

# AN APPRAISAL ANALYSIS : THE INTERPERSONAL MEANINGS IN THE DISCOURSE OF A LYRIC

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## Abstract

Lyrics have significant contributions to the music by giving the audience deep understanding about the message contained in the song. The message can be delivered depending on how the writer put the words in the lyrics (Bertoli-Dutra and Bissaco, 2006: 1053). This study focused on analysing interpersonal meanings and linguistics features from the perspective of Appraisal Theory. Due to the time constraints, the study only analysed the interpersonal meaning from Attitude categories, - Affect, Judgement and Affection. The method used was descriptive which data collected from “Lonely Night” song lyric by CNBLUE. The process data analysis was based on Appraisal Framework, a development of Systemic Functional Linguistics, proposed by Martin and White (2005). The result of study showed that the song “Lonely Night” has high Affect sub-categories which reached 81.25%, meanwhile the Judgement and Affection reached the same amount, 9.3%. From all affect types, the song showed unhappiness where the composer revealed the feeling of being dumb and disrespected. Finally, Appraisal Framework, as one of approach used in many genres, can be used as an alternative for analysing song. Appraisal Framework was developed to make analysis which is more systemic and organized as it was developed from Systemic Functional Linguistics.

**Keywords:** *Appraisal Theory, Song Lyric, Affect, Text Analysis*

## INTRODUCTION

In communication process, human beings use language to express almost everything such as thought, ideas, emotion, desire, message, etc (Griffie, 1995:4). The forms of communication used can be either in speaking or writing. Griffie (1995) explains that speaking is a communication form to deliver messages directly; meanwhile, writing is a communication form that requires media to convey the messages, such as, television, magazine, newspaper, etc., to convey the messages.

Relating to language and communication, music, - known as a language of emotion, has been a part of people’s life in providing entertainment, relaxed feeling and even, being a therapy for people (Salcedo, 2002:74). Generally, music consists of two elements, sounds as

the primary and lyrics as the secondary (Dallin 1994). People use imaginative diction and rhyme to express their emotions through the lyrics representing their feelings and thoughts (Halliday and Hasan, 1997; Griffie, 1992).

Lyrics have significant contributions to the music by giving the audience deep understanding about the message contained in the song. The message can be delivered depending on how the writer put the words in the lyrics (Bertoli-Dutra and Bissaco, 2006: 1053). Dallin (1994) states lyrics are written as a form of interaction between the writer and the listeners by carrying a message for motivating the listeners to think about. The purpose and form in that interaction are embedded in the cultural context of these people, according to their musical

preferences, time, etc. According to Gerot and Wignell (1994:12), the wording of texts or discourses simultaneously encode three types of meaning: ideational (it is about phenomena), interpersonal (expressing a speaker's attitude), and textual (expressing the relation of language to its environment). The approaches, such as Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA), are commonly used in analyzing those meanings.

The studies on song lyrics have been conducted by some researchers, such as Setyono and Wahyuni (2012), implementing Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in analyzing *Ilir-Ilir* song lyric, with focus on its textual surface of discourse and interpretative stages. In 2015, Olateju Moji conducted Multimodal Discourse Analysis highlighting the ideational, interpersonal and textual aspects in analysing song lyric of a Yoruba song-drama.

Appraisal theory, the development of interpersonal meaning in Systemic Functional (1994), was developed by Martin and White (2005) has been widely used in many genres but rarely conducted in English song discourses. Appraisal framework explains how the taxonomy of the language is employed in communicating evaluation, how the users convey attitude, engagement and graduation. Some studies implementing this approach, found in Souza (2006) conducted a study on some national anthems to analyze the construal of their interpersonal meanings.

