CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHOD, ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH PROCEDURES

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I first outline my research method, dealt with in terms of approach, purpose, and design. The choice of the research data is justified and the analytical framework used to analyse the data is explained and commented on. I outline the research procedures followed to address the research questions in detail and, where necessary, also illustrate key terms and concepts by means of relevant examples.

3.1 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method followed in the present study was prompted by the three questions that were formulated with regard to the research problem. These questions have been referred to before (cf. 1.5). However, as the research method followed is of course linked to the research questions, I repeat them here. The first research question, which is of a theoretical nature, is:

> What sort of analytical framework would enhance our current understanding of the linguistic basis of the notion, 'student-centredness', in the context of distance learning texts?

The second research question is of a descriptive nature:

> How do Unisa study guides developed before and after a student-centred approach to teaching was adopted at the university compare with regard to 'involvement' and appraisal?

The third question essentially flows from the first two and relates to the applied aim of the present study:

> How can the future development of student-centred texts for distance learning be informed by shedding light on key linguistic characteristics of such texts?

In the discussion of my research method, I follow Seliger and Shohamy's (1989) construal of research method as comprising three main components: research approach, research purpose and research design.

3.1.1 Research approach

Seliger and Shohamy (1989:27) distinguish between two different research approaches: a synthetic/holistic approach and an analytic approach. Whereas the synthetic/holistic approach emphasises the interdependence of a variety of interrelated systems that impact on a research problem, the aim of an analytic approach is to 'identify and investigate a single factor or a cluster of factors which at some level are constituents of one of the major systems'. The research approach I adopted in the present study is essentially analytic in that I focused on some of the constituent parts ('involvement' features) of the discourses of distance education teaching texts.

3.1.2 Research purpose

According to Seliger and Shohamy (1989:29), research may have a heuristic (hypothesis-generating) or a deductive (hypothesis-testing) purpose or objective. Studies with a heuristic purpose describe particular phenomena and then generate hypotheses based on the phenomena studied. Studies with a deductive purpose test pre-formulated hypotheses 'in order to develop a theory about the phenomena in question'. The advantage of formulating hypotheses is that it 'narrows the focus of the research and allows the [...] phenomenon to be investigated systematically'.

The present study had a hypothetico-deductive purpose. Two hypotheses were formulated and tested. These hypotheses relate to linguistic interpretations of some principles underlying transformative learning theory, constructivism, whole-person learning and cooperative investigation. Included are notions such as: involvement, interaction, cooperation, and emotion (affect, attitude). These hypotheses (also referred to in 1.7) are:

Hypothesis 1: Distance education study guides developed with a student-centred approach to teaching are more 'involved' than study guides developed with a content-centred approach.

Hypothesis 2: Distance education study guides developed with a student-centred approach to teaching use more and different values of Appraisal than study guides developed with a content-centred approach.

3.1.3 Research design

Seliger and Shohamy (1989:116, 117) make a distinction between qualitative, descriptive and experimental research. According to them, qualitative research 'is heuristic and not deductive since few, if any, decisions regarding research questions or data are made before the research begins'. Descriptive research can be heuristic or deductive. While qualitative research is also concerned with description, descriptive research as a category of research 'refers to investigation which utilizes already existing data or non-experimental research with a preconceived hypothesis' (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989:117). In contrast to descriptive research, which can be quantitative, qualitative research is not. Experimental research corresponds to descriptive research in that it is analytic and can also be hypothesis-driven. However, in contrast to descriptive research, which 'provides descriptions of naturally occurring phenomena', experimental research manipulates data before it is analysed.

Against this background, my research design could be said to be descriptive, but not experimental. As was mentioned (cf. 1.4), the aims of the present study were to: develop an analytical framework that would enhance our current understanding of the linguistic basis of the notion, 'student-centredness' in the context of distance learning texts; to compare, in terms of 'involvement' and appraisal, Unisa study guides developed before and after a student-centred approach to teaching was adopted; and to inform future development of student-centred texts for distance learning by shedding light on key linguistic characteristics of such texts. In an attempt to address these aims, I analysed existing data (the discourse of distance education study guides) without manipulating it. My analyses were largely of a quantitative nature in that I counted the 'involvement' features of Unisa study guides). The quantitatively obtained data was then described and interpreted.

3.2 DATA CORPUS

The assumptions about the differences between student-centred and content-centred guides were tested by analysing six study guides from three different academic departments at Unisa: the Department of Anthropology, Archaeology, Geography and Environmental studies, the

Department of Industrial Psychology and the Department of Psychology. Two guides were analysed from each department (cf. 1.6). In each instance one of the guides had been developed before and one after the adoption of an outcomes based, student-centred approach to teaching. For convenience these guides will often be referred to as 'old' and 'new' guides, respectively.

The choice of these particular guides for analysis was motivated firstly by the fact that in developing the new guides, the lecturers from the different departments had sought the advice of staff members at the Unisa Institute for Curriculum and Learning Development. The specific task of the Institute is to support academic departments in implementing the learning theories underlying an outcomes-based, student-centred approach to teaching. The guides analysed were thus intended to be more student-centred and student responses to the new guides have been very positive.

The choice of the particular study guides was also motivated by the fact that the topics of the course content covered in the new guides is similar to the topics covered in the old guides. In the case of the Departments of Industrial Psychology and Anthropology, the new guides replaced the old guides. In the case of the Department of Psychology, the new guide serves as an extension of the old guide. While the old Psychology guide dealt with topics relating to social psychology in general, the new guide deals specifically with *community* aspects of social psychology.

It is Unisa policy that study guides should be revised every three years. After each revision, copies of the old guides are usually destroyed. The result is that the choice of guides analysed was also dependent on the availability of electronic versions of the old guides.

During the period between the development of the old guides (IPS, SKA and PSY) and the new guides (IOP, APY and PYC) Unisa switched from a year system to a semester system. This switch impacted on the length of the guides in the sense that the new, semester guides are shorter in length than the old, year guides. Thus, as the texts were of varying lengths, the texts' lengths were normalised within each department (but not over departments) in such a way that the two texts of a particular department were of the same length. This was done by normalising the text length of the longer of the two texts compared in a particular department. After having counted all the instances of the words associated with the different 'involvement' features in each of the different texts, the raw score total for each feature was normalised down to the word

count of the shorter text. Thus, IPS (word count 25939) was normalised down to the length of IOP (word count 25430); SKA (word count 90555) was normalised down to the length of APY (word count 51484); and PSY (word count 66551) was normalised down to the length of PYC (word count 24417). Normalised counts were then compared in terms of one-way Chi^2 analyses using the Yates correction factor (Popham, 1967).

3.3 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

As has been mentioned, the hypotheses of the present study focus both on the relative 'involvement' of study guides, as well as on the relative use of Appraisal values. As a result of this focus, the analytical framework of the present study derives from work by scholars who have explored 'involvement' and Appraisal values in texts. In this regard, the research of Biber (1988), Martin (1997, 2000, 2002), and White (1998, 2000, 2002, 2003), as discussed in 2.2.4, is foundational.

