EXPRESSIONS OF ATTITUDES IN STUDENTS' NARRATIVE WRITING: AN APPRAISAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This article investigated attitude, one of subsystem appraisal, in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) university students' narrative writings. Five narrative writing was selected purposefully from undergraduate students of the English Department at a local private university in Central Java. The findings demonstrate that the affect is the most dominant subsystem of attitude used in the students' narrative writing to convey feelings and emotion of characters and events in the stories in order to make the readers involved in the stories. The prominent finding of this research implies that most students used expressions of attitudes which belong to basic English words and repetition of same words. This present research suggests English language teachers and lecturers pay more attention to the explicit teaching of attitudinal words usage in writing, especially narrative writing.

Keywords: attitude expressions, student writing, narrative writing

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most important skills that should be mastered by students in educational settings. Writing skills is a complex process. Moreover, it is difficult to write in English as a foreign language. It involves how to develop ideas in written language by employing generic structure and linguistic features to achieve the communicative purposes of particular genres. Sulistyo and Heriyawati (2017) assert that, "Students not only have to put their ideas into a sufficient content, but they have to put into account style of organization and language use dealing with grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics." Kusumawardhani (2015) adds that, "Writing is related to the content, the language, and grammatical rules." This means students need to improve their writing skills in order to convey their ideas in a text through their competence of grammatical rules, generic structure, and language features effectively and appropriately.

In the English as a foreign language setting, the students are required to write different text types. It aims at expressing students' ideas, opinions, and experiences in their real life by creating different text types. Yulianti (2018) states that writing covers the great range of styles a student will perform in his daily lives. This indicates that the students have the opportunity to share what they want to convey based on their living situations and experiences while writing a text.

In this light, EFL university students have received such knowledge to enrich their writing skills in order to ease themselves in creating different text types. There are several text types that can be created, including description, explanation, instruction, narration, and argumentation (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Those text types can lead the EFL university students to deliver their ideas relating to daily lives.

This present research focuses on exploring the narrative text type because this text type can help students share their ideas through imaginative stories of narratives. Adam (2015) argues that, "Narrative writing can develop students' imaginative thinking and participate in literary understanding as a whole." Thus, writing a narrative is one of the most important activities to develop EFL university students' writing skills.

Narrative writing involves the communicative purposes that should be achieved by the students, especially EFL university students. This aim of text type is to amuse or entertain the readers with the imaginative stories. It is in line with Knapp and Watkins (2005) who state that, "Narrative is simply about entertaining a reading audiences." They add that narrative also has a powerful social role beyond that of being a medium for entertainment. Kusumawardhani (2015) states that narrative writing involves a variety of purposes such as to illustrate and support ideas with anecdotes, to

entertain readers with revealing stories. This means that writing narrative helps students to convey their imaginary ideas, as the main purpose of narrative texts is to entertain the readers, and the stories may contain moral values, such as folktale, fable, or legend found in the students' own culture.

Through the narrative, it helps the students to develop their imagination and cultural gaps in the text (Adam, 2015). Further, Knapp and Watkins (2005) have stated that narrative also involves the sequential events that consist of orientation, sequences/events, and resolution. Narrative text is a text which has these elements; setting, plot, theme, characters, problem, and solution.

The student writers are taught to follow the generic structure of a narrative text, i.e., orientation, sequences of events (the problems occurred), and resolution (Gerot & Wignell, 1994). In order to achieve this entertaining purpose of a narrative text, students need to comprehend the narrative style in terms of vocabulary, sentence structures, and other language features in the plots or sequences, characters, problems, and solutions or other aspects of the story. One of the ways to develop the stories is through the use of appraisal, or the evaluative use of language.

White (2015) has stated that an appraisal is a particular approach to exploring, describing, and explaining the way language is used to evaluate, to adopt stances, to construct textual personas, and to manage interpersonal positionings and relationships. This theory is a developmental theory from Halliday's interpersonal metafunction proposed by Martin and White (2005) to represent a greater detail how students writers, i.e., EFL university students seek to explore the way they use lexical items to express and negotiate attitudes with their readers. This theory is divided into three domains; attitude, engagement, and graduation. In this present research, the researchers focus on attitude as the main domain of appraisal theory.

Attitude is concerned with the feelings, including emotional reaction, judgements of behavior, and evaluation of things. It is divided into three regions of feeling; affect, judgement, and appreciation (Martin & White, 2005). Through three regions of attitude, it covers the writers' ideas relating to their feeling toward the topic. It discovers the ways writers convey their feelings, judgements, and appreciation of things, especially the topic of their writing.

