Dialogic Endorsement in Social Psychology Research Articles

◆ Lucia Abbamonte
◆ Second University of Naples
- lucia.abbamonte@unina2.it

◆ Flavia Cavaliere
University of Naples Federico II
– fcavalie@unina.it

APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK

The term 'Appraisal' is used as a cover-all term to encompass <u>all evaluative uses of language</u>, including those by which speakers/writers <u>adopt particular value positions or stances</u> and by which they negotiate these stances with either actual or potential respondents. According, Appraisal - the evaluative use of language - is seen to perform the following functions:

- 1) Attitudinal Positioning
- 2) Dialogistic Positioning
- 3) Intertextual Positioning

(White 2005)

APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK

- Attitudinal Positioning: implies a positive/negative assessment of people,places, things, state of affairs...

- Dialogistic Positioning:means that every word/utterance is refracted through a host of other (antagonistic) idioms

- Intertextual Positioning: when a writer/speaker quotes or refers to the words or thoughts of someone else

DIALOGISM

♦ Dialogue, in the narrow sense of the word, is of course only one of the forms – a very important form, to be sure – of verbal interaction. But dialogue can also be understood in a broader sense, meaning not only direct, face-to-face, vocalised verbal communication between persons, but also verbal communication of any type whatsoever. A book, i.e. a verbal performance in print, is also an element of verbal communication. …[it] inevitably orients itself with respect to previous performances in the same sphere… Thus the printed verbal performance engages, as it were, in ideological colloquy of a large scale: it responds to something, affirms something, anticipates possible responses and objections, seeks support, and so on   Voloshinov [1929] 1995

Dialogistic Positioning and Engagement

The *resources* by which speakers/writers **negotiate** the *arguability* of their utterances, within the **A**ppraisal **F**ramework, are grouped under the heading of "Engagement"

The Category of Engagement

includes:
- attribution, modality
- hearsay, concession
- polarity, evidentiality
- hedges, boosters
- metadiscursives

ENGAGEMENT

◆ It brings together "these lexico-grammatically diverse wordings [... as] resources which vary the terms of the speakers's engagement with propositions and proposals, [...]both in individual utterances and as the texts unfolds cumulatively"

(Martin & White 2003)

Aspects of Engagement

Dialogic Contraction:

- Proclaim
- Endorse
- Disclaim

vs.

## Dialogic Expansion

- Entertain
- Attribute

Attribution and Authorial Endorsement

when speakers/**writers** choose to **quote** or reference the words or thoughts of (and adopt a stance towards) **other** speakers/**writers**, it is usual to talk about "attribution", "direct and indirect speech", 'intertextuality" and, following Bakhtin,"heteroglossia"

ENDORSEMENT

- By referencing the words of another, the **writer** indicates that these words are in some way *relevant* to his/her current communicative purposes

- The most basic intertextual evaluation is one of *implied* '*relevance*'

