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تحية طيبة وبعد ،،،

تتقدم إليكم جامعة بدر بالقاهرة بالشكر على ما تبذلونه من جهد مادي ومعنوي لإصدار المجلة،
فتميزكم المشهود خير قدوة، ممتنين لعملكم الدؤوب وتفوقكم الباهر، ونتمنى لكم المزيد من
النجاحات المستقبلية.

تحريراً في يوم الأربعاء الموافق 2024/08/07.

رئيس مجلس الأمناء

د/ حسن القلا

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The Proximization of Threat in Anti-Plastic Discourse: A Linguistic Analysis

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Abstract: Plastic pollution is a serious environmental issue that constitutes a grave threat to life on Planet Earth. Due to its durability and versatility, plastic has become part and parcel of every aspect of our lives, revolutionizing several fields like medicine, technology and various industrial sectors. The problem with plastic is that it does not readily decompose, which results in the accumulation of plastic litter in terrestrial areas as well as on sea and ocean floors where it degrades very slowly into smaller particles called “microplastics”, causing the death of many marine creatures through ingestion, suffocation or entanglement. The present paper presents a qualitative and quantitative linguistic analysis of a Ted Talk about the grave consequences of plastic pollution delivered by Patricia Villarrubia-Gómez, a researcher and PhD candidate who is concerned with the environmental impact of plastic pollution. Using the proximization theory proposed by Cap (2013), the paper aims to analyze the lexico-grammatical items enacting the categories of proximization. The analysis reveals that the speaker uses spatial, temporal and axiological proximization in order to draw the threat of plastic pollution closer to her audience in an attempt to solicit their approval of the preventive measures she proposes to neutralize the negative effects of plastic pollution.

Key Words: Plastic Pollution, Proximization Theory, Spatial Proximization, Temporal Proximization, Axiological Proximization

1. Introduction:

Plastic pollution is a most pressing environmental issue that constitutes a serious threat to life on Earth. Horrifying amounts of plastic litter are now covering large parts of land as well as sea and ocean floors. The problem is that plastic is now part and parcel of our lives. Due to its durability and versatility, plastic has revolutionized various fields like medicine and technology. It is used in the manufacturing of medical devices, technological devices, toys, food wrapper, plastic bottles, etc. Hence, plastic has become almost indispensable.

The main problem with plastic is that it does not readily decompose; it needs years and years to degrade, so it accumulates in terrestrial areas and on sea and ocean floors. The amount of plastic that is dumped into landfills and waterbodies is gigantic, and with the passage of time, plastic degrades into smaller particles called microplastics found in the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat. In the marine environment, plastic poses a major threat to marine creatures, causing the

death of a big number of them through ingestion, suffocation or entanglement. Plastic, indeed, is a serious threat to life on Earth.

Using the proximization theory proposed by Cap (2013a), the present study aims to analyze the proximization of the threat of plastic pollution in a Ted Talk delivered by Patricia Villarrubia-Gómez, a researcher and PhD candidate who is mainly concerned in her research with the environmental impact of plastic pollution. The text analyzed highlights the threats that plastic pollution poses to human health and the environment as well as the measures proposed by the speaker to preempt the negative consequences of this environmental crisis. Even though the proximization theory was originally meant to analyze the proximization of threat and legitimization issues in political discourse, Cap (2013b) suggests that it can be used to analyze various texts that belong to different types of public discourse (p. 294). Cap himself analyzes the proximization of threat in texts that tackle the issues of cancer (medicine), climate change (environment) and cyber threats (technology). Proximization is mainly about narrowing the distance between a threat and the addressee(s), and the main aim of proximization, whether in political texts or other types of texts, is soliciting the audience's legitimization of the preventive measures that the speaker/writer proposes in order to preempt the future consequences of a certain threat.

2. Research Objectives:

Using the proximization theory proposed by Cap (2013) to analyze Patricia Villarrubia-Gómez's Ted Talk, in which she proximizes the threat of plastic pollution and highlights its grave consequences, the present paper aims to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the types of proximization (i.e., spatial, temporal or axiological) employed by the speaker in order to narrow the distance between the audience and the threats posed by plastic pollution?
- 2- What are the lexico-grammatical categories used by the speaker to enact the different types of proximization?
- 3- How do the types of proximization employed by the speaker help the speaker legitimize the preventive measures she proposes in order to combat the danger of plastic pollution?

3. Data and Methodology:

The text analyzed in this paper is a Ted Talk delivered by Patricia Villarrubia-Gómez, a researcher and PhD candidate who is mainly concerned in her research with the environmental impact of plastic pollution and who has a number of key publications in the field (The Stockholm Resilience Centre, n.d.). In the text analyzed, the speaker sheds light on the threats that are posed by plastic pollution to our environment and how it is likely to have catastrophic impacts on our planet.

The text analyzed comprises 1166 words and has been selected for analysis for a number of reasons. Firstly, the speaker is a specialist in environmental issues, which makes the speech ripe with insights that are intended to arouse the audience's fear and push them to take action and accept the measures proposed by the speaker to end the

plastic pollution crisis. As Cap (2017b) puts it, the success of fear-based legitimization relies on the credibility of the speaker (p. 10). Second, even though the speaker is a specialist, she knows how to adapt her speech to suit ordinary, non-specialist audiences, which could have an impact on persuading them to take the necessary precautions to save the environment from the anticipated catastrophic effects of plastic pollution. Third, the speech is quite recent; it was delivered in 2022 (two years ago), which makes it relevant and gives the listeners the opportunity to think about the impact of plastic pollution in the third decade of the new century. Fourth, the speech features the categories of the proximization theory significantly, which helps generate the audience's fear and make them feel the imminence of the threat posed by plastic pollution, thus urging them to take action either via changing their consumption patterns or accepting the initiatives and precautionary measures that could be legally taken by concerned international bodies.

