



# The Affect System on Protagonist Characters' Responses toward Racism in the Film 12 Years a Slave

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**Abstract**—This research aims to find out about the affect system in protagonist character's responses toward racism. All data got from the utterances of protagonist characters that contain about the feeling from them. The data classified into affect system that consist of positive and negative. Another element of affect can be classified into direct and implicit. The data source is the film 12 Years a Slave. Data collection technique conducted by transcribing the dialogues of the film and classify them to the affect system from appraisal theory. After that, the data analyzed depends on affect system from appraisal theory. The result of this study are all protagonist characters shared about the positive and negative affect system. They shared about their feeling of negative affect, because they frustrated with their life. They also shared the positive feeling because they still have energy to struggling for their free.

**Keywords**—component; formatting; style; styling; insert

## I. INTRODUCTION

Today, there is still no lasting solution to the racism-related problem. There is still room for more discussion on the subject of racism. Racial discrimination, both physically and in other ways, is the main of American society, including housing, education, and employment. Racial discrimination, both physically and in other ways, is at the center of the racism issue. The global community is being increasingly infected by racism. One of the nations that you are highly familiar with racism is United States. The major issue of racism has persisted in America for many years and is still present now. This covers prejudice and inequality motivated by race or ethnicity. Racial segregation was legalized during the Jim Crow era, and structural discrimination still occurs in many facets of American society, including housing, education, and employment. Racism in America has strong historical roots. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Jim Crow Laws were adopted in the United States. The southern United States received an exact application of this legislation. Separating the white race (white skin) and the black race (black skin) in all spheres of life—including housing, transportation, and education—was how this rule was put into practice. Additionally, the United States apartheid system is another name for this statute.

The enactment of Jim Crow laws created systemized racial inequality and legalized discrimination against black people. Here are some examples of the laws and practices implemented under this law, including:

(1) School segregation: Unequal segregation and funding between black and white schools, as well as the lack of resources received by black schools. (2) Seating segregation on public transportation: Several public transportation such as trains, buses, and other public transportation have seating segregation for whites and blacks. In addition, black people get inferior facilities. (3) Seating separation in restaurants and other public places: Restaurants, cinemas, theaters, and other public places separate seating, and black people frequently have to use back doors or side doors. (4) Residential segregation: The practice of land redlining restricts Black people's access to housing in particular areas, requiring them to live in separated and often substandard neighborhoods. (5) Election Laws: The discriminatory voting laws, such as literacy tests and poll taxes, used to prevent Black people from their right to vote. (6) Occupational discrimination: Black people are frequently excluded from certain jobs or only given jobs with very low salaries.

Jim Crow laws created a system of inequality and discrimination that was prevalent in the southern United States for decades. In the 1960s, the civil rights movement and people's struggle for racial equality led to significant changes in law and society, including the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the United States Supreme Court decisions that ended the practice of racial segregation in education and public places. However, the effects of the Jim Crow system are still felt in many aspects of life in the United States to this day.

There are many things done to campaign for racial equality, so that there is no longer a difference between the colored and black races. One of the things done to campaign for this is by making films with the theme of racism. One of the movies that contains the theme of racism is *12 Years a Slave*. Films can act as communication media that contain elements of messages. The power and ability of movies to reach many social segments gives them the ability to influence the audience.

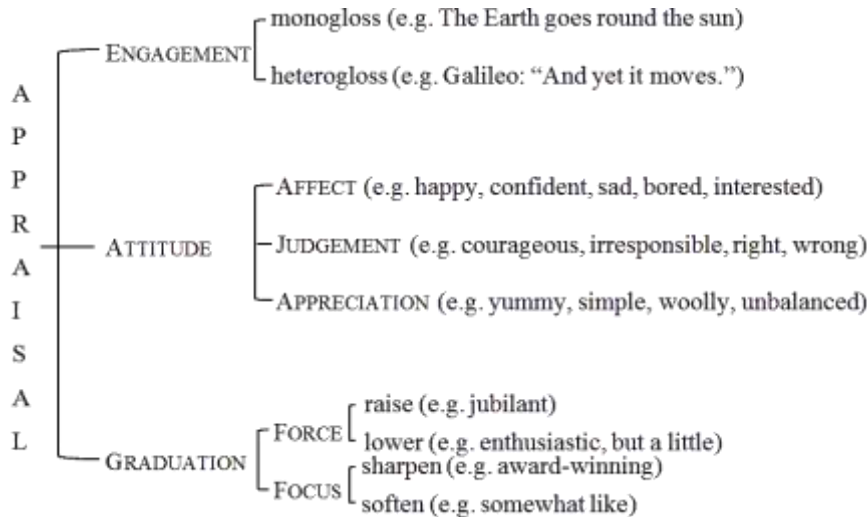
Films always have the power to influence and shape society based on the content they create. Film is a form of message presentation that seeks to convey a theme or social issue. In addition, there are films that reflect current phenomena in society. Therefore, movies are included in the study of mass communication. Mass communication is a communication process carried out through mass media, both printed and electronic currencies. Mass communication (mass communication) is the process of creating common meaning between the media and the public. The movie *12 Years a Slave* tries to convey a message to the public that action against racism needs to be taken. Anti-racist attitudes are positive and good because they oppose the misogyny of a group based on certain physical characteristics.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Systemic Functional Linguistics is a linguistic approach that aims to understand linguistic texts in shaping their meaning in a context (Halliday et al, 2013). Text in this sense means all forms of linguistic events that appear in any media. The concept of situational context was proposed by Halliday & Hasan (1985) which has three types, namely: (1) discourse field (field), (2) discourse actor (tenor), and (3) discourse mode (mode). The cultural context is more of an environment that accommodates the existence of the text (Wiratno, 2018: 51). For example, a text about dialogical events between characters in a film with the theme of racism is a unity, which cannot be separated from the means that describe racism, such as the conditions of a slum neighborhood, the headquarters of a racism resistance party, the offices of government institutions involved such as the FBI, and so on.

