A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Educational Advertisement for Two Leading Universities Inside and Outside China: An Appraisal Theory Perspective

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Abstract

This study is focusing on the persuasion process of two universities educational advertisements for multimodal appraisal resources. There are 3418 words for verbal corpus and 31 minutes for non-verbal corpus in total. The mixed methods were adopted to four objectives. 1) To identify the different verbal resources used in A and B university educational advertisement to construct meaning. 2) To identify the different non-verbal resources used in A and B university educational advertisements to construct meaning.3) To explore how persuasion is realized in A and B university educational advertisements. 4) To explore differences between A and B university educational advertisements' realization of persuasive devices.

The findings indicated that ATTITUDE resources were most effective way to affects the audience with 41.8% and 73.6% for verbal and non-verbal. Different appraisal elements affected the listener or audience's opinions by individual comments, questions, quotes, eye contact, body position or social distance. B university out of China involved many universities' environment, construction or students' life and learning sense had more emotional texts or images to persuade the audience compared A university.

Keywords: Appraisal Resources, Persuasion, Multimodal Discourse, Educational Advertisement

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1. Introduction

With the great development of network media and electronic technology, educational advertisement (EA) shows all sorts of types and characteristics of the university and considers one of the most effective means to promote the university which combines images, music, lexical, etc., as typical multimodal discourses that the information can be expressed in various ways. The meaning is communicated through images as well as language usages (Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress & Leeuwen, 1996; Kress, 2010). This *visualization* is considered visual communication and provides a better understanding of language (Hart, 2016). As a cultural product, EA combines all aspects of the colleges and universities which is closely related to image shaping, cultural building, publicity improving and an excellent way to attract students. Critical discourse analysis CDA) as a systematic approach that connects language, power and ideology which are hidden from people (Fairclough, 1989). CDA is a good way to research how power relations were exercised and negotiated through language and semiotic resources and brings social science and linguistics together that will be able to set up a dialogue between producer and viewer (Chouliarak & Fairclough, 1999, p.6).

The purpose of EA is to persuade viewers to accept their ideas and come to that university. Thus, EA content analysis is focusing on how the university expresses its attitude, evaluations, feelings, judgments and impresses the audience in a short period. Appraisal theory provides a theoretical framework to understand implied meanings using the three main systems attitude, engagement, and graduation (Foley, 2011; Martin &White, 2005). university tends to force or focus on the texts. This research analyzes how those semiotic elements are used to express attitudes, evaluations, feelings, judgments of others and appreciation of entities, and finally aligns viewers with 'community of feeling'. Then it is easy to find how EA producer appropriately persuades the audience to attend this university and the features of those successful EA.

A lot of EA research has been done and made a great contribution in various fields, while few research combined visual and written text to dig out deeper ideology. This study wants to fill in this gap. Film research mainly studied MCDA from a communication and social history

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perspective, such as how image construction is applied to catch the viewer's eyes, while verbal content has been ignored. Wei (2014) analyzed EA from a cross-cultural context view, Newell (2017) studied film content based on public healthy media. Also, according to the Fifth International Conference on Multimodality (2010) that only 10 per cent of multimodality research works were published within the CDA theoretical framework. Most of them mentioned multimodality, while few mentioned critical aim, ideology, or abstract meaning.

Thus, this study analogizes the popular EA (verbal and non-verbal) to identify how various modes are achieved in the process of meaning construction, how elements are creatively combined to attract the viewer's attention and achieve impressive artistic effects, and finally how resources worked together to persuade viewers coming to that university. The following questions will be investigated:

1. What are the different verbal resources used in A and B university educational advertisements to construct meaning?

2. What are the different non-verbal resources used in A and B university educational advertisements to construct meaning?

3. How persuasion is realized in A and B university educational advertisement?

4. What are the differences between A and B university educational advertisements' realization of persuasive devices?

The research objectives are shown below:

1. To identify the different verbal resources used in A and B university educational advertisement to construct meaning.

2. To identify the different non-verbal resources used in A and B university educational advertisement to construct meaning.

