An Appraisal Analysis of English Youth Songs and Its Potential Implication on Teaching English to Teenagers

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the Appraisal in selected English youth songs in Pamungkas' albums as well as its potential implication on teaching English to teenagers. Rooted in constructive interpretative epistemology, this qualitative study focuses on the sub type of Attitude of appraisal analysis. The data of this study embrace the linguistic units containing the elements of Affect, Judgement and Appreciation. Collected using documentation technique, the data are analyzed referring to Martin and White's appraisal theory (2015). While the three sub types are deployed in the song lyrics, the study shows that the negativity Attitude is more prevalent. This, to some extent, indicates the unstable condition of youth in searching for identity in which they perceive the life and people around them vigilantly. In addition, Appreciation becomes the most dominating appraisal subsystem in the analysis, and this shows the inclusion of personal experience in the songs which leads to the rich assessments of life with aesthetic values. Hence, the Negativity and dominant Appreciation are what might make teenagers today feel related to Pamungkas' songs. Departing from this, presumably educators can take advantage of the youth English songs as English teaching material with the aim of exploring more mental-related expressions in learning English.

Keywords: appraisal, song lyrics, teaching English, teenagers

1. INTRODUCTION

Song is a medium that is commonly used to express feelings, emotions, ideas and criticisms. Not only for entertainment purpose, but songs can also be used as a medium of education. Songs are often utilized in teaching English as a second language because the lyrics in English songs contain language aspects which can be explored for developing English language skills covering listening [1], reading [2], speaking [3] and writing [4]. Additionally, with regard to the function of the song as a medium to express feelings, emotions, ideas and criticism, song can be further deployed in in English teaching to relate the language to personal and cultural aspects [5] and also understand the meaning of life [6].

Previous studies have shown that teenagers have their own preference of songs they listen [7]. They will prefer songs which they feel relevant to their lives. Hence, songs bringing the topics such as support in the face of adversity, friendship and love will strongly attract them. Correspondingly, the emergence of English song sung by Indonesian singers has also become a recent trend, and one of the A-list English pop songs are those presented by an Indonesian musician named Rizky Rahmahadian Pamungkas. He has launched three albums and many of his songs have been becoming popular and viewed by more than 177 million times on Pamungkas YouTube channel. His channel itself already had 1,11 million subscribers. Furthermore, based on the Spotify Wrapped 2020 list, Pamungkas' debut album, titled 'Walk the Talk', became the most listened to by music lovers. The success of this album has made the musician who is familiarly called Mas Pam superior to BTS and Hindia. The album 'Walk the Talk', which was released in 2018, managed to occupy the top position of the five albums most listened to by music lovers. It doesn't end there, as reported by liputan6.com Pamungkas is the most popular musician in Indonesia on the music streaming platform version, namely Spotify. The three most popular artists among Spotify Indonesia listeners in 2021 are BTS in first place, followed by Pamungkas and Justin Bieber. Automatically, Pamungkas became the most popular Indonesian singer this year. His song, "To The Bone", is one of the most listened to local songs in Indonesia and has at least been played more than 40 million times [8]. The lyrics in Pamungkas albums generally talks about self-reflection with motivating messages. Besides, the

English he uses in his lyrics is quite easy to understand. Although sometimes there are some idioms and metaphoric phrases expressing deeper meaning the language features actually make Pamungkas' songs more relatable to his listeners.

