

# A Study on Interpersonal Meaning of Engagement Resources in the First Speeches of British Prime Ministers (54th - 57th)

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**Abstract**—Appraisal Theory expands on the concept of the interpersonal meaning found in Systemic Functional Linguistics. As one of the three distinct types of the Appraisal System, the Engagement System (ES) is frequently employed to deconstruct the speakers' position in their speeches to better understand how they manipulate interpersonal interactions with their audience. The UAM Corpus Tool 6.0 was applied in this study to undertake an in-depth quantitative and qualitative analysis of four different British Prime Ministerial First Speeches (BPMFS) from the 54th to 57th Prime Ministers. It was found that three Engagement Resources (ERs) were mainly employed in the selected BPMFSs: Assertion Resources help British Prime Ministers take responsibility for directly introducing their evaluation into the text; Entertainment Resources contribute to opening the dialogic space to bridge differences; and through Disclamation Resources (including Denial and Countering Resources), Prime Ministers can oppose suspicion to build rapport with their recipients and establish common goals for a more prosperous future.

**Index Terms**—appraisal theory, Engagement System, British Prime Ministerial First Speech, interpersonal meaning

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the United Kingdom, the First Speech (or “inaugural address” in the United States of America) made at Downing Street by the Prime Minister as the head of His Majesty’s Government is essential among the many political speeches because it indicates the new plans for the country concerning politics, economy, and diplomacy. The Prime Minister persuades the people of the nation that he is qualified for this political post and that he is allowed to achieve his persuasive and formal objectives by giving the first speech or statement. This is the reason why the First Speech of the British Prime Minister is so significant for academics in a variety of fields to study.

Public political discourse has been the subject of extensive research by academics from other countries in subjects as diverse as sociology, politics, and psychology. Indeed, Rhetorical studies, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), stylistics, and related fields have dominated the studies of this phenomenon in recent years.

“For a long period, rhetoric almost has been used as the synonym for the political speech, which instructs the addressers to dig out the argument, organize the structure, express eloquently and make the whole speech more persuasive” (Wang, 2011, p. 6). Furthermore, it helps to “embed leaders’ rhetorical influence in leader-follower relationships and identify contextual factors that explain the different patterns of...uses of action-oriented terms and negation terms in their inaugural speeches” (Kong, 2013, p. 760).

Some scholars conducted their analysis under the framework of speech acts. For example, Rahayu and Fauziah (2021) aimed to describe the kind of speech acts that were found and used in Boris Johnson’s First Speech and concluded that the highest speech acts most often used in his First Speech on 23 March 2020 were representatives with declaratives coming in second. Mohammad (2022) investigated the different types of persuasive strategies used by Boris Johnson, and along with the claim of Aristotle, Johnson was found to “masterfully adopt the three crucial types to create a solid rhetorical persuasion which are ethos, logos, and pathos” (p. 631).

Previous studies on public political discourse show that the Appraisal Theory is rarely used to further similar studies

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in foreign academic contexts, especially when examining the development of research on the BPMFS. Therefore, this study attempts to conduct a more comprehensive study within the framework of the Engagement System on multiple British Prime Ministers’ first speeches against the particular backdrop of the UK to figure out how interpersonal meaning is constructed through all of these ERs by four British Prime Ministers. It is hoped that this study may broaden the applicability of the Engagement System and explore the status quo of the UK from a new angle where BPMFS acts as a link between the preceding and the following.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Martin and White (2008), engagement is concerned with how resources such as projection, modality, polarity, concession and various comment adverbials position the speaker/writer concerning both the value position being advanced and the potential responses to that value position. That is to say, engagement acts “as a cover-all term for resources of intersubjective positioning” (Martin & White, 2008, p. 95) and is utilized by language users as a means of mitigating their responsibilities and obligations to what is spoken or written.

A. Monogloss

We can be enlightened by Martin’s (2008) demonstration of monogloss in which he states that “by this, the speaker/writer presents the current proposition as one which has no dialogistic alternatives which need to be recognized, or engaged with, in the current communicative context — as dialogistically inert and hence capable of being declared categorically” (p. 99). Therefore, monogloss, or “bare or categorical assertions”, refers to the communicative contexts that make no explicit reference to other voices nor do they recognize opposing views. It also features a situation that removes the proposition from direct availability discussion or “presumption”.

B. Heterogloss

Heterogloss refers to overtly dialogistic locutions that invoke or allow for dialogistic alternatives — that is, the utterances and viewpoints of external voices. In addition, influenced by the academic thought of dialogism by the Soviet scholar Bakhtin, heterogloss can be given to all locutions which function in this way to recognize that the text’s communicative backdrop is a diverse one (Martin & White, 2008). The detailed classification of heterogloss is illustrated below in Figure 1.

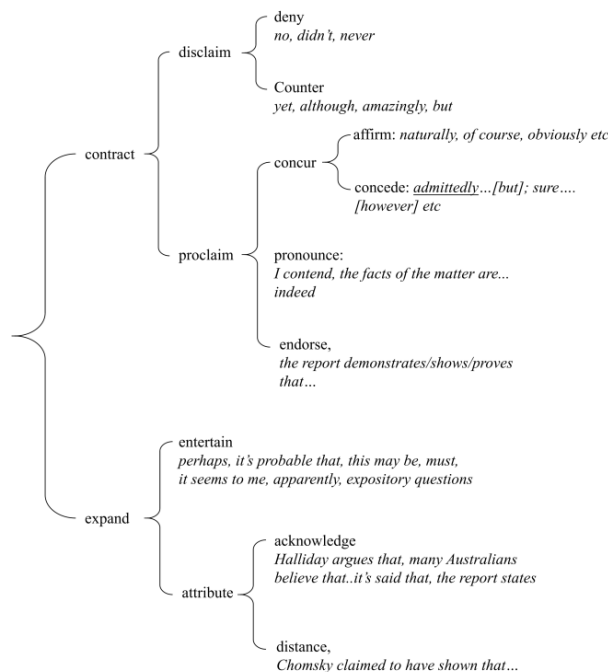


Figure 1. The Engagement System

(a). Dialogic Contraction

Dialogic contraction refers to the resources that act to challenge, fend off or restrict the scope of dialogically alternative positions and voices (Martin & White, 2008). These resources of contractive meaning include two sub-categories, namely Disclaim and Proclaim.

Like what Martin and White (2008) proposed, resources of the first category Disclaim have meanings by which some dialogic alternative is directly rejected or supplanted or is represented as not applying. Within this category, two sub-types can be distinguished: Deny (Negation) and Counter.

Martin and White (2008) defined the second category, Proclaim, as meanings by which, through some authorial interpolation, emphasis or intervention, dialogic alternatives are confronted, challenged, overwhelmed or otherwise excluded (p. 117). According to it, Proclaim can fall into three subcategories: Concur, Pronounce and Endorse.