3. To explore how persuasion is realized in A and B university educational advertisement.

4. To explore differences between A and B university educational advertisements' realization of persuasive devices.

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As far as this research is concerned, successful and appropriate EA not only prompt schools' development, enhance competitiveness, or improve the international status, but also good for other universities. After analyzing and comparing top universities A and B University, the inspiration for EA development can be given to other universities.

Furthermore, multimodal literacy (Faigley & Kress, 2001) challenges dominant language and brought images, animated movements, gestures, gaze, etc. into classroom interaction. Multimodal resource (videos, films, PPT, graphic, comic, poster, mole) has been added for better learning. Thus, how teachers appropriately apply those different modes to express their ideas and interact with students, and how students identify teachers' ideology with a critical and judged mind through semiotic resources as a lifelong learner are crucially important.

2. Literature Review

Halliday and Hasan (1985) raised that all language should be shaped and organized by three functions based on SFL, calls metafunctions. Three metafunctions include ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning, and textual meaning. In other words, language can be used to express consciousness or build experience (the ideational meaning), interact with others (the interpersonal meaning), and combine the above two meanings into a coherent text (the textual meaning) (Joyce & Feez, 2012; Rose & Martin, 2012; Rowsell, 2013). SFL provides the foundation for discourse analysis to identify how language works in A and B university educational advertisement. This research mainly focused on interpersonal meaning to check how producer expresses their attitudes and persuade the viewer to accept their ideas in the interaction process.

Under the theoretical background of SFL, CDA has developed a language model with a socio-cultural context. Different from discourse analysis, CDA fully considers the social structure and meaning above the sentence (Kress & Hodge, 1979). As Fairclough's book *Language and Power* published in 1989, CDA got more systematic development that combines language with socio-cultural. In the book (p.46) he insisted power in the language is how producer, speaker, or author with a powerful standpoint to persuade others to accept their ideas.

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Educational advertisement discourse expresses its ideology includes the university's content, cultural values, rules, achievements, etc. Power is included in the ideology that is related to how a university places its positions to persuade others to accept their ideas and come to the university.

Kress & Hodge (1993) introduced how ideological meaning can be realized in language. After that in 1988, they added other modes and embedded them in CDA. It provided a theoretical framework for multimodal discourse analysis. In 2001, Kress and Leeuwen's studied critical discourse and social semiotic communities to research the speaker's motivation. Such items are key to MCDA that how different semiotics resources are adopted to transform abstraction meaning (social relations, attitudes, general ideas). MCDA is an approach filling the non-verbal analysis gap that meaning be concealed by text, and the center is to critically check how verbal and non-verbal language be adopted and interacted to construe meaning (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p9).

An appraisal is raised from a complementary perspective to identify peoples' ideology to complete interpersonal meaning based on SFL's three metafunctions (Martin, 2000). Martin and Rose (2003) mentioned that appraisal/evaluation system was introduced in discourse analysis, and how those social interactions enacted in the text to express all kinds of attitudes. Based on that, Martin and White (2005) added that appraisal is related to how powerful writers/ speakers persuade non-powerful readers/listeners to accept their ideas. It divides into attitude, engagement, and graduation.

Attitude resources are the core of appraisal theory and refer to the feeling constructed by a kind of mental process or behavior. Martin and White (2005) gave a detailed framework of attitude resources and raised three sub-systems: affect, judgement, and appreciation. Non-verbal attitude resources adopt Kress and Leeuwen's (1996) interactive visual grammar to eye-contact, social-distance, and perspective. Engagement refers to how speakers/writers express their stance or positions under a dialogic perspective (Martin & White, 2005). Verbal engagement resources are conveyed in two ways, producers' minds (monogloss) and other voices (heterogloss) to

