A Study of the Interpersonal Function of Feminist Speech Discourse Based on the Anne Hathaway's Speech in B20 Summit

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Abstract: Based on the interpersonal function of Halliday's systematic functional linguistics, the current paper studies the tone system and modality system of the speech delivered by Anne Hathaway in B20 Indonesia Summit, so as to explore the achievement of interpersonal function of speech discourse. The research findings indicate that: Firstly, the declarative sentences with the function of providing and obtaining information occupy the largest proportion in the discourse; Secondly, speakers frequently use the first person for information output; Finally, for the choice of modal verbs, speakers often choose high-value modal verbs to express strong demands and wishes. To sum up, the appropriate use of tone system, personal system and modality system not only contribute to the construction of speech objectivity and the speaker's power of speech, but also help to arouse the audience's resonance. The results of the research deepen the audience's understanding of interpersonal function, and provide a referential direction for feminist speech text research.

Keywords: Systematic Functional Linguistics; Interpersonal Function; Mood System; Modality System; Feminist Speech

1. Introduction

Systemic-functional grammar was proposed by Halliday in the late 1950s to provide a framework for discourse analysis, suitable for both spoken and written discourse analysis. Both verbal and written output are choices made in the language system to express the speaker's wishes [1]. Unlike traditional meaning grammar, which is limited to the study of words and structures, systemic functional grammar tends to explore the function of language, believing that language not only plays a key role in the process of communication, but also undertakes a variety of functions.

Systemic functional linguistics emerged in the middle and late 20th century and gradually matured, and the three meta-functions have attracted much attention. Among them, interpersonal functions are naturally applied to various discourse analysis. At first, the research on this function focused on novels, poems and other texts. With the development of the research, the research scope extends to ecological discourse analysis and classroom discourse analysis [2,3]. In recent years, speech discourse has become the focus of scholars, whose research scope mainly covers inaugural speeches, TED speeches, graduation speeches, etc. [4-6] With the awakening of female mass consciousness and the rise of feminist movement in the world, Feminist speeches have become more and more frequent in the eyes of people around the world. The speakers not only include country leaders and ordinary feminists, but also public figures such as stars give speeches for feminism and use their public influence to appeal for women's rights and equality. Li and Tong made a comparative analysis of the feminist speeches of Hillary Clinton and Emma Watson based on interpersonal function [8]. However, up to now, the research on interpersonal function probing in feminist speeches still needs to be enriched and expanded. In view of this, this paper takes Anne Hathaway's B20 Summit speech as the research object, explores the tone system and the person system in depth, and then analyzes the realization of the interpersonal function of this text.

2. Theoretical Basis

Halliday, a British linguist, divides the rational function of language into three categories: conceptual meta-function, interpersonal

meta-function and textual meta-function. Systemic functional linguistics takes the actual use of language as the research object, and constantly tests and improves the theory in the process of application. Since its introduction, systemic functional linguistics has been widely used in teaching, medicine, linguistics and other fields. Fang Yan demonstrated the application of systemic functional grammar in discourse analysis [9]. Among them, discourse analysis of speech discourse under the framework of systemic-functional grammar theory is always the preferred object of study.

Interpersonal function mainly includes mood system and modality system. Mood system is the basic element to realize interpersonal function in language. It reflects different relationships of language roles, including subject and qualifier, and can be subdivided into declarative, imperative and interrogative. In the mood system, the choice and use of personal pronouns can directly affect the speaker's speech style, communicative intention and speech role. By observing the frequency of use of personal pronouns, we can understand the different speech content, speech characteristics and communicative purposes in different discourse. For example, in studying the speeches of western female leaders, Zhang found that speakers usually use strategies that strengthen the first-person plural and weaken the first-person singular to highlight their speech intentions [10].

Modal systems mainly involve modal verbs, modal additional components and modal metaphors [11]. In the discourse, modality is mainly embodied by modal verbs, which can be divided into three levels: high, medium and low. Such as ought to, need, have to and must embody high magnitude values; would, will, shall and should represent the median; can, could, may, might represent low magnitude values. By analyzing modal verbs, we can understand the speaker's evaluation of the validity and commitment of the speech content, define the social distance and power relationship between the speaker and the audience, and reveal the speaker's language style and speech intention.

Based on the theory of interpersonal function, this paper takes Anne Hathaway's speech at B20 Indonesia Summit as the research object, collects and analyzes the sentence tone, personal use and modal verbs in this discourse,

and explores the realization of interpersonal function in speech discourse. The research mainly answers the following two questions:
(1) What function does mood system play in discourse?
(2) What functions and functions does the modal system play in the discourse?

3. Research Process
Anne Hathaway's B20 Summit speech totaled 795 words, and the entire speech text consisted of 47 sentences (not including the beginning and end of the pleasantries). The research process will be divided into two steps: (1) Based on the proportion of declarative sentences, interrogative sentences and imperative sentences in the text, and the frequency of the first person, second person and third person in the text, the mood system of the speech is analyzed; (2) Based on the frequency of modal verbs in speech sentences and the proportion of high-value modality, median modality and low-value modality, the modal system in this speech discourse is analyzed.