The first region of attitude is affect. Affect is concerned with expressing positive and negative feelings; do people feel happy or sad, confident or anxious, and interested or bored? Those emotions of feelings can be classified into four types; inclination, happiness, security, and satisfaction. The inclination expresses the feelings of desire toward the phenomena from the writers, e.g., hope, want, miss, and wary. Happiness involves the feeling of being happy or sad, and the possibility of liking or disliking toward phenomena, e.g., love, cheerful, hate, and sad. Security covers the feeling of peace and anxiety in relation to the environment, e.g., confident, comfortable, frightened, and uneasy. Satisfaction deals with the feeling of goals and frustration in relation to activities that people are engaged, e.g., enjoy, busy, bored, and angry. (Martin & White, 2005).

The second region of attitude is the judgement that deals with the evaluations of people's behavior that they admire or criticize, praise or condemn. Those evaluations of judgement are divided into five types; normality, capacity, tenacity, veracity, and propriety. Normality involves the evaluation of how unusual/special someone is in his/her behavior, e.g., familiar, lucky, old-fashioned,

and odd. Capacity deals with the judgement of someone's capability in his/her behavior, e.g., powerful, competent, weak, and unproductive. Tenacity covers how dependable someone does something, e.g., adaptable, brave, unreliable, and impatient. Veracity includes how truthful someone's behavior is, e.g., honest, tactful, deceitful, and manipulative. Propriety is the evaluation of behavior toward how ethical someone does something, e.g., good, polite, arrogant, and greedy. (Martin & White, 2005).

The third region of attitude is appreciation. It concerns with the different ways someone evaluates all things, including human-made objects, performances, and natural phenomena. It is classified into the reaction, composition, and valuation. Reaction deals with the evaluation of the impact that is affected and quality that is involved in things, e.g., good, bad, exciting, and predictable. The composition includes the appreciation of things toward the balance and complexity toward the phenomena, e.g., easy, consistent, difficult, and contradictory. Valuation is the evaluation of value that is included in things, e.g., creative, real, genuine, and insignificant. (Martin & White, 2005).

Previous research on appraisal study has spread in the students of EFL setting. The scholars predominantly focus on the investigating appraisal study in the argumentative essays (Mei & Allison, 2003; Xinghua & Thompson, 2009; Jalilifar & Hemmati, 2013; Liu 2013; and Yang, 2016). However, Xinghua and Thompson (2009) and Liu (2013) have specifically evaluated attitude resources in EFL students' argumentative writing. Xinghua and Thompson (2009) have carried out the research to analyze appraisal resources in argumentative writing, but they focus on one of the appraisal systems, i.e., attitude resources.

This research is a contrastive study to compare argumentative writing in English and Chinese from one Chinese EFL student as their L1 and L2. The findings indicate that there is a similar percentage of appreciation, while in affect and judgement are different percentages between their L1 and L2 writings. It means that their language use in L1 and L2's argumentative writing are similar to give their evaluative assessment/appreciation toward the topic given. Morever, Liu (2013) has examined the evaluation in Chinese University EFL students' English argumentative writing.

This research aims at investigating the use of evaluative language in terms of attitude between high- and low- rated English argumentative essays by two Chinese university EFL students. The result finds that high-rated essays are able to convey their arguments through argumentative essays in order to take the stance and build strong persuasion.

Furthermore, previous researches on examining students' narrative have predominantly focused on analyzing the students' mistakes and errors in writing narratives (e.g., Kusumawardhani, 2015; Luthfiyati, Latief, & Suharmanto, 2015; Qomar, 2016). Those scholars research to figure out the students' problems in writing narratives in order to enhance their writing ability. Concerning appraisal study, Horarik (2003) has researched to investigate the role of appraisal systems in narrative discourse from the point of view of writer/reader position. He uses Martin's (2000) and White's (2000) theory in his research. The data are short written narrative texts in a formal English examination for Australian students. The findings show that the narrative builds the readers' empathy and discernment through affect and judgement resources.

Unlike the previous researches that are described, this

present research investigates how the attitude resources are used in narrative texts by using Martin and White's (2005) framework. There have been a few research to discover the distribution of attitude resources in the narrative writing. It has been underlain with the basis that linguistic features of attitude in narrative texts are needed to be used to describe the main characters of the story.

