

The Construal of Attitudinal Resources in the Discourse of the Song
Titled “Returning Happiness to the People” By Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha:
An Appraisal Analysis

การวิเคราะห์ภาษาเชิงเจตคติของวาทกรรมเพลง คืนความสุขให้ประเทศไทย (เนื้อร้อง
โดย พลเอกประยุทธ์ จันทร์โอชา)

Cheewala Badklang, PhD.Candidate1 and Udomkrit Srinon, PhD.2

ชีวลา บาดกลาง¹ อุดมกฤษณ์ ศรีนนท์²

1 Yala Rajabhat University, มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏยลลา

cheewala.b@yru.ac.th

2 Kasetsart University, Khamphaeng Saen Campus, มหาวิทยาลัยเกษตรศาสตร์ วิทยาเขตกำแพงแสน

srinon@hotmail.com

Abstract

The objective of the paper is to identify and analyze the attitudinal resources of the song titled “Returning Happiness to the People” by the leader of National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) who wrote the lyric while the military coup has happened since 2014. The main theoretical framework I draw upon in this paper is Appraisal theory (Martin, 1997, 2000; Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005) that developed from Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). The important of this paper is to unfold the discourse analysis of a sample of the popular song from Thai military who want to convey the message to Thai people. This work can contribute to a better understanding of how this song Gen.Prayuth Chan-ocha negotiates interpersonal meanings with Thai people.

Keywords: Appraisal, National Council for Peace and Order, Systemic Functional Linguistics

บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษานี้ มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์ตัวภาษาเชิงเจตคติของ บทเพลงคืนความสุขให้ประเทศไทย เนื้อร้องโดยหัวหน้าคณะรักษาความสงบแห่งชาติ (คสช.) พลเอก ประยุทธ์ จันทร์โอชา ซึ่งบทเพลงนี้ได้รับความนิยมในช่วงที่ คสช. เข้ามามีบทบาทในการปกครองบ้านเมือง โดยผู้วิจัยใช้กรอบแนวคิดทฤษฎีการประเมินภาษาของ Martin, 1997, 2000; Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005 โดยพัฒนามาจากทฤษฎีแนวทฤษฎีการวิเคราะห์หน้าที่ทางภาษาเชิงระบบของ Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004 เพื่อประเมินภาษาที่ พลเอก ประยุทธ์ จันทร์โอชา ได้ถ่ายทอดออกมาเป็นบทเพลงชิ้นนี้ สิ่งสำคัญสำหรับการศึกษานี้คือ เพื่อการวิเคราะห์วาทกรรมของตัวอย่างเพลงที่คนไทยทุกคนรู้จักเป็นอย่างดีในมุมมองของการประเมินภาษาด้านเจตคติของผู้แต่งเพลงที่ต้องการถ่ายทอดให้แก่ผู้ฟัง ซึ่งการศึกษานี้สามารถช่วยให้คนไทยเข้าใจเจตนาารมณ์ความต้องการ ความรู้สึกของ พลเอก ประยุทธ์ จันทร์โอชา ที่มีต่อชาติ พระมหากษัตริย์และคนไทยทั้งประเทศ มากยิ่งขึ้น

คำสำคัญ ทฤษฎีการประเมินภาษา คณะรักษาความสงบแห่งชาติ (คสช.) ทฤษฎีแนวทฤษฎีการวิเคราะห์หน้าที่ทางภาษาเชิงระบบ

1. Introduction

The song, titled “Returning Happiness to the People,” was released to promote the military’s ongoing campaign to restore “happiness” to the Thai public following six months of political protests that ended in a military coup on 22nd May 2014. The song was very popular after releasing on YouTube and has already attracted more than 110,000 views within two days. According to a commander of the army marching band Col. Kritsada Sarika, coup-leader Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha spent “one hour” writing the song before submitting the lyrics to a team of musicians who composed a melody. “He wants to convey a message from his heart,” Col. Kritsada explained (Khaosod English online news, June 8, 2014).

With reference to the lyrics, the message that Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha delivered to Thai people as a representative of the armed forces is interesting in criticism and interpretation. Thus, the paper will uncover the attitudinal meanings to the public in order to help a better understanding related to the meaning of the song.

The main linguistics theoretical framework using in this work is Appraisal theory (Martin, 1997, 2000; Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005). This framework is developed from the Systemic Functional Linguistics-SFL (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) that is relevant to the interpersonal metafunction- one of three metafunctions under the SFL. The specific objective is to identify and analyze the attitudinal resources of the song titled “Returning happiness to the people”. Next, this paper will provide simultaneous description of the appraisal framework and the data analysis.