Biber's (1988) research is important to the present study because it provides a mechanism for comparing Unisa study guides in terms of their relative 'involvement'. On the other hand, Appraisal theory, as advanced by Martin (1997, 2000, 2002) and White (1998, 2000, 2002, 2003), allows for an interpretation of the language features which Biber (1988) associates with 'involvement' in terms of the views advanced in Appraisal theory. As has been mentioned (cf. 2.4), in Appraisal the focus is on 'how interlocutors are feeling, the judgements they make, and the value they place on the various phenomena of their experience' (Martin, 2000:144). In other words, Appraisal allows for an analysis of discourse in terms of features which are associated by scholars such as Martin (1997, 2000, 2002) and White (1998, 2000, 2002, 2003) with interpersonal negotiation or interpersonal positioning.

The analytical framework used in the present study has multiple advantages. First, it provides a mechanism for analysing the Appraisal features of a text quantitatively using well- established criteria (counts for 'involvement' features associated with Appraisal). While Appraisal Theory provides an excellent mechanism for analysing the interpersonal positioning strategies of texts, the analytic procedures are time consuming. As a result, online discussions on Appraisal analysis (AppraisalAnalysis@yahoogroups.com) suggest that various initiatives are in progress to develop an automated system for Appraisal analyses. Admittedly, the analytical framework adopted in the present study has its limitations (e.g. not all evaluative features of a text can be analysed); however, it rests on sound principles for analysing many of a text's Appraisal

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features with the help of a concordancer.

The second advantage of combining Biber's perspectives on 'involvement' with the views advanced in Appraisal theory, is that such an approach allows for an interpretation of Biber's perspectives on 'involvement' in terms of interpersonal positioning (the term 'interpersonal positioning' is used here to refer to the potential of all texts to establish a particular relationship between discourse participants). The third advantage is that the analytical framework allows for a finer calibration of the relative 'involvement' of texts and, by implication, of the extent to which a text utilises features associated with relative closeness (solidarity) or distance (alienation) based on the number and nature of the features expressed. The analytical framework will be discussed and exemplified in detail below (cf. 3.4.1 and 3.4.2).

In exploring the interpersonal positioning of Unisa study guides, the present study is thus concerned with the way Unisa lecturers go about constructing different degrees of solidarity with their students through the use of attitudinal language. The present study thus posits a connection between the notion of student-centredness and interpersonal positioning.

3.4 RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The research procedures followed in the testing of the hypotheses are discussed below. The difficulties that were encountered are highlighted and examples provided to support the exposition.

3.4.1 Procedures for testing Hypothesis 1

As noted above (cf. 3.1.2), Hypothesis 1 postulates that distance education study guides developed with a student-centred approach to teaching are more 'involved' than study guides developed with a content-centred approach. Of significance with regard to this hypothesis is the extent to which the 'social presence' of discourse participants is signified in the discourse situation through personal address, conversation-like features of language and the expression of attitudes and feelings. This hypothesis was tested by comparing the analysed texts with regard to their relative 'involvement'. The mechanism used to compare the texts is a subset of the features Biber (1988) associates with 'involvement'. Although I worked with untagged corpora, I was still able to use 17 of the 23 features Biber (1988) associates positively with 'involvement' and three of the five features he associates with the opposite pole of this opposite

dimension, informational focus (the full list of Biber's features was presented in 2.2.1).

In my analyses, I was not able to analyse *that* deletion, present tense verbs, *do* as pro-verb, *be* as main verb, sentence relatives, non-phrasal coordination, *wh* clauses, final prepositions, nouns, agentless passives, past participle *whiz* deletions and present participle *whiz* deletions. However, I extended Biber's analyses of first person pronouns by separately considering the use of the first person plural pronoun *we* with exclusive reference. This decision was prompted by Rounds' (1987) research referred to earlier (cf. 2.2.3) about the use of *we* with inclusive reference (I + you) or with exclusive reference (I + my group – excluding you) As the present study is particularly interested in features whereby closeness between writers and readers of distance learning texts is signified, I argue that the use of *we* with exclusive reference has the potential to create distance between lecturers (writers) and students (readers).

The features I used to calibrate Unisa study guides with regard to their relative 'involvement' as opposed to informational focus are listed below in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Involvement versus informational features

INVOLVEMENT VERSUS INFORMATIONAL FEATURES	
features positively associated with 'involvement'	**features associated with an 'informational' focus**
private verbs contractions 2nd person pronouns analytic negation demonstrative pronouns general emphatics 1st person pronouns pronoun *it* causative subordination discourse particles indefinite pronouns general hedges amplifiers *wh*-questions possibility modals adverbs conditional subordination	word length type/token ratio place adverbs

The 'involvement' features used for the purposes of the present study were electronically traced in the corpus using the WordList program of WordSmith Tools 3.0. WordSmith Tools is an integrated suite of programs for analysing a large corpus of texts. It consists of word listing and

word concordancing facilities. The WordList tool generates lists of all the words of a particular text and indicates the frequency of occurrence of each word. Compare, for instance, the following extract from the word list of the new Psychology study guide, which illustrates how the programme orders all the words in the text alphabetically, numbers each word (N) according to its position in the list and indicates the real number of instances (Freq) of each word in the text:

§3.1 WordList extract

N	Word	Freq.
1522	XENOPHOBIA	2
1523	YEARS	9
1524	YES	8
1525	YET	9
1526	YOU	551
1527	YOU'D	2
1528	YOU'LL	2
1529	YOU'RE	14
1530	YOU'VE	7
1531	YOUR	386
1532	YOURS	3
1533	YOURSELF	21

In considering the words associated with 'involvement' in the analysed text, words were traced in lists such as these by means of the 'search' function of the WordList program. This research function operates in similar fashion to the 'find' function of word processing programs. By giving a search command, the WordList Tool searches through all the words in the word list and displays the word searched and the frequency with which it occurs in a given text. After having searched the word, the frequency with which it occurs in a given text was captured in an Excel spreadsheet.

Where necessary, the context in which words occur was considered before capturing the frequency with which the word occurs. For instance, words such as *hate, hope*, and *love* occur in texts either as nouns or as verbs. However, as I analysed verbs and not nouns, my research was interested in how many times they occur in the texts analysed as verbs. Thus, I used the WordSmith Tools concordancing function (Concord Tool), which allows for a consideration of the context in which each of the words listed in a word list occurs. A concordance of the word is then displayed and access given to information about collocates of the search word (Scott, 1999:10). This procedure allowed me to differentiate between, for example, *hate, hope*, and *love* used as nouns and verbs.

In the testing of the hypotheses, quantitatively obtained data was explored statistically and interpretatively. In order to analyse the data corpus to determine how 'involved' each of the texts under discussion are, expressions associated with each 'involvement' feature were counted in order to establish a total count for each feature. These counts were then added together to get the total score for a particular feature. The data obtained quantitatively from the old and the new guides was then compared and the significance of the results was tested by means of a one-way Chi^2 test. Chi^2 analysis is used to compare two or more frequencies to investigate the probability that their values depart from what would be expected by chance alone. One-way Chi^2 is used to compare the frequencies of different levels of a single variable.

According to Babbie (1992:454-455) Chi^2 is a frequently used test of significance in social science. It is based on the assumption that there is no relationship between two variables in research data (null hypothesis). Given the observed distribution of values on the two separate variables, the conjoint distribution that would be expected if there were no relationship between the two variables is computed. This expected distribution is then compared with the distribution of cases actually found in the sample data, and the probability that the discovered discrepancy could have resulted from sampling error alone is determined.