The narrative text refers to an imaginative story with complication or problematic events, and it tries to find the resolutions to solve the problem. Considering its importance, narrative writers are supposed to make use of appraisal expressions properly in order to draw readers' attention to feel like getting involved in the narrative story. Therefore, this present research aims to explore and analyze the use of expressions of attitudes in the narrative texts that are produced by EFL student writers.

METHODS

This present research aims at exploring the students' ability in using and selecting appropriate words which show attitudes and discovering the attitude resources in the EFL university students' narrative writing. To fulfill this aim, the researchers use the written discourse analysis as research design. According to Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2007), discourse is defined as the studies beyond the sentence boundaries which investigates everyday conversation, the written discourse of all types, narrative, and other kinds of written or spoken text.

The researchers take five narrative texts written by five undergraduate students majoring in the English language education at a local private university in Central Java. There are 26 students of the third semester in the academic year of 2017/2018 attending a Genre-based Writing class. The texts are taken at the middle of the semester. These five students' texts are purposefully selected from a collection of students' works, especially those texts which are about Indonesian folklore. Five narrative texts analyzed are *The Legend of Prambanan Temple, Malin Kundang, Timun Mas, Joko Tarub,* and *The Legend of Toba Lake*. Those narratives belong to legends or folktales from Indonesia. The analysis is done by dividing each paragraph into single clauses, then identifying and categorizing the words and clauses by using Martin and White's (2005) theory of appraisal. The analysis focuses on appraising items which show the attitude that is covering affect, judgment, and appreciation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings on the distribution of attitude in the EFL students' narrative writing are presented in Table 1. As mentioned before, five narrative writing is analyzed to discover to what extent the appraising items of attitude in their writing. In Table 1, T stands for Text. The detailed frequency among five texts is described in Table 1.

Table 1 shows a predominance of attitude, namely affect in the students' narrative writing which constitutes 40,9%, followed by appreciation (32,3%), and judgement (26,8%). This indicates that the EFL university students mostly produce affect that can be seen from the main characters of stories to show their feelings. This finding is similar to the study of Horarik (2003). The use of affect as a dominant domain of attitude demonstrates that the students convey the feeling/emotion to the characters

in the text so that the readers can involve in the stories given. Horarik (2003) argues that the use of affect in the narratives helps writers to create 'reader empathy' in order to describe feelings and emotional individuals relating to the character's internal evaluations of events. This means that a dominant occurrence of affect is important to fulfill the aims of narrative itself which entertains/amuses the readers. The appraising items of affect are useful to deliver the characters' feeling/emotion so that the readers can possess similar feeling relating to the description of feeling in the writing.

The detail categories and samples of attitudinal words are presented in Table 2. Table 2 maps out the detailed description of appraising items of affect as the most dominant distribution in the students' narrative writing.

Table 1 Summary Distribution of Attitude

Attitude	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	Total	
	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	%
Affect	18	4	5	11	14	52	40,9
Judgement	7	5	2	8	12	34	26,8
Apprecia-tion	9	7	6	11	10	41	32,3
Total						127	100

Table 2 Distribution of Appraising Items of Affect

Types	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	Total	
	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	%
Inclina-tion	5	0	1	2	1	9	17,3
Happiness	8	3	4	6	5	26	50
Security	4	1	0	3	7	15	28,9
Satisfac-tion	1	0	0	0	1	2	3,8
Total						52	100

Based on Table 2, the predominant affect type in students' narrative writing is happiness (50%), security (28,9%), inclination (17,3%), and satisfaction (3,8%) respectively. Regarding affect analysis, the higher distribution of happiness can be seen in the EFL university students' narrative writing. This indicates that the students convey their feeling of happiness involving in the text. The excerpts can be seen in the finding section in which those appraising items show the feeling/emotion of happiness from the characters positively and negatively. The students tend to build empathy from the readers while reading the text in order to understand the stories in the text by conveying the feeling of un/happiness as the subsystem of affect. It helps the readers involve in the stories of text in which the readers can imagine the feeling of characters in the stories.

The example of appraising item of inclination is the excerpt from text 5 "He (King of Pegging) never wanted **[-inclination]**". Student 5 conveys the main character's feeling of desire in the text by using appraising item 'wanted'. This means student 5 would like to deliver her feeling of the desire not to do something in this context.