Another study is Xiaqing Li (2016) that conducted an attitudinal analysis to some English song discourses. The Korean

wave - "*hallyu*" in Korean - refers to a surge in the international visibility of Korean culture, beginning in East Asia in the 1990s and continuing more and more (Ravina, 2008, p. 1). One important aspect of the *hallyu* phenomenon is South Korean popular music (known colloquially as K-Pop). K-Pop mostly are formed in Idol groups, such as Exo, Infinite, SNSD, Sistar, Apink etc. Although it is rare, some popular music bands can be found, such as CNBLUE, FT-Island, N-Flying, Royal Pirate and Neil.

CNBLUE differs from other bands, as their songs are not only in Korean, but also in Japanese and English. CNBLUE consists of four members; Jung Yonghwa (Vocal, Guitaris, and Rapper), Lee JongHyun (Vocal, Guitarist), Kang Minhyuk (Drummer) and Lee JungShin (Bassist and Rapper) formed in South Korea, but they were firstly famous in Japan before they had debut in South Korea in 2010.

The present study focused on analysing the messages carried out by song lyric. Therefore, the researcher implemented Appraisal Framework to gain a better understanding of how the composers or singers construe and negotiate interpersonal meanings to their intended listeners. As what explained above, Appraisal theory is a framework developed from Systemic Functional Linguistic for systematizing and investigating the construal of interpersonal meanings in texts, in this case is the song lyric.

Specifically, appraisal focuses on how speakers' express feelings, how they amplify them, and how they may incorporate additional voices in their discourses (Martin, 1997, 2000; Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005). Due to

time constraints, this study focused only on the attitude system. Based on the phenomenon above, the present study attempted to address the following research questions:

- 1) What are language features found in CNBLUE songs based on attitude system of Appraisal Framework?
- 2) How did the composer or singer construe their interpersonal feeling toward the song “LONELY NIGHT”?

### Theoretical Background Appraisal Framework

Appraisal theory, the development of interpersonal meaning in Systemic Functional (1994), was developed by Martin and White (2005). Appraisal framework explains how the taxonomy of the language is employed in communicating evaluation, how the users convey attitude (emotion, judgement of people and appreciation of objects), engagement (assessment of the evaluations of other people) and graduation (how the writers may modify the strength of their engagement).

Appraisal framework was developed for systematizing and investigating the construal of interpersonal meanings in texts, in this case is the song lyric. Specifically, it focuses on how speakers’ express feelings, how they amplify them, and how they may incorporate additional voices in their discourses (Martin, 1997, 2000; Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005). The overview of appraisal is explained on Figure 1.1.

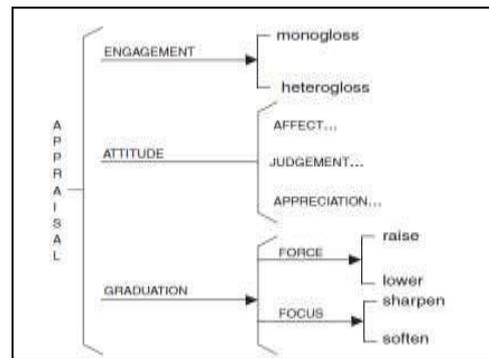


Figure 1.1 Appraisal Theory

### 1) Engagement

Engagement refers to the set of resources drawn upon by speakers for introducing “additional voices into a discourse, via projection, modalization or concession”. Through engagement, Martin and White (2005) deal with the linguistic constructions by which authors construe their point of view and the resources used to adopt stances towards the opinions of other people.

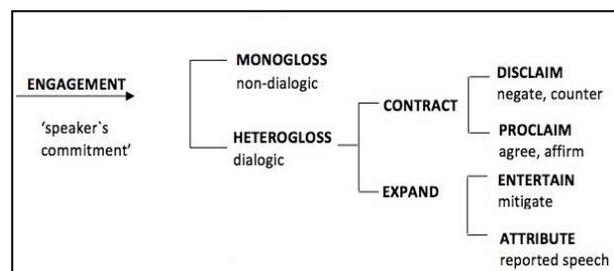


Figure 1.2 Engagement in Appraisal Theory

### 2) Graduation

Graduation refers to the writers or speakers alter the strength of their evaluation as a system of graduation (Martin and White, 2005). Graduation is a general property of both attitude and engagement. In graduation, it engages scales the authors’ conviction in their utterance; meanwhile, in attitude it enables authors to convey greater or lesser degrees of positivity or negativity.

