Pinpointing Interpersonal Stances in Threatening Discourse on Indonesian Muslim Clerics: An Appraisal Analysis

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Abstract. Threatening discourse as a genre is fraught with stances of violence and threatener control in which authorial intent-attributive threats possess particular characteristics strengthening both a threatener's role in and commitment to act shown, among other things, in the deployment of diverse commitment modals and certainty adverbs. This paper purposes, employing resources of Appraisal analysis, aims to figure out the snapshots deriving from texts in which either writers' commitment to or attitudes about a person or proposition, interpersonal stances, are construed and function in precipitated threats of violence. Threateners are disclosed to avail themselves of manifold strategies of rhetoric to deliver interpersonal meaning and take stances, not only strengthening but also weakening of their discernible commitment level, which is not in congruence with the partiality of threatening language ideologies. It is imperative that further research on stancetaking in threatening discourse be in depth explored.

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics; appraisal analysis; stance; language ideologies; threatening discourse

1 Introduction

Taking a position on an issue so that people know which side you are on, so-called take a stance, is most importantly precipitated, among other things, through lexis or words [1]. They construing a stance are prevalently encountered in a text in which writers or speakers linguistically reveal their emotions or their investment and commitment level about proposition or a person, thus both impacting an audience's reactions, even emotions and denoting the stancetaker's discernible level of commitment to accomplish [2]. Moreover, they are of functionality to align or disalign the stancetaker with the readers, or speakers, even proposition; also, they can serve to reproduce and reinforce ideology socially sited, resulting a stance an immensely compelling construct [3].

Apparently there have been a number of researchers highlighting how interpersonal stances are functionally demonstrated across typologies of registers [4], genres [5], language varieties [6], and little attention gained focus, threatening communication [7]. It was, additionally, found out that threats were rife with lexical and grammatical markers of stance; however, adherence of linguistic markers and their corresponding functions to those anticipated in threats are not always of prevalence [8]. For instance, unlike the research findings of threatening behavior replete with profanity [9], merely 24 percent of the threats in investigated corpus truly owned obviously insulting language or profanity [8]. Threats

categorized "high" level possess commanding forms invigorating the threatener's commitment or investment level, even role to act (e.g. 'I will shoot him between the eyes', 'he will die this Tuesday'); conversely, those demonstrating mitigating or conditional forms, and being short of strengthening forms, thus weakening the threatener's level of commitment are labelled "low" level (e.g. 'perhaps we will build a fertilizer bomb', 'I may get...') [10]. Yet, it was figured out that the linguistic forms and their corresponding functions emerged in general with relative frequency in both realized vs non-realized threat category [8]. Therefore, in spite of violent language ideologies, the mitigating forms really occurring in realized threats are entirely disguised or concealed so as to cater us an incomplete portrait of this genre. This erasure process has deterred us from considering the entirety of authorial stances in language threatening as it is intentionally made invisible so as to suit the ideological frames of either an individual or social group [11]. In fact, a threatener and his/her victims play socially situated roles in which the negotiation of interpersonal meanings are construed. Hence, the emergences of stance shall be empirically instead of intuitively examined by employing the discourse analytic system of Appraisal [12][3].

This article was inspired by the previous Gales' studies of threating communications, namely "a socially defined genre with strong ideological links to stance of violence and threatener control [8], searching the disclosure of authorial stance in the lexical, clausal and intra-textual level taking place in a real text of two threat letters threatening Islamic Indonesian Clerics. The empirical analysis using Appraisal systems: attitude, engagement, and graduation may allot a more complete snapshot of how a threatener's intent and commitment, suspected Indonesian Communists, were manisfested, how interpersonal relationships, suspected Communists- Clerics ones in Indonesia, were negotiated and how meanings in this discursive act were construed.

1.1. *Systemic Functional Linguistics and Appraisal Systems*

Developed in the 20th century and continuously progressed, this language function theory viewing language both as a social practice and interplay result of its systematicity and its functionality , Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) [13] [14] , is positioned in this study. Relative to this study, the functions of language, 'to threaten one' mentioned one of them, gear the manifestations of language form and structure [13]. Afterwards, it is argued that three interconnected layers, namely language – grammar and discourse, social context, and genre encode meaning functioned as language experience [14]. Next, concerning about language dimension, in particular interpersonal meta function (a function of language) is constructed in a clause expressing interpersonal meaning whose the central aspect is stance spread in the text creating "prosody of attitudes or discourse cohesion [15].The linguistically delivered stances are, then, analyzed by Appraisal – a discourse analytic framework unveiling prosodic meaning strewn throughout the text [12]. Essentially, within Appraisal system approach, texts as linguistic resources are systematically constructed, denoting interpersonal meaning so as to much disclose the stance functions, that is author's underlying positionality and attitudinal meaning [3].