Moreover, the excerpt from text 4 "Joko Tarub was very sad **[-happiness]**" involves the appraising item of happiness. This means student 4 delivers his feeling of unhappiness toward that clause. He conveys Jaka Tarub's feeling of unhappiness because of something in the context. The clause from text 1 "Jonggrang felt so worried **[-security]**" includes into the feeling of insecurity that is conveyed by student 1 in the text. The appraising item 'worry' indicates that the student would like to convey insecurity that is felt by Jonggrang in the context. Student 5 has appraising item in the excerpt "He was sorry **[-dissatisfaction]**". He conveys his feeling of dissatisfaction through King of Pegging's in which he does not satisfy toward the situation in the context.

Further, the samples of judgment in five narrative writing from EFL university students are described in Table 3.

Table 3 Distribution of Appraising Items of Judgement

Types	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	Total	
	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	%
Normality	1	0	0	0	0	1	2,9
Capacity	1	0	2	4	1	8	23,5
Tenacity	5	2	0	4	5	16	47,1
Veracity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Propriety	0	3	0	0	6	9	26,5
Total						34	100

From Table 3, it can be seen that the predominant judgement type in students' narrative writing is Tenacity (47,1%) followed by Propriety (26,5%), Capacity (23,5%), Normality (2,9%), and Veracity (0%). As to judgement analysis, the use of social esteem (capacity, normality, and tenacity) is higher than social sanction (veracity and propriety) in their writing. This indicates that the narrative writing tends to describe the writers' judgment to the dependability of characters in the stories. The students convey their judgment of characters' behavior in terms of tenacity in order to deliver how dependent characters to do something in the text. It helps the readers to know the detailed events of characters in the stories in terms of characters' dependability.

The excerpt "Prince Bandung had a **special [+normality]** power" involves the appraising item to judge the main character's behavior in the text. Student 1 conveys his judgement of how special power of Prince Bandung Bondowoso in the context. Student 1 also conveys his judgment of capacity in the clause "King Baba was a **powerful[+capacity]** king". This means that student 1 deliver his judgment of King Baba's behaviour. It describes how capability Baba as a King in the context. The appraising item 'dare' in the excerpt "How **dare[+tenacity]** you are" includes into tenacity by student 1. He would like to judge the behavior of the character in the text. He conveys how dependability of Roro Jonggrang to do something in the context. The excerpt "I will reply your **kindness[+propriety]**" involves the appraising item of propriety. Student 5 deliver his judgement of character's behavior in the text in terms of ethics relating to the culture. The appraising item 'kindness' involves how far the ethics of character to do something in the context. Table 4 involves the samples of appraising items of appreciation.

Table 4 Distribution of Appraising Items of Appreciation

Types	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	Total	
	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	Freq	%
Reaction	3	3	5	4	3	18	43,9
Composition	1	4	1	2	6	14	34,1
Valuation	5	0	0	3	1	9	22
Total						41	100

Table 4 shows the predominance of appreciation type in students' narrative writing. The distribution of Reaction is 43,9% followed by Composition (34,1%) and Valuation (22%). It can be seen that reaction is the highest distribution in their narrative writing. This shows the intention of students uses the evaluation/appreciation of things in terms of quality and impact. It eases the readers to know how the quality and impact of characters and events in the stories. Thus, the readers engage into the stories relating to the appreciation of characters and events itself.

The example of appraising item of reaction is shown in the excerpt "A very **beautiful[+reaction]** woman" from text 5. This indicates that student 5 conveys his appreciation toward thing in which it describes the quality of woman in the context. He appreciates how beautiful a woman she is in the text. The excerpt "He became a **rich[+composition]** trader" includes into appraising item of the composition. Student 2 deliver his appreciation toward thing in the text. He appreciates the complexity to be a rich trader that is hard to follow by the others in the context. Student 1 has the excerpt "You are a **useless[-valuation]** prince" identified as example appraising item of valuation. He conveys his appreciation toward the value of prince in the text. He describes the prince who has no priceless pride in the context.

As a result, the distribution of attitude in the EFL university students' narrative writing demonstrates the way students convey their ideas to create a text suitable with the communicative purpose of the text itself. To achieve the goal of the purpose of the text, the students use the affect as the most dominant distribution in writing narratives. This means that the students convey mostly the characters' feelings of inclination, happiness, security, and satisfaction than judging character's behavior or appreciating things/characters in their writing.