For the analysis to be conducted, the video of the speech is downloaded from YouTube, and then the text is transcribed in a Microsoft Word document. Tags are created for the three types of proximization and their subcategories, and the different categories of proximization are highlighted in the Word document and are traced using the "Find" tool. Examples of spatial, temporal and axiological proximization are analyzed, and statistics are made based on the numbers of the different proximization categories to show which proximization categories are employed by the speaker, which of them are particularly focused on, what kind of impact these proximization categories could have on the audience and how far they could convince the audience of the necessity of saving the world from plastic pollution.

4. Theoretical Background:

4.1. Plastic Pollution:

Plastic pollution is now a most pressing environmental threat to life on Planet Earth. Moore (2024) defines plastic pollution as the "accumulation in the environment of synthetic plastic products to the point that they create problems for wildlife and their habitats as well as for human populations". The use of plastic is almost a century old, but the production of plastic was ramped up after World War II; it increased from 2.3 million tons in 1950 to 448 tons in 2015 (Grover, 2023, p. 1). Now, more than 460 million tons of plastic are produced annually to be used in various applications (IUCN, 2024). Plastic is now part and parcel of human life for it is involved almost in every aspect of it. Plastic has transformed fields like the industry of medicine and technological applications. It is now involved in almost in every facet of our life (e.g., food and drink containers, food preservation wrap, toys, applications in construction and the manufacture of clothing, cosmetics, toothpaste, fishing nets, disposable masks from the Covid-19 pandemic, etc.).

Sembiring (2023) holds that there are two reasons why plastic has invaded our planet: intrinsic property and external influences. The intrinsic property has to do with the beneficial property of plastic which is characterized by its versatility, lightness, durability, resistance to some chemicals, good safety and hygiene property for food

package and excellent thermal insulation (pp.10-11). In addition, plastic is characterized by the cost-effectiveness of its production (Galloway et al., 2019, p. 132). External influences include economic growth, lifestyle, urbanization and technological advancement (Sembiring, 2023, p. 11). Sembiring suggests that the rise of the middle class, in regions like East Asia, leads to a shift from focusing on export-led development to consumption-driven growth, which leads to having more interest in products of comfort (e.g., buying plastic-wrapped food from the supermarket instead of going to the traditional market where plastic wrap is hardly used) (p. 11).

The intrinsic properties of plastic make it almost indispensable. Before the invention of plastic, materials like metal, clay and glass were used, but they were all heavy and rigid. Some types of plastic which are now used are stronger than steel but also much lighter, and they can be rigid or bendable, which makes it possible to form them in any shape (The Human Journey, n.d.; Thompson & Pahl, 2019, p. 178). This leads to overreliance on plastic which can easily replace other materials in many industries.

However, this overreliance on plastic is causing much harm almost to all living creatures. For one thing, the production of plastic consumes crude oil and other non-renewable resources (Sembiring, 2023, p. 9). In addition, the amount of plastic which is dumped daily into landfills and oceans is unimaginable. According to the U.S. Department of State (n.d.), as a result of waste mismanagement, almost 11 million metric tons of plastic are dumped into the ocean every year. The amount of plastic that ends up in the environment every year mounts up to 20 million metric tons and is expected to increase drastically by 2040 (IUCN, 2024). Plastics are usually used for a short time before they become waste and accumulate in landfills and aquatic systems (Ficzkowski & Krantzberg, 2023, p. 28). The main problem with plastic is that it is resistant to degradation (Thompson & Pahl, 2019, p. 178), and hence, it needs 100 to 1000 years (or more) to decompose into microplastics (EPA, n.d.; Ficzkowski & Krantzberg, 2023, p. 28), causing biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation (IUCN, 2024). Even when it is broken into smaller pieces that can be hardly seen using a microscope, these tiny pieces, known as “microplastics”, become absorbed into the blood of living organisms (The Human Journey, n.d.). Microplastics are particles that range in size from five millimeters to one nanometer, and they are found in every ecosystem on the planet (EPA, n.d.). Single-use plastic is particularly a problem. It constitutes almost 50% of all the plastic produced (The Human Journey, n.d.). Much of the world’s plastic pollution is the result of single-use products like bottles, caps, cigarettes, shopping bags and straws (IUCN, 2024), and only 9% of manufactured plastics is recycled (Kosior et al., 2019, p. 156) with the rest accumulating in landfills and aquatic systems.

Even though plastic is everywhere, it particularly poses a threat to marine life. Due to its durability and strength, plastic debris is ubiquitous, and it constitutes almost 60-90% of the litter that accumulates in the marine environment (Chin & Fung, 2019, p. 24). Moreover, even the plastic dumped in landfills makes its way to the ocean (The Human Journey, n.d.), and because ultraviolet radiation (UR) plays a key role in the fragmentation of plastic, plastic needs much more time to degrade at sea level since UR is rapidly absorbed by water (Ficzkowski & Krantzberg, 2023, p. 28). Due to ocean currents, tides and winds, plastic can be transported to remote regions which