This study explores how language in songs are used to express feelings and emotion, and therefore; focuses on the linguistic tools used to investigate such expressions i.e., Appraisal. Within the framework of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) which sees language as a potential meaning by emphasizing the function of language in various contexts of everyday life. In SFL, there are three metafunctions that form the basis for conducting the analysis, namely 1. Ideational (related to knowledge about the discourse to be analyzed), 2. Interpersonal (related to interpersonal relationships or people around the discourse to be analyzed), and 3. Textual (related to how the discourse is structured and forms meaning in spoken or written form). The Appraisal theory was developed by Martin and White in the 1990s and 2000s [9] focusing on the interpersonal metafunction of language dimension. This relates to various attitudes of negotiation in discourse, value classification and approach. Judgment is defined by Martin that appraisal theory is about evaluation, the type of attitude in speaking, emotional strength, traceable value systems, and ways to coordinate readers. Overall, the grading system uses language to reveal the sources of attitudes, including the major proficiency systems: attitude, engagement, and graduation. [10]. As the tools to scrutinize the interpersonal meaning, appraisal have long been used to investigate various areas of language use such as the language in news reports [11], in public figure's Blasphemy [12]; as well as in political speech some of them are Jokowi's speech [13] and Donald Trump's speech [14].

This study focuses on attitude resources in evaluation theory. Attitude refers to the judgment and appreciation of human behavior, text or process and phenomenon after psychological attitude is affected [8]. The attitude resource is divided into three subsystems: human emotional expression, or the affective system; human evaluation of the character and behavior of the human being, which is the judgment system; the evaluation of the value of things, that is to say the system of appreciation. The central component of the attitude system is the affective system, and the judgment system are based on the affective system. The affective system is the psychological reaction to behavior, text or process and phenomenon; the judgment system is based on ethical and moral criteria to assess the behavior of language users; the rating system is the evaluation of the text or the process and the phenomenon. More simply, the whole attitude system is the evaluation of the character of the human being. Among the whole attitude system, the attitude system and the judgment system are resources of the character of the human being, while the system of affection and the system of appreciation are resources of evaluation of the human being.a value of matter. Following the proposed evaluation theory, it has been widely applied to literature, academia, media, and other various discourse analyzes to help readers better understand the position, perspective, and attitudes of the speaker or writer [10]

Focusing on the interpersonal meaning in song lyrics, there have been previous studies deploying appraisal to evaluate the language used in various genres of songs. Some of the recent ones is Muhammad Arif who researched a very popular children's song from South Korea, entitled "Baby Shark"[15]. In addition, Vidhiasi also deploy appraisal examining the soundtrack of a children's film entitled Pow Patro l[16]. Another similar study is by Xiaqing Li, investigates appraisal in some songs by Celine Dion, Janet Jackson and The Carpenters[17]; while Yuningsih explored Lonely Night song lyric by CNBLUE [18]; Besides, Cheung did a research on attitudinal meaning & social struggle in heavy metal song lyrics [19] and Raynanda analyzes Interpersonal Meaning of Selected Song Lyrics from Queen's Greatest Hits Album. [20]

This study aims to complement what may have been missed from previous research studies as well as in terms of the reasons for choosing song data to be analyzed, and its implementation in teaching English to teenagers. In short, the importance of this research is because the fact that students need to be emotionally involved in the learning process which can be manifested in activities such as playing, singing songs and other things that involve the five senses requires that the syllabus for learners of English as a second language must be in accordance with the student's experience, such as making songs as a medium of learning. because it has been proven that the song is one of the strong characteristics that represent the main language program [21]. Beside that the linguistic style of a person's favorite song has a significant relationship with their personality traits [22]. Hence, knowing the linguistic style of students' favorite songs will help teachers in providing what students need and assist teachers in providing the right treatment for them and is expected to be useful for future researchers who use songs as research data and open research fields, especially related to appraisal.

2. METHOD

Rooted in Constructivist interpretative epistemology, this study uses a case study design to analyze the types of Attitude that are manifested in the selected

