be defined as “a new style of rebellion based on a misremembered, or at least extremely narrow, version of the history of second wave feminism” (Orr, 1997: 32).

As a contribution to the new discourse of third wave feminism, four major perspectives have been identified based on the United States experience: intersectional theory as developed by women of color; postmodernist and poststructuralist feminist approaches; feminist postcolonial theory, often referred to as global feminism, and the agenda of the new generation of younger feminists (Mann & Huffman, 2005: 80).

The first two of these perspectives, intersectional theory and postmodern and poststructuralist feminist approaches, share the focus on the issue of difference, whereas feminists of color adopt identity politics as a key to liberation, but postmodern and poststructuralist feminists critically question the notion of coherent identities and view freedom as resistance to categorization and identity. The other two major perspectives, feminist postcolonial theory and the agendas of younger feminists, grow out of the challenges posed by feminists of color and postmodern and poststructuralist approaches (Kinser, 2004: 134).

Holmlund (2005: 117) has identified three versions of post feminism: “academic post feminism”, “chick post feminism” and “grrrl post feminism”. According to Holmlund, ‘academic post feminists’ are steeped in French, British and American postmodern, postcolonial, post structural and queer theory; chick post feminists are usually young and are either hostile to the goals and gains of second wave feminism or simply take them for granted, and Grrrl post feminists are “politically
engaged yet playful” and eager to carry on the feminist struggles of the first and second waves (Holmlund, 2005: 119).

The ‘Third Wave of Feminism’ cannot be considered as uniform perspective, as in the case of first and second wave feminism. Kinser (2004: 135) says that it represents “a complex effort to negotiate a space between second-wave and post feminism thought”. Multivocality has been identified as an informing feature of the third wave narrative (Siegel, 1997: 55), which includes “a number of diverse and analytically distinct approaches to feminism” focusing on difference and deconstruction (Mann & Huffman, 2005: 57). Third wavers have also been constructed as ‘a political generation’, or, as a group of people whose experiences shared formative social conditions at approximately the same point in their lives, and that holds a common interpretive framework shaped by historical circumstances.

Also, the third wave can be analyzed as “a stance of political resistance to popular pronouncements of a moratorium on feminism and feminists” (Siegel, 1997: 52). Other authors argue that the third wave is “a movement that contains elements of second wave critique of beauty culture, sexual abuse, and power structures while also acknowledging and making sense of the pleasure, danger and defining power of those structures” (Heywood & Drake, 1997: 7).

Concerning the phases of Feminism, Moi (et.al, 1997: 104) states that there are three main phases of Feminism: ‘Feminist’, ‘Female’, and ‘Feminine’. Moi (ibid: 104) defines the word ‘Feminist’ as “a political label indicating support for the aims of the new women’s movement which merged in the late 1960s. Moi (ibid: 106) also argues that the word ‘Female’ “does not necessarily guarantee a feminist approach”.

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Concerning this term, Moi (ibid: 108) adds that “men can be feminists, but they cannot be women”. Regarding the term ‘Feminine’, Moi indicates that it is a word that represents a cultural and social construct. It is also stated that the word ‘Feminine’ is completely opposite of the word ‘Masculine’.

1.2.3 Theories and Types of Feminist Movement

According to Walters (2005: 86-93), seven types of feminism can be identified:

1. Gender Feminism which is based on the notion that in order for men and women to be equal, women must be granted some special privileges and men should not be an issue in feminism.

2. Liberal Feminism which shows that the source of women’s oppression is social and economic sources.

3. Radical Feminism represents sexual and procreative practices. Men are socialized to have sexual desires, while women are socialized to be submissive. Source of oppression is cultural not biological; therefore, changing attitudes is desirable.

4. Socialist Feminism which indicates that the source of oppression is social and psychological sources including sexual and procreative practices. Changing social and economic structuring is desirable to eradicate oppression.

5. Marxist Feminism: Source of oppression is class distinctions, corruption of wage labor, and capitalism.
6. Existentialist Feminism: Source of oppression is inequality of social freedoms. Improving individual liberties and rights are desirable.

7. Postmodernist Feminism: discourses about femininity and masculinity are essential to understand construction of natural roles.