are far from the original source, and due to its degradation-resistant nature, plastic debris often accumulates in the marine environment, breaking down into microplastics (Chin & Fung, 2019, p. 22). It is predicted that by 2050, the plastic dumped into waterbodies will far outweigh the fish themselves (Center for Biological Diversity, n.d.). The crisis stems from the fact that plastic travels through the food chain, which results in human beings eating, drinking and inhaling hundreds of tiny plastic particles every day for those particles find their way into drinking water supplies and the air. Hence, carcinogenic chemicals found in plastic products can leak into tap water, causing “developmental, reproductive, neurological and immune disorders” (IUCN, 2024). Microplastics also float in the air like dust and are eventually inhaled by human beings (The Human Journey, n.d.). Moreover, microplastics have been found in human liver, kidneys and placentas (EPA, n.d.). In addition to the health risks, plastic pollution affects those relying on marine resources either as a source of income, with various marine creatures losing their lives to plastic ingestion, suffocation, or entanglement, or as food, with all the microplastics they have in their bodies (Ficzkowski & Krantzberg, 2023, p. 28). Thompson and Pahl (2019) explain that in addition to damaging fisheries and reducing catches, plastic pollution can result in damaging vessels; ropes and other types of plastics are frequently caught in fishing gear (p. 180). The negative impacts that plastic pollution has on fisheries and small enterprises could eventually lead to negative effects on a country’s economy and trade systems (IUCN, 2024). Studies also show that women are more likely to suffer from the toxicity of plastic pollution due to their exposure to makeup and skincare products, which makes them prone to miscarriages and cancer (Ficzkowski & Krantzberg, 2023, p. 28).

In addition to the direct risks that plastic pollution poses to human health, it also has a negative impact on wildlife and climate change. Thousands of seabirds, sea turtles, seals and other marine mammals are killed by plastic as a result of ingesting it, suffocating or becoming entangled in it (Center for Biological Diversity, n.d.; EPA, n.d.; Moore, 2024; IUCN, 2024). Some of these creatures, like sea turtles, mistake floating plastic garbage for food, and they choke when they eat it. Other creatures, like seabirds, ingest plastic, which reduces the storage volume of their stomachs, leading to their starvation. Marine mammals ingest and get entangled in plastic debris, which leads to the injury and death of several endangered species (EPA, n.d.). In terms of climate change, plastic production has an impact on cumulative gas emissions (Thompson & Pahl, 2019, p. 179; Ficzkowski & Krantzberg, 2023, p. 27). Plastic production in 2019 was responsible for 3.4% of global greenhouse gas emissions, with 90% of these emissions coming from producing plastic from gas fuels, and the percentage of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from producing plastic is expected to double by 2060 (EPA, n.d.). Abrupt changes in climate also result from the ongoing changes in ecological ecosystems, some of which are the result of plastic pollution, which results in increasing atmospheric carbon (Ficzkowski & Krantzberg, 2023, p. 27). Moreover, oceans serve to mitigate the impacts of climate change, having already “absorbed 20%-40% of all anthropogenic carbon emitted since the dawn of the industrial era” (Ficzkowski & Krantzberg, 2023, p. 28), but now these oceans themselves are suffocating as a result of the accumulation of plastic. This shows how plastic pollution and climate change are interconnected.

One major problem caused by plastic pollution is that many countries lack the facilities and capacities to deal with it. Its impact is mainly felt by developing countries (IUCN, 2024), especially in Asia and Africa, where garbage collection systems are inefficient or even nonexistent (Parker, 2024). The problem is deepened due to the transfer of plastic waste to countries with poor infrastructure that is not sufficient to manage the waste. On the other hand, it is not recommended to burn plastic waste as this would result in emitting toxic fumes (Sembiring, 2023, p. 9). Steps need to be taken in order to save our planet from the threat of plastic pollution such as reducing the production of plastic products, changing consumer behaviour and developing robust infrastructure that is capable of managing plastic waste (IUCN, 2024). In addition, a global treaty guided by the United Nations needs to be signed to end the crisis of plastic pollution (Parker, 2024).

4.2. The Proximization Theory:

Cap (2013b) holds that Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) is among the most vigorously developing interdisciplinary areas of research that lie at the intersection between contemporary linguistics and social sciences (p. 293). The cognitive-linguistic approach to CDS emphasizes the conceptual nature of meaning construction as it focuses on “the conceptual import of linguistic choices which are potentially ideological”, hence offering “a new and promising lens on persuasive, manipulative and coercive properties of discourse, worldview and conceptualization” (Cap, 2017a, p. 17; Cap, 2018, p. 92). Cognitive Linguistics itself is not a theory, but a paradigm which comprises several theories, and hence, it offers CDS with several tools that can be used in the critical analysis of discourse (Hart, 2018, p. 77). The cognitive-linguistic approach to CDS focuses not just on the meaning of words and their grammatical constructions but also on the context (e.g., culture and language) in which they function (Kaal, 2023, p. 128). Hart (2018) explains that there is a shift in focus in cognitive linguistics to the interpretation stage of analysis for the cognitive-linguistic approach to CDS “addresses the cognitive-semiotic processes involved in understanding discourse and the fundamental role that these processes play in the construction of knowledge and the legitimation of action” (p. 77). Legitimization is one of the main goals of public discourse.

Cap (2017b) defines “public discourse” as “communicated issues of public culture and public concern that affect individuals and groups in a given civilization”. It is understood as “a collection of voices on top issues of politics, economy, law, education, and other areas of public interest and participation” (p. 1). In addition to political discourse, public discourse also includes various voices of non-governmental bodies and “grass-roots” initiatives, and it aims to receive people’s approval of policies involving both the speaker and the addressee(s) in a joint course of action through “maximizing the number of ‘shared visions’, that is, common conceptions of current reality as well as its desired developments” (Cap, 2017b, p. 2). That is, through public discourse, public leaders seek the approval of their addressee(s) to legitimize their intended policies and action.