ENDORSEMENT

Positioning
with respect
to Endorsement

Endorsement

Dis-endorsement

Non-endorsing
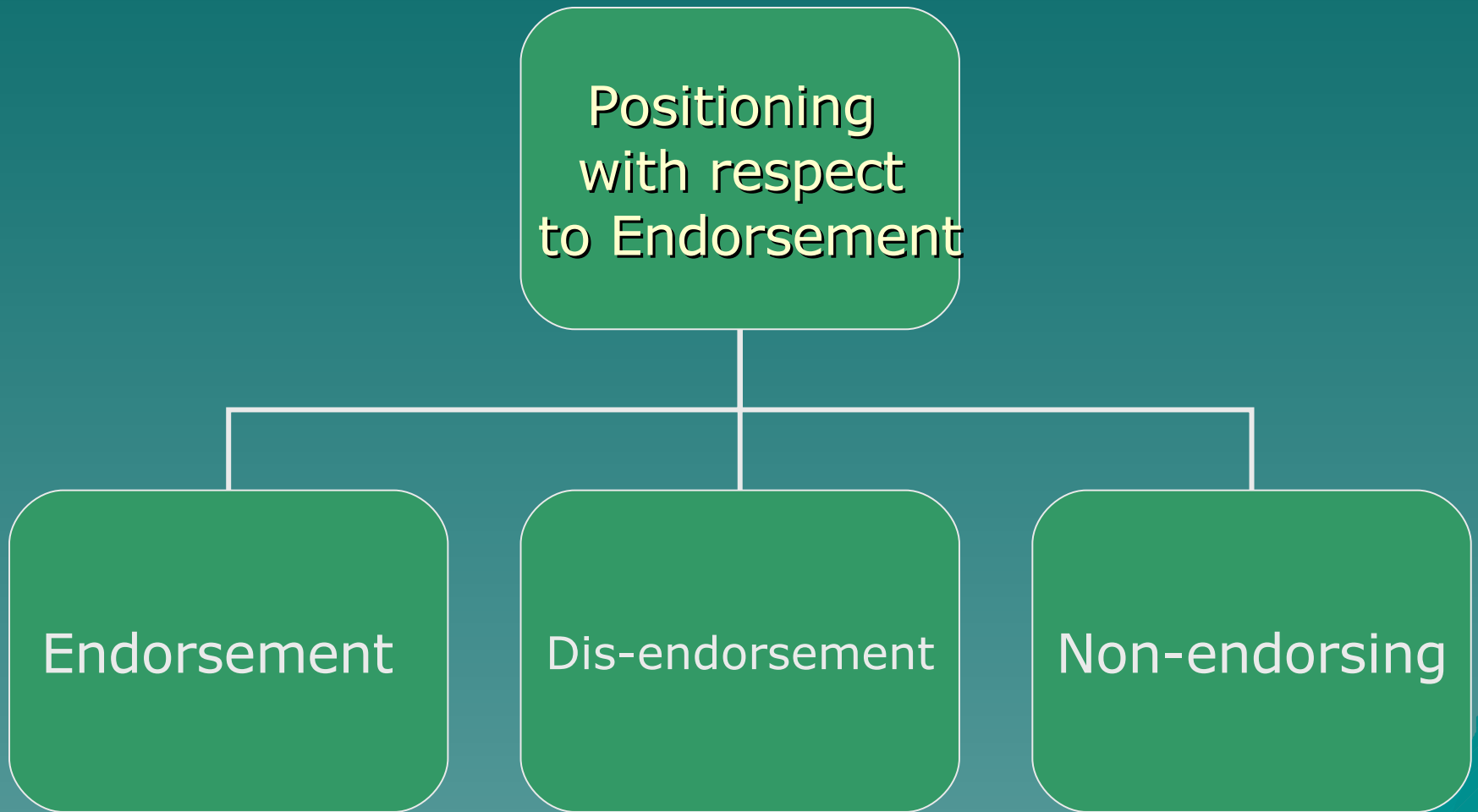
ENDORSEMENT

The endorsed utterance is

- one in which the writer either directly or indirectly indicates support for, or agreement with

- represented as true or reliable or convincing

DIS-ENDORSEMENT

Under <u>dis-endorsement</u>, writers:

- *distance* themselves from the utterance

- indicate that they take *no responsibility* for its reliability

- reject or *deny* the attributed proposition

NON-ENDORSING

The authors remain <u>neutral</u> with respect to the words/beliefs of other authors they quote

Appraisal and Media Discourse

- The **AF** (Martin, Iedema, Feez and White) mainly deals with Media Commentary and Journalistic voice

- It explores the way language is used to evaluate, to adopt stances, to construe <u>textual personas in the world of media</u>

What about dialogic Endorsement in academic discourse?

- <u>Academic discourse communities</u> follow a very <u>different</u> set of <u>rules</u> both discipline-and-genre-specific in their professional interaction, to pursue their <u>different</u> communicative <u>goals</u>

- Research Articles are the pivotal genre in academic communication

Quotation and References in RAs

are *crucial* to engage the scientific community at global level into accepting the work as belonging to a *reliable tradition of studies*

Endorsement in **R**esearch **A**rticles

- In Ras Endorsement is a significant aspect of academic writing as engagement

- In Hyland's word's" the way writers present their topics signal their allegiances, and stake their claims represent careful negotiations, and considerations of, their colleagues"

(Hyland 2006)

Endorsement in **R**esearch **A**rticles

- Research hypotheses have either to be rooted in previous studies, or take them into account

- In **RA** *Introductions* and *Conclusions,* especially, the discourse unfolds through referring to *previous specialized literature,* which needs to be the starting point of current research

Hypothesis

- Our hypothesis is that authorial endorsement towards previous authors/researchers leads not so much to dialogic contraction – as in White's **AF** - but rather to dialogic expansion which results in a polyphony of authorial voices

- The negotiation of scientific findings entails taking into account previous tradition and 'expanding' it

AIMS

◆ We will try to highlight the *discursive/dialogic* quality of the different kinds of endorsement in Social Psychology RAs

◆ We shall see how the authorial attitudes and stances

➢ are graded /vary

➢ display scaling intensity

➢ sharpen /soften the focus

METHOD

◆ *Procedure*: quantitative and qualitative computer-based textual analysis

◆ *Materials*: Selection of 20 RAs from a wider corpus chosen from EBSCO database for *Psychology and Behavioural Sciences Publications*

METHOD

♦ *Criteria for selection:*

3. Impact Factor
4. Relevance
5. Length
6. Date (2004-2006)

CORPUS

20 Research Articles chosen from the following refereed international Journals

British Journal of Social Psychology	8
European Journal of Social Psychology	5
The Journal of Social Psychology	4
Asian Journal of Social Psychology	2
South African Journal of Social Psychology	1

