

CULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND
SOCIALIZATION JOURNAL (CCSJ)

REVIEW ARTICLE

THE POSSIBILITY OF INTEGRATING APPRAISAL THEORY AND PROXIMIZATION THEORY --- AN EXAMPLE OF THE ECONOMIST ON CHINA'S 100TH PARTY ANNIVERSARY

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ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History:

Received 12 August 2021
Accepted 03 October 2021
Available online 25 October 2021

ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the past studies related to appraisal theory and proximization theory. This paper discusses the rationality of integrating appraisal theory and proximization theory from four aspects, that is, value orientation, epistemological basis, analysis of meaning, complementarity. The author argues that the two theories can complement each other and try to establish an analytical framework to point out the possibility for uniting two theories. At the same time, the analysis of the diachronic and synchronic social and cultural contexts from the historical discourse analysis is added to promote the historical gravitas of this study. At last, the author takes the American media's coverage of China's 100th anniversary of the Party as an example and conduct a specific analysis, with a view to providing a new attempt for the integration, innovation and development of linguistics under the new liberal arts perspective.

KEYWORDS

appraisal theory, proximization theory, image construction, China's 100th anniversary of the Party, America media.

1. INTRODUCTION

On July 1, 2021, the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Party (hereinafter referred to as the congress) held in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, attracted much attention, which presented to the world the image of a thriving and prosperous country in a new era. Subsequently, domestic and foreign news media reported on it. It is well known that discourse is socially constructed (Fairclough, 1992). Each media report conveys its own value orientation when describing the event and constructs the identity of what is described. In this paper, we select the coverage of the conference event by the economist on July 3 and try to integrate appraisal theory and proximization theory to establish a comprehensive discourse analysis framework and analyze the discourse dynamically.

2. APPRAISAL THEORY AND PROXIMIZATION THEORY

2.1 Appraisal theory

Martin and White expressed their views on the interpersonal function in Systemic Functional Grammar. They argue that interpersonal function does not discuss the speaker's appraisal towards things, because it mainly considers the tone and mood of clauses (Martin and White, 2005). To further refine and extend the interpersonal function, appraisal theory was developed. In China, past researches on it can be broadly divided into three parts. The first is theoretical mediation, comparison with Hanley's theory, meaning categorization and formal categorization (Fang, 2014; Wang et al., 2007; Zhang et al., 2006). The second is the application to specific

issues themselves, such as English language teaching (Liao, 2008) and business discourse (Xu et al., 2013). The third is the discussion related to other theories, such as the combination of critical discourse analysis and multimodality (Feng et al., 2014; He et al., 2018).

According to Wang, the appraisal means in appraisal theory need to be linked to the dynamics of the context, so the inclusion of discourse genesis makes up for the lack of appraisal theory in analyzing discourse in terms of this aspect of dynamics (Wang, 2012). However, this does not take into account the analysis of the dynamics of the micro - especially the vocabularies, the clauses - nor does it pay attention to - especially discourses with ideological conflicts - the classification of objects from different ideological groups. Therefore, this paper argues that it is possible to broaden the study of lexical dynamism both from the microscopic perspective of lexicon and from the analysis of discourse in a more integrated way in terms of the cultural characteristics, i.e., ideology, in which the speaker is embedded.

2.2 Proximization theory

Proximization theory is a relatively new theory in the field of linguistics that aims to investigate how outside entities approach and threaten internal entities. Based on the concept of "Proximization", Cap proposed proximization theory, and later built on it with the STA (Spatial- Temporal-Axiological) model (Cap, 2006; Cap, 2008). Cap's application of it is mainly reflected in political discourse analysis - especially the Iraq War, the Polish right-wing government's anti-immigration strategy - the construction of legitimizing discourses, and the confirmation of the viability of public

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DOI:
[10.26480/ccsj.02.2021.63.67](http://doi.org/10.26480/ccsj.02.2021.63.67)

sphere discourses such as health, environment, and modern technology (Cap, 2008; Cap, 2018; Cap, 2014). Domestically, Wu et al. introduce proximization theory, which is mediated by Pan Dong, and Zhang Hui et al. Introduces proximization theory into China and consider it as a critique of cognitive linguistics in the "social turn" of cognitive linguistics and the "cognitive" of critical discourse analysis turn discussed in the process (Pan, 2017; Wu et al, 2016; Zhang and Yang, 2019). Related applied researches have focused on war discourse, environmental discourse, etc. (Zhang et al., 2021; Zhou, 2021).