Public communication is coercive by necessity, partly because it depends on “the strategic stimulation of affect”, and hence, it involves legitimation (Cap, 2017b, p. 2). Legitimization can be defined as “a linguistic enactment of the speaker’s right to be obeyed” (Cap, 2008, p. 22; Cap, 2017b, p. 2). In an act of legitimation, the

speaker assumes a certain political or social role as well as a particular authority through which he/she provides reasons for why he/she should be obeyed, including “the awareness and/or assertion of the addressees’ wants and needs, reinforcement of the global and indisputable ideological principles, charismatic leadership projection, boasting about one’s performance, positive self-presentation and many more” (Cap, 2008, p. 22). The ultimate objective of legitimization is mobilizing the public around a common goal (Cap, 2017b, p. 3).

One of the most effective linguistic strategies of legitimization is the proximization of threat. As Cap (2008) puts it, proximization, which is a recent cognitive-pragmatic development, is “a heavily legitimization oriented strategy” (p. 28). The form “proximising” (i.e., bringing closer) first appeared in Chilton (2004) to explain how political speakers seek to attain legitimization by presenting a certain situation as a proximal or imminent threat to their audience. According to Chilton, the speaker and hearer are placed at the “deictic center” inside a political entity and conceptualize external phenomena in terms of the physical distance between them and the deictic center (p. 58). The term “proximization” was first coined by Cap (2006) “to mark *an organized, strategic deployment of cognitive-pragmatic construals in discourse*” (Cap, 2013b, p. 295). It was originally proposed to analyze patterns of coercion in the US’ anti-terrorist discourse following 9/11.

Proximization is a discursive strategy of constructing crises and threats through “presenting physically and temporally distant events and states of affairs (including “distant”, i.e. adversarial, ideological mind-sets) as directly, increasingly and negatively consequential to the speaker and her addressee” (Cap, 2013a, p. 3). Through presenting distant threats (whether physical or ideological) as encroaching on the territory of the speaker and his/her addressees, the speaker may be trying to achieve a number of goals, chief among which is soliciting the audience’s legitimization of the preventive measures proposed by the speaker to neutralize the negative impact of the “foreign”, “alien” and “antagonistic” entities (Cap, 2013a, p. 3; Cap, 2013b, 294-295). In other words, the core idea of proximization is that “the construed vision of foreign entity encroaching upon a home territory of the speaker and her audience prompts issues of preventive response and its justification” (Cap, 2013a, p. 4). Central to the proximization theory is the cognitive pragmatic concept of discourse space (DS) which refers to “a particular kind of mental space people open up in performing discourse in which the ‘world’ described in the discourse is represented” (Cap, 2023, pp. 137-138). Proximization presupposes the distinction between the Us camp (positioned at the center of the DS) and the Them camp (positioned at the periphery of the DS). Cap (2022) explains that proximization is achieved through presenting the “remote Them” (referred to as ODCs, i.e., outside-deictic-center) as moving closer to, and eventually threatening, the “central Us” (referred to as the IDCs, i.e., inside-deictic-center, meaning the speaker and his/her addressee(s)) (Cap, 2017a, p. 21; Cap, 2022, p. 29; Cap, 2023, p. 138). Figure (1) is an illustration of Cap’s representation of the DS (Cap, 2017b, p. 5):

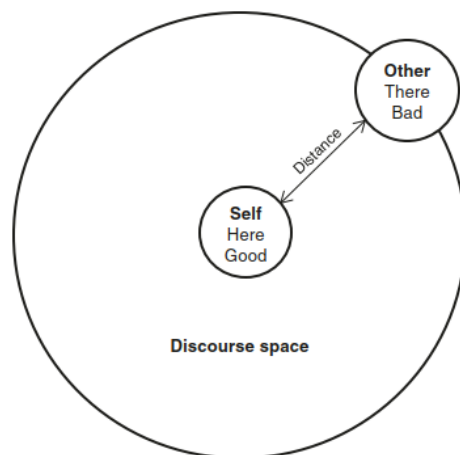


Figure (1): Discourse Space (DS)

Since proximization is a “process by which negatively evaluated entities, objects, or concepts are represented by the speaker as advancing from the periphery of the deictic space to the centre” (Browse, 2018, p. 160), it involves “a forced construal of *movement* of the antagonistic *Them* entities in the direction of the *Us* entities” (Cap, 2022, p. 29). Hence, proximization involves coercive powers for, through evoking closeness of the external threat and hence arousing the audience’s fear and anxiety, it enables the speaker to legitimize the actions they are intending to take as preventive measures to stop Them’s intrusion, hence serving sociopolitical goals (Cap, 2014, p. 17; Cap, 2022, p. 29). The success of proximization depends on the construal of a potential clash between the Us (IDC) entities and the Them (ODC) entities (Cap, 2008, p. 33).

Cap recognizes three dimensions of proximization: spatial, temporal and axiological. For the purpose of analyzing proximization in discourse, Cap (2013a) proposes the spatial-temporal-axiological (STA) proximization model. This model of analysis examines the lexico-grammatical choices made by a speaker/writer in an attempt to proximize a certain threat, in terms of the cognitive categories of space, time and value, as moving closer towards the speaker and his/her addressee(s). The importance of lexico-grammatical choices stems from the fact that they help establish the deictic center and the periphery of the DS as well as “*help impose, in the service of socio-political legitimization, symbolic construals whereby the peripheral entities cross the distance in discourse space to permeate the deictic center*” (Cap, 2013a, p. 9). Cap (2006) argues that the speaker’s success or failure to attain legitimization depends on his/her ability to follow a tripartite proximization strategy to indicate the conceptual shift of antagonistic and alien entities onto the speaker’s (and the addressees’) physical territory in the deictic center from which they both view external events (pp. 7-8).

