



International Journal of Systemic Functional Linguistics

Journal Homepage: <https://ejournal.warmadewa.ac.id/index.php/ijssl>

Interpersonal Function in Martin Luther King Jr's Speech

Forisman Hulu

Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Nias Selatan

huluforisman@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research aims was to discover the interpersonal function types and to explores their realization within the speech. This research was conducted by using qualitative research design. The data was taken from the website which are readily accessible to the public. After that, the data is divided into clauses form. Next, the data was analyzed based on Halliday's theory through many steps of data analysis by Cresswell. The results of data analysis showed that Martin Luther King Jr applied: (1) Speech Function (statement, command, and question); Mood (declarative, imperative and interrogative); Modality (high, median, and low); Tense Shift (present, future, and past) and Personal Pronoun (First Personal Pronoun, Second Personal Pronoun and Third Personal Pronoun). (2) speech function (statement was a most dominant, command was the second dominant and question was less); Mood (declarative was most dominant, imperative was the second dominant and interrogative was less); modality (median was most dominant, high was the second, and low was rare); personal pronoun (we was used frequently) and tense shift (present tense was majority, future was a second place, and past tense was less). So based result above, it was concluded that Martin Luther King Jr gave much infomation. Therefore, this speech was called as an informative speech. Considering the result above, the researcher suggested orator use many pronoun "we" when delivering a speech and the university students learn interpersonal function.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since maintaining interaction with audiences in the speech is a challenge for every in achieving their goal, and the speech I Have a dream is one of the three popular speeches in the world in 20th century (Kemendikbud, 2014). In political world, many speakers use speech to obtain their goal. Commonly, the speaker goals are: to inform, to persuade, and to entertain (Verdeber & Sellnow, 2008). To achieve the speaker's goal, the speaker must to maintain the interaction with others by cautious in choosing appropriate sentence and vocabulary. It terms of choosing appropriate sentence and vocabulary, it relates to grammar. According to Gerot and Wignell (1994), there are three types of grammar, those are: traditional grammar, formal grammar, and

functional grammar (Gerot & Wignell, 1994). According to Morley (2000), Halliday & Matthiessen (2014), Prasetyo (2013) and Setyowati (2016), there are three functions of language, those are: *Ideational function, Interpersonal function and Textual function* (Morley, 2000; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Prasetyo, 2013; Setyowati, 2016).

Interpersonal metafunction assumes that language as a tool to enact with others people. The model of the Interpersonal metafunction, as it has been developed for English, is related to choice of mood, and distinguishes between a Mood (or Mood element) and a Residue, the Mood being made up of the Subject and the Finite (Bank, 2010). Interpersonal function is an interesting phenomenon to be studied because by knowing about interpersonal function can

ARTICLE INFO

How To Cite:

Hulu, F. (2019). Interpersonal Function In Martin Luther King Jr's Speech. *International Journal of Systemic Functional Linguistics*. 2(1). 43-46. Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22225/ijssl.2.1.999.43-46>

Article History:

Received 21 Feb 2019

Revised 16 May 2019

Accepted 16 May 2019

Keywords:

Interpersonal function;

personal pronoun;

speech;

speech function;

make people successful in exchange information, good, and service to listeners. It is caused by its function which can offer the notion about how to choose the proper grammatical choices in the communication (social interaction). Applying the proper grammatical choices in communication is important because it can make a divergent and significant meaning which can influence the interaction between speaker and audiences within communication.

Interpersonal function can be realized in two kinds of language, those are written and oral communication language. In the written language, interpersonal function can be found in newspaper, novel, and magazine. But, in the spoken language, interpersonal can be realized in through conversation, interview, and speech.

Therefore, Webster (2012) said that it does not matter how sophisticated or modern our society, effective communication is always going to be an important part of being human (Webster, 2012). According to Halliday, interpersonal function assumed language as interaction so one proper way to reveal how Martin Luther King Jr maintained the interaction with his audiences in his speech *I have a dream* is by analyzing interpersonal metafunctions within it.

