

Appraisal And Speech Structure Of Contestants' Speeches In Speech Contest Of ESA WEEK Competition

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Abstract

Performing a persuasion speech and delivering meanings through spoken text poses many challenges for students. As a part of interpersonal meanings, appraisal helps the speaker expressing their position in speech through the choice of words or diction. The chosen diction enables the speaker to precisely realize the message she/he intends to convey through spoken text. Furthermore, in order to guide the listener so they can understand of speaker's ideas, a clear speech structure is needed. Integrating the theories of appraisal (Martin and White, 2005) and speech structure (Sellnow, 2005), this thesis was intended to explain the appraisal and the speech structure on the students' speeches in speech contest of ESA WEEK Competition. By using Discourse Analysis (Bavelas, 2002; Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2007), the data – in the form of transcripts from video recordings – were analyzed. The findings map out the high use of appreciation of attitude, entertain of engagement, and focus of graduation applied. Those appraisal, moreover, were highly found in the body of the speech. Finally, this thesis provides suggestions that teaching the speech structure and how to convince the listener by using appraisal is needed for better speeches.

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INTRODUCTION

As English language teachers, we should engage our students in using the language meaningfully, negotiate meanings and share their messages to others by creating texts. Something is called a text when it has meanings whether in a spoken or written form. Creating a text means creating meanings. Meanings are created not only through what speakers say to each other but also through what they do with words they use to satisfy the needs of their environment.

One of the types of meanings that highlighted in this study was interpersonal meanings which focuses on the ways in which the speakers act upon one another through language. Students have to know interpersonal meanings as it will help them to express their attitudes or feelings to others. For some reasons, meanings are also influenced by context. Certain grammatical structures and words do not always make the same meanings. The same words can have a different communicative function in a different situation.

Furthermore, the choice of words or dictions also contributes to create a good text. The combination of words that has been adjusted with the context is the key of successful text. The diction enables the speaker or writer to precisely realize the message he or she intends to convey through their texts. Once the speaker or the writer fails to construct the diction, the message will be ambiguous or confusing to be read or understood.

As a development in the study of interpersonal meaning as described by Systemic Functional Linguists, appraisal plays its role. Appraisal is used to refer to the semantic resources including words, phrases and structures which speakers or writers employ to negotiate emotions, judgments and valuations (Wei et. al, 2015). It is needed to evaluate attitudinal meanings in texts in a systemic way (Wan, 2008).

Concerning with how the speakers or writers approve or disapprove, appraisal system shows how the speaker or the writer position

their listener or reader to do likewise in communication by using evaluative language to express an attitude regarding one thing or matter (Martin and White, 2005). According to Martin and White (2005), appraisal is composed of three interacting domains: attitude (feelings, emotional reactions, judgments of behavior and evaluation of things), engagement (sourcing attitudes and the play of voices around opinions in discourse), and graduation (grading phenomena whereby feelings are amplified and categories blurred). Attitude, engagement, and graduation as the appraisal domains are applied to negotiate our relationship with others by our own positive or negative attitudes (Wan, 2008).

The area of appraisal covers up various texts such as textbooks (Kawamitsu, 2012), medical prescription (Gallardo and Ferrari, 2010), news (Pekarova, 2011; Jakaza, 2013; Auman, 2014), essays (Xinghua and Thompson, 2009; Pascual and Unger, 2010; Geng, 2015) and conversations (Wan, 2008). However, based on our literature review on appraisal system, we recognized that the appraisal system found in students' speech is few and needed to be explored further. Speech is a sustained formal presentation to inform, persuade, or entertain made by a speaker to an audience (Sellnow, 2005:58). As a one-way communication, there is no turn-taking in the speech unlike casual conversation. Therefore, the speaker has to arrange the speech well to make the audience understand what the speaker says since the listeners are not allowed to ask what the speaker says. The diction or the words arrangement becomes one of the keys to realize the speakers' meaning since the meaning is the core of the speech itself.

Basically, in doing speech, speaker develops an argument in support of a position on a topic (Sellnow, 2005). This argument is used to persuade the listener. Speech used to influence other people's attitudes, beliefs, values, or behaviors is called "persuasive speech" (Sellnow, 2005). In doing persuasive speech, appraisal contributes a significant role in order to state the speaker's point of view towards an issue. By applying appraisal, the speaker tries to

influence the listener by showing her or his attitude.