1. “The category of ‘concur’ involves formulations which overtly announce the addresser as agreeing with, or having the same knowledge as, some projected dialogic partner” (Martin & White, 2008).
2. From what Martin and White (2008) discussed, Endorsement Resources point to those formulations by which propositions sourced to external sources are construed by the authorial voice as correct, valid, undeniable or otherwise maximally warrantable. Verbs like “show”, “demonstrate”, “find” and “point out” can help to achieve the target.
3. As for Pronouncement Resources, Martin and White (2008) explained that it covers formulations that involve authorial emphases or explicit authorial interventions or interpolations, and listed some examples: “I contend ...”, “The truth of the matter is that ...” (p. 127).

(b). *Dialogic Expansion*

As a concept in contrast to dialogic contraction, dialogic expansion actively makes allowances for dialogically alternative positions and voices (Martin & White, 2008). Additionally, it includes Entertain and Attribute as its sub-categories.

As Martin and White (2008) have discussed, Entertainment Resources are “wordings by which the authorial voice indicates that its position is but one of several possible positions and thereby, to greater or lesser degrees, makes dialogic space for those possibilities” (p. 104). Attribution Resources deal with those formulations that disassociate the proposition from the text’s internal authorial voice by attributing it to some external source (Martin & White, 2008). It can be divided into two sub-categories, namely Acknowledge and Distance.

1. Acknowledgement Resources are the locutions where there is no overt indication, at least via the choice of the framer, as to where the authorial voice stands concerning the proposition (Martin & White, 2008).
2. On the same premise as Acknowledgements Resources, Distancing Resources are expansive in the discourse space. They go beyond mere acknowledgments in that they allow more room for dialogical alternatives by portraying the voice of the writer or speaker as clearly rejecting to assume credit for the notion. However, Acknowledgement Resources have been “widely attended to in the extensive literature on reported speech and citation, especially as it operates within academic discourse” (Martin & White, 2008, p. 113).

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. *Corpora*

This study selected four First Speeches as the corpus sources; respectively, they are the First Speeches of Theresa May, Boris Johnson, Elizabeth Truss and Rishi Sunak. All of these sources are accessible at the official website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/>.

The year 2020 witnessed a number of events that had a global impact. One of those events was Brexit. Since the 2016 referendum, the United Kingdom had begun the process of exiting the European Union which had taken more than four years to complete. The result of the referendum in the United Kingdom reflected a burst of long-simmering political, social, economic and cultural issues, along with other issues concerning national governance, globalization, and reason and irrationality among them. The UK was scheduled to officially withdraw from the European Union (EU) on January 1, 2021, and would no longer be able to participate in the decision-making and voting processes of the European Union. Additionally, it would no longer be bound by the laws and policies of the EU. Former Prime Ministers Theresa May and Boris Johnson played key roles during the Brexit period.

There has been unprecedented volatility in British politics over the past few years, with two Prime Ministers — Boris Johnson and Liz Truss — being ousted from office by members of their own party and a massive reaction against budgetary changes that ultimately led to their withdrawal. Rishi Sunak became the 57th Prime Minister in the UK. On September 8, 2022, Queen Elizabeth II passed away at Balmoral Castle in Scotland. Following her death, Prince Charles ascended to the throne as King of the United Kingdom. Within the space of a single year, the country went through three prime ministers and two monarchs. Even in the relatively unsettled political climate of recent years, such political turbulence in Britain is unusual. Therefore, the corpus selected in this study is highly representative and contains abundant Engagement Resources. A list of the four British First Speeches can be seen below in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
LIST OF BRITISH PRIME MINISTERIAL FIRST SPEECHES

Time	Addresser	Word Number
2016.7	Theresa May	629
2019.7	Boris Johnson	1689
2022.9	Liz Truss	516
2022.10	Rishi Sunak	567
Total		3401

### B. Instrument and Procedure

In the quantitative aspect, effective software was employed for data collection: the UAM Corpus Tool 6.0 - an all-in-one tool for building databases, getting information, and creating statistics. Previously dubbed the Systemic Coder, the tool was developed by Dr. Mick O'Donnell and based on Systemic Functional Linguistics. Moreover, it can not only annotate a corpus for linguistic research but can also create a training set for statistical language processing.

The UAM Corpus Tool is often used in discourse analysis, especially for studies conducted under the Appraisal Theory. With its assistance, various texts can be annotated on multiple levels such as NP, clause, sentence, and whole document by using the same annotation schemes or individually designed schemes. Furthermore, researchers may search for examples on many levels such as finite clauses with company NPs or future clauses in introductions and compare statistics on multiple subsets such as the linguistic differences between male and female speakers. In addition, every annotation is kept in XML files making it simpler to transfer annotations across programs, and "stand-off" XML enables several overlapping analyses of the same text.

Data collection is completed through the following steps:

1. Create a new project and name it "BPMFS Analysis".
2. Add the four First Speeches as a folder of text files to the project.
3. Add the layer name "Manuel Annotation", select the coding object "Engagement Only", and edit a new Coding scheme according to the Engagement System in the Appraisal Theory.
4. Acquire all the statistics and see the features presented.

It's worth noting that in all procedures, step 3 plays the most important role in the accuracy of the research. In this research, we use the following predetermined network system to implement the Coding Scheme:

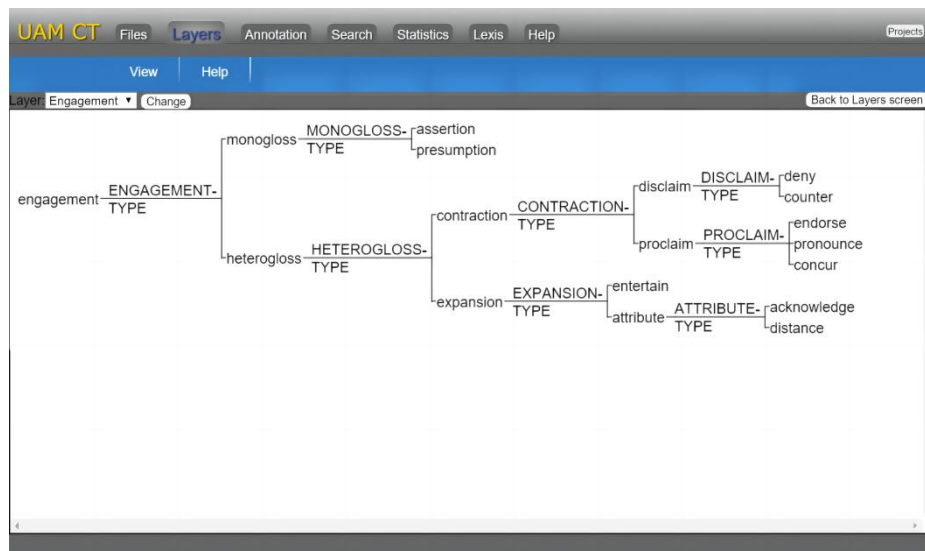


Figure 2. Coding Scheme for Engagement Analysis

Currently, manual annotation is used more for many Appraisal Theory publications. In this dissertation, the author focused on classifying the Engagement System which has several subsystems with each subsystem containing its own branches. While assigning labels, it is necessary to determine the appropriate noun or phrase for each subsystem that falls under the Engagement System. It is easy to make mistakes if the process is not carried out with the utmost care and precision.