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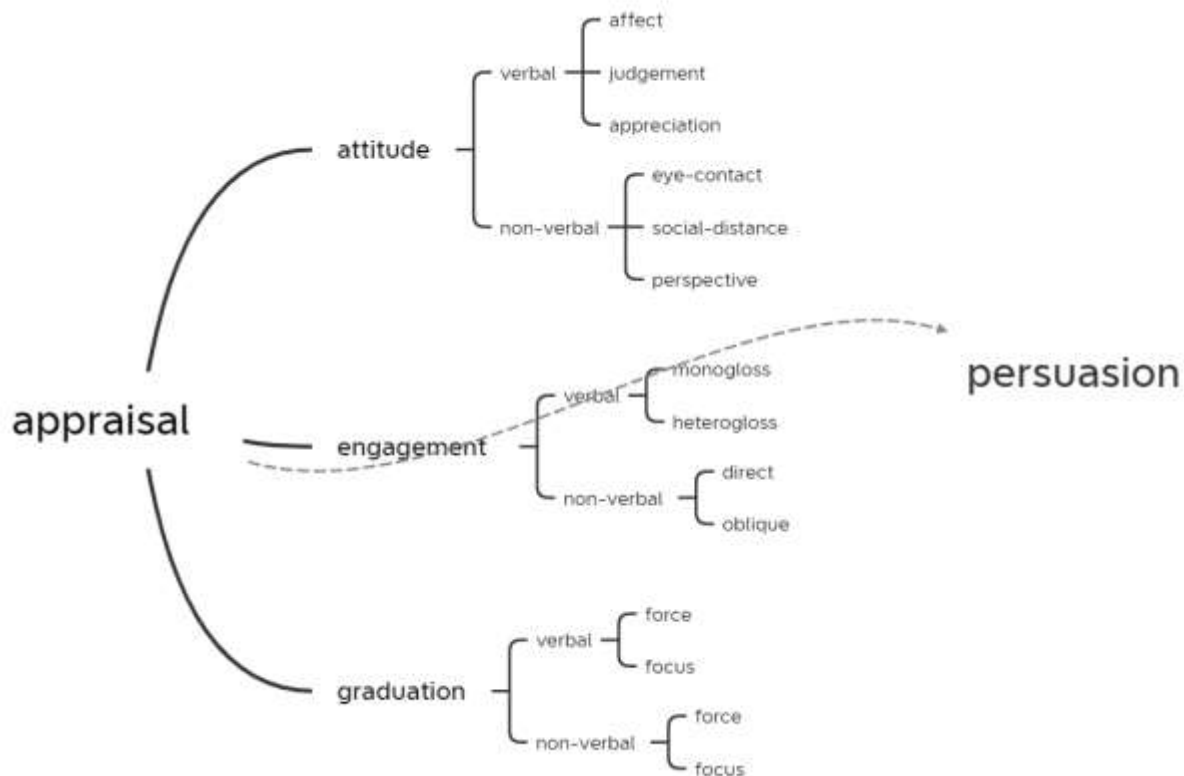
construct text meaning. Non-verbal engagement resources are divided to direct engagement and oblique engagement (Kress and Leeuwen, 1996; Martin and White, 2005). Graduation refers to gradability of the meaning and involves attitude resources and engagement resources. Martin and White (2005) divided it into two parts force and focus. Non-verbal was achieved by softening and sharpening.

Three modes of persuasion theory ethos, pathos, and logos raised by Larson (2012) which made big significance for persuasion development. It helped to identify how those appraisal resources are distributed in three sub-systems and stated to express producer's stances and to achieve persuasion purposes.

The following figure display the conceptual framework applied to the study of educational advertisement persuasion process under appraisal theory.

Figure 1-1

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The conceptual framework

The concept framework is used to guide the research process for answering research objectives and fulfilling study goals.

3. Methodology

Mixed-method is adopted. Quantitative is used to check written and visual text statistic distribution with aid of annotation instruments ELAN. Qualitative is applied to discourse analysis. The complex multimodal meaning is observed in the dataset. The analysis draws on both qualitative discourse analysis and corpus-based analysis.