3.1 Mood System
3.1.1 Sentence
Halliday (1994) argued that mood is composed of subject and finite element, and different types of sentences are generated due to their different order: declarative sentence, interrogative sentence and imperative sentence. Anne Hathaway's speech consists of 47 sentences, of which the specific number and proportion of three tones are as follows:

Table 1. Sentence

	Declarative Sentence	Imperative Sentence	Question
Account	40	6	1
Proportion	85%	13%	2%

As can be seen from Table 1, the dominant mood type is declarative, followed by imperative, and finally interrogative.

It is generally believed that the declarative mood has two functions: to provide information and to obtain information. The former is mainly to convey information and show attitude; The latter is the speaker's hope to get feedback from the audience. In Anne Hathaway's speech, she used a large number of declarative sentences to express the fact and current situation that women in today's world, especially in the society affected by the novel

coronavirus epidemic, pay more labor than before the epidemic, but get less welfare and treatment than before the epidemic, such as:

(1) The pandemic had a devastating impact on us all, but it hit women especially hard.

(2) Millions of women left the workforce in 2020, they lost their jobs at faster rates than men and have stayed out of the job market longer.

(3) The world—not just women—needs innovative solutions more than ever.

Example 1: The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on people all over the world, but it has hit women particularly hard. Example 2 illustrates one of the dangers of the COVID-19 pandemic for women: millions of women have lost their jobs due to the pandemic. The risks of the current harmful status quo are so high that the world needs innovative solutions to the problem. In the three examples, the first and second sentences are used to convey the living situation of women in the era of COVID-19, and the third sentence is used to call for action and change, hoping to get a positive response from the audience.

Imperative sentences convey commands, requests, and suggestions to the audience, such as:

(4) Ask governments to support care services.

(5) Pay the taxes that fund them.

To address the audience, especially women, and advise them to demand government support for care services; The government is asked to pay taxes to support the appropriate care services. These two sentences convey suggestions and requirements to the people and the government respectively, giving full play to the interpersonal function of the imperative sentence.

Interrogative tone can inspire thinking, improve atmosphere and even play an interactive role. There is only one interrogative tone in the whole text, namely:

(6) What can we attribute this to?

Based on the text, women's labor force participation in 169 countries and territories is expected to remain below pre-pandemic levels in 2022, raising the question: What can we attribute this status quo to? This question questions the tragic job market of women, and then arouses the audience's resonance or thinking, and realizes the role of interpersonal function.

3.1.2 Personal system

Personal pronouns also play an important role in exerting interpersonal functions. Different personal pronouns as subjects can reflect different attitudes of speakers and produce different choices of interpersonal functions. Correct personal pronouns are helpful to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships between speakers and listeners. In Anne Hathaway's speech, there are 23 sentences based on personal pronouns (including clauses), among which the first person appears most frequently (12); This is followed by the third person with 11. There is no second subject in the whole text.

(7) I hope we all agree that this is three centuries too long.

(8) And yet, we show time and time again that we do not equally value women's participation, contribution, and leadership.

(9) As leaders of countries, they gave us some of the most effective responses to the pandemic.

(10) Even before the pandemic, women spent more than three times as many hours as men on unpaid care and domestic work. It was unfair then; it's worse now.

Example 7 presents two first-person subjects: I and we. In the sentence, the first person singular I is used to introduce the personal will that Anne Hathaway will express as the speaker, and then the first person plural we is used to put the speaker and the audience in the same position, so as to narrow the psychological distance between them, attract the trust of the audience, make the audience easier to accept the speech content, so as to have greater resonance and express the common will of the people. Achieve the incentive effect.

Example 8: With the help of the first-person plural we, we not only represent the people, but also the relevant government agencies. From the first-person perspective, we express that the oppression of women in the current society has been clearly revealed, and accuse the government of depriving women of their rights and failing to do anything in the face of the loss of women's welfare benefits. On the one hand, it exerted certain pressure and supervision on the relevant government departments; on the other hand, it aroused the resonance of the oppressed female groups,

making the speech clear in purpose, that is, it called on the society and the government to reduce the sanctions on women and restore and improve the relevant treatment of women.

In example 9, the third person plurals they refer to women who have made contributions to society, such as entrepreneurs or medical professionals. They are used here to refer to a typical person or group of people who deserve praise, such as women who have invented vaccines against viruses and underpin the health care system. For example, women leaders have developed a series of effective epidemic prevention and control measures, here express the speaker's praise for such groups.

Example 10 points out that even before the pandemic, women spent more than three times as much time on unpaid care and domestic work as men, and then repeats the third person singular "it" to refer to this situation, suggesting that the situation was unfair then and is even worse now. Compared with the first person, the third person is more objective and is mostly used to state objective facts outside the speaker. Therefore, with the help of the third person, the text helps to build the objectivity and credibility of the speech content on the one hand, and helps the speaker express his own views and ideas based on the objective facts presented in the third person on the other hand.

