

## ANALYSIS OF THE LANCE FEATURE ARTICLES: A DIACHRONIC STUDY

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### ABSTRACT

*This descriptive-analytic research aimed at presenting the textual changes found in The LANCE feature articles from 1998 – 2017. The data included at least one issue per year in the 20-year span from Colegio de San Juan de Letran – Manila's student publication, The LANCE. Furthermore, codes and subcodes were created for mapping after having all the articles encoded. To clearly provide results for the diachronic study and differences on the textual parts, the feature articles in the 20-year span were divided to two groups: the first one with the first ten years and the second group complete the latter ten years. The said groups were analysed and interpreted in a comparative manner. Thus, it was found out that rhetoric plays a central role in The LANCE feature articles by means of moving the readers through arguments. Based from the aforementioned results, it was found out that this study is geared towards the improvement of language teaching, specifically in academic writing.*

**Keywords:** *Diachronic, Lexis, Neologis, The Lance*

### INTRODUCTION

Language, having been known for its dynamic characteristic, is becoming increasingly flexible at the present generation. One word can pertain to many definitions and vice versa. People, especially the younger generations, or the so-called millennial, tend to coin new words which they use in their daily conversations. This inevitable occurrence of newly coined words may lead evident change in the Second Language communication.

On the other note, despite the vastness and richness of the English language, questions with regard to the possible drawbacks of this phenomenon become evident.

Hence, with the indomitable emergence of newly coined words brought about by the millennial came upon the consciousness of English language teachers. How do language educators teach modern students? What are the other techniques apart from the traditional ones?

Thus, this study attempted to discover the theories related to the transition of language with emphasis on lexis, rhetorical style, and dynamic language use.

As a researcher and a second language practitioner, it is hoped that this study could be an avenue for language teachers to update themselves of the trends in language which could possibly

be of help in coming up with strategies in teaching English as a Second Language, specifically in teaching writing, and to understand how language transformation affects communication (both written and oral) in the classroom setting.

### METHODOLOGY

The present study was conceptualized along Noam Chomsky's Theory of Language (1960), William Mann and Sandra Thompson's (1988) Rhetorical Structure Theory, and Ferdinand de Saussure's Language Theory (1974).

The aforementioned theories are essential in the development of this study in which the Chomsky's Theory focuses on language transformation through changes in the lexical items, while Rhetorical Structure Theory's aim is to support the study by providing comprehensive analyses of written text and describing relationship between them. Lastly, the Language Theory purports to justify the need to conduct this study as it proves the existence of language dynamism which will be premeditated through feature articles.

The research was descriptive-analytic in nature for its central interest lies in the interpretation of actual language use in textual rhetoric elicited from feature articles and the analysis of dynamic

language use. Utilizing Critical Discourse Analysis, the corpus were described and interpreted. To support the descriptive interpretation of the articles, tabular presentation of the code frequencies were also taken from MAXQDA sub-code statistics.

The corpora were collected personally from the said school. A formal request letter, noted by the research adviser was given to the student publication moderator to seek permission for the access of feature article archives. All pertinent pages were scanned manually so as to countercheck the inclusion and

exclusion criteria set by the researcher. Articles issued with no relevance to the study were excluded.

Hence, the reference corpus included all the texts on the selected feature articles in the 20-year span. The data collection started in October 2017 and ended in April 2018. The period of coverage for each feature articles were originally set as at least one issue per year with an exact count of 20,077-word corpora were dealt with in this study.

## FINDINGS

**Table 1. Summary of Comparative Lexical Analysis in Feature Articles of The LANCE over the past 20 years**

Group 1 (1998 - 2007)	Differences	Group 2 (2008 - 2017)	Differences	Similarities (Group 1 and 2)
1998	use of interjection for more creative expression	2009	occurrence of digital terms	<b>1998 - 2017</b> The use of puns was not evident; the presence of transitional devices was consistent
	occurrence of words we now know as "archaic"	2010	manifestation of new word variations as alternatives to the previously used words	<b>1999 - 2017</b> There was no frequency on the use of interjections
2003, 2006	existence of borrowed words from Spanish and Filipino	2011, 2013	"verbing of nouns"	<b>2007, 2008, 2011, 2012</b> The use of word formations (blending)
		2014 - 2016	presence of shorter word counterparts (neologisms)	

Table 1 revealed that some of terms from 1998 - 2007 feature articles are no longer commonly used in the present year. Also, the use of interjection occurred only once in this group, specifically in 1998 issue, which implies that injection does not play a vital role in The LANCE feature articles. Consequently, the occurrence of borrowed words from Spanish and Filipino origin was apparent in years 2003 and 2006. It entails that The LANCE feature articles are not limited to English words. Additionally, word formation such as "blending" was noted in the articles from the year 2007 and 2008. However, there was no frequency on the use of puns over the first 10-year span.