The use of attitudinal expressions in the students' narrative in this research shows that they generally use simple words and used them repetitively. Following Fry and Fountoukidis (2000), "There are the most basic English words in English, ranked infrequently order." They list 1000 most frequently used words in their textbook in which those words are used by the students in this present research. Based on the findings of this research, the students tend to use the basic English words that are easy to comprehend, for example, beautiful, clever, rich, special, old, powerful, etc. This finding is similar to the research findings of Luthfiyati, Latief, and Suharmanto (2015); Fareed, Ashraf, and Bilal (2016); and Qomar (2016).

Those researches indicate that undergraduate students have their linguistic proficiency (syntax and vocabulary) by using common words in their writing. It helps the readers understand what the texts talk about, especially in narrative text. Wolsey, Grisham, and Hiebert (2012) assert that, "The

linguistic choice including vocabulary/word contributes to the complexity of that text." They add that the complexity can influence students' ability to comprehend and remember texts. Thus, by using basic English words, the students' narrative writing decrease the complexity of the text. In other words, their texts are understandable.

Not only using basic English words but also repeating same words are involved in their narrative writing. Those repetition can be shown on Text-1 (*The Legend of Prambanan Temple*) and Text-3 (*Timun Mas*) as follows.

The first sample of repetition is taken from Text-1 (*The Legend of Prambanan Temple*) where the student uses the word 'best' four times to appreciate the value of objects that are described in the text. The excerpts are described below.

> ".... I command you to lead our best warriors to conquer Prambanan...." (paragraph 4, sentence 3).
> " Yes, Father. I will prove you that I am the **best**. I will not disappoint you, answered Prince Bandung..." (paragraph 5, sentence 1).
> "..... Then, Prince Bandung headead to Prambanan with his **best** warriors" (paragraph 6, sentence 2).
> ".... You have shown us that you are the **best** one to be ing of Pengging in the future...." (paragraph 10, sentence 3).

Text-3 (*Timun Mas*) shows a lot of repetition in using Attitudinal expressions by using the word 'happy' three times to express Happiness for the story. The excerpts are as follows.

> "....the old widow was so **happy** to hears that because she will have child" (paragraph 1, sentence 5).
> "...The old widow was so **happy**..." (paragraph 2, sentence 4).
> "....Finaly, Timun Emas went back to home and lived **happily** ever after with the old widow" (paragraph 3, sentence 11).

Wolsey, Grisham, and Hiebert (2012) declare that, "repetition reduces the complexity of the vocabulary found in texts students read." It indicates that the repetition helps the readers obtain the sequences of the story in the narrative texts. Thus, the readers are familiar with the repetitious words in the texts that make them understand the texts talk about. Therefore, the use of basic English words and repetition make the readers ease to get stories in the narrative writing.

CONCLUSIONS

This present research focuses on the analysis of EFL university students' narrative writing that explores how attitude resources and flows across the texts. This research concerns how the students manipulate linguistic choices in the attitude throughout their texts as well as the students' problems in writing a narrative relating to the use of attitudinal resources in their writing.

The finding shows that a dominant distribution of attitude is Affect in the students' narratives which constitutes 40,9%, followed by Appreciation (32,3%), and Judgement (26,8%). This finding indicates that the higher affect is useful to achieve the communicative purpose of the narrative text itself. To amuse and entertain the readers, the students use more affect to convey the feelings/emotion that are shown in the characters and events of stories. It helps the readers involved in the stories. It is important for the readers to understand what the writers express their ideas in the stories. Also, the distribution of Attitude in their text includes the use of basic English words and repetition that help readers understand the stories in the texts.

This present research explores five students' narrative texts taken from a Genre-Based Writing class. The findings of this research can not be generalized as the representation of all of the students' writing competence in the whole class. Despite this limitation, for future research, it can be suggested that researchers explore many more students' writings to gain deeper understanding on the students' writing competence in general.

Through this present research, methodologically, researchers and teachers can develop more explicit ways of identifying problems of EFL students from an appraisal perspective. A pedagogical implication might be that teachers should refer back to the importance of meaning-focused teaching rather than teaching grammar separately from contexts. Teachers can instruct students to write simple narratives centering on some attitude words. Some attitude words describe the flow of narrative stories so that students are required to provide such words or expressions in the narratives. Through this exercise together with the instructions from teachers, students can learn how to use attitudinal resources in the writing step by step and understand the meaning of evaluation. Attitudinal resources can be used across the whole narratives and need to be taught explicitly in the writing process.

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