4.2.1. Spatial Proximization:

Cap (2013a) defines spatial proximization as “a forced construal of the Discourse Space (DS) peripheral entities encroaching *physically* upon the DS central

entities located in the deictic center of the space” (p. 74). In other words, it is “a forced construal of *Them* entities encroaching physically on the *Us* entities in the deictic center of the DS” (Cap, 2022, p. 30). Spatial proximization can be achieved through using certain lexical forms which result in a “gradual narrowing of the physical distance between IDCs and ODCs” (Cap, 2013a, p. 75). Spatial proximization presupposes a geographical and geopolitical distance, in addition to an ideological distance, between the IDCs (which are placed in the deictic center and characterized by positive values) and the ODCs (which are placed at the periphery of the DS and characterized by negative values and destructive character) (Cap, 2013a, p. 74). The threat the ODCs pose to the IDCs urges the speaker to take preventive measures for which he/she needs to solicit legitimization from his/her addressee(s). This is because spatial proximization “involve[s] strong fear appeals” (Cap, 2013a, p. 74). It generates the addressee’s fear through presenting a certain threat as imminent, and “the construal of imminent danger paves the way for legitimization of preventive measures” since public audiences are usually reluctant to accept radical policies unless they are a response to a danger which is consequential to individuals (Cap, 2017b, p. 9). Such imminent threats require immediate preemptive action, and the speaker, in some cases, tries to solicit the audience’s legitimization of such action through conflating the current threat with an actual past disaster. As Cap (2017b) puts it, the speaker draws an analogy between the current threat and a past event “to endorse credibility of future visions” which “involve construals of future events as personally consequential, thus strengthening the fear appeals” (p. 44). Cap (2013a) argues that spatial proximization is effective since the speaker presents the threat not only as inevitable but also as fast, instilling fear in the heart(s) of the addressee(s) (p. 80). Hence, spatial proximization pushes the addressee(s) to approve of the preventive measures proposed by the speaker.

Cap (2013a) proposes a number of lexico-grammatical categories of spatial proximization which denote both the IDCs and the ODCs as construed in physical terms (p. 108). These include:

- (1) Noun phrases (NPs) construed as elements of the deictic center of the DS (IDCs)
- (2) Noun phrases (NPs) construed as elements outside the deictic center of the DS (ODCs)
- (3) Verb phrases (VPs) of motion and directionality construed as markers of movement of ODCs towards the deictic center
- (4) Verb phrases (VPs) of action construed as markers of impact of ODCs upon IDCs
- (5) Noun phrases (NPs) denoting abstract concepts construed as anticipations of impact of ODCs upon IDCs
- (6) Noun phrases (NPs) denoting abstract concepts construed as effects of impact of ODCs upon IDCs

El-Zouka (2020) proposes two more categories that can be added to the spatial proximization framework (p. 13):

- (7) Verb phrases (VPs) marking acts of resistance of ODCs
- (8) Noun phrases (NPs) denoting goals of IDCs and the strategies of confronting ODCs

The verb phrases in category (7), if found in a text, indicate that the IDCs are not passive but rather have a positive reaction to the threats posed by the ODCs (El-Zouka, 2020, p. 13).

4.2.2. Temporal Proximization:

Temporal proximization refers to points in time when past or future actions by entities construed in spatial dimension took/will take place (Cap, 2013a, pp. 27-28). It is “a forced construal of “now”, the speaker’s present, as the central point and event frame on the time “axis”” (Cap, 2013a, p. 85). “Now” refers to the momentousness of the present, defined by past events or anticipated events in the near future (Cap, 2013a, p. 85). Temporal proximization presents a threat not only as imminent but also as “momentous”, requiring an immediate response and unique preventive measures (Cap, 2013b, p. 295; Cap, 2017, p. 17; Cap, 2023, p. 138). Both spatial and temporal proximization involve strong fear appeals, and hence, they help the speaker, through an analogy between the current situation and an actual disaster that took place in the past, to gain support for the preventive measures he/she proposes to neutralize the threat (Cap, 2013b, p. 296; Cap, 2017b, pp. 16-17). MacDonald and Hunter (2019) explain that temporal proximization situates events in relation to the present time of the speaker, either in terms of past events which might affect the present or anticipated future events resulting from events taking place in the present (p. 73). Temporal proximization involves a compression of the time axis, resulting in a partial conflation of the three timeframes: either a past-to-present conflation, which is a construal of past events performed by ODCs as affecting the speaker’s present, or a future-to-present conflation, which is a construal of future events performed by ODCs stemming from the present context (Cap, 2013a, pp. 85-86). Both shifts urge the speaker to take preventive measures either to neutralize the effect of past events on the present (retrospective) or to prevent current scenarios from affecting the speaker’s near future (prospective) (Cap, 2013a, p. 86). Figure (2) is an illustration of Cap’s (2013b) representation of the two shifts on the time axis (p. 86):

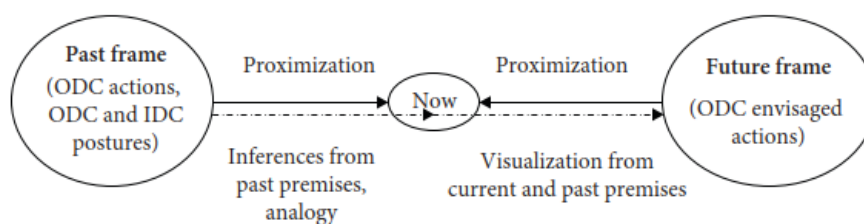


Figure (2): Centralizing “now” for momentousness: two temporal proximization shifts