Proximization emphasizes the dynamics of different entities, which can enable the speaker to actively eliminate the negative influence or hostile posture of the outside entities in order to contribute to the legitimization strategy of the policy or behavior (Cap, 2014). However, these strategies do not elucidate the reasons why the discourse of the speaker can be accepted by the listener and ultimately achieve the communicative purpose of legitimization from the listener's perspective (Wu and Niu, 2018). Therefore, the relationship between the speaker and the listener should be considered in the analysis of proximization.

In summary, appraisal theory should be further analyzed in terms of dynamism, and proximization theory should take the relationship between speakers and listeners into account more. At the same time, in order to make the analysis more reflective of the socio-cultural context, we can examine the synchronic and diachronic contextual causes of the events.

3. RATIONALIZATION OF THE INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK OF APPRAISAL THEORY AND PROXIMIZATION THEORY

In terms of value orientation, appraisal theory values the influence of the speaker's attitude on the listener and proximization theory values how the speaker legitimizes the discourse and its ideology. On the one hand, appraisal theory focuses on the speaker's evaluative stance on things, emphasizing the fact that the speaker's discursive perspective is encoded in the text and influences the potential reader's response (Martin and White, 2005). This emphasizes how the speaker's discourse is subjectively constructed and expects the listener to move to the direction the speaker expects, which is a persuasive relationship. In this way, appraisal theory's emphasis on the relationship between the speaker and the listener is reflected. On the other hand, proximization theory cannot be separated from critical discourse analysis (CDA) understanding of ideology. Ideology is related to the purpose of CDA's research, which is to study the domination of social rights and the inequality of rights (Huo, 2015). Proximization theory develops the different opposing camps within discourse in CDA, what Wodak calls the "in-group" and "out-group", establishing the opposition between peripheral and central entities, conveying the speaker's ideology and convincing the listener (Wodak, 2001). Thus, it appears that both appraisal theory and proximization theory are concerned with the value orientation of the speaker and his or her relationship with the listener. The difference is that the ideology contained in the proximization theory is more political and social in nature, while the attitude in the appraisal theory is slightly more moderate.

In terms of epistemological foundations, appraisal theory coincides with proximization theory. Appraisal theory has empiricism, subjectivity and subjectivity, and constructivism as its epistemological foundations (Hu, 2015). Proximization theory, as the intersection of cognitive linguistics and critical discourse analysis, involves both the epistemological foundation of cognitive linguistics, the claim to empiricism, i.e., philosophy of experience, and the epistemological foundation of critical discourse analysis, social constructivism (Wang, 2002; Liu, 2009). Therefore, it is of significant research value to consider the similarities between the epistemological foundations of the two and to integrate them appropriately, focusing on discourse and identity construction.

In terms of semantic analysis, both of them focus on micro and macro studies of discourse. Appraisal theory extends interpersonal meaning in detail, focusing on adjectives, adverbs, verbs and nounization and other lexical words as well as beyond lexical clauses to examine their evaluative meaning. Proximization theory focuses on lexical grammar such as verb phrases and noun phrases. The difference is that proximization is concerned with the analysis of the relationship between peripheral and central entities that contain ideology. As a result, the proximization theory

has a slightly clearer logic than the appraisal theory in the treatment of relations within the discourse. Therefore, the integration of the two facilitates the analysis of the internal system of language at different levels, involving both words and phrases and covering logic, which can complement each other.

In terms of dynamism, appraisal theory is relatively traditional, focusing on lexico-grammatical analysis and exploring discourse attitudes and the influence of the speaker on the listener. In contrast, Proximization theory has a sense of imminence and dynamism as its core, setting the sense of distance between peripheral and central entities and the meaning of movement of lexical phrases. Therefore, the dynamic nature of proximization theory can lexically complement the relatively static meaning of appraisal theory.

In summary, the advantage of appraisal theory is a more systematic and integrated subdivision of word categories and semantics that explores speaker attitudes and their effects on listeners. In other words, appraisal theory establishes beliefs and values shared by speakers and listeners but takes less account of the ideological oppositions between speakers and listeners, between different objects of description within discourse, and how these oppositions and relations are presented in a dynamic way. In contrast, proximization theory focuses on the relationship between in-groups and out-groups within discourses and their ideological differences. However, the refinement of word meanings is not obvious, and only the meaning of proximization is used as a distinction, in order to induce listeners' panic and evoke the psychology of the prevention. Therefore, the appraisal theory can be combined with the proximization theory for a comprehensive analysis of the text.

4. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE INTEGRATION OF APPRAISAL THEORY AND PROXIMIZATION THEORY

This paper attempts to integrate the three subsystems of appraisal theory with the spatial proximization of proximization theory, divided into clarifying the analytical framework of the two and finding the integration point of the integrated framework, as follows.

The appraisal theory contains three subsystems: attitude, engagement and graduation. Among them, attitude includes affect, judgment, and appreciation. Engagement includes contract and expand, which shows the origin of appraisal. Graduation is a hierarchical meaning model based on a typological perspective, including force and focus (Martin and White, 2005).

Proximization theory is based on the three axes of spatial proximization, temporal proximization and value proximization, which constitute the STA model of proximization theory (Cap, 2014). In this regard, the central entity is referred to as IDC ("inside -the -deictic -center") and shares positive values; the peripheral entity is referred to as ODC ("outside -the -deictic -center") and is seen as the embodiment of negative values. Spatial proximization refers to discursive spatial peripheral entities being recognized as approaching from far to near in physical spatial distance. Specifically, (a) noun phrases are recognized as ODC, (b) noun phrases are recognized as IDC, (c) displacement verb phrases and pointing verb phrases are recognized as markers of ODC movement toward IDC, (d) behavioral verbs are recognized as markers of ODC exerting influence on IDC, (e) abstract noun phrases indicate the expectation of ODC influence toward IDC, (f) abstract noun phrases indicate the outcome of ODC influence on IDC. Based on the above classifications, we can discuss the meaning embedded behind these words, i.e., how the speaker spatially demonstrates the sense of coercion of the peripheral entity on the central entity.

Above, the analytical framework of the two is sorted out. The integrated analysis of the two is discussed in detail below. First of all, the most important feature of proximization theory is the division of entities into ODC and IDC internally. So, the division of ODC and IDC can be taken as the premise of discourse analysis first. The reason is to grasp the general trend of the ideology of the discourse from a macro perspective. Before analyzing the discourse, we discuss the practical reasons and take the real historical context as the entry point to deepen our understanding of the context of the times. Next, both displacement verbs, pointing verbs, and action verbs are discussed, as well as the dynamics and influence of verb phrases at the same time. Again, the impact of abstract nouns in the

discourse is discussed in terms of expectations and results. This integrated three-step process provides an overall analysis of the text. Based on this, the scope is narrowed down to look at appraisal theory for a more microscopic and in-depth discussion of the details and attitudes from news. Appraisal theory has a detailed classification of attitudes, engagement, and graduation. But if each classification is discussed separately in previous applied researches, it is not conducive to an integrated analysis of the subsystems of appraisal theory as a whole and of the discourse as a whole. In view of its detailed classification, the paper seeks to integrate appraisal theory into details that bleed into the context of proximization theory for an integrated analysis.

5. REPORT COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Report collection

This paper selects the report of The Economist, July 3, 2021, entitled Chaguan: It works until it doesn't, as a corpus to demonstrate the feasibility of an integrated analysis framework of appraisal theory and proximization theory. First, the share of words in spatial proximization and appraisal theory is looked at.

Table 1: Spatial proximization

Category	Words and phrases	Subtotal	Distribution frequency (%)
Noun phrases are recognized as ODCs	governments, political scientists, government ministers, senior officials, Chinese officials, the Communist Party, the party, party organs, party members, party secretary, party heroes, China, ordinary people, the crowd, the masses, Chinese people, Xi Jinping, Chinese leaders, reformist leaders, his advisers, China's media heroic, party workers, white-coated doctors and nurses, martyrs, city mayors, university presidents, censors, propagandists, security agencies, priests	49	55
The noun phrase is recognized as IDC	foreigner, America, representative government, Lincoln, western political systems, the governed, free press, opposition parties, independent judiciary, Muslims in Xinjiang, democrats in Hong Kong	12	13.4
Displacement verb phrases and pointing verb phrases are recognized as markers for the movement of ODCs to IDCs	dash against, keep, point at, buttress, come, remain, mock	8	8.9
Behavioral verbs are recognized as markers for ODCs to exert influence on IDCs	crush, grip, lead, cause	5	5.6
The abstract noun phrase indicates the expectation of ODC to IDC impact	promising forces, China's rise, their autocracy, top-down endeavor, socialist democracy, lists of achievements, other forms of legitimacy, society shaking crisis, financial crash, defeat in war	10	11.2
Results of abstract noun phrases indicating the impact of ODC on IDC	loud applause, individual liberties, sincere admiration, indispensable source of wisdom, principled criticism,	5	5.6
Total		89	100

Note: In Table 2, considering the existence of lexical repetition in the discourse, we tried to select one word from others with similar meaning, but the subtotal total remains the same.