As the mere discovery of a discrepancy is not necessarily significant, the magnitude of the value of Chi^2 is considered. The higher the Chi^2 value, the more significant the discrepancy. Discrepancy levels were taken as significant when the Chi^2 test suggested a 0.05 possibility of error ($p \leq 0.05$). Discrepancy levels were, on the other hand, taken as very significant when the Chi^2 test suggested a 0.01 possibility of error ($p \leq 0.01$).

3.4.1.1 Analysing 'involvement'

Below I briefly point out why each of the 'involvement' features is associated with 'involved' texts, that is, with texts where the social presence of interactants is discoursally signalled. I also elaborate further on the procedures followed and problems encountered in the counting of the words associated with each of the individual 'involvement' features used to compare the discourse of the study guides under investigation in terms of their relative 'involvement'.

(a) Private verbs

Biber (1988:105) draws a very strong correlation between high counts for private verbs and

'involvement' in texts. He found private verbs to be among the features carrying the largest weight in distinguishing 'involved' texts from more informational ones. Biber (1988:242) subdivides private verbs into verbs used for the expression of intellectual states (e.g. believe), nonobservable intellectual acts (e.g. discover), and affective or emotional states (e.g. fear). The list of private verbs used by Biber in the process of comparing texts with regard to their relative involvement was taken from Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, and Svartvik (1985:1181–1182).

In the counting of private verbs, I considered the private verbs listed by Biber (1988:242) and by Quirk et al. (1985:1181, 1182, 1183, 1223). I followed Quirk *et al.*'s categorisation of private verbs into the categories factual verbs, suasive verbs, emotive verbs, and hypothesis verbs. Regarding the denotation of private verbs they observe that '[t]hese states and acts are 'private' in the sense that they are not observable: a person may be observed to assert that God exists, but not to believe that God exists. Belief is in this sense 'private' (Quirk, *et al.*, 1985:1181). The private verbs counted are listed in Table 3.2 below:

Table 3.2: Categorisation of private verbs

CATEGORISATION OF PRIVATE VERBS
PRIVATE 'FACTUAL' VERBS
accept, anticipate, ascertain, assume, believe, calculate, check, conclude, conjecture, consider, deduce, deem, demonstrate, discern, discover, doubt, dream, establish, estimate, expect, fancy, feel, find, foresee, forget, gather, guess, hear, hold, hope, imagine, imply, indicate, infer, insure, judge, know, learn, mean, note, notice, observe, perceive, presume, presuppose, pretend, prove, realize, reason, recall, reckon, recognize, reflect, remember, reveal, see, sense, show, signify, suppose, suspect, think, understand, wish.
PRIVATE 'SUASIVE' VERBS
agree, allow, concede, decide, determine, ensure, insist, intend, prefer, pronounce, propose, recommend, require, resolve.

PRIVATE 'EMOTIVE' VERBS
amaze, amuse, annoy, astonish, depress, disappoint, distress, disturb, fear, frighten, horrify, irritate, regret, rejoice, shock, surprise, upset.
PRIVATE 'HYPOTHESIS' VERBS
suppose.

The various tense forms of all the verbs listed above were considered in the counting and statistical interpretation of the occurrence of private verbs. In the instance of verbs such as *doubt, dream*, *fear, mean, note, reason, sense, shock, distress,* and *wish,* the WordSmith Concord Tool was used to distinguish between instances where these words are used as verbs as opposed to contexts where they are used with other grammatical functions.

For instance, while all texts have high counts for *mean*, a consideration of the collocates of *mean* revealed that *mean* is often used in contexts such as *by means of*, *a means of, a mean person*. In order to maintain control over the accuracy of my data, I thus considered the potential of the verbs listed in Table 3.2 above very carefully and only counted instances where the listed words occur as verbs.

(b) Contractions

The relationship between contractions and 'involvement' flows from the fact that in everyday spoken English, forms of the verb 'to be' and other auxiliary verbs are usually contracted. Biber found contracted forms to occur more frequently in spoken than written texts. Biber (1988:243) accounts for the higher count of contractions in spoken language by pointing out that their reduced surface form is dispreferred in edited writing. However, it could be deduced that as readers associate contractions with spoken language, they would probably experience a text using such contractions as more informal and personal. Thus I considered contractions of the verb 'to be', including: *'d, 'll, 'm, 're, 's, 've*, *n't, it's*.

(c) Second person pronouns

Brown and Gilman (1960), Fortanet (2003) and Rounds (1987) associate second person pronouns with intimacy and contact. It is as a result of this association that second person pronouns are linked to 'involvement'. Biber (1988:225) comments that such pronouns require

a specific addressee and that they have been used as markers of register differences. In the context of the present study, second person pronouns were regarded to be important indicators of student-centredness as they directly refer to the student. The second person pronouns counted were the following: *you, your, yourself, yourselves,* and all contracted forms.

(d) Analytic negation

Analytic negation involves the use of 'not' and its contracted form *n't* (e.g. *I didn't see anyone*) and it is contrasted with synthetic negation, where, for example, *no* is used (e.g. *I saw no-one*). Analytic negation is more colloquial in nature (Biber, 1988:245) and as such is a feature of 'involved' discourse. In determining the count for analytic negation in the guides under analysis, all instances of *not* and contractions with **n't* were counted.

(e) Demonstrative pronouns

Biber (1988:226) observes that demonstrative pronouns 'can refer to an entity outside the text, an exophoric referent, or to a previous referent in the text itself'. The association of demonstrative pronouns with 'involvement' relates to the fact that they are often used in spoken language. Due to the time constraints associated with conversations, referents are often referred to by means of demonstrative pronouns rather than nouns. As conversations are not edited after production, the pronominal reference is not corrected, as a result such reference is associated with 'involvement'. Demonstratives considered for the purposes of the present study include: *that, these, this* and *those*.

In counting instances of these demonstratives, the WordSmith Concord Tool was used to display their collocates in order to distinguish between *that, these, this* and *those* used in qualifying clauses or as adjectives (e.g. *... a map that people could use to find their way*; *These questions are important; Let's consider this chapter*), and *that, these, this* and *those* used as demonstratives (e.g. *For us that counts as a secondary issue; This is an example of matrimonial hierarchies; Those we encountered were counted*). Only instances of *that, these, this* and *those* used as demonstratives were counted.

(f) General emphatics

Biber (1988:241) highlights the fact that emphatics mark informal, colloquial discourse and 'involvement with the topic'. He also observes that they indicate heightened emotion (Biber, 1988:240). Their association with 'involvement' is thus evident. The emphatic markers considered for the purposes of the present study are: *for sure, a lot, such a, such as, just, really, most,* and *more* (the order in which they are presented is taken from Biber, 1988:241). Biber also counted combinations such as *real* + adjectives*, so* + adjectives, etc. However, this was not possible in this study as I used untagged corpora. In counting *such a* and *such as*, I searched *such* in the word lists of the different texts and then used the WordSmith concordance program to consider the contexts in which *such* occurs. All instances of *such* other than *such a* and *such as* were rejected (e.g. *such stories, such organisations*). In counting *more* all instances of *more or less* were rejected as *more or less* was counted under general hedges.

