

**AN APPRAISAL ANALYSIS OF JORDAN
PETERSON’S SPEECH: “MESSAGE TO MUSLIMS”**

A GRADUATING PAPER

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the Bachelor Degree in English Literature



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ABSTRACT

Spoken texts are known for their complexity, for instance, speech is used to convey messages to influence people with various linguistic strategies. The rise of social media use has added to the reach and impact of speech. Those with large platforms have a great opportunity to be heard by society, one of them is Jordan Peterson. He conveyed a speech entitled “Message to Muslims” through his YouTube Channel and gained a lot of attention from the Muslim audience. This study aims to find out appraisal devices reflected in Jordan Peterson’s speech and his ideological position. Using the descriptive qualitative method, this research employs the Appraisal theory by Martin & White (2005) and the ideological framework by Martin (1992). The findings in the study consist of 25 attitude items with 16 positive evaluations and 9 negative evaluations which show feelings, emotions, judgments, and appreciation in a direct and indirect way. There are 11 engagement items consisting of 5 monogloss which are considered as taken for granted and 6 heterogloss which indicates the use of dialogistic alternatives. Besides, 17 graduation items show upscaling and downscaling the evaluation. Meanwhile, the analysis of ideology reveals that Peterson uses the left protagonist ideology in his speech, which means he supports the issue by persuading Muslims to gain power.

Keywords: *Appraisal analysis, ideology, Jordan Peterson, speech, and attitude*

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ABSTRAK

Teks lisan dikenal karena kompleksitasnya, contohnya, pidato digunakan untuk menyampaikan pesan untuk memengaruhi orang dengan menggunakan berbagai strategi linguistik tertentu. Seiring meningkatnya penggunaan media sosial, jangkauan dan dampak dari sebuah pidato juga meningkat. Tokoh dengan platform yang besar memiliki kesempatan yang besar untuk didengar oleh masyarakat, salah satu tokoh tersebut adalah Jordan Peterson. Ia menyampaikan pidato yang berjudul "Message to Muslims" melalui akun YouTube-nya dan memperoleh banyak perhatian dari penonton muslim. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui perangkat *Appraisal* yang terdapat dalam pidato Jordan Peterson, serta mengidentifikasi posisi ideologisnya dalam pidato tersebut. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini menggunakan teori *Appraisal* oleh Martin & White (2005) dan kerangka ideologi oleh Martin (1992). Temuan dalam penelitian ini mencakup 25 item *attitude* dengan 16 evaluasi positif dan 9 evaluasi negatif yang menunjukkan perasaan, emosi, penilaian, dan apresiasi secara langsung dan tidak langsung. Terdapat 11 item *engagement* yang terdiri dari 5 *monogloss* yang dianggap sebagai sesuatu yang diterima secara umum dan 6 *heterogloss* yang mengindikasikan penggunaan *dialogistic alternatives*. Selain itu, 17 item *graduation* menunjukkan peningkatan dan penurunan pada level evaluasi. Sementara itu, analisis ideologi menunjukkan bahwa Peterson menggunakan ideologi *left protagonist* dalam pidatonya, yang berarti ia mendukung sebuah isu dengan mempengaruhi muslim untuk mendapatkan kekuatan.

Kata kunci: *Appraisal analysis, ideology, Jordan Peterson, speech, attitude*

MOTTO

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۖ إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۖ

So undoubtedly, along with hardship there is ease. Undoubtedly, along with hardship there is ease. (QS. Al-Insyirah: 5-6)



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DEDICATION

This graduating paper is dedicated to my beloved parents who have gone through all the blood, sweat, and tears to make me who I am today.





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Assalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb

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kami menyatakan bahwa skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan pada sidang Munaqosyah untuk memenuhi salah satu syarat memperoleh gelar Sarjana Sastra Inggris.

Atas perhatiannya, kami mengucapkan terima kasih.