Based on the two types of shifts involved in temporal proximization (past-to-present and future-to-present), the lexico-grammatical categories proposed by Cap (2013a) to indicate temporal proximization are of two types: “real time” (RT) lexico-grammatical markers (denoting “events as happening at dated points in time”) and “construed time” (CT) lexico-grammatical markers fitting these points and events “into preferred temporal frames” through analogy and other means (p. 111). Cap explains that RT lexico-grammatical markers do not only denote actual past events for

they can also denote future point-in-time events. Such events are durative in the sense that “they can be construed as occurring anytime between now and the infinite future” (Cap, 2013a, p. 112). Cap (2022) argues that both retrospective and prospective conceptualizations result in shrinkage of the temporal aspect, causing the “Now” frame and the actions it subsumes to be critical to the future course of events (p. 77). This shrinkage of the time axis is one of the coercive functions of a text, resulting in the centralization of the present timeframe with the aim of “strengthening the sense of momentousness of the current state of affairs” and persuading the audience to approve of the preventive measures proposed by the speaker (Cap, 2022, p. 76).

Cap (2013a) proposes a number of lexico-grammatical categories which denote temporal proximization (p. 114). These are:

- (1) Noun phrases (NPs) involving indefinite descriptions construing ODC actual impact acts in alternative temporal frames
- (2) Discourse forms involving contrastive use of the simple past and the present perfect construing threatening future extending infinitely from a past instance
- (3) Noun phrases (NPs) involving nominalizations construing presupposition of conditions for ODC impact to arise anytime in the future
- (4) Verb phrases (VPs) involving modal auxiliaries construing conditions for ODC impact as existing continually between the now and the infinite future
- (5) Discourse forms involving parallel contrastive construals of oppositional and privileged futures extending from the now

4.2.3. Axiological Proximization:

Cap (2013a) argues that axiological proximization serves to keep up the attempt to attain legitimization when other means do not seem to work (p. 94). He explains that axiological proximization involves a conflict between the “home values” of the IDCs, located in the deictic center of the DS, and the alien, antagonistic values of the ODCs, located at the periphery of the DS (p. 94). Hence, it can be defined as “a forced construal of a growing ODC-IDC ideological conflict which, in time, may lead to a physical clash” (Cap, 2013a, p. 119). Accordingly, it is concerned with the opposing values held by the central IDCs and the peripheral ODCs. This is because the construction of the ideological conflict “draws upon patterns of bipolar axiological representation and proximization” (Cap, 2017b, pp. 46-47). While the conflict is initially presented as ideological, the speaker, through axiological proximization, can present ODC values as having the potential to materialize (physically) in the speaker’s and addressees’ territory (Cap, 2017b, p. 17; Cap, 2022, p. 30), hence leading to a physical conflict. MacDonald and Hunter (2019) explain that axiological proximization can cooperate with spatial and temporal proximization to “heighten the immediacy of the ideological encroachment” (pp. 73-74), which may easily lead to a physical conflict. Therefore, axiological proximization serves to legitimize preventive actions that could be proposed by the speaker to prevent the adversarial values of the ODCs from materializing in the deictic center. Cap (2013a) proposes a number of lexico-grammatical markers of axiological proximization (p. 121). These are:

- (1) Noun phrases (NPs) construed as IDC positive values or value sets (ideologies)
- (2) Noun phrases (NPs) construed as ODC negative values or value sets (ideologies)
- (3) Discourse forms involving linear arrangement of lexico-grammatical phrases construing materialization in the IDC space of the ODC negative ideologies

Previous studies using the proximization theory have mostly focused on political texts in which the speaker tries to legitimize the measures taken to protect the Self from the enemy (Abdelateef, 2020; Cap, 2008; Cap, 2013b; Cap, 2017a; Cap 2023; El-Zouka, 2020; El-Zouka, 2023). The proximization theory has also been used to analyze other types of public discourse like texts about diseases, climate change and cyber threats (Alshanaawani, 2021; Cap, 2014; Hamid, 2021). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, the proximization theory has not been applied to any texts tackling the threat of plastic pollution. Hence, this research aims to apply the proximization theory to a Ted Talk in which the speaker, who is a researcher concerned with environmental issues, highlights the dire consequences of plastic pollution in an attempt to investigate how the speaker proximates the threat of this environmental crisis and hence justifies the measures she proposes to neutralize its effects.

5. Analysis:

Cap (2017b) states that analyzing a text using the proximization theory and the STA model must involve three interrelated levels. The first level is the conceptual level of organization of the DS where the IDCs (home entities), the ODCs (alien, antagonistic, Other) entities and the negative impact of the ODCs on the IDCs need to be determined. The second level is the lexical categories which enact the strategic changes of the organization of the DS. The third level is the coercion level: how the text is considered an example of soliciting legitimization from the public via pushing them to approve of the preventive measures proposed by the speaker (p.32).

Cap presents several analyses of the proximization of threat in political discourse, particularly in the US anti-terrorism discourse after 9/11. In political discourse, it is quite easy to determine the IDCs entities (the self, e.g., the US) and the ODCs entities (the Other, e.g., Saddam Hussein). There are other types of discourse where determining the IDCs and ODCs is not that easy, and a case in point is climate change discourse. Cap (2017b) holds that the construal of threat in this kind of discourse is not clearcut since the IDCs and ODCs are not quite obvious and need to be precisely defined. The solution is to assign the role of ODCs to public actors, institutions and industry who are partly responsible for the climate change crisis and the role of IDCs to ordinary people who can be considered the "real self" entity (p. 42). Eventually, action needs to be taken to combat the devastating effects of climate change.