(g) First person pronouns

In commenting on the association of first person pronouns with 'involvement', Biber largely echoes Chafe's (1985) observations that these pronouns signify ego-involvement, indicate an interpersonal focus, and are generally associated with an 'involved' style (Biber, 1988:225). Of particular relevance to the present study is research by Brown and Gilman (1960), Chafe (1985), Fortanet (2003), Kamio (2001), Poynton (1985) and Rounds (1987). These scholars associate pronoun use with the contact and intimacy that prevails between discourse participants. Fortanet (2003) points out that levels of attempted rapport between interlocutors can be traced by the use of *we* and *you*, while degrees of speaker or writer involvement with a text can be traced by the use of *I* (Fortanet, 2003:2). First person pronouns counted for the purposes of the present study are: *I, me, we, us, my, our, myself, ourselves* and all contracted forms.

In addition to the above counts, I also counted separately *we* used with 'exclusive' reference (excluding the addressee from the reference), that is, when it referred to the lecturers, subject specialists, or any other parties while very clearly excluding the student from such reference. In this regard, compare the following examples from the old Industrial Psychology guide: *We compiled the guide in such a way that the topics follow logically upon each other*; *We decided to summarise the information supplied at the end of some units.* While these examples signal the social presence of lecturers in the discourse, the use of *we* in such examples can be

associated negatively with student-centredness as students are pertinently excluded from the reference. Resultantly, the principles of cooperative inquiry referred to earlier (cf. 2.1.1.3) are ignored.

As it is not always clear when *we* is used with 'inclusive' reference (including the student in the reference), I did not count we when used with inclusive separately. *We* is clearly used with inclusive reference in an example such as: *Make an appointment with me and we can meet in my office*. However, in an example such as *We will also discuss the advantages of using more than one theory*, it is not always clear whether *we* is used with exclusive reference to refer to the authors of the study guide, or whether the students are included in the reference.

(h) Pronoun *it*

The relevance of the pronoun *it* to 'involvement' relates to the fact that it is the most generalised pronoun since it can refer to animate beings as well as abstract concepts. The inexplicit lexical content of *it* is generally associated with conversations (Biber, 1988:225–226). High instances of *it* are thus associated with discourses in which the discourse participants are in relatively close contact. All instances of *it* were counted for the purposes of the present study.

(i) Causative subordination

The association of causative subordination with 'involvement' seems to be of a dual nature: causative subordination gives justification for beliefs and actions and occurs more in speech than in writing; causative subordinate clauses also 'seem to have a primarily affective function' (Biber, 1988:107) and can be associated with the expression of attitude in the sense that they mark justification for actions or beliefs. As *because* is the only preposition which can be unambiguously associated with causation (Biber, 1988:236), a value for the feature 'causative subordination' was determined by counting instances of *because* in texts.

(j) Discourse particles

Discourse particles are used to maintain conversational coherence. Due to their generalised discourse function, they rarely occur in writing (Biber, 1988:241) and are associated with more informal, intimate discourses. The discourse particles considered for the purposes of the present study include *now, anyhow, anyway,* and *anyways.* These are the same as the

discourse particles considered by Biber (1988:241). Biber also considered instances of *well* when used in particular kinds of clauses, however, my use of untagged corpora did not allow me to do so.

(k) Indefinite pronouns

The association of indefinite pronouns with discoursal involvement stems from the fact that they are used for generalised reference and are thus typically associated with conversations and, resultantly, with contact between discourse participants. The indefinite pronouns considered by this study include *anybody, anyone, anything, everybody, everyone, everything, nobody, none, nothing, nowhere, somebody, someone,* and *something.* These are also the indefinite pronouns used by Biber (1988:226).

(l) General hedges

Hedges are informal, less specific markers of probability or uncertainty and are defined by Hyland (1999:3) as indicators of the 'unwillingness to make an explicit and complete commitment to the truth of propositions'. According to Biber (1988:240), they tend to co-occur with features indicating discoursal interaction (e.g. personal pronouns and questions), and with other features marking reduced or generalised lexical content (e.g. general emphatics, pronoun *it* and contractions. Hedges mark a proposition as being only approximately true (e.g. *It's sort of a book*) and as such, they can be interpreted as 'face saving' mechanisms (Brown and Levinson, 1987).   House and Kasper (1981) suggest that the surer a speaker or writer feels about his or her own position with regard to the listener or reader, the less need there is for hedging. These arguments clarify the association between hedges and 'involvement'. All instances of the following hedges were counted: *at about, something like, more or less, almost, maybe, sort of,* and *kind of.* These hedges are the ones associated by Biber (1988:240) with 'involvement'.

(m) Amplifiers

Biber (1988:106) observes that amplifiers (in similar fashion to emphatics) mark heightened feeling in that they boost the force of the verb. In this sense they are closely associated with more personal texts, and thus with 'involvement'. Amplifiers also indicate (in positive terms) how reliable a proposition is.

The amplifiers considered for the purposes of the present study were taken from Biber (1988:240) and Quirk, *et al.* (1985: 590-592). Following Quirk, *et al.* (1985), I sub-categorised the amplifiers counted into *maximisers* (amplifiers which denote the upper extreme of a scale) and *boosters* (amplifiers which denote a high degree on a scale, yet there is still room to further amplify the meaning). Under 'maximisers' I counted the following amplifiers: *absolutely, altogether, completely, enormously, entirely, extremely, fully, greatly, highly, intensely, perfectly, quite, thoroughly, totally, utterly,* and *very.* The 'boosters' that were counted include the following: *badly, bitterly, deeply, enormously, far, greatly, heartily, highly, intensely, much, severely, so, strongly, terribly, violently, as well as, a great deal, a good deal, a lot,* and *by far.*

A number of difficulties were experienced in the counting of the amplifiers. For example, instances of *so* were only counted where *so* clearly upgrades or boosts an evaluative meaning, as in the following examples from the concordance list of *so* in the new Industrial Psychology guide: *The pay was not so bad*; *Why is an understanding of one's preferred work environment so critical ...?* Instances such as the following, where *so* is used in a non-grading capacity, were not considered: *people from the so-called designated groups*; *provide an opportunity to do so.*

(n) *Wh*-questions

Wh-questions are associated with 'involvement' because such questions are used primarily in interactive discourse where there is a specific addressee present to answer questions (Biber, 1988:105-106). For the purposes of this dissertation, all instances of *what, when, where, which, who, whose, why* and *how* as question words were counted. This was done by 'searching' these words in the word lists of texts and then by determining their context by means of the concordancing program of WordSmith. They were counted only when they occur as question words.

(o) Possibility modals

Possibility modals are generally associated with discourses produced under time constraints because they mark propositions as only approximately true. Their association with 'involvement' also relates to their tendency to co-occur with private verbs denoting sensory evidence (e.g. *We can see that ...*). . The possibility modals counted for the purposes of the present study are the same as those counted by Biber (1988:241). Included in counts for possibility modals are: *can, could, may,* and *might.*

(p) Adverbs

Adverbs are widely associated with the expression of evaluation and stance (e.g. Biber and Finegan, 1989; Channel, 1994, 2000; Conrad and Biber, 2000; Hyland, 1999; Myers, 1996; Nwogu, 1997; Thompson and Hunston, 2000; and Thompson and Zhou, 2000), a feature which is widely associated with interactive discourse and thus with 'involvement'. However, Biber (1988:105) postulates that place adverbs are negatively associated with 'involvement' 'due to text internal deixis'. Following Biber (1988:224, 238), I distinguished between place adverbs, time adverbs and other adverbs. The adverbs counted for the purposes of the present study are taken from Biber (1988:224) and are listed in Table 3.3 below:

Table 3.3: Categorisation of adverbs

CATEGORISATION OF ADVERBS
PLACE ADVERBIALS
aboard, above, abroad, across, ahead, alongside, around, ashore, astern, away, behind, below, beneath, beside, downhill, downstairs, downstream, east, far, hereabouts, indoors, inland, inshore, inside, locally, near, nearby, north, nowhere, outdoors, outside, overboard, overland, overseas, south, underfoot, underground, underneath, uphill, upstairs, upstream, west.
TIME ADVERBIALS
afterwards, again, earlier, early, eventually, formerly, immediately, initially, instantly, late, lately, later, momentarily, nowadays, once, originally, presently, previously, recently, shortly, simultaneously, soon, subsequently, today, tomorrow, tonight, yesterday.
-ly ADVERBS
all -ly adverbs (excluding -ly adverbs counted as time adverbials or amplifiers)

As can be seen in the table, I counted place adverbs, time adverbs and under the category 'other' I counted adverbs ending in *-ly*. The count for *-ly* adverbs does not include adverbs counted as hedges or amplifiers.