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Yogyakarta, 16 Februari 2024

Pembimbing

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A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this graduate paper is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for the content of this graduating paper. Other researcher's opinion or finding included in this research is quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ABSTRAK	iii
MOTTO	iv
DEDICATION	v
NOTA DINAS	vi
PENGESAHAN TUGAS AKHIR	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of Study	1
1.2 Research Questions	5
1.3 Objectives of Study	5
1.4 Scope of Study	5
1.5 Significance of Study	6
1.6 Literature Review	6
1.7 Theoretical Approach	10

1.8 Methods of Research	12
1.8.1 Type of research.....	12
1.8.2 Data Source.....	13
1.8.3 Data Collection Techniques.....	13
1.8.4 Data Analysis Techniques	14
1.9 Paper Organization	14
CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	16
2.1 Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL).....	16
2.2 Appraisal System.....	19
2.2.1 Attitude	20
2.2.2 Engagement	25
2.2.3 Graduation	28
2.3 Ideology.....	32
CHAPTER III FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS	33
3.1 Analysis of Appraisal Devices	33
3.1.1 Analysis of Attitude.....	34
3.1.2 Analysis of Engagement	50
3.1.3 Analysis of Graduation	58
3.2 Analysis of Ideology	69
CHAPTER IV CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS	75

4.1 Conclusions	75
4.2 Suggestions.....	76
REFERENCES.....	77
APPENDICIES	79
APPENDIX 1	79
APPENDIX 2	81
CURRICULUM VITAE	96



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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 The model of context in SFL	19
Figure 2.2 The framework of Appraisal theory	20



LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 kinds of genre	17
Table 2.2 Kinds of Affect	22
Table 2.3 Kinds of Judgement	23
Table 2.4 Kinds of Appreciation	25
Table 3.1 Appraisal Analysis	34
Table 3.2 Analysis of Inclination-Affect	35
Table 3.3 Analysis of Happiness-Affect	36
Table 3.4 Analysis of Security-Affect	36
Table 3.5 Analysis of Satisfaction-Affect	38
Table 3.6 Analysis of Insecurity-Affect	39
Table 3.7 Analysis of Positive Normality-Judgment	40
Table 3.8 Analysis of Positive Capacity-Judgment	41
Table 3.9 Analysis of Positive Propriety-Judgment	42
Table 3.10 Analysis of Negative Capacity-Judgment	43
Table 3.11 Analysis of Negative Propriety-Judgment	44
Table 3.12 Analysis of Monogloss-Engagement	48
Table 3.13 Analysis of Positive Reaction-Appreciation	49

Table 3.14 Analysis of Positive Valuation-Appreciation	51
Table 3.15 Analysis of Attribution Heterogloss-Engagement	54
Table 3.16 Analysis of Denial Heterogloss-Engagement	55
Table 3.17 Analysis of Endorsement Heterogloss-Engagement.....	57
Table 3.18 Analysis of Entertain Heterogloss-Engagement	57
Table 3.19 Analysis of Isolation	59
Table 3.20 Analysis of Maximization.....	60
Table 3.21 Analysis of Infusion.....	61
Table 3.22 Analysis of Lexicalization	63
Table 3.23 Analysis of Metaphor.....	64
Table 3.24 Analysis of Number	65
Table 3.25 Analysis of Mass.....	66
Table 3.26 Analysis of Extent.....	66
Table 3.27 Analysis of Focus-sharpen.....	67
Table 3.28 Analysis of Genre.....	70
Table 3.29 The Distribution of Evaluation	73

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Language is defined as a communication tool for conveying feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and so forth. This means people interact in a form of language that is understandable. In linguistics, any instance of language that is sensible to anyone who knows it, is defined as a text (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 3). A text can be both in spoken and written form. Poole & Field (1976) found a distinguishing characteristic between spoken and written text is that spoken texts tend to have greater complexity in terms of embedding, including more adverbs and personal pronouns (Chafe & Tannen, 1987).

