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2015

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Systemic Functional Linguistics has been one of the main theoretical approaches within the field of Critical Discourse Analysis since its inception (Hart, 2014). Traditionally, SFL-based CDA has tended to focus on investigating the ideological implications for *ideational* patterns in discourse, e.g. transitivity, nominalization and passivization, and the representation of social actors (e.g. Fairclough, 1992, 2003; Fowler 1991, 1996; Li, 2010; van Dijk 1991; van Leeuwen, 1996; Reisigl and Wodak 2001). Research on the *interpersonal* function of language in this field has tended to be limited to the domain of modality (e.g. Fairclough 1989, 1992; Fowler 1991). However, increasing attention has recently been devoted to the analysis of other aspects of this metafunction. Drawing on Martin and White's (2005) APPRAISAL framework, several scholars have shown how interpersonal resources can be strategically deployed in discourse to shape interpersonal (power) relations and identities in a variety of communicative contexts (e.g. Bednarek and Caple, 2010; Camiciottoli, 2013; Koller 2011; Miller 2004, 2014; Miller and Johnson, 2009; van Dijk 2011; White 2006).

The goal of this paper is to demonstrate the usefulness of the APPRAISAL framework as a tool for critically investigating *corporate public discourse*, i.e. the multifarious texts produced by companies to communicate to their various external audiences. While there is a growing body of CDA research in this area (e.g. Koller 2010, 2011b; Merkl-Davies and Koller 2012; Laine, 2005, 2010; Lischinsky, 2011; Livesey, 2002), most of it is based on either a cognitive linguistics or social constructionist approach, and thus lies outside the realm of SFL (but see Camiciottoli, 2013). In addition, interpersonal aspects of corporate public discourse are still largely under-researched. In this paper, I aim to show that APPRAISAL can be a very effective tool to deconstruct corporate messages and shed new light on interpersonal processes that occupy a central position in the CDA research agenda, namely *legitimation* and *trust*.

The paper mainly draws on two case studies. The first is a comparative analysis of APPRAISAL in the corporate social responsibility reports published by two large multinational companies. The results highlight significant differences in the type of APPRAISAL resources and the legitimation strategies deployed by the two companies. The second case-study focuses on BP's discursive response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill of 2010, and analyzes the role of evaluative language in the company's attempt to repair public trust after the accident. The analysis shows that AFFECT, self-assessments and ENGAGEMENT markers are key interpersonal resources in the company's trust-repair discourse.

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