Most studies drawing on appraisal in spoken discourse focus on appraising items only. However, Yang and Lv (2015) state that there are few studies combines the structures with lexico-grammatical features. Speech is an exchange meaning between the speaker and listener. Therefore, through the study of both structure and appraisal, we are able to get a clearer overview of speech discourse is constructed and how the interpersonal meanings is developed. In this regards, I combine the appraisal with speech structure to know the interpersonal meanings of the speakers. Findings this study can shed light on the importance of appraisal and speech structure for the readers of this thesis, especially English language students to improve their ability in transferring their interactions in spoken texts, through the exploration of appraisal system.

METHODS

This study aimed to to explain the appraisal of attitude, engagement, and graduation manifested in students' speeches, to explain how the appraising items contribute on the speech structure of the speeches, and to explain the pedagogical implications of the findings on English language teaching and learning..

In order to fulfill this aim, we used discourse analysis as research design. Bavelas et al. (2002) defines discourse analysis as the systematic study of naturally occurring (not hypothetical communication in the broadest sense, at the level of meaning (rather than as physical acts or features). It studies beyond the sentence boundaries that investigate everyday conversation, written discourse of all types, narrative, and other kinds of written or spoken text (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2007: 4).

The data in this study were spoken data as the main data source in the form of clause and clause complexes. Leech et.al (1982: 27) define clauses as the principal units of which sentences are composed.

The data were the recording files of students' speeches in ESA WEEK Competition in the academic year of 2016/2017 recorded by the organizing committee of the competition. In this study, we chose six speeches from the finalist since the text from finalist were selected according to several criteria scored by judges.

These data were qualitative as they were information from a small number of individuals (Cresswell, 2012: 205). These qualitative data formed in recording file belonged to audiovisual materials. According to Cresswell (2012: 206), audiovisual materials consist of images or sounds that researchers collect to help them understand the central phenomenon under study.

Several procedures were done including transcribing, reading, categorizing, and analysing. In order to avoid bias, we used triangulation as a tool to test the validity of the study (Webb et al., 1966). According to Symonds and Gorard (2008), triangulation is seen to increase validity when multiple findings either confirm or confound each other (thus reducing the chances of inappropriate generalisations). Triangulation is used for validating findings. Triangulation is the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection (Cresswell, 2012), asa strategy that adds rigor, breadth, complexity, richness, and depth to any inquiry (Flick, 2002).

Denzin (1970) as cited in Cohen et.al (2005) distinguish triangulation into five, namely time triangulation, space triangulation, combined levels of triangulation, theoretical triangulation, and investigator triangulation. In this study, we used investigator triangulation as an alternative observation from different expert or observer in order to get valid data (Cohen et.al., 2005). To achieve this purpose, the data and the analysis of this thesis had been examined and judged by one of the lectures in a local university in Semarang as the expert of appraisal. wWe worked independently in analysing the data before we asked her to examine the result of our analysis. She gave us feedback and commens.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section will follow the statement of the research objectives.

The appraisal of attitude, engagement, and graduation manifested in students' speeches

After conducting the analysis of the appraising items, some findings are generated. The summary of the findings of the appraisal of attitude, engagement, and graduation manifested in students' speeches are shown in table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Attitude choices

Type	Affect	Judgement	Appreciation
Instances	36	38	85
%	23	24	53

As table 1 maps out, appreciation exceeds other attitude appraising items by a fair margin in the whole texts. Almost 53% of attitudinal resources in the students' speeches constitutes appreciation. This finding confirms the study done by Xinghua and Thompson (2009), Liu (2013), and Hadidi and Mohammadbagheri-Parvin (2015). These studies reveal that appreciation is used towards phenomena. Since the speaker in the speeches argue towards the phenomena provided by the committee, the appreciation is applied. Furthermore, this kind of appreciation is regarded as being characterized of the argumentative genre (Lee, 2006; Liu and Thompson, 2009; Liu, 2013). Therefore, the persuasive speaker needs arguments in support her/his position, appreciation seems more appropriate for the speaker.

The distribution of appraising items in the whole students' speeches is set out in table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Engagement choices

Type	Disclaim	Proclaim	Entertain	Attribute
Instances	44	32	74	0
%	29	22	49	0

As the table 2 maps out, entertain exceeds other engagement appraising items. Almost 49%

of attitudinal resources in the students' speeches constitutes entertain. The second place belongs to disclaim with 29 % and proclaim takes up 23 %, while there is no attribute found in the students' speeches.