There are different types of spoken texts. One of the types is speech. It is usually used to convey important information. In recent years, speech has been used to communicate ideas and messages that significantly impact society, politics, and public discourse. Besides that, speech can also be persuasive, with the main goal of getting the audience persuaded and convinced about the subject matter of the speech (Fanani et al., 2020).

The rise of social media use has added to the reach and impact of speech. This is possible because social media provides a space for people to convey their thoughts, engage in discussions, and share various information. Speech can be more influential if it is delivered by someone with a large platform. Thus, people with

large platforms, such as influential public figures, political leaders, or social media influencers, have the power to reach and engage with broader audience.

Influential figures make it possible to influence public opinion and even drive social or political change with their speeches. One of the prominent figures who had the advantage of being heard by many people through his speeches is Jordan Peterson. He is a professor of psychology at the University of Toronto who started a YouTube channel back in 2013. Since then, Peterson has been active in uploading recordings of his speeches. The speeches on his YouTube channel revolve around the areas of education, culture, and biblical lectures. Therefore, he has become one of the influencers who has made quite an impact on society at large, with a total of 7.48 million subscribers. Among many of his video lectures, Peterson made a video containing a speech specifically for Muslims entitled “Message to Muslims.” After the video was uploaded on July 14, 2022, Peterson received a lot of attention from Muslims around the world, with 3 million viewers. Thus, the video is considered worthy of being further studied to find out about Peterson’s use of language so that he can effectively engage a large audience of Muslims.

The popularity of Peterson’s speech is certainly not only because he is an influencer but also because it stems from the speech itself. Peterson conveyed the speech in the aftermath of the Abraham Accords. The Accords were an American-sponsored normalization process between Israel dan the United Arab Emirates, and were partly marketed as a religious rapprochement between Muslims, Jews, and Christians (Winter & Guzansky, 2020). Furthermore, in his speech, Peterson also revealed that he has recently received a lot of attention from Muslims who listen to

his biblical lectures as mentioned in his speech, “and all of this is lovely to see in the aftermath of the extraordinary Abraham Accords, which have laid out the possibility for peace between all the people of the Book in an unprecedented manner” (Peterson, 2022). The researcher assumes that Peterson’s utterances involve his feelings especially in the phrase “*all of this is lovely to see*”, which conveys an emotional reaction towards his Muslim audience following the aftermath of the Abraham Accords.

Moreover, in his speech, Peterson mentioned his presumptions towards Muslims which indicated a judgement against them. Peterson stated, “it is time for those of you in the Muslim world to stop fighting among yourselves— you Shiites and Sunnis— and also time to stop regarding the Christians, and even more specifically, the Jews, as your enemies” (Peterson, 2022). It is clear from Peterson’s use of the linguistic choices “*stop fighting*” and “*stop regarding the Christians and even more specifically, the Jews, as your enemies,*” that he believes there is a lack of tolerance among Muslims as well as between Muslims, Christians and Jews. In addition, Peterson conveyed about peacebuilding, encouraging Muslims to cross sectarian and religious divides so that they can live together. The idea of Peterson’s speech is concerning on evaluating Muslims regarding peaceful coexistence of religious diversity.

For those reasons above, the linguistic choices in Peterson’s speech are worth examining. These linguistic choices reflect the way language is used to accomplish the interpersonal meta function, which relates to how language users are able to establish and maintain appropriate relationships with other people. Thus,

a study of interpersonal meaning is necessary to be conducted. The clauses in Peterson's speech can be analyzed by using Appraisal theory, which is the development of Halliday's (2004) theory of interpersonal meaning. Appraisal is one of the approaches used to uncover interpersonal meaning by narrowing down the evaluation of attitudes found in a text (speech). By applying appraisal theory, these attitudinal evaluations can reveal the feelings and values of the speaker (Martin & White, 2005, p. 2). Besides, the appraisal theory also interprets evaluation strategies by examining the appraisal devices used in Peterson's speech addressed to Muslims. The appraisal devices are mainly categorized into attitude, engagement, and graduation. These devices include lexical choices, evaluative adjectives, adverbs, intensifiers, and other linguistic features that express positive or negative evaluations.