## IV. RESULTS

All Engagement Resources (ER) have been manually annotated and their frequencies and percentages were calculated in UAM Corpus Tool 6. The overall distribution of each kind of ER in the four First Speeches is presented in Table 2:

TABLE 2  
THE OVERALL DISTRIBUTION OF ERS (UAM CORPUS TOOL 6)

Feature	N	%
<b>ENGAGEMENT-TYPE</b>		<b>TOTAL: 188</b>
- monogloss	57	30.3
- heterogloss	131	60.7
<b>MONOGLOSS-TYPE</b>		<b>TOTAL: 57</b>
- assertion	57	30
- presumption	0	0
<b>HETEROGLOSS-TYPE</b>		<b>TOTAL: 131</b>
- contraction	93	49.5
- expansion	38	20.2
<b>CONTRACTION TYPE</b>		<b>TOTAL: 93</b>
- disclaim	63	33.5
- proclaim	30	16
<b>DISCLAIM-TYPE</b>		<b>TOTAL: 63</b>
- deny	32	17
- counter	31	16.5
<b>PROCLAIM-TYPE</b>		<b>TOTAL: 30</b>
- endorse	13	6.9
- pronounce	10	5.3
- concur	7	3.7
<b>EXPANSION-TYPE</b>		<b>TOTAL: 38</b>
- entertain	37	19.7
- attribute	1	0.5
<b>ATTRIBUTION-TYPE</b>		<b>TOTAL: 1</b>
- acknowledge	1	0.5
- distance	0	0

What we can directly observe from Table 3 is that there are 188 ER items in total in the selected First Speeches of four British Prime Ministers. Obviously, the Heterogloss Resources number much more than the Monogloss Resources. Moreover, in the aspect of monogloss resources, the four Prime Ministers' First Speeches are distributed with all assertions instead of just one presumption. Among the branches of Heterogloss Resources, dialogic contraction plays a main part where Disclamation Resources are more than double the number of Proclamation Resources. The 63 Disclamation Resources contain nearly the same number of denial and countering resources while in Proclamation Resources, the proportion of Endorsement, Pronouncement and Concurrence Resources gradually decrease. As for the other branch, the 38 Expansion Resources encounters an extreme situation where it consists of 37 Entertainment Resources and only one Attribution Resource in which there are no Distancing Resources but only a single Acknowledgement Resource.

As a result, we can draw the preliminary conclusion that to achieve their goals and impress the audience during political speeches, particularly when giving the First Speech at Downing Street, these four British Prime Ministers are more likely to employ resources such as Assertion Resources and Disclamation Resources in the aspect of Dialogic Contraction and Entertainment Resources in the aspect of Dialogic Expansion. Based on this, we could then make an initial assumption about the strategies they used in their speeches; that is, they are skilled at making firm declarations and promises to reassure the audience, extending the dialogic space and their stances to include citizens of the whole nation, quoting authoritative voices to support their own voices and reject alternative voices.

When we respectively shift perspective to the First Speeches by the four Prime Ministers, there are still differences in the distribution features of ERs and their employed tactics. The respective distribution of ERs in each Prime Minister's First Speech is shown below in Table 3:

TABLE 3  
THE DISTRIBUTION OF ERS IN FOUR FIRST SPEECHES (UAM CORPUS TOOL 6)

	Theresa May		Boris Johnson		Liz Truss		Rishi Sunak	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ENGAGEMENT-TYPE	TOTAL: 64		TOTAL: 71		TOTAL: 29		TOTAL: 24	
- monogloss	8	12.5%	25	35.2%	16	55.2%	8	33.3%
- heterogloss	56	87.5%	46	64.8%	13	44.8%	16	66.7%
MONOGLOSS-TYPE	TOTAL: 8		TOTAL: 25		TOTAL: 16		TOTAL: 8	
- assertion	8	12.5%	25	35.2%	16	55.2%	8	33.3%
- presumption	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HETEROGLOSS-TYPE	TOTAL: 56		TOTAL: 46		TOTAL: 13		TOTAL: 16	
- contraction	32	50.0%	38	53.5%	10	34.5%	13	54.2%
- expansion	24	37.5%	8	11.3%	3	10.3%	3	12.5%
CONTRACTION-TYPE	TOTAL: 32		TOTAL: 38		TOTAL: 10		TOTAL: 13	
- disclaim	25	39.1%	23	32.4%	5	17.2%	10	41.7%
- proclaim	7	10.9%	15	21.1%	5	17.2%	3	12.5%
DISCLAIM-TYPE	TOTAL: 25		TOTAL: 23		TOTAL: 5		TOTAL: 10	
- deny	11	17.2%	11	15.5%	4	13.8%	6	25.0%
- counter	14	21.9%	12	16.9%	1	3.4%	4	16.7%
PROCLAIM-TYPE	TOTAL: 7		TOTAL: 15		TOTAL: 5		TOTAL: 3	
- endorse	5	7.8%	2	2.8%	4	13.8%	2	8.3%
- pronounce	2	3.1%	8	11.3%	0	0	0	0
- concur	0	0	5	7.0%	1	3.4%	1	4.2%
EXPANSION-TYPE	TOTAL: 24		TOTAL: 8		TOTAL: 3		TOTAL: 3	
- entertain	24	37.5%	7	9.9%	3	10.3%	3	12.5%
- attribute	0	0	1	1.4%	0	0	0	0
ATTRIBUTION-TYPE	TOTAL: 0		TOTAL: 8		TOTAL: 0		TOTAL: 0	
- acknowledge	0	0	1	1.4%	0	0	0	0
- distance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

A. Distribution Features of Monogloss

Monogloss can fall into two sub-types: Assertion and Presumption. As we see in the Table 3 above, four Prime Ministers never use presumption in their speech and assertion resources occupy all of the proportion of monogloss. The proportion of Assertion that Boris Johnson, Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak take in their addresses ranges between 35% and 55%, and Truss uses the most in her speech. To make it clearer, Figure 3 is provided below:

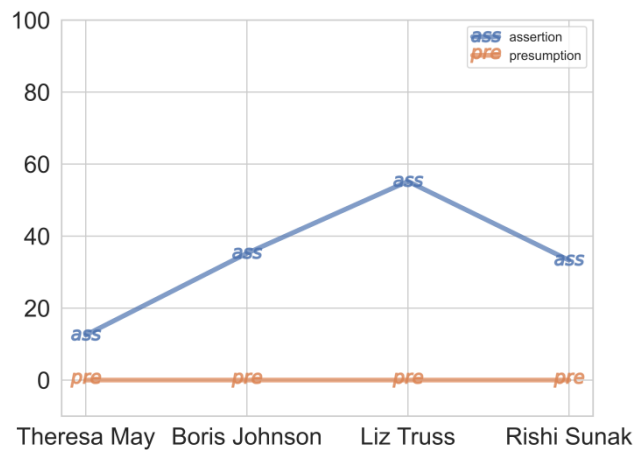


Figure 3. The Comparison of Monogloss in the Four First Speeches

Many of them prefer to express their points and ideas by using Assertion Resources in a way to strike a chord with the audience. Moreover, we can see that there is zero Presumption Resource employed in their speeches.