3.1 Population

EA developed from publicity film that involves various propaganda to attract audience unconsciously. Based on that, EA is defined as a kind of symbolized visual text to

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promote universities' overall image and value by montage and other image production

techniques usage (Zhang & Lu, 2015). It reflects different countries' teaching philosophies,

cultural, campus atmosphere, which provides new perspective for universities' domestic and

overseas development.

3.2 Sample

Two top A and B universities' educational advertisement have been involved.

Educational advertisement of A comes A university's official website YouTube and lasts14

minutes and 23 seconds. It was issued in June 2014. B comes from University's official website

YouTube and lasts 16 minutes and 36 seconds. It supported by College Admissions and

Financial Aid and published on 21st, October 2013. The videos are divided into two parts written

and visual text to analysis. Written text about 3418 words, and visual text with 31 minutes.

3.3 Research Instrument

Text corpus will be analyzed in checklist based on the conceptual framework. Appraisal

layers (attitude, graduation, engagement, and sub-systems) are easily classified into the checklist.

ELAN 6.0 are used to annotate video corpus as quantitative instruments; it's easily added and

removed appraisal layers. In annotation process, the video's time can be selected freely from

beginning to the end. Those dates are explained according to the research objectives.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings and analysis of research question 1

The findings of the RQ1would be answered by presenting the overall distribution of

verbal appraisal resources found in A and B university educational advertisements. As table 4.1

showed, ATTITUDE sub-system took dominate part of 44.7% and 41.8%．Both two educational

advertisements were more likely to use emotional elements or create an evaluation to represented

targets to evoke audience' emotions. ENGAGEMENT took second proposition provided logical

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comments which easily convince audience or inserted students' family background or working experience by *bare assertion* (Martin & White, 2005) to increase the EA's reliability and struck a responsive chord in the hearts of the audiences. GRADUATION had taken the smallest part, taking 15.2 and 17.3% separately. Excepted enhance emotions, quantification in GRADUATION expressed by graduation to declare time and space.

Table 4.1

Distribution of Verbal Appraisal Resources in A and B university

System	Sub-system	A UNIVERSITY		B UNIVERSITY	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Appraisal	Attitude	115	44.7%	198	41.8%
	Engagement	105	40.1%	194	40.9%
	Graduation	39	15.2%	82	17.3%
Total		257	100%	474	100%

The findings and analysis of research question 2

The findings of the RQ2 would be answered by presenting the overall distribution of non-verbal appraisal resources found in A and B university educational advertisements. A total number of 1309 non-verbal appraisal resources out of two universities' educational advertisements 31 minutes in all. Similar with verbal resources, attitude resources took the biggest proposition of 74.4% and 73.6%. The non-verbal appraisal resources mainly expressed by ATTITUDE resources social distance, horizontal angle, vertical angle, frontal or oblique angle and eye-contact. It was tripe of ENGAGEMENT and GRADUATION. ENGAGEMENT was varied to directly gaze at viewer, away from viewer or oblique to one side showing

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represented participants' different emotions with 16.3% and 18.6%. GRADUATION was used to strengthen, or weak emotion took smallest with 9.3% and 7.8%.

Table 4.2

Distribution of Non-Verbal Appraisal Resources in A and B

System	Sub-system	A UNIVERSITY		B UNIVERSITY	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	Attitude	448	74.4%	520	73.6%
Appraisal	Engagement	98	16.3%	131	18.6%
	Graduation	56	9.3%	55	7.8%
Total		603	100%	706	100%

The findings and analysis of research question 3

Based on question 1 and question 2, it's "easily find" shows how those resources were used to persuade the audience.

4.1 Different Verbal Resources in A and B University

For attitude resources, it divided affect, judgement, and appreciation. Affect worked on speaker's emotional assessments. Judgement mapped on speaker's attitudes or particular behaviors. The comments on universities were mainly expressed through appreciation. In A university, the narrator frustrated himself with words *give up, stupid,* while at the end of the video, he achieved his dream with *no longer worried.* The audience is easily persuaded for such contrast. In B university, affect was commonly used to express university's outstanding, effective staff and harmonious learning environment presenting narrator's satisfaction to the university. Judgement mainly referred to how capable and dependable the quality you can get in the university. It meets audience's potential needs like *crack the code, cross the disciplines,*

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create the waves. B university has more appreciation resources than A. That's more narrators had been invited in B, and they preferred to describe university's valuation highlighting status. It built good image of the university to audience.