In addition, after analyzing the evaluative strategies, it is also necessary to identify Peterson's ideological stance, especially since he is addressing a diverse religious audience. By knowing how Peterson positioned himself ideologically, it is easier to identify the biases in his speech. This is very important in analyzing something that is spread on social media because, as mentioned earlier that, the use of language can affect society at large. Therefore, a study of Peterson's ideological stance in conveying his message to Muslims is necessary along the process of interpretation.

Therefore, this research aims to conduct an appraisal analysis of Jordan Peterson's speech in his YouTube video entitled "Message to Muslims." By employing an appraisal theory approach, this research aims to uncover the

evaluative strategies employed by Peterson to express his attitudes, negotiate meanings, and examine his perspectives on Muslims. Besides, analyzing appraisal devices in Peterson's speech allows for discovering the ideological representations constructed through his utterances. This research is further analyzed by applying the appraisal theory by Martin & White (2005) as well as the ideological framework by Martin (1992).

1.2 Research Questions

In order to specify the research's objective, the following are constructed research questions:

1. How are the appraisal devices reflected in Jordan Peterson's speech?
2. How does Jordan Peterson ideologically position himself in delivering his speech?

1.3 Objectives of Study

As explained earlier, this research proposed some objectives as follows:

1. To identify appraisal devices used by Jordan Peterson in his speech.
2. To find out Jordan Peterson's ideological position in his speech.

1.4 Scope of Study

This research is limited to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly regarding appraisal theory and ideology analysis. This research examines the appraisal devices in Jordan Peterson's speech addressed to the Muslim

community. In the second analysis, the research focuses on how Jordan Peterson positions himself ideologically in persuading the Muslim community.

1.5 Significance of Study

This research aims to provide more knowledge in the field of linguistics, particularly in analyzing appraisal devices used in public discourse. Additionally, this study seeks to expand understanding of how influential people use appraisal devices and ideology to influence attitudes and perceptions of particular communities, in this case, the Muslim community.

1.6 Literature Review

Several researchers have previously conducted studies on appraisal devices. First, research was carried out by Khotimah (2023) in her thesis entitled "An Appraisal Analysis of Viewers Comments on Alaa Murabit Talk in TED YouTube Channel." In that research, she used a descriptive qualitative method with appraisal theory by Martin and White (2005) to analyze the attitude expressed by the viewers' comments on a video talk delivered by Alaa Murabit. The data used various positive and negative comments, which were collected using documentation and sampling techniques. Based on the results of the analysis, there are 55 positive attitude and 45 negative attitude items. This shows that a high number of viewers gave positive comments to Alaa Murabit for her attitude and words regardless of some negative comments that showed that some viewers did not like her thoughts. Other than that, engagement items were also found, which consisted of 6 monogloss and 17 heterogloss. On graduation items, there were 31

items used by viewers that showed an increase and decrease in intensification. Therefore, it can be summarized that the viewers employed different appraisal devices in each comment they left.

The second thesis is entitled “An Appraisal Devise Analysis of Biden’s Speech in A Virtual Campaign” which was conducted by Muftinatul Karimah (2022). The thesis used the appraisal theory by Martin and White (2005) to analyze Biden’s speech in conveying his intentions to American Muslims and how his view about Muslims through appraisal attitude items. There are several category issues in Biden’s speech, including emphasizing the importance of the Islamic faith, campaigning for the rights of American Muslims, admiring the civil rights fighters, criticizing Donald Trump, showing the importance of Muslims presence, and persuading American Muslims to vote for him. The researcher found that each categorical issues show all kinds of appraisal devices (affect, engagement, appreciation). The study also reveals Biden’s view of Muslims through judgement devices, which was conveyed in a positive evaluation dealing with capacity, tenacity, veracity, and propriety.