B. Distribution Features of Heterogloss

(a). Distribution Features of Dialogic Contraction

Heterogloss accounts for 60.7% of the total ERs as does Contraction Resources with one of its sub-types accounting for 49.5% of their ERs. The variances between the four Prime Ministers are shown below in Figure 4.

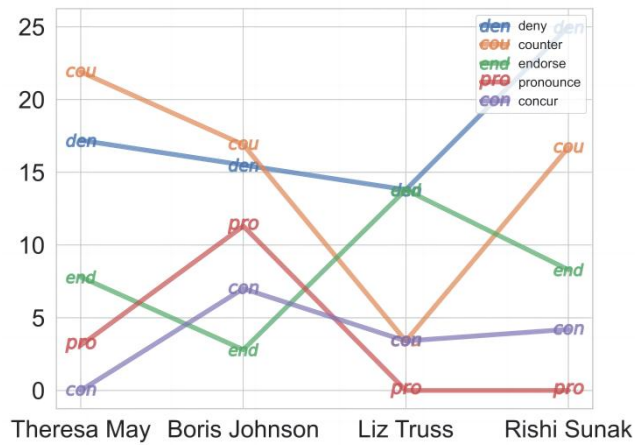


Figure 4. The Comparison of Contraction in the Four First Speeches

As one of the sub-types of Contraction, Disclamation Resources accounts for two-thirds thereof. More specifically, the proportion of Denial Resources equals that of Countering Resources. Prime Ministers do this because they want to steer public opinion in a more positive direction. Furthermore, they hold enough sway to outright silence a number of dissident opinions. However, Truss differs from the other three Prime Ministers in the low employment of Countering Resources. May, Johnson, and Sunak employ almost the same number of Denial and Countering resources.

Though Proclamation Resources are not used nearly as much as Disclamation Resources, Boris Johnson employs most of them among these Prime Ministers, especially concerning Pronouncement Resources. However, Truss and Sunak did not use any Pronouncement Resources in their first speech which means that they do not tend to prioritize their views among competing ones. May and Truss attempt to use more Endorsement Resources to recognize external sources as correct.

(b). *Distribution Features of Dialogic Expansion*

Compared to Contraction Resources, Expansion Resources do not contribute as much to the composition of heterogloss. In fact, it is less than half. Figure 5 offers a succinct view on the characteristics presented in the four speeches:

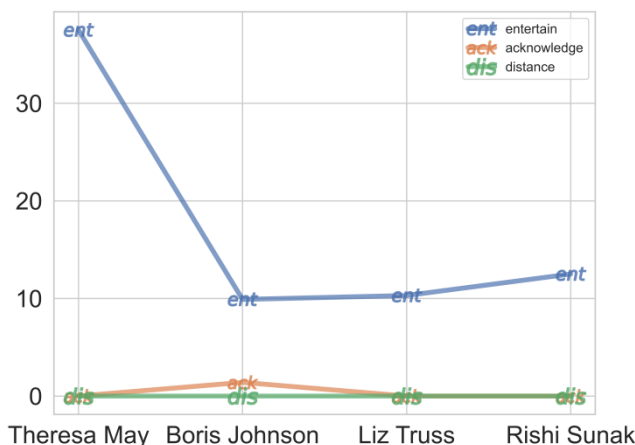


Figure 5. The Comparison of Expansion in the Four First Speeches

Dialogic expansion is divided into two branches: Entertain and Attribute. Attribute has two sub-branches: Acknowledge and Distance. What is presented in Figure 5 is the large distinction between the proportion of Entertainment Resources and the proportion of Attribution Resources, not to mention the single Acknowledgement Resource that was employed in Johnson’s speech. None of the Prime Ministers used Distancing Resources in their speech. Among all of these political figures, May’s employment of Entertainment Resources outnumbers the others, which shows that she values fostering a dialogic environment where divergent viewpoints and perspectives may coexist.

V. DISCUSSION

A. *Case Analysis on Interpersonal Meaning of Monogloss*

The speakers can present their current proposition as dialogically inactive and hence capable of being proclaimed categorically because no alternatives need to be recognized or interacted with in the current communicative situation

which, in other words, means that they are able to express fairly certain attitudes and viewpoints directly while employing monogloss resources.

There are two classifications of monogloss: Assertion and Presumption. However, in the speeches selected as the corpus, four Prime Ministers utilize 57 Assertion Resources and not even one single Presumption Resource. The following examples are Assertion Resources in BPMFS.

1. “We are living through an important moment in our country’s history. Following the referendum, we face a time of great national change” (May, 2016). [Monogloss: Assertion]
2. “We are going to restore trust in our democracy and we are going to fulfill the repeated promises of parliament to the people and come out of the EU on October 31, no ifs or buts” (Johnson, 2019). [Monogloss: Assertion]
3. “We will transform Britain into an aspiration nation...with high-paying jobs, safe streets and where everyone everywhere has the opportunities they deserve” (Truss, 2022). [Monogloss: Assertion]
4. “I will always be grateful to Boris Johnson for his incredible achievements as Prime Minister, and I treasure his warmth and generosity of spirit” (Sunak, 2022). [Monogloss: Assertion]

In example 1, in her First Speech, May directly recognized Brexit as “an important moment in our country’s history” because in June of 2016, Britain held the Brexit referendum, and she took on the responsibility to lead the effort to pull Britain out of the European Union after she was appointed Prime Minister in July.

In example 2, Johnson used “we” to convey the promise on behalf of not only himself but the whole government and tried to invoke the confidence and hope of people by using “no ifs or buts” to show that as a key leader in the drive for a “hard Brexit”, he had an adamant attitude toward it.

Example 3 clarifies current problems faced by the UK in 2022, and Truss was expected to change the status quo as the third female Prime Minister. She also used “we” to represent the government’s resolution directly.

Example 4 hints at an interesting story between Sunak and Johnson. Johnson withdrew his Conservative leadership bid, paving the way for Sunak to become Britain’s first prime minister of Indian descent. Sunak took great care in his first statement by utilizing Assertion Resources to laud the work of former Prime Minister Johnson in bringing about Brexit.