(q) Conditional subordination

Biber (1988:236) points out that several researchers have found more conditional clauses in spoken language than in writing. As a result, conditional subordination is associated with 'involvement'. Conditional clauses mark conditions for actions or beliefs and thus relate to the expression of attitude (Biber, 1988:107). The subordinators I counted are the same conditional subordinators as counted by Biber: *if* and *unless*.

(r) Word length

Word length is associated by Biber with informational texts in the sense that, on average, informational discourse consists of longer words (words with more syllables) than conversational discourses. In other words, texts with longer words are associated with the opposite side of the 'involvement' continuum.

(s) Type/token ratio

A higher type/token is also associated with informational texts. Information regarding the type/token ratio of a text forms part of the information supplied by the WordList program of WordSmith III. If a text is 1000 words long it is regarded by the program to have 1000 tokens. However, many of these words will be repeated and there may, for instance, be only 400 different words, or word types, in the text. *Types* therefore are different words. In Chapter 4 (cf. 4.1.2.3) I expand on these notions.

As texts are of various lengths and as text length impacts on the average type/token ratio of texts, the WordSmith program calculates the type/token ratio afresh for every 1000 running words of a text. A running average is then computed which means that an average type/token ratio is based on consecutive 1000-word chunks of a text. In this regard, my procedure differs from that of Biber, who determined the type/token ratio of his texts by counting the number of different lexical items that occur in the first 400 words of each text, and then divided the number by four (Biber, 1988:238). However, the same principle of comparing texts consistently applies.

3.4.1.2 Summary

As is clear from the discussions above, the procedure for testing Hypothesis 1 involved a search

of each of the words listed above that are associated with the 'involvement' features considered. After having counted all the instances of the words associated with the different 'involvement' features in each of the different texts, the raw score total for each feature was normalised down to the word count of the shorter text. Normalised counts were then compared in terms of one-way Chi^2 analyses using the Yates correction factor. The statistical values of the 'involvement' features of the old and new guides from each department were then compared and conclusions reached about the move towards student-centredness in each department.

3.4.2 Procedures for testing Hypothesis 2

It was pointed out (cf. 3.1) that Hypothesis 2 relates to the comparing of Unisa study guides in terms of Appraisal. It postulates that study guides developed with a student-centred approach to teaching use more and different values of Appraisal than study guides developed with a content-centred approach. Of significance with regard to this hypothesis is the frequency and variety of Appraisal values in student-centred as opposed to content-centred texts. This hypothesis was tested by analysing certain of the 'involvement' features referred to above (cf. 3.4.1) in Appraisal terms, that is, by analysing the explicitly evaluative (attitudinal) lexis of 'involvement' in terms of the Appraisal subsystems of meaning relating to ATTITUDE, GRADUATION and ENGAGEMENT. The present study proposes that, based on such data, conclusions can be reached on the interpersonal positioning or solidarity negotiation strategies of Unisa lecturers.

In this regard, the terms interpersonal positioning and solidarity negotiation are taken to have the same meaning. Both concepts refer to the fact that interpersonal relationships are established between discourse participants through the sharing of attitudes and feelings. But, as was mentioned above (cf. 1.3 and 2.2.4) by using attitudinal language, speakers or writers face the risk that their listeners or readers might either accept or reject the stand that is being taken and, whereas agreement draws discourse participants together, rejection tends to set discourse participants apart. Thus, the process of interpersonal positioning or solidarity negotiation involves the negotiation of attitudes in order to achieve a previously set goal.

Interpreted in the context of a transformative learning, this implies that in the knowledge construction process Unisa lecturers need to use attitudinal language to signal their own social presence in the text. By using attitudinal language they implicitly also acknowledge the students' social presence in the knowledge construction process. However, for optimum

learning to occur, there should be solidarity between lecturers and students. In other words, attitude should be expressed in such a way that other viewpoints are accommodated.

The testing of Hypothesis 2 involved three steps which allowed me to move from general to more particular matters underlying the testing of the hypothesis. The first step was to make a distinction between 'involvement' features that can be explicitly associated with the Appraisal subsystems of meaning and those that cannot. A critical consideration of the 'involvement' features used to compare Unisa study guides with regard to their relative student-centredness revealed that the following relate directly to Appraisal theory: private verbs, analytic negation, general emphatics, indefinite pronouns, general hedges, amplifiers, possibility modals and adverbs. This relation derives from the notion that meanings coded by these features can be associated with values of ATTITUDE, GRADUATION and ENGAGEMENT.

These features stand in contrast to 'involvement' features such as the following, which cannot readily be associated with Appraisal: second person pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, first person pronouns, pronoun *it*, causative subordination, discourse particles, WH questions, conditional subordination and type/token ratio.

The second step in the testing of Hypothesis 2 was to consider these Appraisal related features to determine if the new guide of a particular academic department has significantly higher counts. The third step was then to analyse the feature under discussion in Appraisal terms. This was done by considering each feature occurring with significantly higher counts in a particular guide in its context for the analyst to be able to draw conclusions about the Appraisal subsystem the feature is associated with. In this regard, it was found that the 'involvement' features relating to Appraisal can be associated with more than one Appraisal subsystem. For instance, private verbs code meanings relevant to the Appraisal subsystems of ATTITUDE and ENGAGEMENT.

Private verbs, in the first place, directly encode meanings relating to ATTITUDE – private verbs such as *fear, love*, and *hate*, for instance, code explicit AFFECT. By its very nature a private verb such as *feel*, for instance, collocates with meanings associated with AFFECT, while a verb such as *find*, when used in the sense of 'establish', collocates with meanings associated with APPRECIATION. The following examples show such collocations:

§3.1 Collocations of *feel* and *find*

> 1. It is important to choose a space where you will **feel** comfortable [AFFECT: +security]. (concordance list *feel*: PYC205-A)
> 2. People, who **find** it difficult [APPRECIATION: -impact] to talk about their feelings, should be encouraged to do it in writing. (concordance list *find*: IOP303-V)

It has been pointed out (cf. 2.2.5) that Hood (2004:233) indicates that the coding of ATTITUDE influences a whole phase of text that would otherwise be read as unevaluated description. Example 1, above, shows how *feel* forms an essential part of the evaluation of someone's emotion in terms of positive security (*feel comfortable*). In example 2, *find* is associated very strongly with the appreciation of something in terms of negative impact (*find it difficult*), and as a result *find* acquires attitudinal meaning through collocation.

