

Analysing the Language Used in Resumes through Discourse Analysis for Social Intelligence

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ABSTRACT

A resume is a tool for individuals to showcase their professional background and values to market themselves for employment. It is a technical written discourse that requires specific terms and language to convey specific information about job applicants. Recent trends show that recruiters have started looking for candidates with a high level of social intelligence. In order to get through the screening process, job applicants not only need to showcase their values, but also high level of social intelligence through their resume. Nevertheless, fresh graduates do not seem to be concerned about producing good and effective resumes. In many cases, graduates are found to simply copy paste the required information into a standard template. Within this context, it is vital for future graduates to produce effective resumes that provide clear information about them and at the same time demonstrate social intelligence to capture the attention of recruiters. This study examined the presence of social intelligence in written discourse, focusing on the career goal section of four resumes produced by four final year students of one technical university in Malaysia. The resumes were also examined by four human resource officers to obtain their opinions. The career goal section was examined through transactional and interactional functions of language. The findings generated from this analysis were then mapped against Albrecht's of social intelligence dimensions, SPACE. Based on the mapping and the opinions of the human resource officers, it could be concluded that the language used to achieve transactional function of language can be associated with Clarity while language used to achieve interactional function of language can be associated with Situational Awareness. The study also highlighted that social intelligence can be identified in written discourse.

Keywords: social intelligence; written discourse; transactional; interactional; resume

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INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive world, fresh graduates need to stand out to enable them to secure a job. The selection criteria have shifted from focusing on academic performance to skills and values. One of the tools used to showcase these skills and values in job applications is the resume.

Resume is one of the most preferred tools used for screening applications (Derous & Ryan, 2019). Thus, writing a good and effective resume is vital because recruiters can recognise potential candidates through applicants' resumes (Bassah, 2022). When screening resumes, recruiters often look for elements such as the language and choice of words used to showcase their credentials (Rahman et al., 2020). In screening job applications, recruiters have started looking into using artificial intelligence such as the Natural Language Processing which analyses word choice and syntax (Sinha et al. 2021; Phan et al., 2021). Thus, the occurrence of language errors such as spelling mistakes in resumes can reduce applicants' chances of being shortlisted (Tomaska & Nosek, 2018; Martin-Lacroux et al., 2018).

Resumes need to be accurate so that the information conveyed is understood by recruiters (Welton & Moody, 2023). However, it has been reported that fresh graduates tend to produce vague statements, use unsuitable choice of words and provide inadequate information (Krishnan et al., 2017). As a result, their resumes become ambiguous and lack persuasion (Wijayanti, 2020). In addition, the skills written in the resume need to match with the job description indicated in the advertisement (Phan et al., 2021). It has been reported that recruiters will automatically dismiss resumes that are not customised according to or duplicated from the job advertisements (CareerBuilder, 2005).

Social intelligence is an element that employers seek in candidates, nowadays (Jameson et al., 2016). On average, recruiters generally shortlist three candidates to be interviewed (Ramanath et al., 2018). Thus, applicants who can write resumes that show evidence of social intelligence have a higher chance of being shortlisted for a job interview. The need for social intelligence among future workforce has raised questions about the presence of social intelligence in future graduates. As such, there is a need to find out the extent to which future graduates can demonstrate social intelligence particularly in their resumes. Through the discourse analysis of transactional and interactional functions of language (Brown & Yule, 2012; McCarthy, 1991), fresh graduates' resumes were analysed for the presence of social intelligence.

Social Intelligence is commonly examined on individuals' oral interactions. In addition, the transactional and interactional function of language are also employed on speaking discourses. This paper is an attempt to identify the presence of social intelligence in written discourse and the analysis of the written discourse uses the transactional and interactional function of language.