1.2.4 Literary Works and Feminism

As it is a human movement before it is a social and political one, it is normal for Feminist Movement to affect literary writing and to have its followers, such as Charlotte Brontë, Anne Brontë, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot, George Meredith, George Gissing, Thomas Hardy, and Henrik Ibsen. Also, several female thinkers have contributed to feminism, like Eva Herman and Iris Radisch. They demonstrate a solid understanding of the goals, philosophy, and achievements of 1970s feminism (Hill, 2008: 210-215).

Talking specifically, Julia Franck is one of the authoresses affected by the Feminist Movement; she won the German Book Prize in 2007 for her novel Die Mittagsfrau. This novel explores the life of a woman who unwillingly becomes a mother and ultimately abandons her child shortly after the end of World War II. Although Die Mittagsflau is the most controversial of her works, it is not the first to speak to popular discourse about women, and indeed all of her works are predominantly concerned with women's experiences. Critics and scholars are interested in the extent to which Franck demonstrates a connection to 1970s feminism, and whether her work can be read through a feminist lens. These seemingly related investigations result in two distinct readings of Franck and her works: one as a feminist woman according to a popular
understanding of feminism in the media, and another as a feminist author along the lines of scholars working with feminist theory.

Jane Austen also is one of the novelists whose writings are affected by Feminism before the presence of this term ‘feminism’ in history; therefore, sometimes, she cannot be called a "feminist" writer; however, a great deal of criticism surrounding Austen is from a feminist perspective. Austen’s choice to write novels such as, *Emma, Pride and Prejudice,* and *Sense and Sensibility,* about women in the 19th Century is a basic element of the feminist thought which emerged in the 20th Century (Puttonen, 1991: 39). Throughout Austen's fiction, according to feminist critics, female characters comment on male-authored texts and take charge of the creation of their own worlds (Perkins, 1998: 4). Hill (2008:109) assures that feminism is evoked, primarily to induce identifications with the heroine in her suffering. Austen explores the depth at which women may act in society and finds her own boundaries in the 19th Century’s England. Thus, the notions of feminism often follow the subjects of class distinctions and boundaries. At the beginning of the 19th century, little opportunity exists for women; therefore, many of them feel uncomfortable when attempting to enter many parts of society. The absence of advanced educational opportunities for women and their alienation from almost all fields of work give them little option in life.

As a result, Feminist criticism has appeared in order to explore two major things: the first is concerned with woman as a reader; the other is dedicated to woman as a writer (Coates, 1986: 25). So, it is said that feminist literary criticism is a hybrid construct, a combination of the ideological notion that gender has been a major contribution in shaping literature (ibid: 31).
1.3 Jane Austen and *Sense and Sensibility*

1.3.1 The Background of Jane Austen`s Life and Writing History

Jane Austen`s life, time, and history of writing novels are highly significant to be included in the discussion of this study, since she is the authoress of the novel of the research, *Sense and Sensibility*, and one of the leading names of the principles of feminism. Austen is an eighteenth / nineteenth century novelist who criticizes women`s conditions and status before the existence of the word “feminism” in English language.

She comes from a middle class family; therefore, she writes for and about her own class. She deals with relationships in that small social group and the relationships among particular individuals in that group. She lives at a time when the political and the economic importance of the country gentry is strange. The landed country gentry can be defined as a social class which involves land owners, knights, and noblemen. Hence, she focuses on the life, manners, and values of this social segment. The landed country gentry provides her with various social types and with middle class manners and morals. However, the social life in Austen's England is not uniform and peaceful: the privileged gentry and the nobility prosper economically and own large lands; however, the underprivileged lower classes, which mainly consisted of peasants and the jobless, suffer from serious economic problems (Yavuz, 2008: 527).

For Austen, it is a land of high contrasts and gross inequality in living standards and condition between the nobility and gentry on the one hand and the common people on the other. In this rebellious atmosphere, Austen mostly deals in her novels with the individuals and the societies in which they lived. The landed country gentry and especially the women characters constitute her main material for fiction (Yavuz, 2008: 529).
Austen can be described as a realistic, moral and social critic; she paints a full picture of the landed gentry and expects her readers to draw certain moral conclusions by using somewhat grotesque situations and temperamentally conflicting characters. In her fiction, she uses irony and ridiculous stations to describe the social manners and behavior of her characters, and her novels turn into a kind of comedy of manners. She has given the readers a variety of characters whose personalities are revealed through their context and dialogues.