Private verbs relate to the Appraisal subsystem of ENGAGEMENT when the meaning coded by verbs is of a modal nature. In this regard, a verb such as *think* offers a good example. The examples presented in §3.2 below show how the private verb *think* renders a tentativeness to propositions (3.4.2.1(c) expands on this notion):

§3.2 Private verbs and ENGAGEMENT: dialogic expansion

> 1. You don't have to select the 'best' or 'most correct' work, but anything that looks interesting, and that you **think** [ENGAGEMENT: dialogic expansion, entertain] your audience will enjoy [appreciation: +impact] discussing. (concordance list *think*: PYC205-A)
> 2. You may place some slips next to each other if you **think** [ENGAGEMENT: dialogic expansion, entertain] they're equally important [APPRECIATION: +social value] ... (concordance list *think*: PYC205-A)

Example 1 shows that *think* renders a tentativeness to that which the addressee regards as making positive impact (*you think your audience will enjoy*). Example 2, in similar fashion, shows that *think* presents the evaluation of *slips* in terms of their positive social value (*important*) as the presupposition of a particular person. Due to the tentativeness coded by *think,* propositions are presented as open to alternative viewpoints, that is, *think* renders a dialogically expansive nature to propositions. The same kind of meaning is also rendered by verbs such as *assume, hope*, and *imagine*.

However, private verbs also have the potential to contract the dialogic potential of a proposition. Verbs such as *show*, *demonstrate,* and *establish,* for instance, signal proof of a particular point

of view with the result that they increase the potential tension with alternative viewpoints (3.4.2.1(c) expands on this notion). This is demonstrated by the examples presented under §3.3 below:

§3.3 Private verbs and ENGAGEMENT: dialogic contraction

> 1. He was able to **show** [ENGAGEMENT: dialogic contraction, proclaim] that there are up to five strategies [APPRECIATION: composition] for information processing. (concordance list *show*: PSY313-D)
> 2. The model also **demonstrates** [ENGAGEMENT: dialogic contraction, proclaim] clearly the different system levels [APPRECIATION: composition] within the suprasystem. (concordance list *demonstrate*: PSY313-D: SKA202-4)

Because *show* in example 1 and *demonstrates* in example 2 imply that proof is available *that there are up to five strategies for information processing* and that there are *different system levels within the suprasystem*, these propositions are deemed undeniable. Resultantly, *show* and *demonstrates* contract the dialogic potential of the propositions in which they occur.

Due to the extensive nature of the data I analysed every private verb, analytic negative, emphatic marker, indefinite pronoun, hedge, amplifier and possibility modal could not be analysed. As a result I considered, the individual private verbs, emphatic markers, hedges, and amplifiers occurring with the highest significance in the old and new guides. I then analysed them in Appraisal terms, compared the outcomes, and drew conclusions about how the interpersonal positioning strategies of the new guides differ from those of the old guides.

In other words, if it was established that the verbs *think* and *find* occur with significantly higher counts in the new guides, and that the verbs *see* and *understand* occur with significantly higher counts in the old guides, each instance of these verbs would then be analysed in Appraisal terms within its context. A detailed exposition of the implementation of step three is presented below.

3.4.2.1 Appraisal values considered in the present study

As has been mentioned in 2.2.4, Appraisal theory is concerned with meanings associated with ATTITUDE, GRADUATION and ENGAGEMENT. The system of ATTITUDE includes meanings associated with human emotions in terms of AFFECT, JUDGEMENT and APPRECIATION; the system

of GRADUATION includes meanings associated with FORCE and FOCUS; the system of ENGAGEMENT is associated with meanings that either extend or contract the dialogic potential of a proposition. The criteria used in the present study in analysing 'involvement' features in these terms are discussed below.

First I discuss the criteria used to analyse the attitude subsystems of AFFECT, JUDGEMENT and APPRECIATION. Then I discuss the criteria used to analyse GRADUATION and ENGAGEMENT. These criteria are advocated by Martin (2000) and White (2002) and are largely ideologically unbiased in the sense that another analyst, using the same analytic criteria, is likely to come to the same conclusions regarding the Appraisal status of the analysed items.

(a) ATTITUDE

The meanings considered in analysing 'involvement' in terms of the subsystems of ATTITUDE are presented in Table 3.4 below. These are the meanings presented by Martin (1997). Included under AFFECT are meanings relating to happiness, security and satisfaction; included under JUDGEMENT are meanings associated with normality, capacity, tenacity, veracity, and propriety; included under APPRECIATION are meanings associated with impact, composition and social value. 'Involvement' features associated with the coding of ATTITUDE are private verbs, general emphatics, amplifiers and adverbs.

Table 3.4: The Appraisal subsystem of ATTITUDE

THE APPRAISAL SUBSYSTEM OF ATTITUDE	
ATTITUDE expressed as AFFECT	
Happiness	Unhappiness
Security	Insecurity
Satisfaction	Dissatisfaction
ATTITUDE expressed as JUDGEMENT	
Positive social esteem (normality, capacity, tenacity)	Negative social esteem (capacity, tenacity)
Positive social sanction (veracity, propriety)	Negative social sanction (veracity, propriety)

ATTITUDE expressed as JUDGEMENT	
ATTITUDE expressed as APPRECIATION	
Reaction	
Positive impact	Negative impact
Composition	
Positive composition	Negative composition
Social Valuation	
Positive social value	Negative social value

The wide variety of meanings relating to ATTITUDE are all represented in some or other way by the meanings listed in Table 3.4 above. In interpreting the 'involvement' features of the present study in terms of these subcategorisations of meaning, a particular feature was only interpreted as relating to AFFECT if human feelings and emotions were coded. Instances of AFFECT are illustrated in §3.4 below:

§3.4 Analysing AFFECT

1. ... she and the rest of her family are starting to **feel** quite desperate [AFFECT: -happiness]... (concordance list *feel*: IOP303-V)

2. You don't have to pretend to be an expert either - tell them if you **feel** confused [AFFECT: -security] about certain aspects ...(concordance list *feel*: PYC205-A)

3. ... the sad inability we all as people experience at some stage or another to just **accept** [AFFECT: +satisfaction] or actually **appreciate** [AFFECT: +satisfaction] that it's diversity that gives meaning to life ... (concordance list *accept*: PYC205-A)

As is shown in example 1, meanings associated with happiness include positive or negative surges of delight or enjoyment. As was mentioned above (cf. 3.4.3), values of ATTITUDE were interpreted as having prosodic value. For instance, a verb such as *feel* (cf. §3.2 below), which does not encode ATTITUDE on its own, was associated with the encoding of AFFECT due to its collocation with evaluative lexis such as *desperate*, and *confused*. On the other hand, the verbs *accept* and *appreciate*, which explicitly encode as a result of their meaning, were seen to prosodically spread their attitude to their collocates: In example 1, the phrase *feel quite desperate* codes unhappiness [-happiness]. Example 2 shows that meanings associated with security include positive or negative surges of emotion relating to safety or confidence and here *feel confused* codes insecurity [-security]. 'Satisfaction' involves meanings relating to positive or negative surges of emotion in terms of contentment. In example 3, *accept* and *appreciate* code positive satisfaction.