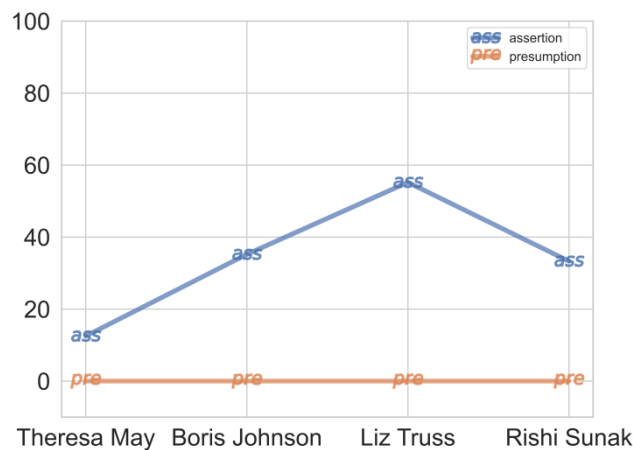


Figure 6. The Comparison of Assertion and Presumption Resources

As we can conclude from Figure 6, here is how the proportions of Assertion Resources in the four First Speeches are ranked: Truss (55.2%) > Johnson (35.2%) > Sunak (33.3%) > May (12.5%); however, none of the four Prime Ministers employed Presumption Resources.

### B. Case Analysis on Interpersonal Meaning of Heterogloss

The use of Heterogloss Resources allows the speaker or writer to avoid responsibility for their words. It offers the idea of objectivity because the speaker is not directly responsible for the statement being made. There are 131 Heterogloss Resources used which make up the largest part of the ERs used in these speeches. Nearly 71% of them are Contraction Resources while Expansion Resources only account for 29%.

#### (a). Interpersonal Meaning of Dialogic Contraction

Resources that question, counter, or limit the range of dialogically different perspectives and voices are said to engage in dialogic contraction which falls into Disclaim and Proclaim. The comparison of the proportions of Contraction Resources employed is illustrated below in Figure 7.



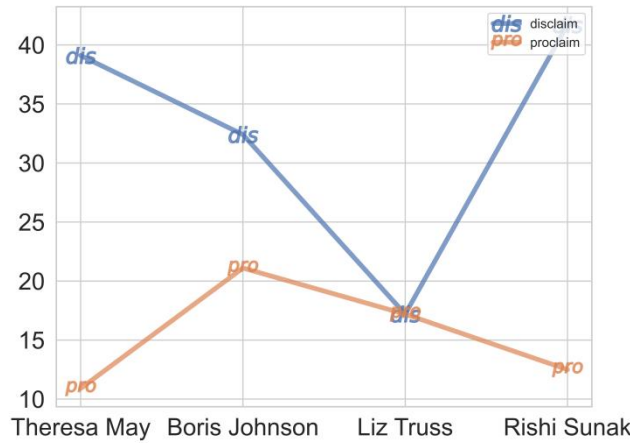


Figure 7. The Comparison of Overall Contraction Resources

As can be concluded from Figure 7, here is how the proportions of overall Contraction Resources are ranked:  
 Disclamation Resources: Sunak (41.7%) > May (39.1%) > Johnson (32.4%) > Truss (17.2%);  
 Proclamation Resources: Johnson (21.1%) > Truss (17.2%) > Sunak (12.5%) > May (10.9%).

1. Disclaim

Disclamation Resources encompass a range of interpretations, all of which include the implicit or explicit dismissal of a potential course of action in a conversation. There are two distinct categories within this group: Deny and Counter. Denial Resource is a strategy that admits the existence of a potentially more advantageous alternative stance in order to reject it. Countering Resource is a tool, which represents the current proposition as replacing or supplanting and then rejecting it and adding that which would have been expected to take its place. Examples are as follows:

5. “But David’s true legacy is not [Disclaim: Deny] about the economy but [Disclaim: Counter] about social justice” (May, 2016).
6. “I have every confidence that in 99 days’ time we will have cracked it but [Disclaim: Counter] you know what — we aren’t” [Disclaim: Deny] going to wait 99 days because the British people have had enough of waiting (Johnson, 2019).
7. “We shouldn’t [Disclaim: Deny] be daunted by the challenges we face” (Truss, 2022).
8. “I will unite our country, not [Disclaim: Deny] with words, but [Disclaim: Counter] with action” (Sunak, 2022).

In example 5, the Denial Resource “not” and the Countering Resource “but” are perfectly combined to construe May’s glowing assessment of former Prime Minister David Cameron’s achievements in social justice. However, May used these two tools to try to convince the British people that she would prioritize economic growth.

In example 6, during the most important period of Brexit, Johnson used “but” to replace the current proposition that the UK would succeed in leaving the EU in 99 days, and he then negated the patience of waiting for these 99 days. Instead, he was aiming to convey a firm attitude that he would achieve the goal as soon as possible. Moreover, here he also replaced “I” with “We” to extend the stance to all citizens.

In example 7, Truss denied the fear brought about by the turbulent status quo and she encouraged having a fixed heart to confront all the challenges.

Example 8 uses the same strategy as example 5, the combination of the Denial Resource “not” and the Countering Resource “but” which helps Sunak to express his responsibility and duty to build a better Britain through his endeavors.

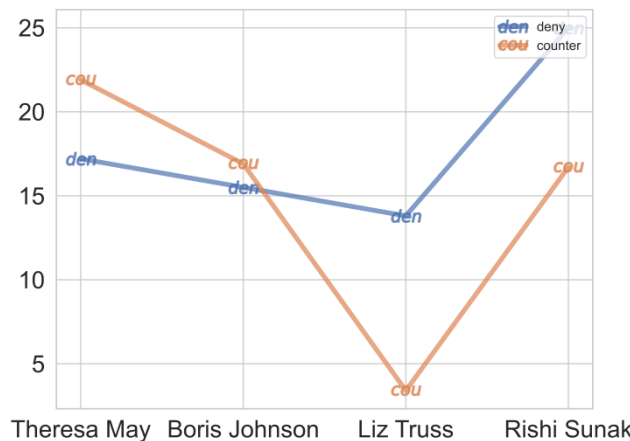


Figure 8. The Comparison of Disclamation Resources

As we can conclude from Figure 8, here is how the proportions of Disclamation Resources are ranked:  
 Denial Resources: Sunak (25.0%) > May (17.2%) > Johnson (15.5%) > Truss (13.8%);  
 Countering Resources: May (21.9%) > Johnson (16.9%) > Sunak (16.7%) > Truss (3.4%).

## 2. Proclaim

Proclaim Resources refer to a set of meanings that excludes other possible interpretations through the use of authorial interpolation, emphasis, or intervention. It is classified into three subsets — Concur, Pronounce, and Endorse.