There are 85 words covering the three major systems of appraisal theory. A total of 45 (52.9%) were used for the attitude system. Among them, 17 (20%) were affect. 22 (25.9%) is for the judgment. Appraisal is 6 (7%). Engagement is 19 (22.4%), including 10 expansions and 9 contractions. 21 (24.7%) for the very graduation, including 19 for the force and 2 for the focus.

The above percentages are discussed separately below. The large difference between the number of ODCs and IDCs in spatial proximization has the highest proportion of half, indicating that the discourse maximally presents the spatially convergent threat of the peripheral entity to the central entity. The reason for the low percentage of verbs is understandable, indicating that the discourse desires to describe the persecution of ODCs to IDCs with other seemingly non-dynamic nouns, etc. The fact that the noun affects the expectation more than the outcome indicates that the discourse tries its best to assume a warning of the danger expectation of the peripheral entity to the central entity. In terms of word choice, the discourse mainly describes the dynamic persecution of the peripheral entities indirectly with expectations that appear to be unrelated to the central entity.

The percentage of the graduation and engagement in the appraisal theory is about the same. The attitude has the highest proportion, with the highest proportion of judgment, indicating that the U.S. media gave the description of the Congress with a large number of subjective attitudes. Engagement is dominated by the feeling of attribution to indicate the undesirability of the attribution of peripheral entities. Graduation emphasizes the rebellion against the peripheral entities.

5.2 Analysis of coverage

From the macro level of The Economist's coverage on China's 100th Party Anniversary, ODC and IDC are divided into two different ideology groups, with ODC mainly being "government", "leaders", "ordinary people", "people", "experts", "heroes", etc. IDC is mainly for "foreigners", "Muslims in Xinjiang", "Hong Kong democrats", "Western parties and factions". On the one hand, it completely presupposes China and the United States as irreconcilable contradictions; on the other hand, it raises the central entity to all foreigners in an attempt to alert the world to take action; on its own, it equates the people of Xinjiang with Muslims and the people from Hong Kong with democrats, constituting the central entity that shares common values with the West, intensifying the internal ethnic contradictions of China and igniting the anger of religious people and Western democratic political countries around the world. The answer to such a division can be found in the socio-historical context. The analysis of the discourse should consider both the real and historical contexts (Wodak, 2001). Historically,

Western discrimination against non-Western originated from the perspective of early European colonial expansion (You, 2008). Ideological differences have led the United States to hold stereotypes about China. In reality, during the epidemic, the United States managed chaos, depressed economic development, and recklessly blamed China; by contrast, China effectively prevented and controlled the epidemic, left its economy unaffected, and provided help to other countries. The U.S. media can only blacken the content of the conference in question, which contains various leaders, heroic figures, etc. The following is the second step, combining appraisal theory with spatial proximization in order to analyze part of the discourse. For example:

(1) For all who believe [AFFECT] that people [IDC] are endowed with inalienable rights including liberty and the pursuit of happiness [AFFECT], it was alarming [AFFECT] to hear the loud applause and cheers [AFFECT] that greeted Xi Jinping [ODC] on July 1st, the 100th anniversary of the Communist Party [ODC].

In the beginning of the report, people are defined as those who can obtain freedom and happiness. Here, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are derived from the Declaration of Independence, which can evoke a sense of national belonging and identity. In this way, the word "people" automates the membership of the central entity and presupposes a shared belief between journalists and potential readers. In a turn of events, the word "alarming" is used to contrast the emotional system of satisfaction among the internal members of the peripheral entity, thus constructing a sense of insecurity in people's emotional system. The reason for this is that it grafted the semantic category of historical aggressor Britain directly onto peace-seeking China. At the same time, the journalist implies that the acquisition of freedom and happiness reflects the inequality of power between the central and peripheral entities, i.e., the peripheral entities do not enjoy the freedom of the central entity, thereby attacking the system of the central entity.