IMPACTS OF LANGUAGE IN WRITTEN DISCOURSE

Language may influence recipients' attitude and affect their understanding of a message. This can be observed in a study by Lin (2019) who examined the impacts of language errors produced by a political candidate on voters. In this study, it was found that the language errors produced by the political candidate caused voters to be less confident and affected the candidate's electability. In another study Hamzah et al. (2022) investigated miscommunication between non-native speaker pilots and air traffic controllers. The researchers examined the interactions between the two groups of participants. It was found that the language used by both groups led to miscommunication. The

message intended by one party was misunderstood by the other due to cultural differences. This study highlighted the importance of understanding the context and situation as this could affect recipients' attitude. Deckert (2021), however, found that language errors did not affect participants' understanding. The study examined the perceptions of viewers of foreign language films on the language errors in the subtitles. The findings showed that the language errors did not have any effect on the participants' attitude and thus did not affect their enjoyment and comprehension.

In the context of employment, the lack of language skills can affect the employment outcome (Almeida et al., 2012). Miin-Hwa and Chung (2021) examined the language used by professional writers to capture readers' interests in their argumentative essays. The study discussed the communicative functions required to write argumentative essays and the language resources required to write argumentative essays. In the context of writing resumes, the range of language and vocabulary is limited with fixed expressions and functions (Richards, 2015). As such, writing a resume that can capture recruiters' interests can be challenging.

Studies investigating language use in job application documents such as cover letters and resumes have focused on language use that leads to employment (Brandt & Herzberg, 2022), identifying gender through language use (Brandt & Herzberg, 2023; Yang et al., 2020; Castañeda Peña, 2008) and intuitive judgement on resumes (Sadler-Smith, 2022). Brandt and Herzberg (2020), for example, examined language used in cover letters and employment success. The researchers found that successful candidates used less self-centred language. Self-centred language focuses on individualism and personal gain (Ferro, 2013). In terms of the resume, self-centred language focuses on what the speaker needs and feels rather than what the recipient expects from the speaker. Applicants who produce self-centred language leave negative impressions on the recruiters that the applicants are self-centred and may not be able to work well in a team. Thus, resumes that contain self-centred language have higher possibility to be rejected.

In another study, Yang et al. (2022) investigated the language used by gender in CVs produced by non-native English speakers in the USA. The study found that female applicants tend to use language that gave the impression of less power. Sadler-Smith (2022) reported that recruiters use intuitive judgements when screening resumes. Both the study by Yang et al. (2022) and Sadler-Smith (2022) suggest that the way applicants write their resumes, particularly in terms of language use can influence recruiters' decision when screening job applications.

TRANSACTIONAL AND INTERACTIONAL FUNCTION OF LANGUAGE

Studies on transactional and interactional function of language have often focused on oral communication (Seely, 2019; Muñoz & Contreras, 2018). Seely (2019), for example, investigated ways in which international university students achieve transactional function in their oral interactions. The focus of the study was on the content of the message being conveyed. The study identified the communicative strategies by these students such as asking for clarification and expressing misunderstanding, to convey accurate information and achieve transactional function.

In another study, Muñoz and Contreras (2018) investigated the effects of using transactional communication strategies on pre-service teachers' speaking skills. These strategies included asking questions, repeating and comprehension checks. Humă (2023) investigated the process of oral interactions and how language is positioned as, not only the medium to transfer messages, but also the medium to promote social interaction to achieve interactional function. Social interaction involves sequential actions such as responding, interrupting, turn-taking, and

reacting (Richards, 2015). In written discourse, such as a resume, the strategies stated above seem to be irrelevant as recruiters do not have the opportunity to interact with the writer of the resume. This suggests that interactional function is absent from written discourses.

In general, although written discourses have limited “deictic expression”, they “still encode a high degree of shared knowledge between reader and writer” (McCarthy, 1991, p.149). In resume writing, the content is written based on a job advertisement. The reference to the job advertisement is subtle but it can be observed that a resume is written based on something (job advertisement), for a target audience (recruiters) and to gain something (be hired). In other words, it is possible for a technical written discourse such as a resume to contain both transactional and interactional functions of language.