The third appraisal analysis was conducted in a political discourse. The article is entitled “Uncovering of Ideological Stances of The Indonesian Presidents through An Amalgamation Analysis of Attitudinal Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis,” which was written by Megah et al. (2021). This study aimed to analyze, comprehend, and draw conclusions about the hidden ideology of the Indonesian Presidents’ speeches in the post-new order. To uncover the ideological stance of the presential speech texts, the researchers applied the Critical Discourse Analysis

(CDA) of the Fairclough model (1995) along with Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), in particular the Appraisal Analysis of Martin & White (2005). The results of the study showed that the judgmental dominated the attitude subsystem with 81 data (54%). Then, tenacity was found to be the most frequent from the judgmental category, with 14 data from SBY's speech and 15 data from Jokowi's speech. According to the findings explained, SBY and Jokowi described their evaluation of Indonesians in a positive way to convey their positive value toward them as reliable people who put a lot of effort and strength into their work. Both presidents did that to win the public's trust and maintain their positions of power.

The fourth research study in the area of appraisal devices was conducted in a fictional work. Piscayanti (2020), in her article entitled "The Appraisal Analysis of Character In Resolution Part Of The Old Man And The Sea By Ernest Hemingway", used the text of The Old Man and The Sea novel, especially on the resolution part as the primary data. The research aimed to analyze how appraisal items are realized by Santiago in the resolution part of the novel entitled "The Old Man and The Sea." The results of the research showed that attitude: affect and graduation: force dominate the appraisal items found in the resolution section of the novel. Of the 34 appraisal items found, there are 17 graduation, 11 affect, 5 engagement, 3 judgment, and 1 appreciation. It can be concluded that Santiago, in the resolution part, has many positive traits. This indicates that appraisal items have something to do with fictional character development.

Appraisal analysis is also relevant to consider in the news text. The first research is entitled "Analysis of Appraisal System in News Text *"Berebut Vaksin"*:

A Study of Systemic Functional of Linguistic.” In that research, Yulianti et al. (2021) found that there are many instances of negative appreciation and judgment in the news text entitled “*Berebut Vaksin.*” Negative appreciation is the sub-type of appraisal that is found the most with 31 data, while negative affect is found with 26 data, and negative judgment is found with 14 data. Despite this, researchers also found positive affect, judgment, and appreciation, although the number is less than the negative ones. There are 9 positive affect, 8 positive judgment, and 9 appreciation in the news text. According to the findings of the research, the news writer tends to hold a negative view of vaccine manufacturers, other nations, the world’s citizens, and Indonesia’s citizens themselves.

The next research on news text that used appraisal theory was written by Prastikawati (2021). The research entitled "Attitude Perspective in BBC News' Article: An Appraisal Analysis" aimed to investigate the appraisal items related to humanity in BBC News' articles. The results showed that most findings of the study were affect; and unhappiness with 12 findings while the fewer findings were judgment; tenacity, appreciation; balance, complexity, and valuation with only a single finding. This informs us that the news article encouraged people around the world to pay attention to the feelings felt by the victims affected by the storm in the Philippines.

Research that applies appraisal theory to news texts was also conducted by Gunawan et al. (2019) in an article entitled "Trick of Political Identity: Analyzing Appraisal System on 212 Movement Reunion in Online Media." The news text used in this study is entitled Trick of Political Identity and was posted on Tirto.id online

media for three months, from October to December 2018. The data in this research are 44 clauses that discussed the 212 movement reunion at the National Monument in Jakarta. Based on the research results, negative appreciation (43.3%) was found to be the most frequent appraisal item in the news text. It can be seen that the news writer wants to convey that he disagrees with identity politics in Indonesia because it is not appropriate to be practiced. The occurrence of positive affect (3.33%), negative affect (13.33%), positive judgment (13.33%), and negative judgment (10%) shows that the news writer attempted to position himself on a neutral side. In addition, the news writer used more heterogloss (46.67%) than monogloss (53.33%), which showed that the news writer tended to use his own opinion in expressing his attitude about the 212 movement reunion.