With the use of Concurrence Resources, the speaker might appear to be on equal footing with, or knowledgeable about, the person to whom the material is addressed. Endorsement resources confirm that the claim is true and link it to a specific person's opinion, usually the speaker's. They also point out statements in which the speaker makes claims based on outside voices, making them sound like they came from inside sources. Pronouncement is a tool that involves authorial emphases or explicit authorial interventions or interpolations. Examples are as follows:

9. "Because not everybody knows this, but the full title of my party is the Conservative and Unionist Party, and that word 'unionist' is very important to me. It means [Proclaim: Endorsement] we believe in the Union: the precious, precious bond between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland" (May, 2016).
10. "What makes the United Kingdom great is our fundamental belief [Proclaim: Endorsement] in freedom, in enterprise, and in fair play" (Truss, 2022).
11. "That's why we have already announced that [Proclaim: Pronounce] we are going to level up per pupil funding in primary and secondary schools and that is the work that begins immediately behind that black door" (Johnson, 2019).
12. "I know that we have what it takes to tackle those challenges. Of course [Proclaim: Concur], it won't be easy. But we can do it" (Truss, 2022).

In example 9, May made reference to the Conservative Party's entire name, which omits the word "Unionist". It's a fact that most people do not know very well. That the vital tie between England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland is strong and will never be broken is what May is trying to emphasize and tell the people. Furthermore, she did everything she could to uphold her pledge by demonstrating her loyalty to the party, the people, and the country.

In example 10, Truss described as "fundamental" the idea that the UK is great because of its commitment to individual liberty, free enterprise, and equal opportunity. This would undoubtedly spark feelings of national pride.

In example 11, to make a favorable impression, Johnson bundled one of his responsibilities into the obligation of the entire government. With the phrase "have already announced", he hoped to convey the idea that he had already begun his work and was implementing a superior strategy to advance national education.

In example 12, Truss, using the adverb "of course", assumed that her readers would agree with her that the United Kingdom is facing numerous difficulties at the present time. She made an effort to share the sentiments of the common people to inspire them in her role as Prime Minister.

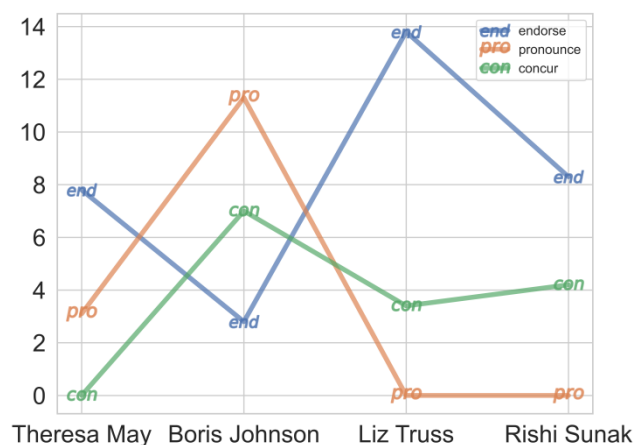


Figure 9. The Comparison of Proclamation Resources

As we can conclude from Figure 9, here is how the proportions of Proclamation Resources in the four First Speeches are ranked:

Endorsement Resources: Truss (25.0%) > May (17.2%) > Johnson (15.5%) > Truss (13.8%);  
 Pronouncement Resources: May (21.9%) > Johnson (16.9%) > Sunak (16.7%) > Truss (3.4%);  
 Concurrence Resources: May (21.9%) > Johnson (16.9%) > Sunak (16.7%) > Truss (3.4%).

## (b). Interpersonal Meaning of Dialogic Expansion

Dialogic expansion actively accommodates several perspectives and viewpoints inside a conversation, and locutions like Entertain and Attribute are sub-branches of it. The comparison of the proportions of Expansion Resources employed is illustrated in Figure 10.

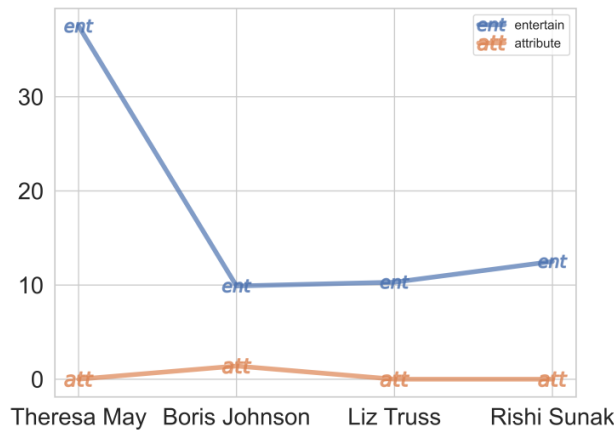


Figure 10. The Comparison of Overall Expansion Resources

1. *Entertain*

By openly tying the ongoing proposal to the speaker’s unique subjectivity, Entertainment Resources acknowledge that the current proposal is just one of many in the communicative context and make room for alternative options in the dialogue. Examples are as follows:

13. “That means fighting against the burning injustice that, if [Attribute: Entertain] you’re born poor, you will die on average 9 years earlier than others. If [Attribute: Entertain] you’re black, you’re treated more harshly by the criminal justice system than if [Attribute: Entertain] you’re white. If [Attribute: Entertain] you’re a white, working-class boy, you’re less likely than anybody else in Britain to go to university. If [Attribute: Entertain] you’re at a state school, you’re less likely to reach the top professions than if [Attribute: Entertain] you’re educated privately. If [Attribute: Entertain] you’re a woman, you will earn less than a man. If [Attribute: Entertain] you suffer from mental health problems, there’s not enough help to hand. If [Attribute: Entertain] you’re young, you’ll find it harder than ever before to own your own home” (May, 2016).
14. “I am convinced that [Attribute: Entertain] we can do a deal without checks at the Irish border, because we refuse under any circumstances to have such checks” (Johnson, 2019).
15. “United with our allies, we will stand up for freedom and democracy around the world — recognising that [Attribute: Entertain] we can’t have security at home without having security abroad” (Truss, 2022).

The use of “if” modalized clauses to actualize potential entertainment resources is demonstrated effectively in Example 13. May used seven “if” modalized clauses in succession to highlight societal unfairness in the UK in regards to poverty, racism, education, gender, etc., and presents herself as a contingent individual based on evidence, thereby creating a space for others suffering the injustice to speak their minds.

In example 14, Entertainment Resource was realized by the mental attribute projection “I am convinced that”. Johnson made it clear that the deal could, indeed, be done without checks at the Irish border.

In example 15, Truss employed the mental-verb projection “(we) recognize that”, which plainly bases the value position on her own subjectivity and even on the stance of all citizens, to construct a backdrop against which she could firmly maintain a position on the significance of security abroad. Meanwhile, she was ready to demonstrate an awareness of the possibility that the presentations could contain other voices with differing perspectives on the importance of domestic and international security to global freedom and democracy. This allows them a forum in which to negotiate with others who have different perspectives.