According to Wu (2007), entertain uses the option of entertain as the "speaker suggests a possible alternative to an implicit belief". By using modal, she adds that entertain "indicating dialogic space". Furthermore, using entertain means "dialogically expand manner" (Wu, 2007). Since the students' speeches are persuasive speeches, the speaker needs to expand their arguments by producing utterance that acknowledges a proposition as one possibility amongst others through the use of modals (Wu, 2007). This result confirms the study done by Pascual and Unger (2010). In their study, the most frequent type revealed in the grant proposals by Argentinean researchers is entertain. It indicates that the speaker "elected to open up dialogic space, representing the proposition as one of a range of possible positions" (White, 2002; Pascual and Unger, 2010).

The distribution of appraising items in the whole students' speeches is set out in table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of Graduation choices

Polarity	Focus	Force
Instances	15	65
%	19	81

According to Jakaza (2013), graduation in the appraisal system is utilised binary scaling consists of focus 'prototypicality' and force 'preciseness'. Since this study reveals that the students use 'force' rather than 'focus', it confirms the result of study done by Liu (2013) that the use of force in the students' speeches is to "enrich prosody and build up persuasion". Wan (2008) also reveals the high use of graduation of force in his study. He states that "the frequently employment of graduation as force are to express meaning when the speaker describes the situation or complain about problem". Therefore, by building up persuasion in describing situation by using graduation of

force (Liu, 2013; Jakaza, 2013; Wan, 2008; Read 2009), the speaker can “articulate her/his position about topics that matter to her/him with solid logic and reasoning” (Sellnow, 2005: 350)

Contribution of the use of appraising items on the structure of students’ speeches

The distribution of appraising items in the whole students’ speeches is set out in table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of Appraisal in Speech Structure

Type	Intro- duction	Body and Transition	Conclu- sion
Instances	39	316	48
%	10%	78%	12%

As the table 4 maps out, body and transition exceeds other subsystem of speech structure. Almost 78% of attitudinal resources in the students’ speeches are in body and transition. The second place belongs to conclusion with 48 % and introduction takes up 10 %.

This result contradicts with the study done by Yang and Xiaojuan (2015). In their study, the most frequent appraising items revealed in the writing system is in introduction. It indicates that the writer “present his research topic and method briefly”. However, in speeches, introduction only tells “the audience what you’re going to tell them” (Sellnow, 2005: 60; O’Hair et. al, 2015: 219).

The pedagogical implications of the findings on English language teaching and learning

The results of this study contribute to an understanding of interpersonal position done by the senior high schools students through the use of appraisal and speech structure. Though there is no attempt to imply that the achievement of the purpose of the students’ speeches is a direct consequence of the factors above, speech constitutes a very complex process. Nevertheless, the role of appraisal as the evaluative resources and the speech structure as the framework of the speech cannot be underestimated.

Moreover, the important pedagogical implications gained from the findings for English speaking instruction in EFL/ESL context is that instead of focusing on the correctness of grammar use in speaking, EFL/ESL speaking instruction and learning needs to pay more attention to evaluative meanings conveyed through linguistics constructions. In SFL terms, apart from ideational and textual metafunctions, the interpersonal metafunctions in which arranging the relationship among people needs to be taken into consideration. As this study shows that a proper use of evaluative language through appraisal system helps establish personal voice and position listener (Liu, 2013; Pascual and Unger, 2010). Therefore, students need to be given the practice of analysing their speaking skills from an interactional perspective and training in the use of proper evaluative constructions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion of this present study, there are some conclusions that can be drawn as follows:

The investigation maps out that the students have predominantly used appreciation resources rather than judgement and affect ones within the attitude system. Relating to the nature of the topic in which varies in the recent social phenomena happened in the society, the use of appreciation appraising items makes their speech more appreciative than personal and emotional.

Moreover, there is a high occurrence of entertain as a subsystem in engagement. As the students’ speeches are persuasive speeches, the speaker needs to expand their arguments by producing utterances which acknowledge a proposition as one possibility amongst others through the use of modals.

Graduation in the appraisal system is used for scaling meaning. Since this study reveals that the students use ‘force’ rather than ‘focus’, it confirms that the students express meaning for describing the situation or complaining about

problems and build up persuasion by assessing to degree of intensity and amount.

Doing persuasion speeches, the students' speeches are well-structured. They did the speeches in right structure including introduction, body and conclusion. Furthermore, by applying appraising items in their speeches, they have already convinced the listener and defined their position in their speeches.

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