Table 4.3

Distribution of Verbal Attitude Resources in A and B

System	Sub-system	A UNIVERSITY		B UNIVERSITY	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	Affect	33	28.7%	49	24.7%
Attitude	Judgment	49	42.6%	71	35.9%
	Appreciation	33	28.7%	78	39.4%
Total		115	100%	198	100%

For engagement resources, A university had a preference for Heterogloss, and it took more than half with 78.6% with contractive engagement resources to persuade audience through close the conversation. *Deny+ counter* was commonly used to build solidarity with reader and invite them to think logically. Monogloss have barely asserted propositions and it used to raise the background or assertion living no space for dialogue. The monogloss is close to heterogloss for B university. Since various students with different background, they showed their life in or out of B university by many ways, it not only increased the number of monogloss, but also raise narrative's subjective opinions to increase reliability. It also more opened dialogues to other alternative views that helped to increase university's credibility and built image of inclusiveness.

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Table 4.4

Distribution of Verbal Engagement Resources in A and B

System	Sub-system	A UNIVERSITY		B UNIVERSITY	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Engagement	Monogloss	22	21.4%	96	49.5%
	Heterogloss	81	78.6%	98	50.5%
Total		103	100%	194	100%

For graduation resources, force of A university took all over the graduation resources by quantification and intensification to intensify emotions and stances. Such strong emotions were easier to strike a chord. Once the emotional connection is formed, audience is more likely persuaded. In B university, there was uneven distribution in force and focus. Compared with focus, force more turned up emotional changes.

Table 4.5

Distribution of Verbal Graduation Resources in A and B

System	Sub-system	A UNIVERSITY		B UNIVERSITY	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Graduation	Force	39	100%	78	95.1%
	Focus	0	0%	4	4.9%
Total		39	100%	82	100%

4.2 Different Non-verbal Resources in A and B University

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Table 4.6

Distribution of Non-verbal Attitude Resources in A UNIVERSITY

System	Sub-system	A UNIVERSITY		B UNIVERSITY	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	Social distance	136	30.0%	39	21.5%
Attitude	Perspective	240	53.0%	96	53.0%
	Eye-contact	77	17.0%	46	25.5%
Total		453	100%	181	100%

In attitude resources, perspective with number of 240 occupied the biggest share, and more than half of the proposition. The A university producer made a preference to affects audience's emotions through stressing the special characteristics of university. The usage of frontal and eye level angle used to give audience sense of belonging and enhance the equal relationship with them. Different narrators in B university gave their comments for the university through medium shot presenting a sense of welcome and comfortable. Long shot showing university's hardware included study environments, living place and equipment to attracts audience from dormitory to study area. Close short also used to show university's attractive environment, like traditional teatime seems participants are attending tea time and visiting fine decorations. Eye-contact took the smallest part in attitude resources, it appeared with close or medium shot and frontal angle to offer information or demand something corresponded with verbal expression.

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Table 4.7

Distribution of Non-verbal Engagement Resources in A UNIVERSITY

System	Sub-system	A UNIVERSITY		B UNIVERSITY	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Engagement	Direct	65	66.3%	104	79.4%
	Oblique	33	33.7%	27	20.6%
Total		98	100%	131	100%

Compared give audience feeling of objectivity, A university producer preferred to directly involve audience into the picture and engrave the same emotional evaluation. More than 20 narrators had been involved to share their feelings or opinions to B university by direct angle to evoke audience's emotions.

Table 4.8

Distribution of Non-verbal Graduation Resources in A UNIVERSITY

System	Sub-system	A UNIVERSITY		B UNIVERSITY	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Graduation	Sharpen	34	60.7%	31	56.4%
	Soften	22	39.3%	24	43.6%
Total		56	100%	55	100%

To make audience clearly understand and feel cumbersome, main points were orderly and organized through sharpen angle for A and B university.