Austen does not try to visualize an ideal world. She lets the reader understand the dark sides of woman’s life in her time. Women do not have many rights; they are legal infants, and their conduct is determined by many rules. They cannot enter the professions or study at the university. She also tries to give the readers several hits concerning legal matters in her society, such as inheritance affairs which are clearly present in *Sense and Sensibility*, as she depicts women quite aware of financial matters. Austen also shows that the world was – and still is – quicker in forgiving man’s foolish and dishonorable behavior than woman’s (Puttonen, 1991: 44).

Austen is actually best known as an authoress of realism; she is aware of both the good and the bad sides of her society, of men and of women. She has views of what a woman or a man ought to be like but those views do not include any order of hierarchy. Austen does not try to change the world she lives in. But she attempts to set an example of women who grow to moral independence, who have a mind of their own and who perceive the world as it is.

Considering Austen from a feminist perspective, it seems to be ironic that the authoress places a great deal of emphasis on love and marriage. On the surface, Austen appears to deal with the ideas and
attitudes of her society, as some of the main characters in her novels are in search of marriage based on wealth.

It is clear that Austen’s writings can be characterized as the following: most of her novels consist of the changing moral values, conflicting characters, gender relations, and self-knowledge. All these issues come under the general topics of the individual and society in Austen’s time. Furthermore, since Austen’s novels are all romances; every leading lady plays a unique role in her story. Each heroine has a distinctive personality, domestic setting, personal relationships, and imagination. Commonalities can be found among Austen’s leading ladies by describing them as women with strong affections, constancy, a love of nature and books, good look, good temper, and good breeding. However, this description could apply to many characters in Austen’s novels such as Louisa Musgrove of *Persuasion* (1818), or Mary Crawford of *Mansfield Park* (1814). These two women vie for the attention and affection of the heroes in their respective novels, and readers briefly wonder if these women will succeed in snatching the hero away from the “real” heroine of the novel. Characters like Louisa Musgrove and Mary Crawford cannot win the hero, because they possess seemingly “good” outward qualities. The description of the Austen’s heroine leaves out two essential characteristics that distinguish each heroine from all other characters. First, Austen’s heroines are delightfully flawed: they are neither angelically perfect nor morally debased (Hannon, 2005: 13). The second characteristic that is essential to the true heroine is a moral core of virtue and conscience that leads the heroine throughout her story, guiding her toward personal correction and relational growth. Each heroine possesses the capacity for self-examination and self-correction.
1.3.2 Jane Austen and the Feminist Movement

A highly constructed bond is found between Austen and the roots of Feminism, so it is significant to discuss this relationship. Austen’s beliefs and behaviors are based on Feminist Movement and mainly concerned with a depiction of women as liberal and self-confident characters in a social context with strict moral and social codes of behavior. Therefore, her fictions to a large extent focus on women characters rather than on the whole range of social types.

Also, her novels are an important step in the evolution of the Feminist Movement; they are written around the time of the early women's rights movement when women start to think about equal rights. Her novels claim that women are equal to men in every way. Austen’s novels also show the efforts of the heroines to assert their own identity within a male-dominated society; they show that some Victorian women become independently minded; therefore, she refutes Victorian stereotypes about women, articulating what is for her time a radical feminist philosophy. In her novels, Austen criticizes the women who lack the features of logic thought and uneducated women which is a landmark for feminists and the independence of her heroines that is basic element for the advance of women within society according to her viewpoint. In Sense and Sensibility, for example, the character Lucy Steele is described as ignorant and illiterate. In this novel, Lucy is a character that the readers dislike since she lacks the education to make logic decisions.

In Austen’s novels, it has been demonstrated that the characters face many social and moral limitations and restrictions. Austen’s female protagonists have conflicts with the established norms of their society; therefore, struggle to accommodate their search for freedom together with their submission to the pressure of social conditions and traditions. They have to fight with the social and moral norms, and undergo serious tests
and experiences in order to be strong morally, socially, and in terms of gender. Austen’s novels are all about young women who find true love after some experiences (Yavuz, 2008: 530).