The references above show that this research has similarities in theory and methodology with different objects. Most research focuses on the appraisal theory subsystem. Thus, this research tries to fill the gap by conducting an appraisal analysis along with the ideology in Jordan Peterson's speech. In this research, the researcher analyzes all devices of appraisal to answer the first research question, and the second analysis is focused on the ideology of the speaker to answer the second research question.

1.7 Theoretical Approach

Martin & White (2005) argued that appraisal is categorized into three interconnected domains of attitude, engagement, and graduation. Attitude is used to refer to one's feelings, including emotional responses, behavioral judgments, and

evaluation of things. Furthermore, engagement concerns acquiring attitudes and the interaction of views surrounding opinions in a discourse. On the other hand, graduation examines the issue of grading, in which categories are blurred and emotions become amplified.

According to Martin & White (2005), engagement is related to the way someone positions themselves regarding the value position advanced and potential responses to that value position, using resources such as projection, modality, polarity, concession, and various remark adverbs. Furthermore, engagement is categorized as "heteroglossic" when it presents dialogic alternatives but is "monoglossic" when no other voices or opinions are brought up in the utterances.

The attitude of appraisal devices is separated into three different kinds, which are affect, judgment, and appreciation. According to Martin & White (2005), affect concerns with instruments to evaluate emotional responses, such as the sense of shock in relation to a specific event. It has to do with the way people express both positive and negative emotions. Martin & White (2005) classified affect under three main categories which are affect as quality, affect as process, and affect as commentary. Affect as quality relates to participant descriptions, participant attributions, and manner of process. Affects as a process is related to mental processes and affective behavior. On the other hand, affect as commentary refers to the desiderative. Besides, Martin & White (2005) explained that judgment relates to instruments for evaluating behavior by considering various normative principles. The classifications of judgment involve social esteem, such as tenacity, capacity, and normality, and social sanction, including propriety and veracity. Additionally,

appreciation implies the evaluation of semiotic and typical phenomena, corresponding to whether they are valued or not in certain areas (Martin & White, 2005). Appreciation can be categorized into reaction, composition, and valuation. Reaction is concerned with affection, composition deals with perception, and valuation comes with cognition.

Furthermore, Martin & White (2005) stated that graduation is concerned with gradability. It values rise and lower by how speakers graduate the interpersonal force, impact, or volume of their utterances. Besides, it also evaluates sharpen and softer by how they graduate the point of their semantic categorizations.

In addition to appraisal devices analysis, the researcher set out to find what kind of ideology Jordan Peterson used in his speech. Martin (1992) stated that dealing with ideology involves two axes, which are left/right and protagonist/antagonist. In addition, he explained that antagonists were defined as interlocutors engaged in creating issues, while protagonists were defined as interlocutors aiming to dissolve them. On the other hand, the term left was used for those with semiotic power to gain, while the right was used to refer to those with power to lose from the ensuing arguments (Martin, 1992).

1.8 Methods of Research

1.8.1 Type of research

This research uses descriptive qualitative method. This method is a tool for understanding and exploring the meaning that a person or group attaches to a human or social issue (Creswell, 2009). This is an appropriate method for the

research as it concerns the language devices that are used by Jordan Peterson. In addition, in this research, the researcher is required to accurately present the characteristics of a particular person, group, or situation (Kothari, 2004). The descriptive research in this study aims to explain the appraisal devices and ideology used in Jordan Peterson's speech.

1.8.2 Data Source

The data in this research were obtained from the transcription of Jordan Peterson's YouTube Video entitled "Message to Muslims." The video was shared publicly on his YouTube channel on July 14, 2022. The video went viral among the Muslim community, and it has been streamed 3.027.294 times. The video can be accessed through the YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7pd0HLeYKsE>. Thus, the data in this study are clauses in Jordan Peterson's speech that contain appraisal devices.