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The findings and analysis of research question 4

For verbal, both evaluation objects included university, faculty, student, curriculum, and project. But A university emphasized dream achieving, while B university referred to community. A university more applied explicit appreciation resources to university' hardware facility and environment like *prestigious university, countless class*. B university did not focus much attention on appreciation equipment, but repeated use of *explore* to evaluate university like with million things to explore, explore everything. Different amount of narrator cause difference engagement resources among A and B university. In graduation resources, A university mostly used to evaluate campus, but B university adopted graduation to student's capacity and resilience like *always challenge oneself, word really hard*.

In non-verbal attitude resources, perspective took biggest proposition. A more likely used low angle to show buildings, while B university preferred eye-level angle to show living image. In A university, close shot mainly used in represented participants' interaction process, while B university involved a bed in the dormitory and small cakes on the table such special things giving a sense of involvement. A has less eye-contact than B university, students were listening to teacher in campus and no eye-contact shown teacher's authority and distance, while B university in teacher and student communication image, social and equal angle was adopted to show equal relationship among them. In both A and B, graduation mostly used to show face expression or as they were involved into image giving sense of welcome.

5. Discussion of the Overall Findings

This study conducted multimodal discourse analysis based on Martin and White (2006)'s appraisal theory to explore how appraisal resources are adopted in educational advertisement to persuade audience.

Firstly, analysis of appraisal lexical resources on A and B university educational advertisement was carried out.

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-       Same with Gao's (2019) research result that attitude took the biggest share, it usually expressed by words and phrases. Positive was more than negative emotions. Explicit was more than implicit emotions. Thus, attitude resources were frequently adopted to directly express positive emotions and evaluations on university or related behavior. Negative was usually used to lead to positive resources, it confirmed Martin & White's (2005) idea. Appreciation was also welcomed to introduce special or attractive university's characters. Graduation usually cooperated with attitude or appreciation to enhance the emotion, so the percentage was quite low.

-       Words, phrases, and sentences were found in the corpus to express engagement resources. As Qiu (2019) emphasized monogloss was seldom used in educational advertisement, since it clarified background and not good at realizing persuasion purposes, while heterogloss allowed space for the narrator, and easily establish dialogic effect through interaction with audience. This study found Heterogloss was more used than monogloss.

-       Same with (Gao, 2019, and Qiu, 2019)'s result graduation took smallest part. Compared with focus, the force took an overwhelming proposition adopts comparative forms like adjectives, adverbs, numbers, and repetition to highlight emotion to the university. Not all attitude or graduation worked with graduation, so the percentage of graduation was not high.

Secondly non-verbal appraisal resources were conducted in A and B university educational advertisement.

-       As Martin & Rose (2007) asserted attitude resources affected audience's emotions through various angle and social distance, eye-contact. In this research, attitude system was mostly appeared, and perspective resources with attitude sub-systems took the first place, proposition of involvement and equality occupied high proposition. Both producer of A and B tended to create an atmosphere of being involved and equal. Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996) argued direct angle and eye-level angle shortened the distance between producer and audience. Low and high angles were used to enhance verbal appraisal resources and impress audience deeper. Social distance took second proposition. Social distance it gave a comfortable distance to

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an audience without the feeling of compulsion or distance. Eye-contact occupied the smallest proposition, it usually accompanied with face expression to make the verbal expression more complete and more accurate.

- In engagement resources, it was uneven between direct and oblique. That was to say, producer of educational advertisement was more like give audience a sense of participants than spectators.

- In graduation system, sharpening was more than softening. Sharpen was highlighted or emphasized represented participant.

Thirdly, different appraisal resources contributed to persuading the audience in different ways.

