

**The Evaluative Language in a Group Discussion of
EFL Undergraduate Students in
a Context of Deep South Thailand: An Appraisal
Perspective**

**Cheewala Badklang, Ph.D.
Yala Rajabhat University**

email: cheewala.b@yru.ac.th



Outlines

1. Introduction
2. Conceptual framework: Appraisal framework
3. Research methodology
4. The findings
5. Conclusion



Introduction

- EFL teaching and learning context, communication is played a crucial role in order to achieve learning outcome.



Introduction

- The management of activity in classroom through communication can show students' abilities in terms of exchanging facts, information, opinions, including negotiating others, and expressing emotions and feelings.



Introduction

- Group discussion is one of good activities to promote students' autonomy, and it develops students' capacity for the clear communication of ideas and meaning, including helps students explore a diversity of perspectives.

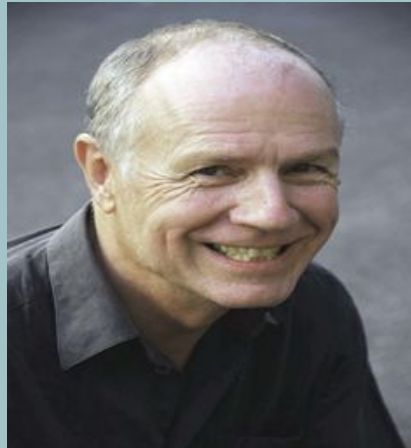


Introduction

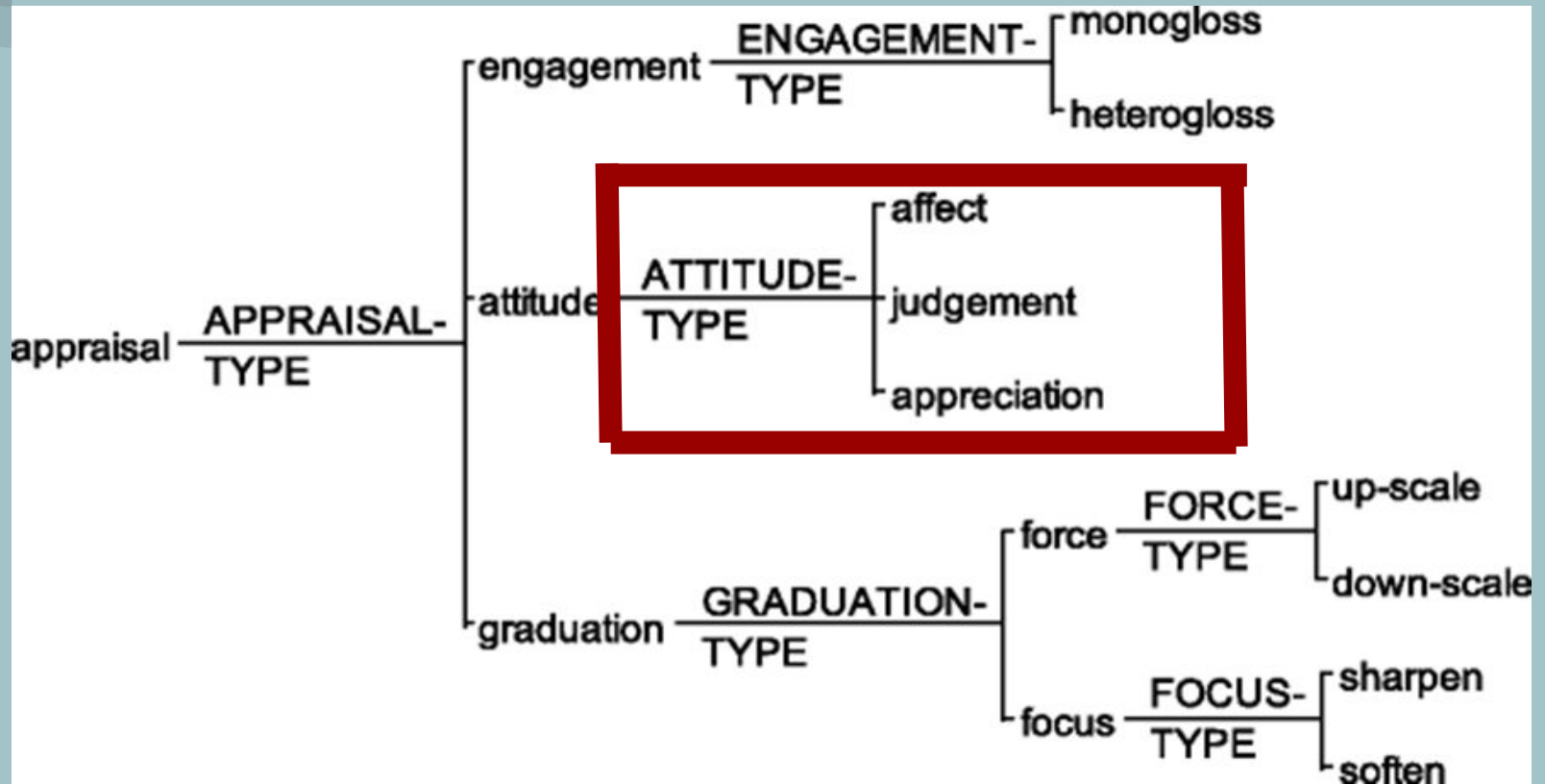
- However, Thai EFL students still lack the skills of critical thinking and thoughtful argumentation when they exchange their points of view.
- To understand increasingly how students are working together in a group discussion, the evaluative language needs to be clarified by using APPRAISAL framework.

Appraisal framework

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).