In interpreting the 'involvement' features of the present study in terms of these subcategorisations of meaning, a particular feature was only interpreted as relating to JUDGEMENT if human behaviour was evaluated with relation to normality, capacity, tenacity, veracity and propriety. The following examples show the coding of such values:

§3.5 Analysing JUDGEMENT

1. Humans have been on earth for only a relatively short period of time. However, the human species has been **extraordinarily** successful [JUDGEMENT: +social esteem, capacity] in an evolutionary sense. (concordance list *extraordinarily*: APY202-J)
2. ... he is **highly** motivated [JUDGEMENT: +social esteem, tenacity] and gets the job done. (concordance list *highly*: IOP303-V)
3. He is a man of character and honour and is **very** reliable [JUDGEMENT: +veracity] (concordance list *very*: IOP303-V)
4. They **usually** [JUDGEMENT: +social esteem, normality] gather food during summer ...
(concordance list *usually*: SKA202-4)

Example 1 shows that meanings associated with capacity include positive or negative surges of emotion relating to capability. In example 1, *extraordinally successful* codes capacity [+capacity]. Example 2 shows that tenacity is associated with positive or negative determination or perseverance – *highly motivated* codes determination [+determination]. Veracity involves meanings relating to positive or negative loyalty or honour. In example 3, *very reliable* codes positive propriety [+propriety], while *usually* in example 4 codes JUDGEMENT in terms of normality [+normality].

'Involvement' features were analysed in terms of APPRECIATION in instances where real world entities are evaluated in terms of the impact they make on humans, their composition, or their social value. The following examples illustrate such codings:

§3.6 Analysing APPRECIATION

1. ... if you do this it will be **more** difficult [APPRECIATION: -impact] to do the learning experiences in this study guide. (concordance list difficult: PYC205-A)
2. ... try writing a few **very** short [APPRECIATION: composition] stories and then integrating them into one longer story. (concordance list *very*: PYC205-A)
3. People, who **find** it difficult [APPRECIATION: -impact] to talk about their feelings, should be encouraged to do it in writing. (concordance list *find*: IOP303-V)

Meanings associated with impact include positive or negative surges of emotion relating to the

impression something makes. In example 1, *difficult* codes negative impact [-impact]. In example 2 *very short* codes composition.   In example 3 *find* is associated very strongly with the appreciation of something in terms of negative impact (*find it difficult*), as a result *find* acquires attitudinal meaning through collocation.

(b) GRADUATION

The Appraisal meanings considered for the purposes of the present study in analysing sub-categorisations of GRADUATION comprise meanings by means of which other meanings are scaled up or down. While there is usually a clear indication whether values are scaled up or down, such scaling is not categorically positive or negative but represents dimensions of meaning. Two sub-categorisations of meaning were considered: FORCE and FOCUS.   FORCE concerns the scaling of meanings in terms of low or high intensity, quantity or enhancement, while FOCUS concerns the scaling of meanings in terms of marginal or core category membership. These sub-categorisations of meaning are summarised in Table 3.5 below. Meanings considered are those presented by White (2002):

Table 3.5: The Appraisal subsystem of GRADUATION

GRADUATION	
FORCE	
Upgrading ATTITUDE in terms of intensity, quantity, and enhancement	Downgrading ATTITUDE in terms of intensity, quantity, enhancement
FOCUS	
Upgrading ATTITUDE in terms of class membership	Downgrading ATTITUDE in terms of class membership

It has been mentioned (cf. 2.2.4.3) that in Appraisal the enormously varied lexical choices within the area of meaning relating to ATTITUDE, GRADUATION and ENGAGEMENT are seen as construing a small range of general categories of meaning. In terms of GRADUATION meanings are scaled up or down by either locating them on a scale from low to high intensity, or from core to marginal membership of a category. The small, but inclusive general categories of meaning relating to the scaling of meanings are shown in Table 3.5 above. 'Involvement' features relating to GRADUATION include general emphatics, general hedges, and amplifiers. A particular

features was analysed in terms of FORCE when it graded meanings in terms of intensity, quantity, and enhancement.

Following Hood (2004), I regarded meanings as grading in terms of 'intensity' when the values of ATTITUDE upgraded related to the quality of something. Meanings were regarded as graded in terms of 'quantity' when the grading concerned number (e.g. *more than a quarter, more than one hundred*); volume (*more than a litre*), or bulk (e.g. *completely empty, quite full*); meanings were regarded as graded in terms of intensity when the grading concerned qualities (*quite good, very useful*); and meanings were regarded as graded in terms of 'enhancement' where processes were concerned (e.g. *become more aware, analyse more critically).*

 Data analysis in terms of GRADUATION was done in the following way:

§3.7 Analysing FORCE

> 1. The lump from five to eight was not practical and was **very** [FORCE: +intensity] <u>strenuous</u> [APPRECIATION: -impact]. (concordance *very*: IOP303-V)
>
> 2. The education budget for 2000 was R45,5 billion. Yet, according to national statistics **more** [FORCE, +quantity]<u> than a quarter</u> of the country's population has had no schooling (concordance list *more*: APY202-J)
>
> 3. Notwithstanding the fact that such dwellings were **very** [FORCE, +enhancement] <u>poorly constructed</u> [APPRECIATION: -composition] they protected inhabitants from the forces of nature. (concordance list very: SKA202-4)

Example 1, above, shows the intensity [+intensity] of how *strenuous* the work shift (*lump*) *from five to eight* is. Example 2 shows the upgrading of the quantity [+quantity] of *the country's population* that *has had no schooling*; and example 3 shows enhancement [+enhancement] of the poor composition or construction of *dwellings.* The general preference in discourse for grading values up rather than down is confirmed by Hood (2004).

I interpreted 'involvement' features in terms of FOCUS if a particular feature was associated with meanings relating to enhancement or blurring of class or category membership. Of concern are meanings such as those illustrated in the examples presented in §3.8 below:

> 1. In other words, focussing on one's inner self and making contact <u>with whom one **really** is</u> [FOCUS: category membership]. (IOP303-V)
>
> 2. ... the sad inability we all as people experience at **some** [FOCUS: -category membership] <u>stage or another</u> to just accept or actually appreciate that it's diversity that gives meaning to life ... (concordance list *accept*: PYC205-A)
>
> 3. For example,"health-related transactions" is a synonym for "health communication" and "disseminator" is similar to "communicator" and "interpreter" means **more or less** [FOCUS: category membership] <u>the same as "recipient"</u>. (Concordance list *more or less*: IOP303-V)

Example 1 demonstrates the enhancing the category membership of something. As is illustrated here, the amplifier *really* enhances the identity of a person *(whom one really is)*. Examples 2 and 3 show the downgrading of category membership [-category membership]. The blurring of the boundaries in example 2 relates to the *stage* at *we all as people* accept *that it's diversity that gives meaning to life.* In example 3, *more or less* only associates the term *interpreter* in vague terms with *recipient.* As such, it downgrades the focus of the term *interpreter.*

(c) ENGAGEMENT

It has been mentioned (cf. 2.2.4.4) that the Appraisal subsystem of ENGAGEMENT considers the commitment a speaker or writer shows to a particular evaluative position. In Appraisal theory, the point of departure in analysing ENGAGEMENT is Bakhtin's (1986) notion of *dialogism* and *heteroglossia*, which considers the potential of texts to accommodate alternative viewpoints. Viewed from the perspective of dialogism, a particular evaluative position can be presented as accommodating other viewpoints (dialogic expansion), or as acknowledging but rejecting other viewpoints (dialogic contraction). In such instances, the evaluations are heteroglossic in nature as other positionings are acknowledged. However, an evaluative position can also be presented as disregarding other viewpoints. Such positionings are monologic bare assertions and pose a high risk of compromising interpersonal relations (White, 1998).