According to Brown and Yule (2012), transactional function focuses on the message being conveyed while interactional function focuses on the way the message is being conveyed. From the transactional view, linguistic accuracy is not important (Richards, 2015) but information accuracy is (Brown & Yule, 2012). Furthermore, the intention is to inform or get someone to do something (McCarthy, 1991). As for the resume, the intention is to inform recruiters about applicants’ professional background with the intention recruiters will hire them. The content of a resume is written according to headings and sub-headings which “indicate to the reader how the author intends his argument to be chunked” (Brown & Yule, 2012, p.7). From the interactional view, language is used to establish and maintain social relationships in order to negotiate role-relationships such as relationship between a boss and an employee or turn changing in a conversation (Brown & Levinson, 1978). In terms of the resume, the writer may also intend to establish a connection with the recruiters so that the writer would have the opportunity to be shortlisted. Within this context, the resume needs to have interactional function as well.

A discourse is “rarely all one thing or the other” (McCarthy, 1991, p.136). In other words, a discourse is generally made up of transactional and interactional. It can be determined, however, that a discourse is mainly transactional or interactional (Brown & Yule, 2012). In some instances, it is challenging to determine whether a statement has interactional or transactional function. For example, the function of “My goodness, it’s cold” (Brown & Yule, 2012, p.3) can either be to transmit information (transactional) or to be friendly and establish social relationships (interactional). This study did not determine whether resumes are mainly transactional or interactional. Rather, this study examined the transactional and interaction functions in the resume to determine evidence of social intelligence in the resume.

Richards (2015) have identified the skills required to achieve transactional and interactional function. These skills are shown in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1. Skills to achieve transactional and interactional functions.

Transactional	Interactional
Explaining a need or intention	Opening and closing markers
Describing something	Choosing topics-Making small talks
Asking questions	Recounting personal incidents and experiences
Confirming information	Turn-taking
Justifying opinion	Interrupting
Clarifying understanding	Reacting to others
Making comparison	
Agreeing and disagreeing	

Although written discourse is commonly used for transactional functions, it is possible to use written discourse to maintain social relationships (Brown & Yule, 2012). However, using written discourse to achieve interactional function is challenging due to the absence of paralinguistic cues such as gestures, facial expressions and voice quality which are only available through the spoken discourse. Moreover, in written discourse, writers do not receive immediate feedback to create interactions and establish social relationships. As such, interactional function may not be achieved. In the literature review section, the issue of “self-centred language” in resumes has been discussed. Self-centred language refers to words used to reflect individual benefits and personal gains (Ferro, 2013). For example, words that reflect what a person gets rather than what the person gives or contributes. This type of language can affect the interactional function of language in a written discourse.

Within the context of job application, written discourse such as resumes help recruiters to get information about applicants. The way in which resumes are produced by applicants (writers) can influence recruiters’ (readers) interpretation and decisions when screening job applications. This study examined transactional and interactional functions in a written discourse, particularly a resume. The analysis provided an understanding of the applicants’ efforts to communicate their capabilities and values through written discourse and the extent to which the language use could establish relationships with the recruiters (readers).

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Social intelligence refers to an individual’s ability to read people’s feelings, respond to those feelings with empathy and build relationships with other people (Goleman, 2006). It involves being conscious and sensitive towards people’s emotions, feelings, and way of thinking, while making use of social cues to act according to their surroundings (Goswami, 2018). It includes the capacity to talk clearly and persuasively, which requires saying the right thing at the right moment (Subramaniam et al., 2019).

Albrecht (2006) posits five dimensions of social intelligence with the acronym S.P.A.C.E. which stands for Situational Awareness, Presence, Authenticity, Clarity, Empathy. This study presents the analysis of situational awareness and clarity. Situational Awareness refers to the ability to perceive one’s social situations that enables them to perform appropriate action in an appropriate setting. Clarity refers to the competency of delivering clear messages that fit the purpose to avoid misinterpretations.

When an employee sends an email to a colleague in a different department requesting for a report to be sent immediately, he or she needs to accurately convey the message to avoid misunderstanding (Clarity). At the same time, the employee needs to be aware that making such a request seems authoritative which can instigate unpleasant reactions and the report may not be obtained (Situational Awareness). Thus, he or she needs to consider the language used in order to ensure that the request is not misunderstood or instigates unpleasant reactions, and the report can be obtained. Ensuring that the message is accurately conveyed reflects transactional function of language while ensuring that the language used can establish relationships and does not instigate unpleasant reactions reflects interactional function of the language.