1.8.3 Data Collection Techniques

In collecting data, the researcher employs the transcription technique. Since the data is derived in audio-visual form, it is necessary for the researcher to convert it into written form. Along with the transcription technique, this research also uses a data collection technique named content analysis. Content analysis is an appropriate technique related to verbal material research (Kothari, 2004, p. 110). By applying the content-analysis technique, the researcher carefully watched and listened to Jordan Peterson's video in order to ensure that the transcription was in line with the spoken words. Furthermore, the researcher listed phrases containing

affect, judgment, appreciation, engagement, and graduation. After that, they were given coded and matched with Item Number, appraisal devices, and the type of appraisal devices.

1.8.4 Data Analysis Techniques

In this qualitative research, the data analysis process includes preparing the data, conducting various analyses, comprehending more about the data, displaying the data, and finally interpreting the meaning of the data more broadly (Creswell, 2009). After getting the data required, it is further analyzed with some steps such as breaking down the data into clauses, identifying the appraisal devices in them by employing the appraisal framework by Martin & White (2005) and interpreting the data in relation to the problem statement as well as describing the detailed analysis of each device, examining Jordan Peterson's ideological position by using ideological framework by Martin (1992) and summing up the findings and discussions at the end.

1.9 Paper Organization

This research consists of four chapters in total. The first chapter is an introduction that consists of the background of the study, which explains the problem in general, research questions, objectives of the study, which answers the research questions, scope of the study, which shows the limitations of this research, significance of study which discuss the contribution of this research in linguistics field, literature review for the previous researchers, theoretical approach which introduces the appraisal and ideological framework, methods of research which

consists of tools and procedures used by the researcher, and also paper organization. Then, the second chapter contains the theoretical background that explains the theory used in the research in a more specific way, while the third chapter describes the data findings and discussion where the researcher presents the analysis of the appraisal devices and ideology used by Jordan Peterson in his speech. The last or fourth chapter includes conclusions and suggestions for further research.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS

4.1 Conclusions

Based on the research objectives, there are two things to conclude in this research. The first one is that all appraisal devices are realized in Peterson's speech. There are a total of 53 data which express 25 attitude items consisting of 9 affect, 12 judgment, and 4 appreciation; 11 engagement items consisting of 5 monogloss and 6 heterogloss; and 17 graduation items consisting of 11 force-intensification, 3 force-quantification, and 3 focus-sharpen.

In the subsystem of attitude, the findings have to do with positive and negative evaluation. There are 8 positive affect and 1 negative affect which shows that Peterson conveys a lot more feelings with positive sentiment in his speech. Furthermore, there are 4 positive judgments and 8 negative judgments, which indicates that Peterson employs an assessment of a behavior or character in a way that is likely to be negative. Then, there are 4 positive appreciation and no negative appreciation, which shows that there are things that Peterson evaluates as pleasant. Besides, engagement devices are used in Peterson's speech. There are 5 monogloss items that suggest that Peterson did not use any reference to express the proposition. There are also 6 heterogloss items that indicate that Peterson involves dialogic alternatives in his utterances. Finally, graduation devices are also contained within the speech which are categorized into 11 force-intensification which indicates

emphasis, 3 force-quantification which indicates imprecise measuring of number, and 3 focus-sharpen which upscale terms.

The following conclusion is drawn based on Peterson's ideology in positioning himself against the issue through his utterances. By considering the exposition genre and evaluation of attitudinal items, the use of 64% or 16 positive appraising items, which is more than half of all the evaluative items, suggests that Peterson uses the left protagonist ideology in delivering the speech to his Muslim audience. It means he does not have power over the issue, but he positively presents the issue, which can be considered a form of support or approval towards it to gain power.

4.2 Suggestions

By the end of this research, the researcher suggests that future researchers conduct a study on the same topic to add more insight into appraisal analysis. It is important to identify appraisal devices and ideology within a text to find out more about the idea one actually wants to convey. In addition, future researchers can apply the theory more broadly in an analysis by adding other analyses related to Systemic Functional Linguistics, such as register analysis. It is also widely welcomed for future researchers who want to add more insights relating to this research to provide a greater understanding of knowledge.

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