Similarly, in anti-plastic discourse, there are no clear IDCs and ODCs. Hence, like in climate change discourse, the IDCs role can be assigned to entities affected by the negative consequences of plastic pollution (e.g., environment, Planet Earth, developing countries, ordinary people), and the ODCs role can be assigned to the parties responsible for the manufacture and accumulation of plastic in the environment (e.g., "rich countries", "fossil fuel companies", and "consumers" who refuse to change their plastic consumption patterns). In the text analyzed, those IDCs

and ODCs constitute the first level of analysis (i.e., the organization of the DS). The second level of analysis is the lexico-grammatical items enacting the IDCs and ODCs, and these are analyzed in detail in the following subsections. The third level of analysis is the coercion level where the speaker highlights the grave consequences of plastic pollution in an attempt to convince her audience that initiatives need to be taken by international bodies to uproot the problem and persuade them to change their plastic consumption patterns. The following subsections present an analysis of the text under study in an attempt to investigate how the lexico-grammatical choices made by the speaker enact the central (IDC) and peripheral (ODC) elements of the DS and how the proximization of threat is intended to legitimize the speaker's call for exerting our utmost efforts to save the planet from plastic pollution.

5.1. Spatial Proximization:

The main goal of spatial proximization is construing the ODCs as moving closer towards the deictic center of the DS with the possibility of materializing in the deictic center and threatening the IDCs. The lexico-grammatical items enacting the categories of spatial proximization in the text contribute to narrowing the distance between the ODCs (i.e., plastic pollution and the sectors causing it) and the IDCs (i.e., ordinary people and the environment), arousing the audience's fear of the consequences of the crisis. Examples include:

1. Plastics and their chemical additives are really a climate problem.
2. Plastics contribute to climate change.
3. For 99% of all plastics, the starting point is fossil fuel hydrocarbons. Oil, gas and coal are extracted and refined to produce plastic and other synthetic chemicals. And those processes generate greenhouse gases such as CO₂ and methane.
4. [T]he production of single-use plastic alone will contribute to more than 10% of all greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
5. And the thing is that our use of plastic last[s] often just a few minutes or a few hours. Then, we throw them away.
6. And so, huge amounts of plastics are illegally incinerated, informally dumped or get lost at sea. And as a result, millions of tons of plastic every year get into our environment.
7. And this process of breaking down emits powerful gases such as methane, ethylene and CO₂.
8. It means that microplastic can also impair the growth and the photo synthesis capacity of phytoplankton, which are the microorganisms producing much of the oxygen we breathe. But also microplastics can have toxic effects on zooplankton, and the health of these organisms are essential for the functioning of all aquatic food webs.
9. And given how plastics impact the climate and the world's social ecological system, this would spell a catastrophe.

In the selected examples above, the lexical items enacting the categories of spatial proximization employed by the speaker are underlined. NPs which belong to Category (1) are “our environment”, “sea”, “the growth (of phytoplankton)”, “the photo synthesis capacity of phytoplankton”, “the microorganisms producing much of the oxygen we breathe”, “zooplankton”, “the health of these organisms (zooplankton)”, “the functioning of all aquatic food webs”, “the climate” and “the

world's social ecological systems". These are the categories that are located in the deictic center of the DS and towards which the ODCs (i.e., the threats of plastic pollution) are moving. These categories would be seriously affected if action is not taken to stop plastic pollution. Hence, something has to be done in order to save the environment and all the useful organisms without which life is impossible and bring the problem of plastic pollution to an end or else the universe would suffer immensely. Category (2) of spatial proximization includes the NPs "plastics", "their chemical additives", "fossil fuel hydrocarbons", "plastic", "other synthetic chemicals", "those processes", "powerful gases", "greenhouse gases", "this process of breaking down", "CO₂", "methane", "single-use plastic", "more than 10% of all greenhouse gas emissions", "our use of plastics", "them (plastics)", "huge amounts of plastics", "millions of tons of plastic", "methane", "ethylene", "microplastics" and "this (the impact of plastic on the climate)". Category (2) includes the items which constitute grave threats to life on Planet Earth, all of which are the result of plastic pollution like gas emissions, methane and CO₂. Single-use plastic is particularly detrimental to the environment as it is used once and shortly afterwards is thrown away to accumulate in the environment whether in terrestrial areas or on sea and ocean floors. Microplastics are the result of the degradation of the accumulated plastics, and they are particularly harmful to marine creatures since they are usually mistaken for food, and they harm those creatures through ingestion, suffocation or entanglement. The lexico-grammatical items of Category (2) are highlighted by the speaker as the sources of threat that we need to combat to neutralize their effects on our lives. Category (3) of spatial proximization includes the VPs "are extracted", "[are] refined", "generate greenhouse gases", "throw them (plastics) away", "are illegally incinerate", "[are] informally dumped", "get lost", "get into our environment" and "emits powerful gases". The lexico-grammatical items of Category (3) indicate the motion of the ODCs from the periphery of the DS towards the deictic center where they can very soon materialize and hence threaten the IDCs. They show how the threat of plastic pollution is encroaching upon our lives, affecting our environment (polluting the air when incinerated, accumulating in terrestrial areas, getting dumped into the sea, etc.). Category (4) includes VPs which indicate the impact of the ODCs on the IDCs. These include items like "contribute to climate change", and "impact the climate". These are the anticipated effects of the problem of plastic pollution should it remain unresolved. Category (5) includes the NPs that represent the anticipation of impact of the ODCs on the IDCs like "a climate problem" and "climate change". The lexico-grammatical items of Category (5) are likely to have effects which are represented by the NPs which belong to Category (6). These include "toxic effects (on zooplankton)" and "a catastrophe". These are likely to be the end result of plastic pollution should no action be taken to avoid its grave consequences.