People who do not have clarity tend to give too many unorganised details which can bore the recipients of the information (Albrecht, 2006). In the case of a resume, recruiters require the exact information given within a short time. Inability to achieve this results in clarity not fulfilled.

The dimensions of social intelligence have been commonly used to examine social intelligence in oral interactions. This study attempts to examine social intelligence in written discourse, particularly in a resume, which is a form of technical writing.

METHOD

This study employed qualitative case study to investigate a phenomenon in its real life context and has the ability to capture the complex nature of the phenomenon being investigated (Yin, 2014). Within this context, the study examined how future graduates produce their resume based on their own knowledge and understanding, and without any intervention. The study examined transactional and interactional functions of language in a resume, which is a type of technical writing. The intention of using these functions of language was not to determine whether resume is primarily transactional or primarily interactional. Rather, the analysis of the functions of language was used to map against the social intelligence dimensions, Situational Awareness and Clarity.

A total of 80 resumes were collected from final year students who attended a course that required them to produce a resume as part of their assessments. Out of this number, four resumes were randomly selected. The number of resumes selected was decided based on the time that the human resource officers were willing to spend on. Based on Richards (2015) identification of skills in the earlier discussion, the following skills were selected to examine the resume for the presence of transactional and interactional functions (Table 2). These skills were identified by the authors as applicable for written discourses.

TABLE 2. Skills that are applicable for written discourses (Adapted from Richards, 2015).

Transactional	Interactional
Explaining a need or intention	Opening and closing conversation
Describing something	Choosing topics
	Recounting personal incidents and experiences
	Reacting to others (reacting to job advertisements)

Four resumes produced by four final year students were collected and examined for transactional and interactional functions language. Three recruiters agreed to participate in this study. These recruiters were from companies which accepted students from the study site to do their industrial training. In addition, these companies are categorised as the low value-added companies. Low value-added companies are companies that focus on manufacturing and do not own the products that they manufacture (Maverick, 2022). These recruiters were selected as they were the ones who responded to the invitation to participate in this study. The recruiters underwent the think-aloud protocol to obtain insights into the way they screen resumes in terms of the language use and how the information in the resumes was written. The think aloud protocol requires a participant to verbalise his or her thoughts when performing a task (Ericsson & Simon, 1993). The use of this protocol helped to examine the recruiters' thought processes. During the think aloud session, the recruiters were asked to verbalise their thoughts about the resume. The session was conducted in a conversational manner to create a relaxing environment. The recruiters' perceptions were used to support the findings of the resume. The data obtained from the think aloud protocol was analysed using Braun and Clarke (2006)'s six-step analysis. The six steps include, a) familiarising with the text, b) reading and rereading transcription to generate the codes,

c) sorting and rearranging codes to develop themes, d) reviewing the theme, e) analysing data under each, and f) thematic connections are made, and conclusions are drawn. Then, the findings were mapped against the social intelligence framework. This study is part of a larger study which investigated social intelligence in job application documents. This study presents the mapping against two of the social intelligence dimensions, Situational Awareness and Clarity.

FINDINGS

This section is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the analysis of the resumes based on transactional and interactional functions, supported by the findings of the think aloud protocol. In the second part, the findings generated from the transactional and interactional functions analysis are mapped against the Situational Awareness and Clarity dimensions of Social Intelligence.

THE PROFILE SUMMARY

In general, there are several styles or templates to write a resume. The four selected resumes have the similar layout which included profile, skills, education and work experience. The part of a resume that recruiters generally screen is the profile summary.

What you write [at the beginning] represents who you are.

[HR1]

The profile plays an important role.

[HR2]

Therefore, this study only presents the analysis of the profile of the resume.

The resumes are coded as RS1 (Resume Sample 1), RS2 (Resume Sample 2), RS3 (Resume Sample 3) and RS4 (Resume Sample 4). In the discussion, the term “writer” is used to refer to the individuals who wrote the resume and the term “reader” is used to refer to the recruiters. The supporting statements by the recruiters are coded as HR.