Hao (2015:16) explains that metafunction at the clause level has three meanings: (1) Ideational, (2) Interpersonal, and (3) Textual. Furthermore, each meaning of the metafunction can be explained as follows by Santosa (2003:20): (1) ideational meaning is the function of language to reflect the reality of its participants' experience; (2) interpersonal meaning generally describes the social relationship between participants, what kind of social interaction is going on: giving or asking for information (propositions) or giving or asking for goods or services; and (3) textual meaning is a symbol meaning realized into phonology (oral) or graphology (written), lexis system (congruence or incongruence), theme and rema system in the clause, cohesion, and text structure at the level of discourse semantics.

Appraisal system is the development of the meaning of interpersonal metafunction as the application of linguistic analysis to a text based on an evaluative or assessment perspective. Interpersonal metafunction is a personal and social relationship that is built through language (Halliday, 2014: 30). It is a tool for representing attitudes and interactions through language. The type of attitude negotiated in a text is achieved through the power of feeling (Martin & Rose, 2007:24).



In principle, appraisal analysis is based on appraisal theory which deals with the exploration of negotiated attitudes in texts (Wiratno, 2018:384). Attitudes can be negotiated with readers or listeners through explaining how to realize feelings towards other people or things (Martin & Rose, 2007: 22). Wiratno (2018:384) added that the assessment system as described above has three options available simultaneously, namely (1) attitude in assessment (attitude), (2) source of assessment (source or engagement), and (3) graduation of assessment (graduation or amplification). In this study, researchers focused only on the attitude aspect. Martin and White (2005) argue that in evaluating attitude, it can be categorized into affect, judgment, and appreciation. In this research, the researcher just focuses in affect system. Affect is the expression of how we feel about something, including the emotional response to an expression (Thompson, 2014:80). Affect is expressed by how people express their feelings in the text. Affects are related to positive and negative poles, for example: happy, or sad, confident or doubtful, and interested or bored (Martin & Rose, 2005:42). Based on this, affect has groups of emotions that are summarized in three major sets as follows: (1) Un/Happiness accommodates emotions related to "affairs of the heart", for example: sadness, hate, happiness, and love; (2) In/Security accommodates emotions related to eco-social well-being relationships, for example: anxiety, fear, confidence, and trust; (3) the dis/satisfaction accommodates emotions related to telos (pursuit of goals), for example: boredom, displeasure, curiosity, and honor. Based on this explanation, according to Martin & White (2005: 51), the affects can be summarized as in the following table:

Affect	Positive	Negative
dis/inclination	miss, long for, yearn for	wary, fearful, terrorised
un/happiness	cheerful buoyant, jubilant; like, love, adore	sad, melancholy, despondent; cut-up, heart-broken ... broken-hearted, heavy-hearted, sick at heart; sorrowful ... grief-stricken, weebegone ... dejected ...; dejected, joyless, dreary, cheerless, unhappy, sad; gloomy, despondent, ... downcast, low, down, down in the mouth, depressed ...; weepy, wet-eyed, tearful, in tears ...
In/security	together, confident, assured; comfortable, confident, trusting	uneasy, anxious, freaked out; startled, surprised, astonished
dis/satisfaction	involved, absorbed, engrossed; satisfied, pleased, chuffed/ impressed, charmed, thrilled	flat, stale, jaded; cross, angry, furious; bored with, sick of, fed up with

The relationship between linguistics and racism is certainly very close. The phenomenon of racism certainly does not escape the use of words that are racist and discriminatory. One approach that can be used to see racism is systemic functional linguistics. One of the tools of this SFL approach that can be used to assess that a person is racist is appraisal theory. Through this theory, it can be seen how lexis can have a very important element to determine the assessment of antagonists and protagonists related to racism. In this study, the researcher used attitudes to reveal the assessment of racism that occurred.