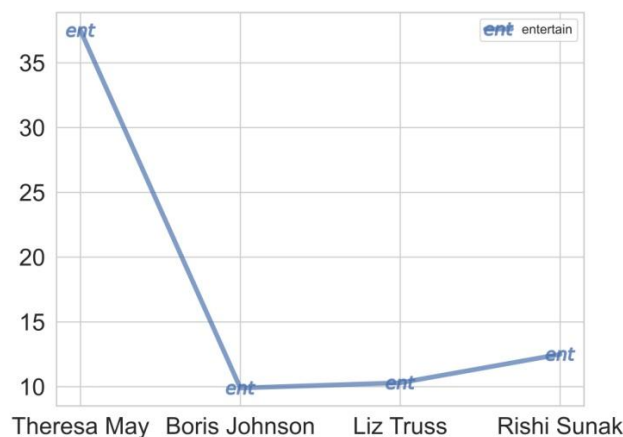


Figure 11. The Comparison of Entertainment Resources

As we can conclude from Figure 11, here is how the proportions of entertainment resources in four First Speeches are ranked:

Entertainment Resources: May (37.5%) > Sunak (12.5%) > Truss (10.3%) > Johnson (9.9%).

## 2. Attribute

Attribution Resources deal with “those formulations which disassociate the proposition from the text’s internal authorial voice by attributing it to some external source” (Xue & Xu, 2021, p. 95). There are two sub-categories, namely Acknowledge and Distance. Acknowledging Resources “refer to those propositions where there is no overt indication...as to where the authorial voice stands with respect to the proposition” (El-Zouka, 2017, pp. 13-14). However, by making it clear that the writer or speaker is not taking credit for the idea, Distancing Resources create more room for dialogical alternatives. Here is the only example in all these four speeches.

16. “In spite of all her efforts, it has become clear that there are pessimists at home and abroad who think that [Attribute: Acknowledge] after three years of indecision that this country has become a prisoner to the old arguments of 2016, and that in this home of democracy we are incapable of honouring a basic democratic mandate” (Johnson, 2019).

In example 16, due to May’s failure to let Britain withdraw from the EU, Johnson only invited the external voices of those who were hostile toward the government and the Brexit plan, but he would not take responsibility for it. Instead, Johnson, as a dedicated Prime Minister for Brexit, tried to inspire the people to play up their trust in him in order to build solidarity with the new government.

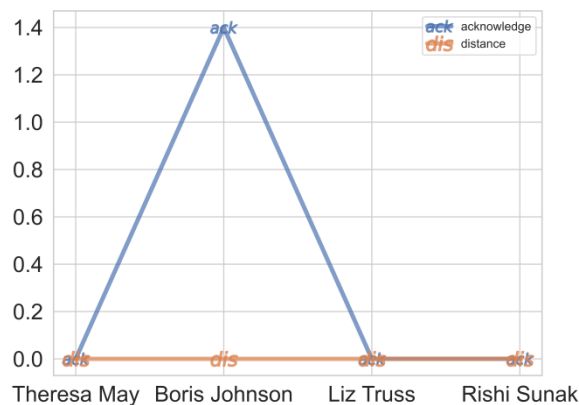


Figure 12. The Comparison of Attribution Resources

As we can conclude from Figure 12, here is how the proportions of Acknowledgement Resources in the four First Speeches are ranked: Johnson (1.4%) > Truss (0%) > Truss (0%) > Sunak (0%); however, all of the four Prime Ministers employed zero Distancing Resources.

## C. Construction of Interpersonal Meaning in BPMFS

We have discussed the distributional characteristics of all branches of both monogloss and heterogloss resources, and now we will review the approaches taken by each Prime Minister in their first speech to understand the interpersonal meaning inherent in their respective situations.

### (a). Theresa May

Here is the specific ranking of Theresa May’s First Speech: Entertain (37.5%) > Counter (21.9%) > Deny (17.2%) > Assertion (12.5%) > Endorse (7.8%) > Pronounce (3.1%) > Presumption (0%) > Concur (0%) > Acknowledge (0%) > Distance (0%).

The year 2017 saw Queen Elizabeth II approve the Brexit bill, authorizing Theresa May to formally start the process of leaving the EU; meanwhile, in 2019, the draft Brexit agreement between Theresa May’s government and the EU was rejected three times by the House of Commons of the British Parliament.

Entertainment and Disclamation Resources occupy the highest proportion of May’s First Speech. These resources she used rendered her opinion arbitrary, and audiences were encouraged to voice their own reactions. As the second woman to lead Britain as Prime Minister, May vowed to address social inequality and Brexit’s consequences during her time at Downing Street. Her primary responsibility as Prime Minister would be to steer Britain through the “Brexit” process and negotiate in Britain’s best interests. Also through disclamation resources, she attempted to mend the divisions within her own party and among the British public that had arisen as a result of the “Brexit” debate and restore the country’s social fabric.

### (b). Boris Johnson

Here is the specific ranking of Boris Johnson’s First Speech: Assertion (35.2%) > Counter (16.9%) > Deny (15.5%) >

Pronounce (11.3%) > Entertain (9.9%) > Concur (7.0%) > Endorse (2.8%) > Acknowledge (1.4%) > Presumption (0%) > Distance (0%).

In July of 2017, Boris Johnson succeeded Theresa May as Prime Minister. Assertion and Disclamation Resources occupy the largest proportion of Johnson's First Speech. Johnson used a lot of Assertion Resources to reassure the country and people that he would do his best to pull Britain out of the quagmire of Brexit and maintain Britain's international influence in the changing international pattern and situation despite the many challenges facing British diplomacy in the Brexit era. He declared his intention to take decisive action in the face of ambiguity, addressing both Europe's issues and Britain's own.

During his reign, the UK successfully left the EU. He solved the Brexit impasse left by former Prime Minister Theresa May and pushed through the development of a vaccine in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The reoccurring waves of COVID-19, supply chain bottlenecks, labor shortages, and soaring energy prices in 2021 wreaked havoc on the UK economy while in 2022, the rising cost of food in the UK (especially bread, cereals, and meat) posed the greatest threat to the standard of living for Britons in four decades. The UK's economic recovery has been facing major obstacles that, along with the global inflation problem which has exacerbated the impact of Brexit, caused Britain to fall on particularly hard times.

(c). *Liz Truss*

For Liz Truss's First Speech, here are the specific rankings: Assertion (55.2%) > Deny (13.8%) > Endorse (13.8%) > Entertain (9.9%) > Counter (3.4%) > Concur (3.4%) > Presumption (0%) > Pronounce (0%) > Acknowledge (0%) > Distance (0%).

The reoccurring waves of COVID-19, supply chain bottlenecks, labor shortages, and soaring energy prices in 2021 wreaked havoc on the UK economy, while in 2022, the rising cost of food in the UK (especially bread, cereals, and meat) posed the greatest threat to the standard of living for Britons in four decades. It is fair to conclude that Johnson had long ago lost the faith of the government and the people. After Johnson stepped down, Liz Truss became the third ever female Prime Minister of the UK.

Assertion Resources are most employed in her First Speech because she was expected and also determined to introduce a series of dramatic economic reforms in an effort to pull the country out of its economic slump and set it on a path toward development in the future government. During that period, the UK's economic recovery was still facing major obstacles that, along with the global inflation problem which exacerbated the impact of Brexit, still had Britons reeling.