In further development, there are many researchers who interest in the same field. First, Banks (2010) studied the interpersonal metafunction in French from a Systemic Functional perspective (Banks, 2010). However, his research only focused on French language and it was conducted by applying comparative method. Second, Feng and Liu (2010) conducted the research with title "Analysis of Interpersonal Meaning in Public Speeches-A Case Study of Obama's Speech" However, the research only focused on Obama's speech. His finding showed that Obama makes full use of the language to achieve his political purpose in his speech by using different devices to fulfill interpersonal meaning (Feng & Liu, 2010). Third, Nur (2012) conducted analysis of interpersonal metafunction in public speeches: a case study of Nelson Mandela's presidential inauguration speech. The findings reveal that the architecture of Mandela's speech achieved his political purpose as well as fulfilled its interpersonal meaning not only by corresponding with its lexicogrammar but also by considering the contextual factors such as the need to reflect the economic and socio-political situation of the country at that time (Nur, 2012). Fourth, Jingxia, Na and Qing (2015) with the title interpersonal

interpretation of personal pronouns in marriage advertising (Jingxia & Qing, 2015). Last, Yang (2017) with the title "The Interpersonal Metafunction Analysis of Barack Obama's Inaugural Address". Here, he preferred inaugural address terminology to speech terminology. His paper focused on the Interpersonal roles, Mood and Modality system at the level of interpersonal function (Yang, 2017). The study finds that the plural forms of the first person are mostly used, declarative clauses have an absolute advantage, and the medium and low modal auxiliaries appear most frequently in Obama's address, which aims to help readers understand and evaluate the speech regarding its suitability, thus to provide some guidance for readers to make better speeches. This research is expected to give contribution to many people from many fields. First, this research will give a meaningful reference to orator particularly about how to apply interpersonal functions for a popular speech. Second, the result will be a material teaching in academic field.

The focuses of the present research was on interpersonal function which includes speech function, mood, modality, tense shift and personal pronoun. So based on the explanation given in the introduction section, the objectives of the current research are to discover what kinds of interpersonal functions realized in the speech is and to reveal how Martin Luther King Jr applied interpersonal functions in his popular speech.

II. METHOD

This research was conducted by qualitative research. The data were obtained from the text of *I have a dream* speech. The data were collected through documentation technique. To analyze the data was applied Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approach theory applied (Cresswell, 2009). First, the material of data were scanned optically and typed on the computer. Second, read all the data frequently and comprehensively. Third, the data were sorted into some sentences. Fourth, the sentence forms were sorted into some clauses. Next, put all data into a table in order to analyze its speech function, Mood, modality, personal pronoun, and tense shift. After that, the researcher used coded (*) and some colors to analyze any categories. Afterward, the types of interpersonal function and its realization in the speech (*I Have a Dream*) were described textually. Last, the data were interpreted based on the researcher's experience. After that, the result of

this research was compared with the information gleaned from the literature or theories.

After doing some steps of analyzing data, it discovered that Martin Luther King Jr's speech was consisted of 163 clauses. Through those clauses, Martin Luther King Jr applied many types of interpersonal function.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Interpersonal Function

	Interpersonal function				Total
	Sta	Que	Off	Com	
Speech function	142	1	-	20	163
Mood	Dec 142	Int 1		Imp 20	163
Modality	High 16	Median 35		Low 2	53
Tense shift	Past 13	Present 120		Future 30	163
Personal pronoun	Fpp 46	Spp 5	Tpp 8	Other 84	143

Note :

Sta : Statement

Que : Question

Off : Offer

Com : Command

Dec : Declarative

Int : Interrogative

Imp : Imperative

Fpp : First personal pronoun

Spp : Second personal pronoun

Tpp : Third personal pronoun

Based on the Table 1, the first position was speech function, Mood, and tense shift. This was caused by every clause always contended the three interpersonal function above. The personal pronoun took the second position because not all the clauses has explicit subject. This occurred in the imperative clauses which has implicit subject. The last finding was modality took the last position because it was not a must in each clause.