- Same with Halmari & Virtanen's (2005) points that the choice of language can influence or persuade others. In A and B university educational advertisement, different attitude resources changed audience's emotions. According to Martin & White (2006), affect direct constructed immersive feeling to affect audience's emotions. Happiness, security, and satisfaction created a reliable and pleasant atmosphere. Judgement built good image of university by presents how capable, stable, or good. Same with the points of Gao (2019), appreciation also contributed to builds a good image. In an educational advertisement, appreciation comments for well-organized curriculum, flexible educational system, and erudite staff directly exerted psychological influences on audience. Valuation was core part of appreciation presenting university as valuable and meaning. For non-verbal, involvement, equality, and social-distance always worked together giving the audience a sense of personally on the scene. They easily understood stance and accept the attitudes. Low angle or high angle were used to attracted audience's attention and corresponded with verbal resources.

- In the engagement system, as Bednarek (2008) asserted that monogloss was used to clarify the facts and increase the credibility. In educational advertisement, it was used to

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introduce narrator's background. Dialogic contractive established authoritative image by presenting counter expression. It gave reasonable statement for presented viewpoints. Expansion resources presented university's inclusiveness, openness, and honesty to earn audience's trust and recognition. For non-verbal, audiences were more easily convinced within a sense of involvement through the direct angle.

- Graduation worked with attitude and engagement resources to turn up emotional effects. Quantification and qualification in force enhanced the good image of university. Focus was seldom showed in educational advertisement. While it gave audience a sense of personality and made them more understand presented stance. For non-verbal, highlight represented participant is more effective to affects audience emotional response (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006).

Fourthly, different appraisal resources devised persuasion between B and A university educational advertisement.

- In verbal, A university focused on mainly narrator and the process of his pursuit of dreams. But in B university, a lot of students with different major had been involved to declare what they got or experienced in this university. Many negative judgement resources were involved in A university to raise positive emotions. B university mainly focused on positive evaluation for students' behaviors.

- Lastly, A university focused on expressing importance in group and society like China's most prestigious university. B university attached great important to personality and teacher-student communication ways like one to one communication with professor, discover who you want to be.

- For non-verbal social-distance, B university paid more attention to close shot establishing close relationships than A (Hu, 2020). In horizontal angle, Frontal angle of B was

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more than A university that focused on activities in and out the classroom. In vertical angle, eye-level angle of B was more than A presenting equality.

From the above findings, we can find appraisal corpus is closely connected with classroom interaction. Compared with non-verbal appraisal resources, verbal is strong to persuade others (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). According (Nunan, 1991, Harmer, 2001) that in teaching process, we can add pictures or other materials help us for better class, while it just an aid can't replace the language main position. Same with Huang (2020)'s point, directly and explicitly express teacher's attitude is more understandable and acceptable for learner. It's recommended for the teacher to adopts appropriate negative emotions in the class, and it's better than always provides positive views. In contradiction situation, teacher should raise opposite opinions then give reason for correct side (Gao, 2019). The learner is more convinced in that way. Leading question is good way to raise learner's opinions in the class. In non-verbal, if teacher wants the learner to do something, gaze at them is more useful than language. Teacher walking among the student help to short distance between them and give student a sense of equality and involvement.

6. Conclusion

Educational advertisement as a multimodal discourse combines lexical discourse and visual discourse. The analysis of this multimodal discourse was significant, not only how appraisal resources were distributed but also how persuasion was realized. The appropriate use of appraisal theory helped use to directly grasped audience's attention and straight affected their emotions. University administrators should suitable adopted various verbal and non-verbal attitude resources to attract audience.

In the future English teaching and learning process, teacher should mainly focus on affect resources to directly express their feelings, and appreciation to assert evaluation to things mostly affects student' attitudes. And appropriately raise open questions leading student to reason. Sometimes appropriate adverbial phrases like most, top to emphasize our attitudes. Also

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Teacher's action also express information, long distance and overlook student gives their sense of unwelcome and distance. Teacher express happiness can short the distance with students, smile expression, eye-contact with them. Such combination maximizes ideology.

For student, understand different verbal and non-verbal elements, can improve their ability to correctly understand the information in the classroom or out classroom. It not only helps them cultivate their critical thinking ability, but also identify the ideology behind resources.

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