2. Theoretical framework

Appraisal framework is a system of interpersonal meanings developed from Systemic Functional Linguistics theory. This framework concerns the evaluative language of attitude or emotion expressed (Martin and Rose, 2003; Martin and White, 2005). The resources of appraisal are employed for negotiating social relationships and construing solidarity shared values. The author selects appraisal theory as a functional model of evaluative language at the discourse semantics level. There are three main regions of meaning are identified as Attitude, Graduation, and Engagement, however this paper focuses only on Attitude domain. The two other domains which are Graduation and Engagement were not employed in the study. This is due to the present study’s main focus of exposing the attitudinal language choices of the lyrics.

Attitude is related to feelings, including emotional reactions (affect), judgements of behavior (judgement) and evaluation of thing (appreciation). Attitudinal meaning can be expressed directly as so-called ‘inscribed’ and indirectly as known ‘invoke’ attitude. The inscribe attitude or explicit feelings are feelings that are overtly sufficient to be understood lacking the interpretation. It can be evaluated through some kind of adjectives. The implicit or invoke attitude, on the other hand, are the feeling that need to be interpretation, they often realize through lexical metaphors, the selection of ideational meanings, and non-core vocabulary items (Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005). The system of attitude composes three semantic domains are ‘affect, judgement, and appreciation.

Engagement refers to the resources characterizing the speaker’s or writer’s voice as it ‘positions itself with respect to, and hence to ‘engage’ with, the other voices and alternative positions construed as being in play in the current communicative event’ (Martin & White, 2005, p. 94). Graduation deals with the resources of grading the feeling of someone or something (Martin and Rose, 2007), there are two types of resources for amplification. Firstly, it is called ‘force’. It concerns the turning of the volume up or down, and the second type is called ‘focus’

which deals with sharpening or softening kinds of people and things. The basic system of Appraisal theory is shown at the figure below.

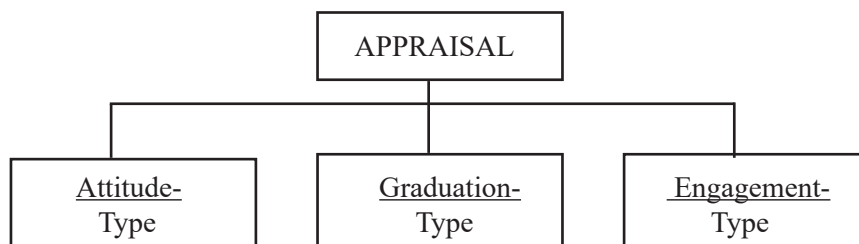


Figure 1 The basic system of Appraisal (Martin and White, 2005)

As the paper focuses only on Attitude domain that consists of affect, judgement and appreciate systems. Three systems of attitude domain outline in figure 2.

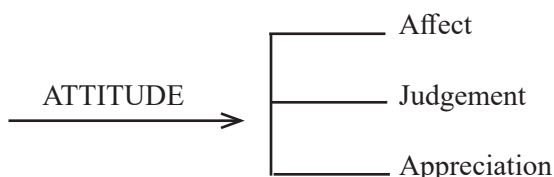


Figure 2 The system of attitude domain

Affect is the emotional region which refers to expressing feelings, opinions, and emotions. Affect can be grouped into four categories: dis/inclination, un/happiness, in/security and dis/satisfaction. The ‘dis/inclination is related to how the speaker is inclined or disinclined towards something; the un/happiness is concerned with the emotions of happy or sad; the in/security involves the feelings of peace and anxiety; and finally the dis/satisfaction refers to feelings of achievement and frustration in terms of the activities in which people are engaged. In order to express attitude, it could be both positive and negative attitudes. The examples below demonstrate the analysis of the affect system with its categories as showed in italic letters within square brackets.

¹The day the nation, the King, and the mass of people live *without danger* [aff + in/security]

²We offer to *guard and protect* [aff + in/security; process: behavior] you with our hearts [aff + un/happiness]

⁴Today the nation is facing *menacing danger* [aff – in/security]

⁷To bring back *love* [aff + un/happiness], how long will it take?

⁸Please, will you wait? We will move *beyond disputes*[aff – dis/satisfaction]

⁹We will do what we *promised* [aff + in/security; process: behavior]. We are asking for a little more time.

¹⁴Let us return *happiness* [aff + un/happiness] to you, the people

¹⁵Today, we will be *tired* [aff – dis/satisfaction] because of our mission, we know

According to the examples of the analysis of affect system, the majority of positive affect attitudes were found in the lyrics and its categories were only in/security and un/happiness and some dis/satisfaction. As the results, it can imply that Gen.Prayuth Chan-ocha who wrote the lyrics conveys the message as the feeling of peace and of delight to the nation.