The idea of this research is a form of review of several related previous studies. Here are some studies that examine related to appraisal: Yuliyanti (2022); Afriliani (2022); Nurjanah (2021); Putriyantina et al (2018); Falaakh et al (2023); Zain et al (2020); Aljuraywi et al (2022); Ekawati (2015); Puspita (2021); and Badklang et al (2018). Some studies have taken research locations in the media (Ekawati, 2015; Yuliyanti, 2022; Afriliani, 2022; Nurjanah, 2021; Falaakh et al, 2023; Aljuraywi et al, 2022). Then, researchers also found research that examines appraisal in the realm of language teaching (Putriyantina et al, 2018; Badklang et al, 2018). Furthermore, researchers also found research related to appraisal that examines literary locations (Zain et al, 2020). All of these studies have not examined film data sources. In addition, all of these studies have also not examined specifically only the affect system. Therefore, researchers found a research gap to examine the affect system that focuses on the protagonist character in his response to racism. This is because no one has studied specifically on the protagonist character in a movie.

### III. METHOD

This research used qualitative descriptive design. All data in this paper is drawn from the dialogue that contain about protagonist's character's feeling from the source 12 Years a Slave. The data is first classified into positive affect with direct or implicit aspect, and negative affect with direct or implicit aspect. In direct aspect include emotional state and physical expression. On the other hand, in implicit aspect include extraordinary behavior and metaphor. Secondly, the data analyzed by the theory from Martin & Rose (2007). After that, the researcher write conclusion drawn based on the data analysis display.

### IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Racism that appears in the movie 12 Years a Slave, of course, gets a response by the protagonist. Some of these characters express responses through the attitude system. In this study, the resarcher analyzed the attitude system on affect. The following is an example of the results of the data analysis:

#### a. Positive's affect with emotional state

The expression of positive feelings was expressed by one of the characters in the movie 12 Years a Slave in response to the issue of racism. The expression is expressed in the following data:

Data (1)

**And I promise you - I promise** - upon my liberation I will have satisfaction for this wrong.

In the data, it contains positive affect expressed by emotional state. In the data, Solomon tries to convince Burch that he is a free person and not a slave. He also explained that he was from Saratoga and had a family. Solomon convinces Burch by saying "promise" which indicates a positive affect to convince Burch that he is not a slave, but a free person.

Data (2)

I can make **every effort**.

Solomon explained to Arthur that he had made every effort to free him and the other people held hostage on the ship. The phrase 'every effort' shows affect with a positive emotional state because it shows high enthusiasm and fighting power related to freedom.

Based on the results of data analysis and classification, no data were found that lead to positive's affect expressed by physical expression and extraordinary behavior. The next result is negative affect expressed by the protagonist in the movie 12 Years a Slave. The following are the results of the analysis of the negative affect found.

#### b. Negative's affect with emotional state

The protagonist expresses negative affect to respond to the racism that befalls the protagonist. The following are the findings related to negative affect expressed by the protagonist:

Data (3)

Sabbath day. **It's free to roam.** Massa know where I be.

The data above expresses Patsey's feelings who object to having a concubinage relationship with Epps. This is expressed by saying the diction "Sabbath day" which means Saturday, where that day is one of the holy days for Christians. Furthermore, the phrase "it's free to roam" is an expression that means that Patsey should be free to do anything and go anywhere.

Data (4)

Take me by the throat. Hold me low in the water until I'm still 'n without life. **Bury me in a lonely place of dyin'.**

The expression is a negative affect that is expressed implicitly using metaphors. The meaning of the expression is that Patsey wants his life to be ended immediately by Solomon because of his suffering so far. He uses the expression "bury me in a lonely place of dying" which means that Patsey wants to take his life into a lonely place that is close to death.

c. Negative's Affect with extraordinary behaviour

The response of the protagonist's feelings is also expressed in the form of extraordinary behavior. This exaggerated feeling is a form of negative frustration possessed by the protagonist in dealing with the issue of racism that occurred. The use of negative affect with this type can be elaborated in the following analysis:

Data (5)

But you leave me damned **with every breath I draw.**

In the above expression, there is negative affect expressed through extraordinary behavior. Patsey told Solomon that he wanted Solomon to kill him. He felt very tormented by the discrimination that occurred. Patsey has experienced various kinds of torture. Until he told Solomon "with every breath I draw". There is an exaggeration in the clause. The clause makes it seem as if Patsey can draw her breath. In fact, breath is something that cannot be seen. Therefore, Patsey's behavior is called extraordinary behavior.

Data (6)

**Death is better than all that waits.** Take me, Lord... Take my life. Lord. ...Lord?

In the expression above, there is also a negative affect that leads to extraordinary behavior. The expression above talks about death which is better than waiting for something else. The expression was expressed because the character experienced very high frustration.

## V. CONCLUSION

The protagonist characters in film have many expression that can be delivered to share about a message. They can share their positive and negative feeling. The both of feeling can be analyzed with affect system in the appraisal theory (Martin & Rose, 2007). Affect is the system of feeling. By the data analysis above, the researcher can be concluded that the protagonist characters in the film 12 Years a Slave share. The result from this study reported that the protagonist's positive feeling can be expressed by direct and implicit affect system. The direct of affect system can be classified into the emotional state. Then, the protagonist's negative feeling can be expressed by direct and implicit affect system. The direct of affect system can be classified into the emotional state, and for the implicit can be classified into the extraordinary behavior.

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