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Analysis of Experiential Function in Kamala Harris' Victory Speech 2020

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to analyze the kinds of process of experiential function are used in Kamala Harris' Victory Speech 2020, to find the experiential process that has been used the most, and to explain the reason of process of experiential function used in Kamala Harris' Victory Speech 2020. This research used descriptive qualitative for analyzing data. The data was taken from Kamala Harris' Victory Speech 2020 script. There were 22 datas found in Kamala Harris' Victory Speech 2020. The data analysis found out the findings indicating that there were 6 types of process used in Kamala Harris' Victory Speech 2020, they were (1) Material Process, (2) Mental Process, (3) Relational Process, (4) Behavioural Process, (5) Verbal Process, and (6) Existential Process. It found that the process that has been used the most is Mental Process.

Keywords: discouse analysis experiential function; Kamala Harris's victory speech

1. Introduction

Language used by people to communicate. Kridalaksana (1985:12) states that language is a system used by people to communicate and produce meaning. Without language, we would not understand what other people want to express. Language help us to express what we feel with words and meaning. What someone says is not necessarily the same as what they want to express.

Language allows every human being to tell their experiences, messages, and thoughts in a series of words. The way each person conveys their message is different. Experiences, messages, and thoughts can be conveyed on various occasions, such as telling stories, discussing, and even when giving speeches. One of the speeches that attracted attention was the speech of the Vice President of the United States, Kamala Harris when she won the 2020 Presidential and Vice Presidential election.

Kamala Harris is the first female vice president elected in the United States. Her speech inspired the audience, especially women, to uphold their rights and make changes. The choice of words in the speech inspired the listeners and made them believe that there would be changes when Joe Biden, who was elected President, led.

The choice of these words is inseparable from a function called Experiential Function. Experiential function represents the experience of a clause. Experiential function is part of Systemic Functional Linguistics (LFS) introduced by M.A.K Halliday. LFS is a theory that aims to understand how a text forms meaning in a context (Halliday, 2013).

Experiential function can be seen from various texts such as speech texts, magazines, stories, and so on. Each text has a different experiential function depending on the verb used. Experiential function has six types of processes, namely material process, mental process, relational process, behavioural process, verbal process, and existential process.

These processes are grouped based on the type of verb. Material process refers to verbs that have semantic criteria for doing something physically. Mental process refers to things that are based on someone's mind. Relational process refers to things that are inside and outside a person. Behavioural process refers to a person's psychology, verbal process regarding the information conveyed, and existential process refers to a person's existence. Each of these processes also has different participants.

There are many studies that raise the topic of experiential function in speech texts. Sari (2019) studied the speech texts of presidential candidates in her thesis entitled *Experiential Function Analysis on Political Speech of Indonesian Presidential Candidate 2019*. Lubis (2018) studied President Joko Widodo's speech in a thesis entitled *Experiential Function in Joko Widodo's Speech at APEC CEO Summit in Beijing China 2014*. Sari (2020) studied the Miss Universe speech in her thesis entitled *Discourse Analysis of the Experiential Function in the Miss Universe's Speeches 2019*.

Another study related to the analysis of experiential function in speech texts is Rambe (2017) entitled *Experiential Function in Donald Trump's Speech about Radical Islamic Terrorism*. Liping (2014) studied the text of a speech entitled *Experiential Metafunctional Analysis of Winston S. Churchill's Speech on Hitler's Invasion of the U.S.S.R.* Another study was also conducted by Jamaludin (2016) entitled *The Analysis of Experiential Function in Public Speeches of Bill and Melinda Gates*. This study aims to describe the experiential process contained in Kamala Harris' victory speech and find the most widely used process in the speech. The benefits of this study are to find out the most frequently used experiential function by Kamala Harris and what kind of process makes people believe in others will be found in this study.

2. Methods

This study uses a qualitative method where research refers to data collection, analysis, interpretation, and writing of research results (Creswell, 2014). The researcher obtained Kamala Harris' speech from www.washingtonpost.com and then analysed it using a qualitative descriptive method. Mukhtar (2013: 10) said that the qualitative descriptive research method is a method used by researchers to find knowledge or theories about research at a certain time.

Researchers use literature in data collection. Literature techniques are data collection techniques by reviewing books, literature, notes, and various reports related to the problem to be solved (Nazir: 1988). Researchers divide each sentence and then analyse the process that occurs in each sentence.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. Material Process

In the material process, the first participant is called the actor and the second participant is called the goal. The actor is the one who carries out an activity and the goal is the objective. We can see the material process in tables (1), (2), and (3). If we observe carefully, the three sentences in the table above all have goals that move the listener's heart.

Table 1. Material Process

Congressman John Lewis	before his passing	wrote	Democracy is not a state. It is an act
Actor	Circumstance	Process: Material	Goal

Table 2. Material Process

It	Takes	Sacrifice
Actor	Process: Material	Goal

Table 3. Material Process

American People	Who make up	Our beautiful country
Actor	Process: Material	Goal

In table (1), the goal in the form of democracy is something that the American people have longed for since long ago. In table (2), the goal in the form of sacrifice means the sacrifices that have been made by many Americans who want change. The goal in table (3) is their desire for a beautiful country. From the three data above, we can see that Kamala Harris chooses words that can influence her audience and the things she feels while in America.