The next system is called ‘Judgement’, involving the evaluation of the people’s behaviors/ characters. Judgement can be divided into two categories: social esteem and social sanction. Social esteem has to be made following ‘Normality’ (how special someone is?), ‘Capacity’ (how capable they are?) and ‘Tenacity’ (how dependable they are?). Mostly, its sharing values happen in the formation of social network for instance, family, friends, colleagues, and etc. (Martin & White, 2005: 52). Social sanction has to be made according to ‘Veracity’ (how honest they are?) and ‘Propriety’ (how ethical they are?) (Martin & White, 2005, pp. 52-53). According to An introduction tour through the appraisal theory website, the system of judgement or the way people judge ability, normality, morality, honesty, etc. is frequently based on their culture. Here is the table of categories of Judgement with the lexical instantiations.

SOCIAL ESTEEM	Positive (admire)	Negative (criticize)
Normality (how special?)	lucky, natural, fashionable...	unlucky, odd, eccentric...
Capacity (how capable?)	robust, mature, clever, successful...	weak, childish, slow, unsuccessful...
Tenacity (how dependable?)	resolute, brave, dependable...	cowardly, despondent, undependable...
SOCIAL SANCTION	Positive (praise)	Negative (condemn)
Veracity (how honest?)	truthful, honest, credible...	dishonest, lying, deceitful ...
Propriety (how far beyond reproach?)	good, moral, respectful, ethical...	bad, immoral, unfair, selfish...

Table 1: The categories of Judgement with the lexical instantiations (Martin & White, 2005, p. 53)

Regarding the analysis of judgement system and its categories, there found several resources as illustrated below.

³This is *our promise* [*jud + veracity*]

¹¹We will do with *sincerity* [*jud + veracity*]

¹²All we ask of you is *to trust and have faith* [*jud + veracity*] *in us*

¹⁵Today, we will be tired because of *our mission* [*jud + tenacity*], we know

¹⁷Lives of soldiers will *not surrender* [*jud + tenacity*]

¹⁸This is *our promise* [*jud + veracity*]

As the examples of the analysis of judgement system with its categories, it showed that the category of veracity in which under the social sanction displayed frequently and followed by the category of tenacity belonging to social esteem that assess someone’s determination to accomplish a particular piece of work (Souza, 2006: 542). According to the results of the analysis of judgement system, it could be said that the song composer often communicates in terms of a moral domain of sincerity. It can infer that he wants the people believe and trust in him (the military) that will bring the happiness back to the nation.

The last system is called ‘Appreciation’. It refers to interpersonal resources for expressing positive and negative things, texts, natural phenomena and processes (Martin & White, 2005, p. 56). Appreciation can be divided into three categories which are Reaction, Composition and Valuation. Within three categories, subcategories are provided. Reaction involves the evaluation

of people's impact about something and its quality. Composition is concerned the assessment of the balance and complexity of something, and Valuation refers to the value of something.

Type of Appreciation	Positive	Negative
Reaction Impact (did it grab me?)	arresting, exciting, fascinating ...	dull, boring, tedious, dry...
Quality (did I like it?)	okay, fine, good, splendid, lovely...	bad, nasty, ugly, plain, repulsive...
Composition Balance (did it hang together?)	balance, harmonious, unified, symmetrical...	unbalance, discordant, irregular...
Complexity (was it hard to follow?)	simple, pure, elegant, clear...	ornate, extravagant, unclear...
Valuation (was it worthwhile?)	profound, innovative, creative...	shallow, reductive, insignificant...

Table 2: The category of Appreciation with the lexical instantiations (Martin & White, 2005, p. 56)

According to the lyrics, appreciation can be found a few positive resources in order to evaluate the nation as the beautiful land, however there were some negative attitudes expression as well. The examples demonstrated the appreciation resources as follow.

⁵The flames [*app – rea: impact*] are rising

⁶Let us be the ones who step in, before it is too late [*app – com: complexity*]

¹⁰And the beautiful land [*app + rea: quality*] will return

¹³The land will be good [*app + rea: quality*] soon

As the results, the category of reaction was mostly used. Martin (2000) explains that values of reaction have to do with the degree to which entity, process or phenomenon capture our attention and emotional impact it has on us. According to the lyrics, Gen.Prayuth Chan-ocha depicted the beauty of the nation that means he evaluated things with his feeling. Furthermore, he expressed some negative attitudes as the sentence number 5 'the flame are rising'; he used lexical metaphor 'the flame' instead of 'danger'.