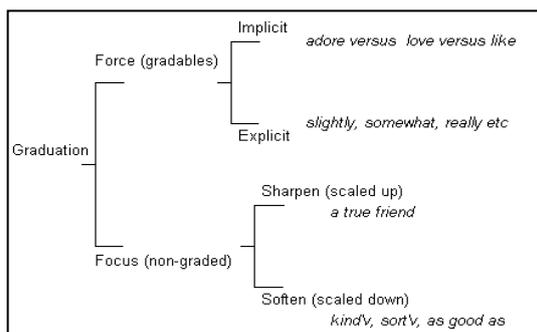


Figure 1.3 Graduation in Appraisal Theory

### 3) Attitude

The system of attitude is focused on speakers' utilizations for expressing positive and negative feelings involving in the construal of three main semantic domains; affect, judgement, and appreciation (Martin and White, 2005).

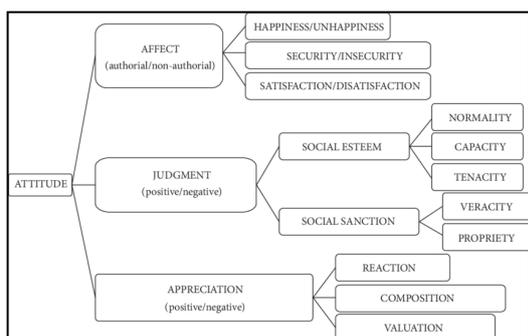


Figure 1.4 Attitude in Appraisal Theory

#### a) Affect

Affect identifies feelings—author's emotions as represented by their text. In Martin and White (2005:42), it describes that affect is concerned with registering positive and negative feelings: “do we feel happy or sad, confident or anxious, interested or bored?” The explanations are as followed (Martin and White 2005: 48-50):

- 1) Inclination concerns the emotional issue of intention and desideration.
- 2) Happiness involves the moods of feeling happy or sad.
- 3) Satisfaction deals with our feelings of achievement and frustration in

relation to the activities in which we are engaged.

- 4) Security covers our feelings of peace and anxiety in relation to our environs, including of course the people sharing them with us.

#### b) Judgement

Judgement deals with authors' attitude towards the behaviour of people; how authors applaud or reproach the actions of others, how author criticize, praise or condemn” (Martin and White 2005: 42). It is divided into:

- 1) Esteem concerns to normality’ (“how unusual someone is”), ‘capacity’ (“how capable they are”) and ‘tenacity’ (“how resolute they are”)
- 2) Sanction has to do with ‘veracity’ (“how truthful someone is”) and ‘propriety’ (“how ethical someone is”).

#### c) Appreciation

Appreciation considers the evaluation of things—both man-made and natural phenomena. Appreciation involves evaluations of semiotic and natural phenomena, according to the ways in which they are valued or not in a given field (Martin and White 2005: 43). It consists of three general classes explained as follow:

- 1) Reaction: Impact (did it grab me?) and Quality (did I like it?)
- 2) Composition: Balance (did it hang together?)
- 3) Complexity (was it hard to follow?); and 3) Valuation (was it worthwhile?)

### METHOD

A qualitative was adopted in this study. It was appropriate in this study seeking to investigate how composer or

singers construe their feelings through the songs and the chosen words on their lyrics. Fraenkel and Wallen (1990: 10) state that “qualitative approach is employed when a researcher wants to acquire a holistic depiction of what actually happens in particularly circumstances or situation”. As explained on introduction, the “Hallyu” wave spreading widely recently made the researcher put interest in analysing the song lyrics from one of those Hallyu stars; therefore, the sampling was purposively taken by the researcher.