When examining RS1, it was found that the writer included the name of the position “assistant baker” at the top section of her resume before the profile summary.

Skilled Baker enthusiastic about adding modern twists to classic baked goods. Specialising in producing high-quality doughnuts, cookies, cupcakes and tarts. Experienced in developing new recipes and fulfilling customers' orders.

[RS1_Profile]

The above extract is the profile summary from RS 1. She made her intention clear by introducing the post that she intended to apply for, and her profile description was the sequence of events that follow. The profile described her intention and reason for becoming an assistant baker. Within this context, the transactional function is achieved. It could be said that the content (or topic) of the profile summary is written in response to the job advertisement and had addressed the requirements stated in the advertisement. Further study is needed to examine ways in which applicants' response to job advertisements in their resumes. Within this context, interactional function is achieved.

In her profile description, the writer indicated that she intended to bring new approaches to baking and indicated a sense of innovation when she wrote “enthusiastic about adding modern twists to classic baked goods” and “developing new recipes”. In today's world, innovation helps

businesses keep up with the market trends (Boyles, 2022). The description “...producing high-quality doughnuts... developing new recipes” indicates that she is describing her capabilities and “recounting her personal experiences”. This indicates potential contribution to the company that she applies to. In general, these descriptions transmitted information (transactional function) about her to the reader. The phrases used to transmit information about her capabilities, are phrases that could get readers to want to find out about her more. Further examination on the phrases “enthusiastic about adding modern twists to classic baked goods” and “fulfilling customers’ orders” are not only about transmitting information about who the writer is but also about her feelings about baking and establish a connection with the recruiters (interactional).

The description of the RS2 profile is general where the job the writer intends to apply is not clear. The name of the position he is applying for is not stated in the resume.

Loyal and resourceful leader with strong organisational skills. Demonstrates advanced problem solving and task prioritization. Looking for experience to improve the skills and knowledge learned. Passionate about seeking knowledge, developing self-confidence, and leading in a working environment. History of successful crews completing work.

[RS2_Profile]

In the above description, the writer transmitted information about his values and skills which included organisational, leadership and problem-solving skills. Within this context, the transactional function is achieved.

Unlike the writer of RS1, the writer of RS2 did not provide information about how he could use his values and skills to contribute to the company. Nonetheless, transactional function has been achieved as the writer has explained his intentions and described about himself. The writer described his intentions about “looking for experience to improve the skills and knowledge learned” and “seeking knowledge”. This information which reflected transactional function, described what he expected to gain from the company. This is an example of self-centred language which reflect individualism as discussed in the literature review. The words “strong” and “passionate” may represent interactional function, but the self-centred language used in the profile may disconnect the readers from reading the resume further. In general, the writer of RS2 provided a general profile and was not customised according to a specific position or job advertisement. It could be said that the content (topic) was not a result of responding a job advertisement. Therefore, it could be concluded that interactional function may not have been achieved.

For RS3 profile, even though the name of the position that she is applying for is not indicated, the description that she has written provided the information about the position. It could be said that the content of her profile was the result of her reacting to the job advertisement (interactional).

Someone who is dedicated to teaching and facilitating the learning and growth of students and is concerned about the welfare of students, parents, and colleagues. Able to manage the classroom behaviour and time and able to motivate students. In addition, always think positively among students and staff, and be able to prepare teaching materials well.

[RS3_Profile]

In this description, the writer described her intention to become a teacher by explaining about her values and how she could contribute to the third party (students) which could also benefit the organisation (the school). She described skills and values that she had (transactional). Instead of simply saying that her skills and abilities included teaching skills, time and classroom

management skills and preparing teaching materials, she included phrases like “dedicated to teaching”, “concerned about the welfare of”, and “always think positively”. This is to make the resume sound friendly as what McCarthy explained “to relieve the overwhelmingly ‘transactional’ nature of the rest of the text” (McCarthy, 1991:188). This shows an attempt by the writer to establish relationships with the readers. Apart from that, her profile is customised according to the position that she applied for resulting from responding to the job advertisement. Within this context, interactional function is achieved.