3. Resources for expressing attitude

Evaluation of attitudinal meaning can be realized either explicitly or implicitly. Explicit or inscribed realizations are those attitudinal resources that are apparently indicated through evaluative lexis, particularly adjectives. In the SFL, at the level of discourse semantics, attitudinal meanings can be realized across a range of grammatical structures. Those inscribed attitudes unfold the meanings by themselves. There are some examples related to inscribing attitude with the common grammatical structures used below.

[Process infused with attitudinal meanings]

²We offer to *guard and protect* you with our hearts

⁹We will do what we *promised*. We are asking for a little more time.

[Attribute in a relational clause]

³This is our *promise*

⁴Today the nation is *facing menacing danger*

¹²All we ask of you is to *trust* and have *faith* in us

[Epithet in a nominal group]

¹⁰And the *beautiful* land will return

[Adjectival and verbal nominalization]

⁷To bring back *love*, how long will it take?

¹¹We will do with *sincerity*

¹⁴Let us return *happiness* to you, the people

As the data showed, most of expressions displayed inscribing attitudes, it could be imply that direct expressions makes a better understanding the way the composer wants to convey. It does not involve with any complexity in terms of interpretation.

On the other hand, implicit or invoked instances are comprehended via the ideational meanings (Afford), lexical metaphors (Provoke) and non-core vocabulary (Flag) (Martin & White, 2005, pp. 61-67). For example, the use of lexical metaphors was found in the lyrics. ‘The land’ was metaphorically represented as the nation. Another resource was ‘the flame’; the composer implied to ‘the danger’.

(t)⁵The *flames* are rising

¹⁰And the beautiful (t) *land* will return

(t)¹³The *land* will be good soon

4. Discussion and conclusion

The analysis of the popular song titled “Returning happiness to the people” that was written by Gen.Prayuth Chan-ocha presented in the paper. The sample of this work exposed at a few key findings:

4.1 The explicit attitude resources are the song composer’s preferred strategy for expressing his evaluative stance. They were largely employed in the song in order to directly share the composer’s feelings to the audience. According to Martin (1997, p. 155), inscribed evaluations are “harder to resist or ignore” than indirect ones since they are more prescriptive about the feelings, values, and normative behavior their author wants his/her readers to share. Likewise, the analysis of the nation anthems the authors employed frequently inscribing attitude expression (Souza, 2006). This is due to the fact that the direct delivery message is easier to get better understanding what the writer wants to convey to the reader.

4.2 The analysis also showed that the evaluations of affect system play a significant role in the texts of the song titled “Returning happiness to the people”. The large frequency of values of affect and judgement are used by the song composer to try and align readers concerning shared feelings of love, peace, moral values for the nation. The assessments of appreciation attitude were used the least and some evoked attitudes are used.

In this work, it contributes the readers to perceive how the song composer presented his emotions when communicating related to restore the happiness to the nation. The attitudinal evaluations are of interest not only they reveal the speaker’s/writer’s feelings and values but also because their expression can be related to the speaker’s/writer’s status or authority as construed in the text (Sartin, 2006). As the present work, Gen.Prayuth Chan-ocha is the coup-leader of National Council for Peace and Order as his status/ authority and the lyrics are conveyed his feeling towards the nation.

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Appendix I

Returning Happiness to the People” [Khaosod English’s Translation] Lyrics by Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha Melody by Wichian Tantipimolpan

Encoding scheme: *Aff* = affect; *Jud* = judgement and *App* = appreciation

¹*The day the nation, the King, and the mass of people live without danger^{Aff}*

²*We offer to guard and protect^{Aff} you with our hearts^{Aff}*

³*This is our promise^{Jud}*

⁴*Today the nation is facing menacing danger^{Aff}*

(t)⁵*The flames^{App} are rising*

⁶*Let us be the ones who step in, before it is too late^{App}*

⁷*To bring back love^{Aff}, how long will it take?*

⁸*Please, will you wait? We will move beyond disputes^{Aff}*

⁹*We will do what we promised^{Aff}. We are asking for^{Aff} a little more time.*

¹⁰*And the beautiful land^{App} will return*

¹¹*We will do with sincerity^{Jud}*

¹²*All we ask of you is to trust and have faith^{Jud} in us*

(t)¹³*The land^{App} will be good^{App} soon*

¹⁴*Let us return happiness^{Aff} to you, the people*

¹⁵*Today, we will be tired^{Aff} [because of our mission^{Jud}], we know*

¹⁶*We offer to fight the danger^{Aff}*

¹⁷*Lives of soldiers will not surrender^{Jud}*

¹⁸*This is our promise^{Jud}*

¹⁹*Today the nation is facing menacing danger^{Aff}.*

(t)²⁰*The flames^{App} are rising*

²¹*Let us be the ones who step in, before it is too late^{App}*

(t)²²*The land^{App} will be good^{App} soon*