3.2. Mental Process

There are ten mental processes used in Kamala Harris's speech. In the mental process, the first participant is called the senser and the second participant is called the phenomenon. Mental processes are related to feelings. In the data above, Kamala Harris expresses her feelings with words that make the audience feel the same way as her.

In addition to using the word "I" as a senser, Kamala Harris also uses the words "you", "she", and "we". The use of these words expresses that she is not only thinking about her feelings but also the feelings of others. This makes the listeners of her speech believe that they have chosen the right person. A leader who not only thinks about himself but also his people.

Table 4. Mental Process

I	Know	Times have been challenging
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon

Table 5. Mental Process

You	Delivered	A clear message
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon

Table 6. Mental Process

You	Chose	Joe Biden	as the next president of the United States of America
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon	Circumstance

Table 7. Mental Process

I really	Got to know	Him	as the father who loved Beau
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon	Circumstance

Table 8. Mental Process

I	Love	You all	more than I can ever express
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon	Circumstance

Table 9. Mental Process

She maybe	Didn't quite imagine	This moment
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon

Table 10. Mental Process

She	Believed	So deeply in an America	where a moment like this is possible
Senser	Process: Mental	Circumstance	Phenomenon

Table 11. Mental Process

I	Am thinking	About her
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon

Table 12. Mental Process

I	Reflect	On their struggle
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon

Table 13. Mental Process

We	Have elected	A president	who represents the best in us
Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon	Circumstance

3.3. Relational Process

There are three types of relational processes, namely identification, attribution, and possession. All three have different functions and participants. In identification, the first participant is called a token and the second participant is called a value. For attribution, the first participant is the carrier and the second participant is the attribute. While in possession, the first participant is the possessor and the second participant is possessed.

From Kamala Harris's speech text, only two types of relational processes were found, namely attribution and possession. From the five data above, there are four attributions and one possession. Tables (14), (15), (16), and (17) are attributions and table (! 8) is possession.

In the attribution data, Kamala Harris focuses on democracy as a carrier. Where democracy has been lost in America. Kamala Harris's choice of words in describing democracy makes the audience excited about the democracy that has been lost in their

country. From the data above, it can be seen that Kamala Harris understands what the American people have not had so far, namely democracy.

Table 14. Relational Process

Democracy	Is not	A state
Carrier	Process: Relational	Attribute

Table 15. Relational Process

It	Is	An act
Carrier	Process: Relational	Attribute

Table 16. Relational Process

It	Is only	As strong as our willingness
Carrier	Process: Relational	Attribute

Table 17. Relational Process

Our democracy	Was	On the ballot	In this election
Carrier	Process: Relational	Attribute	Circumstance

Table 18. Relational Process

We the people	Have	The power	to build a better future
Possessor	Process: Relational	Possessed	Circumstance

In possession, Kamala Harris declares that everyone has the power to build a better future. This shows that Kamala Harris has the same determination as the American people. They can feel a connection with Kamala Harris because they have the same goals for America.

3.4. Behavioural Process

Table 19. Behavioral Process

I	Stand	On their shoulders
Behaver	Process: Behavioural	Circumstance

Only one behavioural process was found in Kamala Harris' speech text. In the behavioral process, there is only one participant, namely the behavior. A behavior is someone who does something without wearing other people. In the data above, Kamala Harris expressed her pride in being able to stand on the shoulders of great women who have been fighting for change in America.

3.5. Verbal Process

Table 20. Verbal Process

You	Marched and organized	for equality and justice, for our lives, and for our planet
Sayer	Process: Verbal	Verbiage

In verbal process, the first participant is called sayer and the second participant is called verbiage. Only one data is found in Kamala Harris' speech text. Kamala Harris uses the word "You" as a sayer which means she knows the desires and opinions of her people. She has heard their complaints all this time. This makes the American people believe that Kamala Harris will hear their voices when she leads America later.

3.6. Existential Process

There is only one participant in the existential process and not the first participant. In this process, there is only a second participant called existent. Two data were found in Kamala Harris' speech. Kamala Harris chose the words "joy" and "she" as existent. The word joy was chosen to show that there is happiness amidst the twists and turns they face to get democracy.

The word "she" is used to tell about her mother who came to America when she was 19 years old. She said that her mother did not imagine that she could become the Vice President of America as she is now. This makes everyone proud and believe that things that are considered impossible can happen.

Table 21. Existential Process

There is	Joy	In it
Process: Existential	Existent	Circumstance

Table 22. Existential Process

She	Came here	from India at the age of 19
Existent	Process: Existential	Circumstance

4. Conclusion

Kamala Harris' victory speech received much praise from all circles because it was so flattering and represented the spirit of the American people for democracy. The text of this speech contains many experiential functions. The following are the results of the analysis obtained from Kamala Harris' victory speech:

1. Overall, there are 22 experiential function data in Kamala Harris' victory speech. The data are divided into material processes, mental processes, relational processes, behavioral processes, verbal processes, and existential processes.
2. The most frequently used process is the mental process. This is because Kamala Harris understands the feelings of her people and can feel what her people feel too.
3. From the overall analysis results, Kamala Harris uses many words that inspire her listeners and make them agree with her. Kamala Harris said that she knows what the people have wanted and wants to uphold the same things as her people too. She shows that she will be a good leader and listen to the voices of her people.

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