Software Developer

Passionate and analytical university student working toward Information Technology (IT) in VV University. Aim to gain experience and apply knowledge of software developing at XXX Sdn Bhd.

[RS4_Profile]

In RS4, there is evidence that the writer has attempted to respond to the job advertisement. He wrote the name of the position in the resume and crafted his profile to reflect the position. The phrase “apply knowledge of software developing at XXX Sdn. Bhd. [the name of the company he was applying to], indicated his effort to customise his resume. At this stage, it seems that he may have achieved interactional function. Nonetheless, the language used seems to give an unclear message. For example, “analytical university student working toward Information Technology”. His intended message is unclear. In addition, there are some language errors in his profile summary. For instance, “apply knowledge of software developing”.

Language represents who you are. To me, grammatical error is fatal. Very dangerous.

[HR1]

...make sure there is no [language] errors.

[HR3]

Richards (2015) indicates that linguistic accuracy is not important from a transactional view. However, based on the view of the two recruiters above, it can be concluded that the language errors can affect transactional function, causing the application to be rejected. On the other hand, another recruiter did not seem to be distracted by language errors.

Even though there are spelling errors, as long as the experience is OK [clear]...

[HR2]

This indicates that there are discrepancies among recruiters in terms of how they view resumes. This requires further investigation. Nevertheless, HR2 has highlighted the need for the information to be clear when she said “the experience is OK [clear]”.

Despite the discrepancies the key idea that can be generated here is the clarity of the information conveyed. Within this context, it can be concluded that transactional function is not achieved.

The writer of RS4 has also included the phrase “aim to gain experience” which is similar to RS2. This indicates the occurrence of self-centred language. This language can hinder the achievement of interactional function of the resume.

Based on the discussion above, it could be observed that the writer of RS1 and RS3 did not merely describe about their values and capabilities (transactional), but also attempted to interact and establish social relationships with the recruiters reading their resume (interactional).

If an applicant wrote “encourage innovative thinking”, I want to validate that point. I want to see the applicant’s experience [in the experience section in the resume].

[HR1]

It could be said that the profile summary in RS1 and RS3 have created the “opening conversation” in their profile summary which could capture recruiters’ interests to find out more about them.

This section has highlighted the transactional and interactional functions of the language used in three resumes. The discussion focused on whether the language used in the resume is to convey messages or to establish relationships with the readers. The next section discusses these functions in relation to social intelligence dimensions Situational Awareness and Clarity.

DISCUSSION

In the previous section, it has been discussed that the writer of RS1 used language that reflected interactional function which promoted interaction between her and the readers. Her resume was customised according to the post that she applied for. This element can also be found in RS3.

It will be good when applicants can customise their resumes according to the position that they are applying for.

[HR1]

This means that both writers understood the situation and responded to the requirements indicated in the job advertisement. This can help establish a connection between the writer (applicant) and the reader (the recruiter). By understanding the requirements indicated in the job advertisement, the writers of RS1 and RS3 were able to respond appropriately and produced a profile that achieved interactional function. In this context, the interactional language function used reflects the presence of situational awareness. Apart from that, both RS1 and RS3 contain clear description about themselves and their intentions. The language used has achieved transactional function and the descriptions reflect clarity.

The profile description in RS2 has achieved transactional function as the language used described the skills about the writer clearly. However, the writer did not produce the resume in response to the job advertisement and therefore interactional function was not achieved. As a result, his resume was not customised according to a specific position or the job advertisement.

Some applicants use a one-size-fits-all resume.

[HR2]

In addition, the writer of RS2 was more concerned about what he needed and what he could achieve instead of addressing the requirements stated by the hiring company. This language can also be found in RS4. This description reflects self-centred language which may cause the application be rejected (Brandt and Herzberg, 2022). The presence of self-centred language can affect the interactional function of language. Albrecht (2006) stated that:

If you are self-centred, preoccupied with your own feelings, needs and interests, and not open to the feelings, needs, and interests of others, it will probably be more difficult for you to get them to accept you...