1.3.3 The Novel, *Sense and Sensibility*

Because *Sense and Sensibility* is the study data, the researcher finds out that it is essential to shed a light upon it. *Sense and sensibility* is one of the masterpieces written by Jane Austen. It is the first novel of hers to be published under a title page of only "By a Lady", because Austen was not enough courageous to reveal her identity. Throughout Austen’s fiction, Perkins (1998: 3) asserts that Austen’s fictional reconstructions have various attempts to establish her own particular gender conception. Talking specifically, in this novel, Moody (2008: 28) states that Austen presents three different female characters in this novel: Elinor Dashwood, Marianne Dashwood, and Margaret Dashwood. First, Elinor, the oldest daughter of Dashwood girls, who is intellectual and prudent, but affectionate, having strong feelings and mind, represents the theme of "sense". Second, Marianne, the daughter in the middle of the three Dashwood children, who is clever, amiable, sensible, eager, generous, and interesting, represents the theme of "sensibility". Margaret, the youngest of the three Dashwood children, a good-humoured and well-disposed girl, represents the in-between case of Elinor’s sense and Marianne’s sensibility.

To go deeply in Austen’s novel, *Sense and Sensibility*, two conflicting temperaments can be noticed, represented by the two main female characters named as Elinor and Marianne: Austen portrays two feminine types who are ruled by reason and emotion respectively. In other words, Lewis (1967: 44) illuminates general understanding of
Austen's title of the novel Sense and Sensibility: "Sense," as being Elinor's defining characteristic, included the stronger idea of "right judgment" or "rationality", and “Sensibility” as being Marianne’s defining feature, which includes the idea of “emotions and sensations”. Besides, Austen’s depiction of the interrelationship between love, money and marriage is analyzed; the relationship between the individual and society is emphasized.

Moreover, Sense and Sensibility is a novel which includes features of irony and sharp humour (Puttonen, 1991: 40). Also, it is highly defined as a novel of love and deception, of kindness and greed, but most of all, of spiritual growth which provides a wonderful example of her social statements representing the ideas and movements that occurred around the turn of the 18th century, such as the transition from Classicism to Romanticism. The title is a metaphor reflecting the personal traits of the Dashwood sisters, Elinor representing 'Sense' and Marianne representing 'Sensibility'. Elinor does not only symbolize sense, but also Classicism, representing rationality, judgment and moderation, while Marianne symbolizes romance, imagination, idealism and excess. The novel explores the twists and turns as the Dashwood sisters among other characters in an attempt to find mates (Ogle, 2006: 7).

1.4 Gender and Language

1.4.1 Definition of Gender

Gender is a major and essential subject to be defined in this study. Cooper (1989: 17) states that gender is the main constituent of social life. The way people are brought up makes them think of “a set of expectations”, physical and psychological ones, that men should have and
another set which women have, too. He also assures that “our use of language serves to create and reinforce sexual stereotypes”. He then moves to define endocentric genetics as “masculine forms which refers to females as well as males”, such as mankind, craftsman, and newsman. Therefore, this usage of such forms leads to sexual discrimination since some feminists believe, as Cooper (Ibid: 18) confirms “that language structure influences nonverbal behavior”. To solve this problem, there are some efforts by many feminists to reduce bias in language in order to serve reducing discrimination.

To add, gender is the social elaboration of biological sex (Speer, 2005: 10). Also, Coates (1986: 4) states that “gender is the term used to describe socially constructed categories based on sex; most societies operate in terms of two genders, male and female”.

Furthermore, Ibrahim (1973: 24-25) states that gender is a secondary grammatical category, and he asserts the idea that gender is not necessary for any proper noun, as it does not give any meaning to an inanimate noun. He (Ibid: 32) also refers that Herman Paul is the foremost figure to introduce the importance of agreement in the rise of gender and to recognize the necessity of gender concord with nouns.

Beatty (1979: 65) mentions that “people may be biologically classified into two groups: males and females. He also adds that “there are two characteristics associated with these biological divisions: men and women”. Furthermore, he refers to “the male image or role as ‘masculinity’ and the female image or role as ‘femininity’ ”. Therefore, it is totally right to assert the idea that gender is linguistically and socially determined.
1.4.2 Definition of Discourse

Discourse, according to Schiffrin (1994: 43), can be framed within the assumptions of both formal and functional analysis as follow: the ‘discourse’ which is a language above the sentence perspective can be considered more formalist; ‘the discourse’ which a language uses as a model can be defined as more functionalist. Language in discourse is primarily a social interactional phenomenon, so discourse analysts study the language of utterances in relation to its function in social interaction. The material with which discourse analysts work consists of actual instances of spoken or written discourse, which are often referred to as ‘text’ (Johnstone, 2002: 23). Text is also defined as the verbal record of a communicative event (Brown and Yule 1983: 4). Schiffrin (1994: 18) also suggests that text is the linguistic content of utterances, and the stable semantic meanings of words, expressions, and sentences. Text provides the ‘what is said’ part of utterances, while context combines with ‘what is said’ to create an utterance. Kress (1990: 95) states that discourse is a systemic functional view which shows language as a “social semiotic”.