The data analysis is based on Appraisal Framework was developed by Martin and White (2005). This framework was developed from Systemic Functional Linguistics, - for more systematizing and investigating the construal of interpersonal meanings in texts. The data was taken from the song lyric, -Lonely Night, then it was coded based on the criteria of attitude system, then lastly data was analysed to interpret the message carried on the song lyrics. Due to space and time constraints, this study focused only on the attitude system.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**R.Q 1:** *What are language features found in CNBLUE songs based on attitude system of Appraisal Framework?*

The song lyric was made into a detailed analysis under the attitude meaning within appraisal theory, using the attitudinal analysis of the lyric under three perspectives of affect, judgment, and appreciation. This step to find out how this lyric demonstrate the emotion of composer and how they construct interpersonal relationship between composer/singer and readers/listeners through the analysis of the

realization and distribution of the attitude meaning within appraisal theory.

**Table 3.1** Lonely Night Lyric

You are gonna be my *star*  
 Gotta be their *super star*  
 'n' tell 'em you will never change  
 I can feel the *love*  
 But I can't feel your *love*  
 You won't never make me fall *in love*

You are already a *star*  
 Gotta be their only *star*  
 'n' tell 'em you be stay the *same*  
 I can feel the *love*  
 But I can't feel your *love*  
 I can never ever fall in *love*

\*Chorus  
 Gonna be a *lonely* night  
 I can't see you really *love* me  
 Gonna be a *lonely* night  
 I can't *trust* you all no more

Can't you be my *light*?  
 Please be my *light*  
 I not going back to “*old* me”  
 Gonna be a *lonely* night  
 I can't *trust* you all no more  
 You all *lie*

You are gonna feel *alive*  
 You know I will never *lie*  
 You can believe what I say  
 I can feel the *love*  
 But I can't feel your *love*  
 I can never ever fall in *love*

You are gonna feel like *flying*

You are gonna be *alright*  
 You be live in *neverland*  
 Can you let me breath?  
 Can you let me dream?  
 Can you really make me fall in *love?*

\*Repeat

I feel *lost*  
 You tell me you feel *sorry*  
 I'll be gone soon  
 Before you take me *down*

\*Repeat

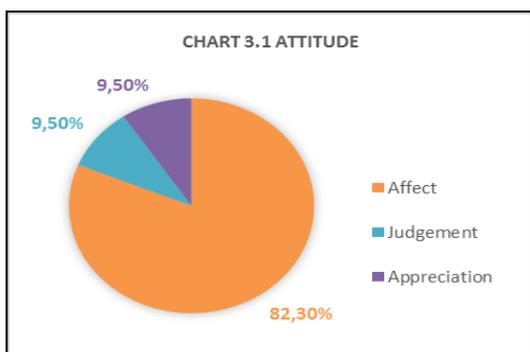


Chart 3.1 shows the general and remarkable tendency of attitude resources in the song “Lonely Night”. The frequency of Affect is the highest from all attitude resources. It reaches 81.25%; meanwhile, Judgement and Appreciation reach the same amount, 9.3%. The detailed distribution can be seen in Table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2** The Distribution of Attitude

Attitude	Features	Amount	
		Positive	Negative
Affect	Un/happiness	8	12
	In/security	2	4
	Dis/satisfaction	-	-
	Inclination	-	-
Judgement	Normality	-	-
	Capacity	-	-
	Tenacity	-	-
	Veracity	1	1
	Propriety	-	1
Appreciation	Reaction	-	-
	Composition	-	2
	Valuation	1	-
<b>Total</b>		12	20
<b>Amount</b>			

The highest frequency reached by Affect can be explained by the following reasons:

Affect deals with people’s emotional states and reactions to others behaviour and phenomena, while judgment attends to the normative assessments of people’s behaviour that we admire or criticize, praise or condemn. Appreciation are properties, which relates to the things we make and performances we but, but also

the phenomenon under evaluation rather than the participant who does the evaluation.