Considering to the result finding of Feng and Liu (2010), the result finding of the current researcher was not the same with the Feng and Liu's finding. Feng and Liu (2010) found just four modal operator in the Obama's speech, those were: will, can, should, and have to. However, the current researcher twelve modal operator in the Martin Luther King Jr's speech, those were: must, can not, can never, must not, will, was to, would, will not, shall, is to, need to, and can. Besides the similarity between Feng and Liu's result finding, and the current researcher's result finding, both of us had

similarity. The similarity was the most dominant of will in the speech.

Based on the result above, the researcher found three mood types, those were: declarative, imperative, and interrogative Mood. This finding was the same with Halliday's opinion (2004). However, this finding was difference to Nur's finding in her research (2015). The difference was she only found two types mood in the speech, those were: declarative and imperative Mood but the current researcher found two types in the Martin Luther King Jr's speech, those were: declarative, imperative, and interrogative. Although, Nur research and the current researcher was different finding within Mood analysis. However, both Nur and current researcher's research had similarity. The similarity was the dominant using of declarative than other Moods.

IV. CONCLUSION

The dominance of statement within declarative mood signalled that the status of Martin Luther King Jr here was a speaker, a man who had much information that want to be delivered. The fact above was an evidence that the speech was informative speech. Second, the dominance of first personal pronoun "we" showed that Martin Luther King did not talk about his privacy problem or someone's problem but he talked about a serious problem of America people. Martin Luther King Jr also used first personal pronoun "we" to invite the all listeners to overcome racial discrimination in America. Third, The dominance of the present tense usage showed that he was talking about the current situation and some general truth. It was also proven that gaining his dream must be started through the present action at the time. Next, the dominance of the present tense proved

that the speech "I Have a Dream" was a direct copy of its original audio and document. In conclusion, realization of some interpersonal function types in the speech can influence the relation between orator as a speaker and listeners.

REFERENCE

- Bank, D. (2010). The interpersonal metafunction in French from systemic functional perspective. *Language Science*. 32(3), 395-407.
- Cresswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approach* (3rd ed). California: Sage Publication Inc.
- Feng, H., & Liu, Y. (2010). Analysis of Interpersonal Meaning in Public Speeches: A Case Study of Obama's Speech. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1(6), 825-829.
- Gerot, L., & Wignell, P. (1994). *Making Sense of Functional Grammar*. Sydney: AEE Publishing
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C, M, I, M. (2004). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (3rd ed). New York: Oxford University Press Inc.
- Jingxia, Liu., Na, S., & Qing, Z. (2015). Interpersonal Interpretation of Personal Pronoun in Marriage Advertising. *Research Journal of English Language and Literature*. 3 (1) 18-25.
- Kemdikbud (2014). *Bahasa Inggris/ Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*. Jakarta: Kemedikbud.
- Morley, G. D. (2000). *Syntax in Functional Grammar: An Introduction to Lexicogrammar in Systemic Linguistics*. London: Continuum.
- Nur, S. (2015). Analysis Interpersonal Metafunction in Public Speeches: A Case Study of Nelson Mandela's Presidential Inauguration Speech. *The International Journal of Social Sciences*. 30(1), 52-63.
- Prasetyo, T. D. (2013). *An Interpersonal Metafunction Analysis Of Persuasive Speeches Produced By Speaking 4 Class Students Of English Education Department Of Yogyakarta State University In The Academic Year Of 2012/2013*. Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta
- Setyowati, A. L. (2016). *Interpersonal Meaning Analysis In Short Story Of Hans Christian Andersen The Real Princess*. University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta.
- Verderber, R. F., Verderber K. S., & Sellnow D. D. (2008). *The Challenge of Effective Speaking*. Toronto: Lyn Uhl.
- Webster, J. L. (2012). *Introduction to Public Speaking* (2nd ed). Shreveport: Louisiana State University.
- Yang, H. (2017). The Interpersonal Metafunction Analysis of Barack Obama's Inaugural Address. *International Journal of Languages, Literature and Linguistics*. 3(1), 27-31