(d). *Rishi Sunak*

Here are the specific rankings of Rishi Sunak's First Speech: Assertion (33.3%) > Deny (25.0%) > Counter (16.7%) > Entertain (12.5%) > Endorse (8.3%) > Concur (4.2%) > Presumption (0%) > Pronounce (0%) > Acknowledge (0%) > Distance (0%).

Truss's series of policies have been questioned and criticized by outsiders, sparking serious market concerns about the UK government's debt problem. The Truss government remained committed to the New Economic Policy reforms but had completely lost support and trust within the Conservative Party. After only 45 days as Prime Minister, Truss resigned and, following a period of intra-party wrangling, Rishi Sunak was elected as the new leader of the Conservative Party in Britain. He was formally inaugurated as Prime Minister after getting permission from King Charles III to establish a new cabinet. He also has the distinction of being the first Prime Minister to serve during the reign of a new British monarch.

Sunak primarily utilized Assertion and Disclamation Resources in his speech. Through disclamation resources, he answered concerns about the UK government's debt problem. Furthermore, using assertion resources, he delivered his firm promise of a stronger NHS, better schools, safer streets, control of borders, environmental protection, stronger armed forces, and a level and well-built economy that embraces the opportunities of Brexit where businesses invest, innovate, and create jobs (Sunak, 2022).

## VI. CONCLUSION

As evidenced by the literature review, a vast number of domestic scholars have and continue to analyze the political speeches of Western leaders from various vantage points (pragmatics, genre, rhetoric, style, etc.). Only a few academics apply Appraisal Theory to the analysis of political speeches in the public arena. Moreover, Appraisal Theory is rarely used to further similar studies in foreign academic contexts, especially when examining the development of research on the British Prime Ministerial First Speech. Using the theoretical framework of the Engagement System in Appraisal Theory, the author intended to undertake a quantitative and qualitative study on the Engagement Resources presented in four different British Prime Ministers' First Speeches. The study's overarching purpose was to gain insight into the current status of the United Kingdom by evaluating the distribution frequency and features of the ERs used by these four Prime Ministers and examine the function that ERs play in the actualization of interpersonal meaning.

With the assistance of the UAM Corpus Tool, the numbers and frequencies of all ERs were determined and the features were presented. After this quantitative and qualitative research of these four speeches, major findings will be

discussed both in terms of the overall picture and the specifics.

Major findings in terms of the specifics are presented below according to Table 3: The Distribution of ERs in four First Speeches (UAM Corpus Tool 6).

1. Here is the specific ranking of Theresa May's First Speech: Entertain (37.5%) > Counter (21.9%) > Deny (17.2%) > Assertion (12.5%) > Endorse (7.8%) > Pronounce (3.1%) > Presumption (0%) > Concur (0%) > Acknowledge (0%) > Distance (0%).

Entertainment and Disclamation Resources occupy the largest proportion in May's First Speech. The resources she used rendered her opinion arbitrary so that audiences were encouraged to voice their own reactions and helped her mend the divisions within her own party and among the British public that had arisen as a result of the "Brexit" debate, and restore the country's social fabric.

2. Here is the specific ranking of Boris Johnson's First Speech: Assertion (35.2%) > Counter (16.9%) > Deny (15.5%) > Pronounce (11.3%) > Entertain (9.9%) > Concur (7.0%) > Endorse (2.8%) > Acknowledge (1.4%) > Presumption (0%) > Distance (0%).

Assertion and Disclamation Resources occupy the largest proportion of Johnson's First Speech. He used a lot of Assertion Resources to reassure the country and people that he would do his best to pull Britain out of the quagmire of Brexit and maintain Britain's international influence in the changing international pattern and situation. He also declared his intent to take decisive action in the face of ambiguity, addressing both Europe's issues and Britain's own.

3. Here is the specific ranking of Liz Truss's First Speech: Assertion (55.2%) > Deny (13.8%) > Endorse (13.8%) > Entertain (9.9%) > Counter (3.4%) > Concur (3.4%) > Presumption (0%) > Pronounce (0%) > Acknowledge (0%) > Distance (0%).

Assertion Resources are the most employed in her first speech. With these resources, she conveyed her determination to introduce a series of dramatic economic reforms in an effort to pull the country out of its economic slump and set it on a path toward development in the future government.

4. Here is the specific ranking of Rishi Sunak's First Speech: Assertion (33.3%) > Deny (25.0%) > Counter (16.7%) > Entertain (12.5%) > Endorse (8.3%) > Concur (4.2%) > Presumption (0%) > Pronounce (0%) > Acknowledge (0%) > Distance (0%).

Sunak primarily utilized Assertion and Disclamation Resources in his speech. Through Disclamation Resources and Assertion Resources, he answered concerns about the UK government's debt problem and he delivered his firm promise on Brexit and called on people to embrace the opportunities of Brexit.

Major findings in terms of the overall picture are presented below according to Table 2: The Overall Distribution of ERs (UAM Corpus Tool 6).

In general, the heterogloss resources (60.7%) were used much more than the monogloss resources (30.3%). Furthermore, in the aspect of monogloss resources, the four Prime Ministers' First Speeches were distributed using all assertion (30.3%) and not even one presumption (0%). Among the branches of heterogloss resources, dialogic contraction takes up the largest part where disclamation resources are more than double the number of proclamation resources. The 63 disclamation resources contain nearly the same number of denial (17.0%) and countering (16.5%) resources while for proclamation resources, the proportion of endorsement (6.9%), pronouncement (5.3%) and concurrence (3.7%) resources gradually decrease. As for the other branch, the 38 expansion resources encounter an extreme situation that consists of 37 entertainment resources (19.7%) and only one attribution resource in which there is no distancing resource (0%) but only a single acknowledgment resource (0.5%). The following is a ranking of the relative proportions of Engagement's tiniest branches:

Assertion (30.0%) > Entertain (19.7%) > Deny (17.0%) > Counter (16.5%) > Endorse (6.9%) > Pronounce (5.3%) > Concur (3.7%) > Acknowledge (0.5%) > Presumption (0%) > Distance (0%).

As we can see, three Engagement Resources are the main force in the construction of interpersonal meaning in BPMFS from the 54th to the 57th Prime Ministers. Assertion Resources of Monogloss, which ranks first in the overall proportion, help British Prime Ministers directly introduce their evaluation into the text and undertake the responsibility of comments. Entertainment Resources, which are employed in the First Speeches allow Prime Ministers to construct a platform in which the audience is welcome to join in the conversation, opening the dialogic space, giving the audience the impression that the Prime Minister is open-minded. Through the usage of Countering and Denial Resources (of Disclamation Resources), Prime Ministers of the UK may oppose readily demolished concepts in an effort to limit debate and bolster personal beliefs. Over time, they might build rapport with their recipients and establish shared meaning. In consequence, the interpersonal meaning embodied in BPMFS can mostly be constructed through these three Engagement Resources.

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