'Involvement' features associated with ENGAGEMENT include: private verbs, analytic negation, indefinite pronouns, general hedges, amplifiers, possibility modals and adverbs. Positions of ENGAGEMENT that were considered for the purposes of the present study include meanings associated with entertaining, proclaiming, attributing, and disclaiming other positions. Table 3.6 below shows the relation of these meanings to dialogic expansion or contraction. The meanings concerned are taken from White (2002):

Table 3.6: The Appraisal subsystem of ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGEMENT	
Dialogic expansion	**Dialogic contraction**
Entertain (e.g. consider, accommodate)	Proclaim (e.g. pronounce, endorse)
Attribute (e.g. ascribe, accredit)	Disclaim (deny)

According to White (2003), the meanings associated with the subsystem of ENGAGEMENT are characterised as either 'dialogically expansive' or 'dialogically contractive', with the distinction turning on the degree to which an utterance entertains dialogically alternative positions and voices (dialogic expansion), or alternatively, acts to challenge, or restrict the scope of such voices (dialogic contraction). In this regard, compare the examples presented under §3.9 below:

§3.9 Dialogic expansion and contraction

1. You don't have to select the 'best' or 'most correct' work, but anything that looks interesting, and that you **think** [ENGAGEMENT: dialogic expansion, entertain] your audience will enjoy [APPRECIATION: +impact] discussing. (concordance list *think*: PYC205-A)

2. Also, some of the cultural practices you may have witnessed during these travels **may** [ENGAGEMENT: dialogic expansion, entertain,] have been upsetting [APPRECIATION: -impact] or amusing to you.

3. **Everyone** knows [ENGAGEMENT: dialogic contraction, proclamation] that good [APPRECIATION: +social value] payment should be sought ...

4. This module does **not** provide [ENGAGEMENT: dialogic contraction, disclaim,] full training in facilitating groups [APPRECIATION: composition, -social value] ...

Example 1 shows that *think* renders a tentativeness to that which the addressee regards as making positive impact (*you think your audience will enjoy*). Due to the tentativeness coded by *think,* propositions are presented as open to alternative viewpoints, that is, *think* renders propositions more dialogically expansive. The same kind of meaning is also rendered by verbs such as *assume, hope*, and *imagine*.   Example 2 shows how the use of *may* presents a proposition as tentative. In this particular example, *may* presents the proposition that *practices witnessed* during travels could have had a negative impact as a tentative point of view. In contrast, the propositions quoted in examples 3 and 4 are of a dialogically contractive nature. As a result of the all-inclusive nature of the reference of *everyone*, in *everyone knows* (example

3), the proposition that *good payment* should be sought is presented as non-negotiable. The dialogic nature of the text is thus contracted.

The same dialogic contraction is demonstrated in example 4, through the notion of denial. This example shows the foregrounding and dialogically contractive nature of denial. In this particular example, the negative composition of the module, as a result of the fact that it *does not provide full training in facilitating groups*, is highlighted.

3.4.2.2 SUMMARY

It should be considered that while the analysing of features in terms of the Appraisal subsystems of GRADUATION and ENGAGEMENT are mostly unproblematic from an ideological point of view, the attributing of ATTITUDE can depend on the ideological position of the analyser. Thus, the criteria according to which values of ATTITUDE are attributed need to be stated explicitly. While these criteria were referred to above (cf. 3.4.2.1), I summarise them again here for the sake of clarity.

In the analyses of the present study, I used the Appraisal analysis criteria presented by Martin (2000) and White (2002). These criteria are as follows:

(a) AFFECT was seen to concern meanings relating to human emotions such as happiness, security and satisfaction. Happiness includes positive or negative surges of delight or enjoyment; meanings associated with security include positive or negative surges of emotion relating to safety or confidence; and satisfaction involves meanings relating to positive or negative surges of emotion in terms of contentment.

(b) JUDGEMENT was seen to concern meanings associated with human behaviour with regard to normality, capacity, tenacity, veracity, and propriety. Normality includes normal or abnormal human behaviour in terms of usuality; capacity includes positive or negative surges of emotion relating to capability; tenacity is associated with positive or negative determination or perseverance; veracity is associated with truthfulness (positive or negative loyalty or honour); and propriety includes meanings of positive or negative appropriateness or suitability.

(c) APPRECIATION was seen to concern meanings associated with positive or negative surges of emotion. Impact relates to the impression something makes on someone; composition concerns positive or negative evaluations about the design or construction

of something; and social value relates to how useful or useless something is.

3.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I presented the rationale underlying the research method followed in the present study. In this regard, I pointed out that the research method was prompted by three questions relating to linguistic enquiries about the characteristics of student-centred, distance learning teaching texts. It was mentioned that these research questions relate to theoretical, descriptive and applied aspects of the research problem. I explained that in terms of Seliger and Shohamy's (1989) views the research approach is analytic in nature and that it is aimed at revealing: what sort of analytical framework would enhance our current understanding of the linguistic basis of the notion student-centredness; how Unisa study guides developed before and after a student-centred approach to teaching was adopted at the university compare with regard to 'involvement' and appraisal; and how the development of student-centred texts for distance learning can be informed by shedding light on key linguistic characteristics of such texts.

I stated that the present study could be described as a hypothetico-deductive one as the purpose was to test two hypotheses: that distance education study guides developed with a student-centred approach to teaching are more 'involved' than study guides developed with a content-centred approach; and that study guides developed with a student-centred approach to teaching use more and different values of Appraisal than study guides developed with a content-centred approach.

It was also mentioned that the research design is primarily descriptive in nature in that it was aimed at analysing, comparing and describing the interpersonal implications of the 'involvement' features occurring in old and new Unisa study guides against the background of the principles underlying student-centredness. I pointed out that the envisaged outcomes of the research are that: an analytical framework is developed that would enhance our current understanding of the linguistic basis of the notion, 'student-centredness', in the context of distance learning texts; Unisa study guides developed before and after a student-centred approach to teaching was adopted are compared in terms of 'involvement' and appraisal; and that the future development of student-centred texts for distance learning are informed by shedding light on their key linguistic characteristics.

The selection of my data corpus was justified and I explained the analytical framework used to analyse the data. In this regard, I emphasised that the choice of the analytical framework was prompted by the need to develop a framework whereby the learning principles associated with a student-centred approach to teaching could be analysed linguistically. It was pointed out that the analytical framework allows for a quantitative exploration of 'involvement' and features of Appraisal; that it allows for an interpretation of Biber's perspectives on 'involvement' in terms of interpersonal positioning; and that it therefore allows for a calibration of distance learning teaching texts in terms of their relative student-centredness.

I furthermore explained the research procedures for the testing of the hypotheses in detail and, where necessary, demonstrated the procedures by means of examples. The procedures followed to interpret the quantitatively obtained data statistically were also discussed. An account was given of why certain 'involvement' features are suitable for comparing Unisa study guides in terms of 'involvement' and why some 'involvement' features can be associated with Appraisal. A special effort was made to explain the criteria and procedures I used to analyse my research data in terms of the Appraisal subsystems of ATTITUDE, GRADUATION and ENGAGEMENT. In other words, this chapter gives an explication of how I established and applied a goal-orientated analytic tool to answer my research questions.