Appraisal comprises three definite systems: attitude, engagement, and graduation. *Attitude* underlies how feelings are figured out within the text; it makes up three categories: *affect* (emotions) encoding positive and negative emotions of happiness, security and satisfaction, *judgment* (ethics) encoding an author's positive and negative ethical evaluations of behaviors regarding their normality, capacity, tenacity, veracity, and propriety and *appreciation* (aesthetics) evaluating things, phenomena, and process [3]. Analyzing suspected communists-posted threat letters, their authorial attitude, stands a chance of finding out the seriousness of

the threat, the reasons for offering it, and ways the author's ethical positions feasibly impacting both.

Engagement deals with the characteristics of the writers as they dialogically situate themselves as to their audience or to propositions, statements or questions, that they are referred to within the text. [3]. Two utterance typologies socially conveyed are monoglossic and heteroglossic labelled in that the earlier refer to merely the author's viewpoints. Monoglossic utterances are identical to bare assertions manifesting factual and taken-for-granted utterances assuming that the hearer is aligned with the speaker. On the other hand, heteroglossic utterances refer to other viewpoints in that they do references to and/or make negotiation of prior stances that other people belong to; meanwhile, they predict stances put forward by novel audiences [16]. Frequently encountered in the case of threats , utterances demonstrating bare assertions uttered are proffered a room for negotiations, thus disaligning the audiences as naturally a threatener keeps a distance/ a balance to his/her victim [7]. Additionally, heteroglossic utterances possibly either *expand,* permitting other voices to take place in the discourse or *contract,* terminating the debate so as to expect disalignment.

Eventually, the employment of *graduation* system encompasses the scale up and down of the strength in the authors' utterances [3]. *Graduation* can be deployed within *attitude* and *engagemen*t with distinct functions. Authors' greater or lesser positive/negative feelings (*attitude*) are exhibited by utilization of *graduation*, where their intensified or diminished involvement or commitment level is revealed by the use of graduation as well (engagement). In brief, assessing the language functions moved beyond intuitive or ideological base is availed through the analytic systems of Appraisal whose approach towards linguistic resources, threat letters issued by suspected communists in Indonesia, for instance, as systematically constructed meaning. Stances relative to emotions of the writer, the speaker or even the threatener are roughly drafted via *attitudes* system, whereas stances in connection with the writer's or the threatener's commitment or investment to do an act are underscored via *engagement* system. Then, *graduation* roles to both *attitude* and *engagemen*t systems; in fact, it performs to scale up or down of evaluative meaning contextually.

2 Methodology

A qualitative approach, a descriptive qualitative case study was employed in this research [17]. It includes a number of such qualitative research characteristics as natural settings, participants' meanings, interpretative inquiry, theoretical lens [18]. The data were collected from natural setting, namely from the uploaded two threat letters retrieved from on-line media in which the researcher interpreted interpersonal stance –attitudinal, epistemic and stylistic one - of the writer towards the victim employing sub-theory within the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) , particularly stemming from the development of Mood System : Appraisal covering three interrelated systems, namely *attitude, engagemen*t and *graduation.* Next, the paradigmatic discourse analysis method employed social-semiotics [19]. Its paradigm was classic post positivism analysing the Text, threat letters-one form of discourse-with the results of the research from the researcher's point of views or interpretation [20]. The stances in the linguistics resources were empirically interpreted. Moreover, non-random criteria of purposive sampling or theoretically-based sampling was opted owing to the fact that such sampling method met the aim of the study in that the boundary was determined, then the

focus of the study and the prevalence of pre-determined classification data were theoretically preponderant.

As analysing and comprehending the data, three following aspects shall be profoundly taken into account [3]: Firstly, Compliant Reading Position was the focus of compliantly choosing meanings in the threatening discourse since not only the writer but also the researcher are ideologically and culturally identical. Secondly, Bottom-up Analysis was implemented as clauses were the sources of starting analysis, returning up to the mood of the threatening discourse. Eventually, it was feasibly double-coded attitudinal appraised items. The retrieved primary data are two threat letters upload in on-line mass media *(https://www.helmiadamchannel.com/2020/07/viralbukti-surat-ancaman-pki-kepada.html* and *https://metro.tempo.co/read/1066510/teror-surat-di-depok-ini-10-ulama-yang-terancam dibunuh*); In fact,such linguistics resources containing authorial stances written by suspected communists in Indonesia threatened a number of Indonesian Clerics, embracing Islam and much respected by the Indonesian Muslim communities. Netizens in generally were curiously astounded to juxtapose them as they originated from the same threateners, communists in Indonesia. Under the umbrella of threatening discourse, the authorial stances were unveiled, even compared to figure the linguistic distinction within the analytic discourse of appraisal approach.