Discourse is a term used in linguistics to refer to a continuous stretch of especially spoken language larger than a sentence, but within this broad notion, several different applications may be found. At its most general, a discourse is a behavioral unit, which has a pre-theoretical status in linguistics; it is a set of utterances which constitute any recognizable speech event, for example, a conversation, a joke, a sermon, an interview.

To discourse analysts, ‘discourse’ means actual instances of communication in the medium of language, while ‘discourses’, in the plural, are conventional ways of talking that create and perpetuate systems of ideology, sets of beliefs about how the world works and what
is natural (Johnstone, 2002: 65). Dijk (1988: 17) points out that discourse, in a wider sense, is a complex unit of language form, meaning, and action that might best be captured under the notion of a communicative event or communicative act.

Furthermore, Halliday (1985: 12) explains that texts represent aspects of the world, enact social relations among participants, and, as a whole, incorporate cohesion and coherence, both linguistically and contextually. His theory indicates that, at a social level, language serves many functions. According to Halliday’s (ibid: 12) terminology, a text is “a chunk of language that is actually spoken or written for the purposes of communication by real people in actual circumstances”.

1.4.3 The Relationship between Gender (Feminism) and Language

Several literary works find out that “an awareness of a relationship between Language and women’s social status can be found in nineteenth-century publications of women’s movement “(Weatherall, 2002: 2). Besides, “The linguistic message has informed that there are important relationships between gender and language; the feminist one is that those relationships are significant for understanding and challenging sexism” (Weatherall, 2002: 2). Therefore, “the ability to recognize the sex of a speaker on the basis of verbal cues alone seem to be good evidence that men’s and women’s voices do differ in essential ways” (ibid: 49). As a result, Lakoff (1975: 52) maintains that women’s secondary position is reflected by language in society.

Linguistically, Speer (2005: 7) indicates that “by studying gender and discourse, and by exploring how dominant or prejudicial ideas about gender are created or resisted in discourse”, this strongly constructed
relationship between discourse and gender can be defined. Furthermore, he (ibid: 9) indicates that “research on gender and language has traditionally been divided into two strands: the study of how gender is represented in the language (the forms of language) and the study of how men and women use language (the function of language)”. So, does language differ if gender differs? Or according to Weatherall’s (2002: 3) question, “Do women and men use language in different ways?” There is strong evidence that males and females speak differently. McIlvenny (2002: 2) points out that males’ speech is certainly different from females’ in the same situations and cases “because one is a man or a woman”. Thus, gender differences in using language are attributed to various processes (Philips et.al, 1987: 1). Therefore, language makes us human and social beings or it is claimed that "the words we speak situate us in our gender through language we come to know who we are" (Kaplan et.al, 1998: 56).

Concerning discourse and feminism, Mills (1999: 17) states that “we can assume that there is a set of discourses of femininity and masculinity, because women and men behave within a certain range of parameters when defining themselves as gendered subject”, so gender can be formed through the usage of language by males or females. Also, “clearly feminists don’t consider language a side- issue or a luxury, but an essential part of the struggle for liberation” (Cameron, 1992: 1). Mills (1995: 55) confirms this:

The study of gender and discourse not only provides a descriptive account of male/female discourse but also reveals how language functions as a symbolic resource to create and manage
personal, social, and cultural meanings and identities.

Talking specifically, in *Language and Woman's Place*, Lakoff (1975: 28) describes the features of women's language such as focusing on the connection dimension that highlights intimacy and stresses that these characteristics might build a "style". However, Mills (1995: 45) states that “Lakeoff and Spender characterize women’s speech as more hesitant, less fluent, less logical, less assertive than men’s speech.” In addition, Mills (ibid: 53) argues that women’s writing is often characterized as the pouring out of the soul, without the mediation of a structure or plan”. Coates (1986: 10, 24) indicates that women adopt many ways to express themselves: “they swear” and they “often produce half-finished sentences.”