CORPUS

159118 running words

287 pages

20 Research Articles

A possible cline of Endorsement

STRONGER
- ✓ Reported Speech
- ✓ According to

WEAKER
- ✓ Paraphrase/summary
- ✓ e.g.
- ✓ See

MORE NEUTRAL
Quote (Author's name + year)

Data

Occurrencies of
According to

According to	Running words
……………	…
45	…………
	159118

DATA

OCCURRENCIES on 159118 running words

- ✓ **e.g.**
- ✓ **see**

Endorsing **e.g**.	136
Total **e.g**.	227
Endorsing **see**	124
Total **see**	Not considered

DATA

◆ Occurrences of quotes on 159118 running words

Simple quotes (author's name + year)	944
More endorsing quotes (signpost+Author's name +year)	5020

Data

Occurrencies of endorsement
-entailing terms:
 (on 159118
running words)

found	116
research	466
researchers	94
study	472
studies	163

Self-referential/ Endorsing words

➢ *Study* and *research* refer to the ongoing research

➢ *Studies* and *researchers* refer to previous research

Delicacy of focus

- When dealing with dialogistic expansion, differences can be subtle

- Meta-discursivity moves in a more delicate level of analysis

'Textual' context

- The full value of words/sentences may be 'appraised' only in their **TC**
- We selected a small specialized corpus to 'keep in touch' with the texts
- We extracted a sample of qualitative data to better illustrate the quality of authorial positioning

Qualitative data

Strong endorsement

As Lakoff & Johnson (1980/2003 p.269) noted recently, "Cognitive Psychology is dominated by the old idea that concepts are all literal and disembodied"

EurJrnSocPsy , 36, (2006) p. 150

The researcher is here using L& J's criciticism of old CogSci ideas to support/express his own criticism

More examples

◆ Strong endorsement

The distinctiveness account gained support from studies that revealed

EurJrnSocPsy , 36, (2006) p. 316

Discursive/explicit self-endorsement

It is very encouraging as we start on this new road that scholars in such disparate research domains are drawing such similar conclusions from their work

EurJrnSocPsy , 36, (2006) p. 164

This research has been impressive in demostrating the wide scope of unconsiously instigated influences

EurJrnSocPsy , 36, (2006) p. 148

Factual endorsement

- *The present authors will review representative literature regarding independent-interdependent self-construals in North American and Asian samples and will then introduce two hypotheses*

  JrnSocPsy 2006,146 (5) p.593

Dialogic – discursive partial dis-endorsement

- *Clearly the present study differs from earlier research ......Nonetheless the parallel is interesting*

- *We argue that different from earlier treatments of the concept of power... in this situation.....Moreover*

- *The literature does not show consistent and strong support for this hypothesis*

Dialogic – discursive partial dis-endorsement

- *Although several studies corroborated the distinctiveness account of illusory correlations, some of those results have since been challenged*

- *Whilst some progress has been made in….our knowledge remains rather one-sided*

BritJrnSocPsy (2006) 45 p. 259

Dis-endorsement

To some, however, these impressive empirical demonstrations have become an embarrassment of riches, our empirical knowledge has outstripped our ability to understand and conceptualize

EurJrnSocPsy , 36, (2006) p. 148

Dis-endorsement

◆ *Although the present results are consistent with past research, researchers should not take them without a grain of salt*

TheJrnSocPsy 2006 ,146(4), p. 479

(Positive) endorsing phrases

- ✓ *Consistent with earlier studies…*
- ✓ *Recent meta-analytic reviews…reveal*
- ✓ *More specifically the findings are consistent with….*
- ✓ *The findings can also be related to Platow's work on…*
- ✓ *This conclusion is in line with Tyler's view*

Rephrasing (weaker endorsement)

◆ *In their classic article, French and Raven (1959) understand power broadly as…*

◆ *In contrast, Moscovici (1976) distinguishes between power and influence….*

◆ *As Turner (2005) argues even the meaning of reward and sanctions…*

More neutral/distant endorsement

- ✓ *There has been recurring theoretical debate*

- ✓ *Researchers on the self have demonstrated that people*

- ✓ *Since the end of the Second World War, social psychologists have become increasingly aware*

In Concluding

Dialogig Endorsement in RAs:

- ◆ plays a pivotal role
- ◆ can be described as a cline
- ◆ needs to be contextualized and analysed at semantic level
- ◆ leads to discursive expansion, rather than contraction

A Final Quote

To cite with approbation one of Tommasello et al.'s (in press) conclusions **"there is of course still much that we do not know about all of this"**

EurJrnSocPsy , 36, (2006) p. 163