(2) Speaking at Tiananmen Square, China's leader [ODC] had just pledged [JUDGEMENT] that any foreigner [IDC] who tried to [JUDGEMENT] bully China [ODC] would "dash [DISPLACEMENT VERB] their heads [ODC] against a Great Wall of steel ...". The party [ODC] crushes [JUDGEMENT/BEHAVIORAL VERB] individual liberties [ABSTRACT NOUN] with despotic ruthlessness [JUDGEMENT]. Yet [CONTRACT] its leaders [ODC] are sure that they govern with the consent of the vast majority [CONTRACT]. As a result, they claim [EXPAND] to enjoy [AFFECT] as much legitimacy as any democracy.

The report uses a lot of ODCs to create conflict with IDCs. The words "pledge" is positive for the peripheral entity, but negative for the central entity, which is due to the fact that the image of the peripheral entity's determination to struggle for their dream makes the central entity feel threatened. In detail, the displacement verbs dash draws the peripheral entity closer and closer to the central entity, causing a sense of panic. This is manifested by linking the lyrics of the Chinese national anthem "dash... ..steel" with foreigners, amplifying the contradiction between the two and creating an ever-approaching threat to them. In addition, the U.S. media sees non-liberty as a result of peripheral entities and criticizes it negatively in terms of values, regarding it as unjustified rude behavior. At the same time, contract and expand of engagement is used to highlight the pleasure of the peripheral entity, in contrast to the uneasiness of the central entity. The reason for this cognitive bias of the central entity towards the concept of overwhelming consent is caused by the different electoral systems of the two countries.

(3) Almost all [GRADUATION] details of the event were kept secret [AFFECT] beforehand. A crisis of confidence [AFFECT/ABSTRACT NOUN] grips [BEHAVIORAL VERB] much [GRADUATION] of the democratic world. They [ODC] like to [AFFECT] point at [BEHAVIORAL VERB] America [IDC], mocking [BEHAVIORAL VERB] it as a hellhole of covid-19 deaths, racist policing, gun violence and partisan paralysis.

The word "all" deflates the quantity of graduation in order to illustrate the unjustified secrecy of the details of the conference. The placement of "crisis of confidence" in the subject presupposes that this is an established fact, which shows the result of the influence of the peripheral entities and creates the fear in the West. The word "grip" indicates the depth of control over the so-called democratic world and the oppression of the members of the central entity. Subsequently, "like to point at" combines the emotion with the displacement verb, referring to the approach of the peripheral

entity to the central entity, showing its weakness. And "mocking.... paralysis" is meant to shift the responsibility, as it attributes the identity crisis to the persecution of the peripheral entities.

(4) Rather than [ENGAGEMENT] echo Abraham Lincoln's call [IDC] for government of, by and for the people, party mouthpieces praise [AFFECT] Mr. Xi [ODC] as a "people's leader" ... Every political and economic system eventually makes mistakes, such as a financial crash or defeat in war [ABSTRACT NOUN].

The phrase "of, by and for the people" is derived from Abraham Lincoln's famous speech, which was intended to mourn the fallen soldiers at the Battle of Gettysburg. The purpose of appearance is to equate the fallen soldiers with the blows inflicted by the peripheral entities on the U.S. present, adding the historical perspective to strengthen the hostility with the peripheral entities for the purpose of evoking the hatred of the central entities. Thus, it seems that proximization theory and appraisal theory also function as a stimulus to each other. In contrast, the term "people's leader" is placed in the same category as "a financial crash or defeat in war" through the term "rather than". Which is also the result of the central entity's presupposition of the peripheral entity. The word "war" echoes Lincoln's speech and reinforces people's fear of war.

6. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we discuss the background of past research in China and the possibility of proximization between appraisal theory and proximization and argue that the fine division of appraisal theory and the dynamic analysis of proximization theory provide the possibility of their proximization. Taking The Economist's 100th anniversary of the Chinese Party as an example, the analytical framework of the fusion of appraisal theory and proximization theory in spatial proximization is attempted. Firstly, the central entity and the peripheral entity are divided and the historical-realistic background of the division is analyzed. Secondly, the noun phrase and verb phrase are used as the background, and the specific details are discussed in depth and detailed through the affect, engagement and graduation. Thus, a new attempt for theoretical integration is provided.

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