Pamungkas' songs. Qualitative research methods allow for insight into attitudes, behaviors, and experiences [23]. The qualitative method was chosen because it may have revealed new potential meanings of song lyrics. The selection of the song based on some criteria namely the songs are about self-reflection with motivational messages related to youth's dreams, friendship and love. The data are taken from four selected Pamungkas' songs i.e *Be ok again today, Be my friend, Intro 3, and walk the talk*. The Data of this study embrace the linguistic units containing the elements of Affect, Judgement and Appreciation, collected using documentation technique. The data are then analyzed by referring to the appraisal analysis framework as figured 1.
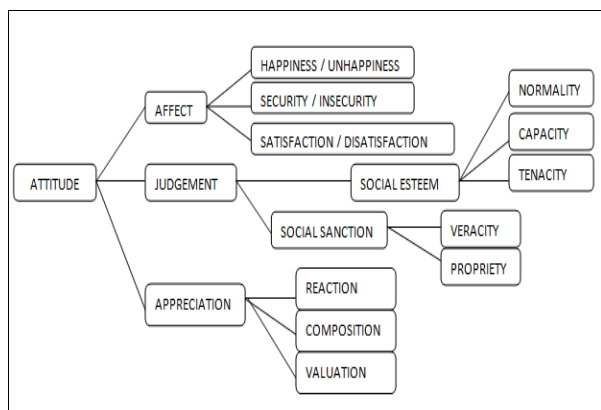

Figure 1 The Appraisal system of Attitude, adapted from [10]

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Three sub-types of Attitudes, namely Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation were deployed in the lyrics of the Pamungkas song each of which is in both positive and negative assessments. The frequency of use of each type is shown in table 1.

Table 1. The subtype of Attitude in Pamungkas' Song

AFFECT			JUDGEMENT			APPRECIATION			TOTAL OCCURENCE
NUMBER OF OCCURENCE			NUMBER OF OCCURENCE			NUMBER OF OCCURENCE			
	+	-		+	-		+	-	
	Assessment	Assessment		Assessment	Assessment		Assessment	Assessment	
	6	6		9	3		9	11	44
Satisfaction	-	1	Normality	3	-	Reaction	1	2	
Security	-	3	Capacity	-	-	Composition	1	-	
Happiness	6	2	Tenacity	6	1	Valuation	7	9	
Desire	-		Veracity	-	2				
			Propriety	-					
	14%	14%		20%	7,0%		20%	25%	100%

Appreciation becomes the most dominant out of three existing subsystems. Appreciation values can focus on the compositional qualities of entities that are evaluated based on how they are such as being harmonious, symmetrical, balanced, and twisted. Additionally, they can focus on aesthetically related reactions associated with entities. Thus, Appreciation is formulated in terms of the aesthetic impact of entities, such as charming, endearing, boring, dark, and beautiful. In his songs, while there are both positive and negative Appreciation, Pamungkas uses more negative appreciation (-) with the percentage of 25% and with 20% valuation. This can be seen, for example in the clause "Words betray, it hurts" which means the words of betrayal from the interlocutor makes (causes) the speaker hurt and the word "hard" in the clause "You bent and broke my life twice as hard as how I like" means that the interlocutor who refers to the word "you" has really hurt and ruined the speaker's life. This shows that Pamungkas uses his songs as a means to evaluate things related to other people who has interaction with him.

Correspondingly, the Judgment aspect is dominated by positive values. For example, the phrase "Film the world, be free" means that Pamungkas wants to invite listeners to do things they enjoy regardless of what the haters say, and in the phrase "Hey, what doesn't kill you makes you stronger", Pamungkas seems to be talking to listeners, suggesting them not to let past unpleasant experiences make them comfortable. Even, the experience can make them stronger to face all problems in the future. The pain of wounds or suffering in the past makes people strong enough to survive problems that might hurt you more. The meaning conveyed shows that Pamungkas is more likely to be jiihimself) even though he has been treated badly by the people around him.