The sub type often appearing in affect is Unhappiness – Misery (37.5%), the phrases can be found in “*can’t feel your love*”, “*can’t make me fall in love*”, “*a lonely nigh*”, “*old me*”, “*feel sorry*”, “*fee; lost*”, “*gone soon*” and “*take me down*”. This sub-type reached the highest of affect sources. Another negative affect is Insecurity – trust (12.5%), these can be found in phrases “*can’t trust*”, and “*you all lie*”. The positive affect occurred reached 6.50 %, which consists of happiness and security-trust. The phrases of positive happiness can be found in “*feel the love*”, “*fall in love*”, and “*love me*”; meanwhile for security –trust, the phrase can be found in “*trust me*”.

The attitude of Judgement and Appreciation reach the same frequency, 9.3%. As explained in the paragraph above, Judgement and Appreciation relate to evaluating either ethics, aesthetics and phenomena. The judgement types occurring in this song are Veracity (6.24%) and Propriety (3.12%). The phrases of Judgement are “*lie*” and “*never lie*” as the Veracity and “*feel sorry*” as the propriety. Here the composer or singer condemn. Lastly, for Appreciation, it occurred three times, twice as composition which can be found in “*change*” and “*stay the same*”. Meanwhile, for valuation occurred only once in the phrase “*alright*”

**R.Q 2:** How did the composer or singer construe their interpersonal feeling toward the song “LONELY NIGHT?”

According to Martin (1997, 2000), Martin & Rose (2003), and Martin & White (2005), attitudinal meanings can be realized

either directly “inscribed” or implicitly “evoked”. Due to time constraints, the researcher reveals some figurative phrases in the song, such as “*my star*”, “*their superstar*”, “*already a star*”, “*my light*”, “*like flying*” and “*Neverland*”. The figurative phrases in this song used by the composer made the song more poetic, as we already know that song can be categorized as a poem as well.

From the analysis of linguistic and explanations above, we can see that song from CNBLUE entitled “Lonely Night” has attitude affect to demonstrate the feeling of the composer or the singer. Although, most affect attitude showed are in negative affect, it still shows the interpersonal relationship between the composer/singer and audiences. From this song, the composer/singer expresses the feeling of being dumbled or disrespected and misery. It is shown in phrases such as “*I can’t feel your love*”, “*I can never ever fall in love*”, “*You all lie*”, “*I can’t trust you all no more*”, “*I’m not going back to old me*”, “*Gonna be a lonely night*”, “*I feel lost*”, and “*Before you take me down*”

Lastly, this song is not composed by band coming from English – speaking country, it might make this song is easy to be understood. As it uses words and phrases which are simple, although in some lines, the composer uses some figurative phrases to make the song more poetic.

## CONCLUSION

Appraisal Framework was implemented in this study has revealed that the song can have three types of interpersonal meanings, such as:

- 1) Affect identifies feelings—author’s emotions as represented by their text. In Martin and White (2005:42), it

describes that affect is concerned with registering positive and negative feelings: “do we feel happy or sad, confident or anxious, interested or bored?”

- 2) Judgement deals with authors’ attitude towards the behavior of people; how authors applaud or reproach the actions of others, how author criticize, praise or condemn” (Martin and White 2005: 42)
- 3) Appreciation involves evaluations of semiotic and natural phenomena, according to the ways in which they are valued or not in a given field (Martin and White 2005: 43).

Although Appraisal Theory has been used in many genres, but it is still rare to be in analysing song lyrics. As it is developed for from Systemic Functional Linguistic for systematizing and investigating the construal of interpersonal meanings in texts, in this case is the song lyric. Specifically, appraisal focuses on how speakers’ express feelings, how they amplify them, and how they may incorporate additional voices in their discourses (Martin, 1997, 2000; Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005).

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