(p. 34)

In the context of social intelligence, the use of self-centred language in RS2 and RS4 reflects that the writers are self-centred and preoccupied with their own needs and interests. This suggests that situational awareness is not present in RS2 and RS4. When examining for clarity, RS2 has not achieved clarity because the writer did not provide clear information about his values and intentions. The description was not specific to a particular position and not responding to a particular job advertisement. For example, the sentences “Looking for experience to improve the skills and knowledge learned” and “Passionate about seeking knowledge” in RS2 did not provide information about what skills and knowledge he wanted to improve or seek. Thus, although the description indicates that transactional function of language, it has not achieved clarity. Based on the profile summary of RS2, it could be concluded that this resume lacks evidence of social intelligence.

For RS4, the language used caused the information about his skills and values to be unclear. Although he attempted to customise his resumes to reflect the position, he did not consider the language used that may affect his intended meaning. In this context, he lacked situational awareness where he did not consider the impacts of language errors on recruiters’ attitude towards him. In addition, the language errors had affected the clarity of his message. As such, it can be concluded that he is not able to demonstrate social intelligence in his resume.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the functions of language, transactional and interactional, in a resume which is a technical written discourse. The findings have highlighted some key elements in relation to functions of language in technical written discourse.

First, a written discourse is commonly used for transactional function except for genres such as thank you or love letters (Brown & Yule, 2012). However, based on the discussion above, it is possible that technical written discourse such as resume can be used for interactional functions. Although the vocabulary and language used in a resume are limited due to the nature of this genre, writers can still produce resumes that can achieve interactional function of language. In addition, it is also possible to achieve transactional and interactional functions in a resume as it can both transmit information as well as establish relationships with the readers.

Second, social intelligence is commonly displayed in oral interactions or written texts generated from oral interactions. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that social intelligence can be identified through written discourse such as resumes. This involves the use of words and phrases that do not reflect self-centred language. The use of self-centred language indicated that the writer is only interested in what he or she can gain while the need of others is considered as insignificant.

Third, in producing resumes, applicants need to first understand the requirements and interests of the hiring company through their job advertisement. In other words, applicants need to understand the language used to transmit the information prior to producing their resume (transactional function). By examining the language, applicants would be able to understand the expectations of the hiring company (situational awareness) and respond to those expectations. In this way, applicants would be able to produce resume that can establish relationships with the recruiters (interactional) and achieve clarity.

Fourth, in producing resumes, applicants need to consider the importance of language accuracy in resumes. Language errors can affect the clarity of the message being conveyed, leading to failure in achieving transactional function. In addition, language errors can lead to the

impression that an applicant lacks social intelligence, in this case, situational awareness and clarity. Language errors, either major or minor seem to have impacts of recruiters' attitude towards applicants' application. As the findings have shown discrepancies, this requires further investigation.

Based on the discussion above, it could be concluded that the language used to achieve transactional function of language can be associated with Clarity while language used to achieve interactional function of language can be associated with Situational Awareness. It could also be concluded that Situational Awareness plays an important role in establishing social relationships that can lead to harmonious environment whether within institutional, workplace or social context.

This study has a number of limitations which can be the basis for future studies. As indicated in the methodology section, the recruiters who participated in this study were from companies categorised as low value-added. While these recruiters have provided invaluable insight into the ways in which they screen resumes, studies involving recruiters from high value-added can provide comparisons in terms of how recruiters from these two categories screen resumes. Apart from that, this study examined on the presence (or absence) of social intelligence. Considering that there are tests that can measure social intelligence, future studies can take into account measuring social intelligence of future graduates. Lastly, this paper has highlighted the importance of situational awareness in producing a resume that is customised according to the expectations of the recruiters. This suggests that candidates need to understand the details included in the job advertisements. An investigation is required on the language used in job advertisements that can affect the presence of situational awareness or any other dimensions of social intelligence.

This study has highlighted the importance of language in producing an effective and powerful resume. The language used can reflect the presence (or absence) of social intelligence in job application documents, particularly in resumes.

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