3 Findings and Discussion

A letter sent to a charismatic and respected Muslim cleric in Indonesia, Hadji Djauhari in 1953. It was written by a communist party, a political party attracting hundred thousands of participants, in particular farm hands and blue collar workers. Hajj Djauhari was hated by a group of people selff-named Rakjat Proletar Tjibeureum. They planned to do harm to him due to his unaccepted religious activitries. The threatening discourse was in the generic form of a letter, complete linguistics resources to be analyzed. See the text 1 below

Text 1: A threat letter from *Rakjat Proletar Tjibeureum*

Tertanggal 25 Djuli 1953
Kepada
H. DJAHARI
Di
Tjibeureum
Bebas!
Dengan ini kami peringatkan kepada kamu, jang mempunjai kedudukan sebagai; Agen Agama 'Arab, penjebar agama D.I, kawan/pembantu D.I, sebagaimana telah kami peringatkan pada rapat umum PKI di Lapang Oleh Raga Tjibeureum, SUPAJA SETERIMANJA PERINGATAN INI, SUPAJA TOBAT, SUPAJA MENGHENTIKAN SEMUA GERAKNJA, SUPAJA KEMBALI KEPADA AGAMA KARUHUN KITA SILIWANGI. Tentang Tuhan Allah jang kamu takuti tentang Muhammad penipu jang kamu pudja, biarkan kami jang menumpas/melawannja.
Kami menunggu bukti tobat kamu; AWAS AWAS, sekali lagi AWAS, Ingatlah pembalasan dari kami kaum PROLETAR.
Dari kami
RAKJAT PROLETAR TJIBEUREUM

However, threats as communicative events denoting purposes do not necessarily share the same typology of schematic categories having easily recognizable characteristics of a genre such an editorial, an advertorial or even a scientific articles with obvious parts of introduction, method, result and discussion and conclusion [21]. A threat letter below, Text 2 sent by suspected communists doing harm to a number of Muslim clerics residing in Depok, a district in West Java close to the capital of Indonesia, Jakarta. Ten *kyai* and *ustadz* were threatened to be killed through a letter accepted by an *ustadz* in his residence 2018. Public was shocked as the trauma of the past moment as clerics were slaughtered by heartless communists in Indonesia is still ingrained in some people's mind. Unlike the previous Text, the following showed rather absurd as a letter in spite of the apparent sender written.

Text 2: A threat letter from suspected communists

Pengirim
KEADILAN JAYA ABADI
Jl. MALAKA HIJAU PONDOK KOPI
JAKARTA TIMUR

NAMA NAMA TARGET PENCULIKAN TOKO AGAMA
YANG ADA DI DEPOK (X) BUNUH SECEPATNYA

1. KH. Qurtubi Nafis	*(X) BUNUH*
2. KH. Abu Bakar Madris	*(X) BUNUH*
3. Ust. Iwan Gardenia	*(X) BUNUH*
4. Ust. Shobur Gardenia	*(X) BUNUH*
5. Ust. Solihin Gardenia	*(X) BUNUH*
6. Abi Zain bin Qasim Gardenia	*(X) BUNUH*
7. KH. Riyono GG Kocen	*(X) BUNUH*
8. Ust. M. Syarif Hidayatulloh	*(X) BUNUH*
9. KH. Ahmad Zaelani	*(X) BUNUH*
10. Ust. Marzan	*(X) BUNUH*

There were a number of social actors or groups of participants critically examined [22], that was *kaum PROLETAR, RAKYAT PROLETAR TJIBEUREUM,PKI, KEADILAN JAYA ABAD*I belonging to the threateners; others H. DJAHARI, *Agen Agama Arab, penjebar agama D.I, kawan/pembantu D.I, TOKO AGAMA,* enumerated one by one related to the victims. In text 1, the threateners obviously refer themselves to kaum PROLETAR, RAKYAT PROLETAR TJIBEUREUM, accomplishing a mission to get the people in that district back to their ancestor's religion, *siliwangi*. Additionally, in text 1, a threaten refers himself to a larger organization, *KEADILAN JAYA ABADI,* possessing an implicit mission to enforce justice for all. Those undermining it are about to be terminated.

Attitudinal stances that the threaten exploited were demonstrated to the employment of sorted lexis. Table 1 showed the categories of attitudes encounted in text 1 and text 2.

