Analysing textual data from a qualitative perspective

Analysing patterns of language use in OU Tutor feedback using the Appraisal framework
Research background and aims

The Appraisal Framework

Coding

Text analysis and discussion

Findings and impact
To explore the language contained used by tutors in the high and low scoring PT3e forms to investigate whether linguistic patterns could be identified.
I am sure you expected a low mark for this TMA, which was clearly produced in a rush, and did not include any work for Q1. This was most disappointing after a promising start with TMA01, and you didn’t make me aware of any difficulties you were having, so did not have an extension.
'I hope that you won’t be too disappointed with this TMA score. As is the case for you, TU100 is often the first course that students new to the OU study and so TMA01 is intentionally short so that we can highlight any issues that arise. This allows you to address these thus giving you the opportunity to gain an improved score for TMA02.
‘the semantic resources used to negotiate emotions, judgements and valuations, alongside resources for amplifying and engaging with these evaluations’
(Martin 2000:145)
attitude

ATTITUDE-TYPE

- affect...
- judgement...
- appreciation...

EXPLICITNESS

- inscribed
- invoked

ATTITUDE-POLARITY

- positive-attitude
- negative-attitude
- ambiguous

Source: UAMCT
Attitude

Affect

‘...this was most disappointing’

Judgement

‘... your submission was let down by very poor presentation’

Appreciation

‘... this is another excellent assignment’
attitude

ATTITUDE-TYPE

affect... judgement...
apprreciation...

EXPLICITNESS

inscribed

invoked

ATTITUDE-POLARITY

positive-attitude

negative-attitude

ambiguous

Source: UAMCT
The context of TU100 and examples from PT3e forms

Affect

‘I was also pleased…’
‘…this was most disappointing’
‘…you did really well on this question’
‘Your work in Q4 seemed a little rushed’
‘…another excellent assignment
‘.. poor presentation;’

Judgement

Appreciation

17th October 2016
Source: UAMCT
Inscribed:
‘your grammar, spelling and punctuation are generally good again’

Invoked:
‘At this stage I have little advice to offer in the ways of improving your work’
Judgement in the context of TU100

Tenacity
Evaluations of effort

Paraphrasing can be quite tricky, so this was a good attempt.

I am sure you expected a low mark for this TMA, which was clearly produced in a rush.

Capacity
Evaluations of capability

Your structured report writing and web searching skills are first-rate!

Your failure to follow instructions carefully lost you quite a few marks.

17th October 2016
The target of the appraisal:

**Student**

‘... your submission was let down by very poor presentation’

**Assignment**

‘... this [the assignment] is another excellent assignment’
The Appraisal Framework
Source: White 2001 Appraisal Outline p.27
Using a scheme adapted from the UAMCT, each text was coded for:

- **TMA**
- High/low scoring
- Attitude (affect, judgement, appreciation)
- Inscribed/invoked; +ve/-ve
- Formulaic language
- Graduation
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his is your first TMA for TU100 and it is designed to get you into the swing of producing assignments. This TMA and the one that follows are 'half' TMAs and you should bare that in mind when planning your time on the full scale TMAs that follow.

Question 1. is your opportunity to demonstrate that you have understood the importance of take notes and can implement the skill and tools to produce your own notes. - You have a resonable grasp of what needs to be done and how to do it, but your answr was little short on detail. (15/20)

Question 2 - This question is in two parts, the first is a kind of 'sanity check' on the Sense and the sense board that also test your ability to read and understand technical text. The second part of the question (b) measures your ability to present
Hope this finds you well!

Thanks very much for this, which was a stunning assignment! I was very impressed by the general all-round excellence of your answers, congratulations.

You can find some minor feedback on your answers in the solution document. I hope it’s all useful and makes sense.

If you have any questions I’d be delighted to help, just email or ring anytime.
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You have elected to submit just half a TMA this time, and although I am aware that you have had connection problems of late, I am not really sure why you didn’t attempt either Q3 or Q4. Inevitably, your low mark reflects this lack of content. To be honest, it also reflects a lack of attention to detail. Your presentation of maths work does not meet the standards provided in the module (or in tutorial materials); this is something you will obviously need to work on if you are to take a maths degree as communicating your calculation clearly is vital in any number work. Your written work covers the correct topic, and questions, but it is not written in the style required, and as a result it fails to provide a balanced argument.
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Lower scoring students:

receive few positive comments on their PT3e forms than higher scoring students

receive comments that suggest their ALs have a negative perception of their effort in their TMAs

Positive feedback for lower scoring students were ‘downscaled’ by resources of graduation

Higher scoring students:

Higher scoring students’ already positive feedback was made more positive through resources of graduation

More positive formulaic language was found in the higher scoring student PTe3 feedback forms.
‘I do think that there are issues of phrasing which could potentially have a significant impact (either negative or positive) on student motivation and self-efficacy. As an example, feedback ....phrased as the student having a “weakness” in a particular area is likely to be received by the student as a negative judgement on their ability. Similarly, sentences starting with “You have failed again to follow my instructions...” are unlikely to engender feelings of determination..... I feel that this issue needs to be looked at in more depth.’
Impact

‘...I had raised an issue in relation to the phrasing of tutor feedback... This issue has been addressed comprehensively and systematically...The general impression was that there has been an improvement in quality of feedback, and I would agree, based on the samples of work that I examined.'
Thank you