On the other hand, the prevalence of digital terms such as "e-groups", "web", "Powerpoint presentation", "cellular phones" and "inboxes" started in the year 2009 feature article issue. Also, in year 2010, there was a manifestation of new word variations as alternatives to the previously used words [e.g. teeny-weeny (1998) = tiny/ little (2010)]. It denotes that lexis, as a part of the language, is continuously evolving. In years 2011 and 2013, "verbing of nouns" (e.g. demoed, lunched, partied) was noted. The use of word formation such as "blending" was also apparent in 2011 and 2012 feature articles. In the latter years, specifically

2014 to 2016, the presence of shorter word counterparts (e.g. drams for dramas) was **observed**.

**Table 2. Summary of the use of Rhetorical Styles in Feature Articles of The LANCE over the past 20 years**

	Code Frequency	Percentage	Percentage (valid)
Ethos	12	46.15	54.55
Logos	6	23.08	27.27
Pathos	5	19.23	22.73
Documents with code(s)	22	84.62	100.00
Documents without code(s)	4	15.38	-
Analyzed Documents	26	100.00	-

As revealed in table 2, from the twenty-six (26) analyzed articles, four (4) did not contain any rhetorical style. With this, it can be seen that the most common rhetorical style used was "ethos" with twelve (12) code frequency at 56% valid percentage, followed by "logos" with six (6) code frequency at 27% valid

percentage, and “pathos” with five (5) code frequency recorded at 23%.

**Table 3. Summary of the dynamic language use in Feature Articles of The LANCE in the past 20 years**

	Code Frequency	Percentage	Percentage (valid)
Enumeration	15	57.69	62.50
Parenthesis	12	46.15	50.00
Direct Quotations	11	42.31	45.83
Appositive	7	26.92	29.17
Repetition	7	26.92	29.17
Parallelism	6	23.08	25.00
Antithesis	5	19.23	20.83
Rhetorical Question	5	19.23	20.83
Idioms	4	15.38	16.67
Metonymy	3	11.54	12.50
Metaphor	3	11.54	12.50
Hyperbole	3	11.54	12.50
Simile	3	11.54	12.50
Synecdoche	2	7.69	8.33
Personification	2	7.69	8.33
Amplification	2	7.69	8.33
Allusion	2	7.69	8.33
Epizuexis	2	7.69	8.33
Anaphora	1	3.85	4.17
Euphemism	1	3.85	4.17
Antimetabole	1	3.85	4.17
Documents with code(s)	24	92.31	100.00
Documents without code(s)	2	7.69	-
Analyzed Documents	26	100.00	-

As shown from table 3, the most common feature of the The LANCE feature articles is the use of enumeration with the code frequency of fifteen (15) at 62.50% valid percentage. It was followed by parenthesis with the code frequency of twelve (12) at 50.00%, direct quotations with the code frequency of eleven (11) at 45.83%, appositive and repetition with the code frequency of seven (7) at 29.17%, parallelism with the code frequency of six (6) at 25.00%, antithesis and rhetorical question with the code frequency of five (5) at 20.83%, idioms with the code frequency of four (4) at 16.67%. Moreover, metonymy, metaphor, hyperbole, and simile were recorded to have obtained the code frequency of three (3) at 12.50%, while synecdoche, personification, amplification, allusion, and epizuexis acquired the code frequency of two (2) at 8.33%, whereas anaphora,

euphemism, and antimetabole were coded once with 4.17% valid percentage.

Having seen the results, it denotes that dynamic language use stayed the same over the past 20 years. Although there is little variation on its frequency, its presence still remains constant. With this analysis, it can be implied that the use of direction quotations, enumerations, and other figurations play a vital role in writing feature articles.

**DISCUSSION**

The said study showed the lexical evolution was evident in the examined feature articles. In terms of Rhetorical Styles, “ethos”, having gained 50% frequency in the first ten (10) years and 55% in the latter years among all the coded articles, implied that the use of authority to persuade an audience to believe in their character was apparent. The use of credible sources was necessary to come up with their own reliable point in the text. Although dynamics of language use over the past 20 years showed little variation on its frequency, its presence still remained constant. For the functions of rhetoric in The LANCE feature articles, based on the descriptive and tabular interpretations, it was suggested that the frequency on the use of rhetoric in The LANCE over the past 20 years was high.

With the data and findings presented, it is implied that inculcating the importance of the use of rhetoric in writing should be observed. Meanwhile, in terms of lexis, dynamics of language use, this study can be an avenue for Second Language Teachers to update themselves of the current trends the English language, with emphasis in formal written communication.

**CONCLUSION**

Grounded from the findings, it can be concluded that textual part in The LANCE Feature Articles have changed over the past 20-year span. It was manifested in the characteristics such as lexis, rhetorical style, and dynamic language use. The possible contributing factors to this said phenomenon include the diversity of writers, which could have affected the written text with their unique style, diction, and tone. Also, denominalization, word formations, and neologism were also said to one of the factors in the emergence of newly coined words added in the lexicon.

Thus, this study is deemed significant in the field of language teaching as it allows teachers to update themselves of the current situation and trends in the said language, to integrate the said changes in the classroom setting, and to inculcate to students that the use of rhetoric style is indeed an imperative in academic

writing. Having said all the findings and conclusions, it boils down that this academic output is aiming towards the development of new teaching approach and/ or strategies.

## REFERENCES

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