Table 1. Attitudinal Items in threat

Threat letters	Affect Tokens	Judgment Tokens	Appreciation Tokens
Text 1	*Bebas, takuti, penipu Awas,pembalasan,peringatkan*	*kedudukan sebagai agen, penyebar agama D.I,*	*Allah yg kamu takuti, Muhammad yang kamu*
	Peringatkan, peringatan,tobat	*Kawan/pembantu D.I*	*puja, kedudukan sebagai*
	Menghentikan, kembali,puja,	*menghentikan semua*	*agen, penyebar agama,*
	Menumpas, melawan, bukti, Tobat,pembalasan	*gerakanya,kamu takuti Kamu puja*	*kawan/pembantu D.I, gerakan*
Text 2	*Bunuh,, bunuh(10 times)*	*Target Penculikan*	
		Bunuh, *Bunuh (10 times)*	

The above table, the attitudinal tokens in affect and judgments ones were in general labelled negative (-). Likewise, all phenomena occurred and got to be done by the victims were viewed negative (-) by the threaterners. Even, encountered in both text 1 and text 2, the same lexis was reiterated deliberately. Such lexis as *peringatan tobat, awas*, or obviously *bunuh* uttered ten times in the appearance of eleven ones found in text-2. The repetition, and even the capital letters and red-ink used in the threat letters were intentional to underscore how deep or serious the writer's feelings on the persons, their attitudes and phenomena. The dominance of (-) propriety also occurred in retrieved texts. For example, "awas" was evaluated to negative behavior of "penyebar agama D.I" or "pembalasan" referred to the attitudes of "Alloh yang kamu takuti" and " Muhammad yang kamu puja" (Text 1). The preponderant subcategory of Judgment tokens was in congruent with the study by Gales in which the terrorist threatened the laymen and professionals in health sectors [7].

To figure out how much the writer or the threatener committed to do an act towards the victims threatened, we could see the table 2 categorizing the kinds of utterances, confirming alignment or disalignment with the readers.

Table 2. Utterance Typologies in

Utterance Typology	Utterance Tokens
Monoglossic	Bebas!
	kami peringatkan kepada kamu
	kami peringatan supaya tobat
	kami peringatkan supaya menghentikan semua gerakanya
	Kami menunggu bukti tobat kamu
	Bunuh secepatnya, etc
Heteroglossic (expand & Contract)	*Biarkan kami yang menumpasnya*

Heteroglossic utterances were minimally found at all, either at lexical level by the use of modal verbs such as *barangkali* (perhaps), *boleh* (can), *sebaiknya* (should). It was only one known from the lexis *biarkan*. Then, at clausal one like the emergence of subordinators

confirming conditions, like walaupun (eventhough, although, despite, in spite of,), *jika* (if), or *karena* (as, since, because), etc were not figured out at all. The findings were divergent from gales studies in that the terrorists attacked the victims, despite being poised to them, at times got willing to open up the negotiations by extending discourse proven heteroglossic utterance encounters. [8] [7]. The coming-up question was that whether the writer was aligned with the readers in that the the threateners simply considered all propositions the shared by the victims. The distinctions of monoglossic and heteroglossic were challenged in that while the utterances produced were socially determined to uphold tension [23], yet in the case of threatening genre, such categorization was futile [16].

Finally, *graduation,* scalling down, scalling up or amplifying was actually manifested through the solid reiterateration , collocational, semantic and metaphorical of the lexis [23], such as *bunuh* uttered ten times, and *bunuh secepatnya* (in text 1), *tobat* uttered twice, AWAS uttered three times (in text 2). Let's see table table 3 depicting repetition type exploited by the threateners.

Table 3. Repetition Typology in Graduation

Utterance Typology	Utterance Tokens
Collocational Repetition	*Bunuh,*
	Bunuh
	Bunuh, etc
Semantic Repetition	Agen Agama Arab
	Penyebar agama D.I
Metaphorical Repetition	Kamu
	Agen Agama Arab
	Kawan/pembantu D.I

The existence of repetition was typically attached to the characteristics of threatening genre. It was executed intentionally to secure, even enforce the investment or commitment to act. The preference of which tapestry to be used is socially determined. The last part of this article, the essence of this research shall be elaborated.

4 Conclusion

The instances of linguistics resources in the forms of threatening discourse constructed in threat letters inform us the underlying intent of the writer towards the feeling and commitment he precipitates. In the particular case of threats addresses to a number of Muslim clerics in Indonesia, the rooms for negotiations, or weakening linguistics features are not corroborated in the actual context. Interpersonal stances. i.e. authorial ones demonstrated through attitudinal, engagement and graduation items deployed depicted how much hatred the communists have towards *kyai* or *ustadz* in Indonesia regarding their attitudes, even the phenomenon they link. Furthermore, by preponderantly delivering monoglossic utterances doesn't mean that the communists and the suspected ones are aligned with the Muslim clerics, yet the actual tense was apparently construed. Juxtaposing the two letters, they possess identical tenets. Further research in depth is still in the need, though.

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