In regards to Affect as a judgment that refers to an emotion that can be expressed either explicitly or implicitly. in this song's assessment, happiness (+) is the most dominating sub-system with the percentage of 14% embracing the expression of happiness as in the phrase "you choose to be okay again today" in which Pamungkas invites his listeners to always stay positive and always be optimistic in facing every problem in life, including hurtful talk. Another happiness assessment can be seen in the lyric "You can win again and that's alright" which means that it doesn't matter if his wish (to be closer than just friends) come true as long as he can stay in close contact as best friend ever. This suggests that Pamungkas tends to show positive feelings in dealing with the problems that befall him. Further, the happiness evaluation is followed by security (-) with a percentage of 7% which we can find, for instance, in the sentence "I'll let you read my stories and worries raw" which means that Pamungkas wants to have a companion not merely an ordinary friend but a friend who can understand each other, understand all the situation (including worries and fears), and accept each

other for who they are. This goes to show that no matter how much he tries to show that he is okay in his songs, as a human being there are bound to be insecurities about how other people will perceive him.

The appraisal analysis of Pamungkas' song highlights that as a young man, Pamungkas is often inspired by his own life stories and experiences which affect how he judges things related to himself or other people, the attitude that he shows in the face of hurtful words from others and how as a human being he shows his insecurity about the views of others towards him. This results in the richness of feeling and emotional expression in his songs which quite relate to teenagers as his main listeners.

From several previous studies focusing on the Appraisal subsystem of Attitude in youth songs, it can be concluded that songs do not only become the channel of emotions of the songwriters but also become the place to put their language of evaluation. This study is mainly in alignment with [16] in which the negative frequency in Attitude tends to be used more in the songs. This suggests that teenagers tend to see and respond to the things they go through with a negative view. Further, the negativity might express the mental anticipation of the youth in facing the world. Moreover, linguistically, while having different utilization, when texts deploy appraisal subsystem of Attitude, the three assessment dimensions i.e. Affect, Judgement and Appreciation are always the construction as stated by Martin and White that the attitude system is focused on how the speaker expresses feelings, both positive and negative, which involves 3 semantic domains i.e. Affect, Judgement and Appreciation. [10]

3.1 Implication of teaching appraisal on teaching English to teenagers

English songs are often used by teachers as a medium of learning in teaching English for students who learn English a second language. The use of English songs as a medium for learning English is because English songs are considered capable of developing English language skills such as listening, reading, speaking and writing. Besides that, songs can also be used for language items learning media such as vocabulary, pronunciation, adjectives, adverbs and sentence patterns. Besides, various application of songs as the English teaching media varies from phonemic predictions, getting the words written until the lyrics creation.

This study brings implication on the use of youth life-related songs with rich expression of feelings and emotions as a medium for learning English. It is a global

phenomenon that young people spend much of their time listening to music, and their playlists might indicate an important part of their identities. Hence, it makes sense to use students' interest in music as a motivator for their English studies [20]. This is in alignment with the previous studies which demonstrate that the use of English songs in EFL teaching can help improve their English, particularly on attitude-related expressions in various language skills which include reading skills [24] listening skills [25] and speaking skills [3]. In the end, things that need to be considered in the utilizing youth English songs in EFL teaching is to ascertain that the teacher could understand the taste of music that suits the youth learners considering that some songs may cause different emotions for the learners,

4. CONCLUSION

This study investigates the evaluation of the language used in some of Pamungkas' songs, specifically self-reflection with motivational messages related to dreams, friendship and love that are very close to the world of teenagers. The use of appraisal, especially the subtype of Attitude, in selected English youth songs highlights that the Appreciation subsystem dominates over the other two subsystems, namely Affection and Judgement which shows that Pamungkas uses product or process assessments with aesthetic value because Pamungkas' songwriting is often inspired by his life journey, which affects how he judges things related to himself or others. Correspondingly, the message conveyed suits teenagers as the main listeners who live in a time of searching for identity, tend to judge things around with a negative view and disagree with the people around them as well as tend to feel insecure. Hence, the appraisal analysis on Pamungkas' songs is a model in which teenagers are able to express their emotions and their thought in musical English words. Moreover, the construction of feelings experienced by students in English youth songs could be an advantage for educators to further enhance students' language skills in in EFL learning by exploring the medium they feel connected.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The first author and the second author contributed to the design and implementation of the research, to the analysis of the results and to the writing of the manuscript.

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