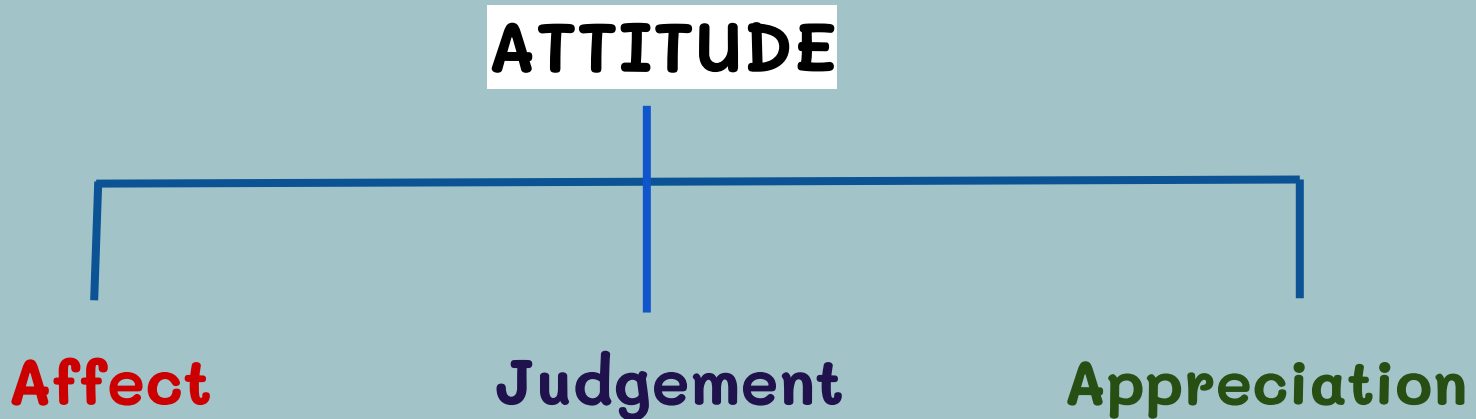


Appraisal framework



Attitude system

related to feelings, including emotional reactions (**affect**), judgements of behavior (**judgement**) and evaluation of things (**appreciation**).



Attitude system

Attitudinal meaning can be expressed ‘inscribed’ and ‘invoked’ attitude..

MS1⁴⁶ I think so. In my opinion, I told you before when we go out the university and *we do bad thing [-app: imp]*. It reflects to the university. Have you ever seen them?

MS2⁴⁷ Yeah.. I have seen them at Public park. But some students think that why do we wear the uniform? *In fact, we use brain to study not the uniform [t+jud: cap]*. Have you ever seen the Thai series ‘Hormones’?

FS+MS1⁴⁸ Yes!



Attitudinal resources

Affect can be grouped into four categories:

dis/inclination: desire/ non-desire

un/happiness: mood, feeling happy or sad

in/security: feelings of peace and anxiety

dis/satisfaction: feelings of achievement and frustration

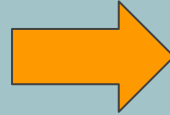
Judgement

SOCIAL ESTEEM

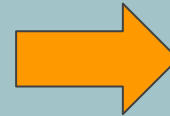
- **Normality**
(how special?)
- **Capacity**
(how capable?)
- **Tenacity**
(how dependable?)

SOCIAL SANCTION

- **Veracity**
(how honest?)
- **Propriety**
(how far beyond reproach?)



Sharing values of social network (families, friends, colleagues, etc.)



Sharing values in the areas of civic duty and religious observances

Appreciation



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.

Attitudinal resources

MS1³⁶

: When we go somewhere with wearing university uniform, everyone know you are university student. *People will respect us [+jud: ver]* and they know we study in Thai education. Something is like that. **They will believe us [+aff: sec].**

FS³⁷

: Yes. In my opinion, when we wear the uniform, we can go anywhere *because* **it is polite [+jud: norm].**

MS2³⁸

: Yeah...like when we go to government office, if you wear a *private it's not polite [-jud: norm]*. It's *more polite [+jud: norm]* if you wear uniform.

MS1³⁹

: When we aren't in the university and we wear the uniform, **we do a good thing [+app: value].** *It's good for my university [+app: value].*

Research methodology

Case study:

Populations: 27 undergraduate students from one of southernmost universities in Thailand, enrolled English Listening and Speaking for Specific Purposes. They were assigned to do group discussions. They are all Muslims.

Participants: 1 female student and 2 male students selected by purposive sampling method.

Topic: Should Thai students wear uniform or not?

Data collection

5 steps:

Step 1: Divide group of students into 3 people by drawing lots.

Step 2: Give them the prompt topic.

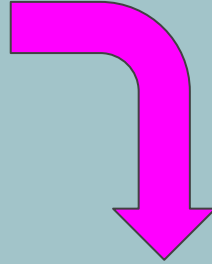
Step 3: Prepare the topic for 15 minutes.

Step 4: Do group discussion for 30 minutes.

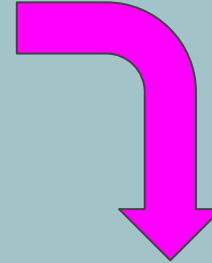
Step 5: Record audio the students' group discussion.

Analysis procedures

Transcribe the data



Analyze and code the transcription data



Present the data

Key findings

1. **Inscribed attitude** > invoked attitude
2. **Appreciation** and **judgement** system play a significant role in the group discussion discourse.
3. Some cultural issues proposed in students' group discussion.

Conclusion

It uncovers *the generic structure of group discussion* of Thai EFL undergraduate students that shows the use of **argumentative expression and critical thinking** are **insufficient**. Therefore, it contributes English teachers to perceive how a Thai EFL undergraduate students expressed their attitudes while doing in the group discussion. They can design and select the language choices into English discussion, particularly the argumentative expressions in the curriculum.