3.2 Modal System

There are not many modal verbs used in Anne Hathaway's speech. The frequency and proportion of modal verbs can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. Modal Verb

	must	may	could	can	would	will
Frequency	5	1	1	2	2	1
Proportion	42%	8%	8%	17%	17%	8%

It can be seen from Table 2 that modal verbs occur 12 times in the whole discourse, of which must belongs to the high-value modal verb and appears the most frequently. Secondly, both can and would occur twice, where can belongs to the low-value modal verb and would belongs to the median modal verb; Finally, may, could and will appear once each and belong to low-value modal words, low-value modal words and median modal words respectively. To sum up, high-value modal verbs are used most frequently in this

text, followed by low-value modal verbs, and finally the median modal verbs, with corresponding percentages of 42%, 33% and 25%.

(11) And yet, the reality in which we find ourselves is that at the current rate of progress, it may take another 300 years to achieve gender equality.

(12) Governments, businesses, and civil society can all play a role in this.

Example 11 uses low-value modal verbs may euphemistically express that achieving gender equality is a long and difficult road; Example 12 uses low-value modal verbs can express that the government, enterprises and society have the ability to release women's potential in the economy and society, and analyzes the functions and roles of these three entities from an objective perspective, with a softer tone.

(13) While I let that statistic sink in, I would like to acknowledge the essential importance of care.

(14) In fact, the reality is, everyone will need care at some point in their life.

E.g. 13 Using the median modal verb would indicates the speaker's obligation to introduce the basic importance of caregiving, e.g. 14 Using the median modal verb will state the objective fact that everyone needs caregiving at some point. With the help of median modal verbs, the speaker can not only express the speaker's views and attitudes through the appropriate tone, but also make the audience take part in it, so as to improve the interaction and appeal of the speech.

(15) However, we must also recognize the reality that the current way care is provided and valued is unfair and unsustainable. We must address the cultural biases that automatically label care as "women's work".

(16) Simply put: we must stop penalizing women for caring. We must stop relying on women to "make it work" and instead proactively make possible, support, and fairly compensate care work.

(17) We must stop relying on women to "make it work" and instead proactively make possible, support, and fairly compensate care work.

The first use of the high-value modal verb must in Example 15 emphasizes that current ways of providing and pricing care are unfair and unsustainable, and is repeated below to reinforce the urgent need to address cultural biases and remove the label "women's work."

Similarly, ex. 16 and Ex. 17 use must to express the strong demand of the speaker and audience that the punishment of women in the house must be stopped, that dependence on women must be stopped and they must be forced to provide unpaid care services, so that women's care work can be positively and fairly compensated.

Must is a high-value modal verb, and in general, speakers use more low-value and mid-value modal verbs than high-value modal verbs to avoid compulsion and command, such as the Cook Stanford commencement speech and Emma Watson's feminist speech. However, in the second half of this speech, five high-value modal verbs must are used together with the first-person plural we. On the one hand, the speech strongly condemns the unfair treatment of women; on the other hand, it demands the society and relevant departments to make changes to improve the current situation in a strong tone, and puts the speaker in the same position as the female oppressed groups. Project an image of solidarity with your audience while expressing your views and intentions.

4. Conclusion

Through the collection and analysis of the sentence tone, person system and modal verbs in the discourse of Anne Hathaway's B20 Summit speech, the following research results are obtained in view of the research questions:

First, declarative sentences are often used in the text, followed by imperative sentences and finally interrogative sentences, which indicates that Anne Hathaway's speech mainly states objective facts and tells the real living situation of women, and appeals to the society and government to correctly view the value of women and formulate reasonable policies as a supplement, building the objectivity and authenticity of the speech content, and clearly expressing the purpose and appeal of the speech.

Second, the first person singular is used to express the speaker's wishes and views, and the first person plural is used to clarify the same position of the speaker and the female group, so as to shape the speaker's image of closeness and gentleness, and narrow the cognitive distance with the audience. Secondly, the third person is used to refer to social inequity and irrationality and the female groups who have made contributions but have not enjoyed corresponding welfare and treatment, so as to make the speech content more realistic and objective, show rational language features, and build the credibility of the speech content and the speaker's right to speak.

Third, the text uses high-value modal verbs with the first-person plural we to express the strong common will of the speaker and the female group, and enhances the speaker's confidence and emphasizes the speaker's demands with a strong tone. Median modal verbs and low-value modal verbs are used less frequently to express the speaker's corresponding obligations in a euphemistic tone, state objective facts, and elaborate the speaker's views and viewpoints

In conclusion, Anne Hathaway's speech, through the selection of different tone systems, person systems and modal verbs, elaborated the objective facts and current situation, put forward personal views and public demands, and caused certain pressure and influence on the relevant departments of society and government, so that the interpersonal function was fully developed and realized in the speech discourse. The amount of corpus in this study is still small, and the research on interpersonal function may not be comprehensive, which needs to be supplemented and enriched by more scholars.

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