On the other hand, Mills (1995: 1) indicates that “feminist stylistic analysis is concerned not only to describe sexism in a text, but also to analyze the way that point of view, agency, metaphor, or transitivity are unexpectedly closely related to matters of gender, and to discover women’s writing practices”. As a result, a highly constructed relationship is found between feminism and language.

All in all, gender cannot be separated from language when discussing feminist subjects. In other words, Gregersen (1983: 7) confirms that “women’s movement raised the issue of sexism in language as a political issue” and also it raises the question of “how are sex and gender designated in language?”. To add, sex is a term that is biologically determined; however, gender is a term that is linguistically and socially determined.
1.5 Transitivity Theory

1.5.1 Definition of the Theory

Halliday`s Transitivity Theory is of great importance for this study which depends on it in data analysis; hence, it is significant to shed a light upon it. Halliday`s (1994: 13) functional grammar argues that the explanation of how language works "needed to be grounded in a functional analysis, since language had evolved in the process of carrying out certain critical functions as human beings interacted with their ... 'eco-social' environment". Transitivity in English includes reference to four components in the grammar of English representing four functions that the language as a communication system is required to carry out: the experiential which represents sharing our experiences with others; the logical that refers to the organizing of our enactments and representations as a meaningful text; the discoursal and the speech functional or interpersonal which indicate the enactment of our social relationships with language. The "discoursal" function is re-named the "textual function". Halliday's notion of language functions, or "metafunctions", becomes part of his general linguistic theory. In fact, Transitivity Theory indicates the way meaning represented in the clause and is interested in the propositional meanings and functions of syntactic elements (Halliday, 1994: 32).

Transitivity is the main theoretical construct used in the data analysis; it generally refers to how meaning is represented in the clause. It plays a role in showing how speakers encode in language their mental picture of reality and how they account for their experience of the world around them. Since transitivity is consumed with the transmission of ideas, it is considered to fall within the realm of the ideational function of
This structure and notion find its assets in Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (Fowler, 1991: 70).

Fowler (1991: 70) confirms that Transitivity is part of the ideational function of language and is a fundamental and powerful semantic concept in Halliday, an essential tool in the analysis of representation. Kress (1990: 90) states that “Transitivity is the representation in language of processes, the participants therein, and the circumstantial features associated with them”, whereas Simpson (1993: 88) asserts that Transitivity refers generally to “how meaning is represented in the clause”.

Linguistically, Transitivity is consumed with propositional meanings and functions of syntactic elements. The representations that can be attested within a transitivity model are said to signal bias, manipulation and ideology in discourse. Coincidentally, a large amount of social impact of literary works has to do with how the literature selectively represents the states of being, actions, events and situations concerning a given society (Matu, 2008: 205).

**1.5.2 Elements and Significance of Transitivity Theory**

The meaning of Halliday's Transitivity differs from the sense of the term in traditional grammar. Traditionally there is a syntactic distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs, depending on whether they take an object or not. But this syntactic distinction oversimplifies or neglects some important differences of meaning between various types of verbs and various types of clauses. A central insight of Halliday's is that Transitivity is the foundation of representation; it is the way the clause is used to analyze events and
situations as being of certain types. Transitivity also has the facility to analyze the same event in different ways. Since Transitivity makes options available, some possibilities are always suppressed, so the choice a speaker makes or the choice made by the discourse indicates that the speaker's point of view is ideologically significant (Matu, 2008: 201-202).

In Transitivity, different processes are distinguished according to whether they represent actions, speech, states of mind or states of being, material processes (processes of doing), relational processes (process of being), verbalization processes (process of saying), and mental processes (process of sensing). These processes express the notion that some entity "does" something which may be done "to" some other entity. Material processes have two inherent participant roles associated with them. The first is the actor, an obligatory element that represents the "doer" of the process expressed by the clause. The second is an optional goal which represents the person or entity affected by the process. Verbalization processes are processes of saying. The participant roles associated with verbalization processes are that of the sayer, the individual who is speaking, and the target, the addressee to whom the process is directed (Matu, 2008: 202).

After all, Transitivity has a great role in revealing how female characters encode in language their reflected images of reality and the way they register their experiences. As a result, this theory may become an appropriate analytic approach to illustrate female`s speeches of Sense and Sensibility.