However, in addition to highlighting the drastic effects of plastic pollution, the speaker also offers a ray of hope represented by lexico-grammatical items which belong to Categories (7) and (8). Some of these items are included in the following sentences:

10. Worldwide entrepreneurs and companies are creating new designs and material that can substitute traditional single-use plastic, and social movements are consolidating and educating people to reduce their plastic

footprint and pressuring local and world policy makers to enact strong policies.

11. And scientists are collaborating more than ever, communicating the urgency to limit not only the volume but the chemical diversity of plastics.
12. And early this year, representatives from over 170 nations at the UN Environment Assembly adopted an initiative to end plastic pollution, committing all these countries to participate in creating, by 2024, a legally binding agreement that addresses the full life cycle of plastics from production to design to disposal.

Category (7) includes the VPs “are creating new designs”, “are consolidating”, “[are] educating people”, “[are] pressuring”, “are collaborating”, “communicating” and “committing”. All these VPs indicate acts of resistance; they shed light on the efforts exerted by scientists and environmentalists to combat plastic pollution and neutralize its effects. Category (8) includes the NPs “an initiative to end plastic pollution” and “creating [...] a legally binding agreement”. These items indicate the goals of the IDCs and the strategies followed to combat the ODCs (plastic pollution and its effects).

5.2. Temporal Proximization:

The aim of temporal proximization in the analyzed text is to present the threats posed by plastic pollution not only as imminent but also as momentous, hence generating strong fear appeals to persuade the audience to accept the preventive measures proposed by the speaker like changing their plastic consumption patterns and accepting the initiatives she suggests should be taken by international bodies. There is no past-to-present conflation in the text as the speaker does not draw an analogy between present and past plastic pollution consequences. The speaker focuses on the consequences plastic pollution is likely to have in the near future unless preemptive measures are taken. As a result, the text does not display any examples of Category (1) of temporal proximization; there are no examples of NPs construing the impact of ODCs in alternative timeframes. The text does not include examples of Category (2) either; there is no contrast between past events and any events presented in the present perfect that may extend to have negative consequences in the future. Lexico-grammatical items of Category (5) are also missing in the analyzed text; no contrastive construals of oppositional and privileged futures are found. The text displays examples of Categories (3) and (4) of temporal proximization as shown in the following sentences:

1. [P]lastic pollution is starting to change the processes that allow the Earth’s climate system to work.
2. Plastics contribute to climate change.
3. [O]ur use of plastic last often just a few minutes or a few hours.
4. And that generates further emissions.
5. Once plastic[s] enter the environment, landfill, are dispersed in soil or water, they start a process of breaking down into micro and nanoparticles.
6. But microplastics risk affecting this marine snow and potentially decreasing the capacity of the ocean to absorb and sequester carbon from the atmosphere.

7. [F]ossil fuel companies see hydrocarbon as their primary growth sector, projecting a 30% increase of virgin plastic for single-use plastic just in the next five years.
8. We already see an accelerating pace in producing and releasing new chemicals because there are many many kinds of plastic, each one the result of a different chemical formula.
9. [M]icroplastics can be decreasing the reflecting property of snow and ice, potentially accelerating the melting of the glaciers and polar ice.
10. [I]t (plastic) will remain in the environment for centuries, degrading ecological processes.
11. [T]he production of single-use plastic alone will contribute to more than 10% of all greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
12. On the surface of microplastics, new microbial communities can grow.
13. [M]icroplastic can also impair the growth and the photo synthesis capacity of phytoplankton.
14. [M]icroplastics can have toxic effects on zooplankton.
15. And given how plastics impact the climate and the world's social ecological system, this would spell a catastrophe.

The text includes a future-to-present shift, presenting the present as the Real Time, indicated by the word “now”, and the future as the Construed time (CT) indicated by the items “2024” and “2050” which refer to the near future. This symbolic compression of the time axis highlights the need to take immediate action to prevent the negative consequences that the ODCs (i.e., plastic pollution and its causes) are likely to have in the near future and is indicated by items of Categories (3) and (4). Sentence 1-9 include a number of nominalizations which indicate undesired actions taken by the ODCs (i.e., “pollution”, “change”, “use”, “emissions”, “breaking”, “affecting”, “decreasing”, “increase”, “producing”, “releasing”, and “melting”). Being derived from verbs, these nominalizations indicate action of the ODCs. Hence, they highlight the threat that the planet is now facing as a result of plastic pollution for they shed light on the likely consequences of this pollution in the near future, stressing the urgency to take preemptive measures. Cap (2022) explains that the role of nominalization in the proximization of threat is conflating the present and the future through representing “an objectified entity that exists at the present moment and presages an ominous future” (p. 75), which plays a significant role in generating the addressees’ fear and winning their approval of the speaker’s suggestions to neutralize the threat. Sentences 9-15 include VPs with modal auxiliaries which highlight the possibility of plastic pollution having drastic consequences in the near future (the VPs including the items “can be decreasing”, “will remain”, “will contribute”, “can grow”, “can also impair”, “can have”, “would spell”). These VPs indicate the anticipated catastrophic impacts of plastic pollution on the environment in the near future (e.g., causing more gas emissions, creating more microbial communities, etc.). The lexicogrammatical items enacting Categories (3) and (4) of temporal proximization in the text contribute to the compression of the time axis through a future-to-present shift where the dire consequences of plastic pollution that are likely to affect our planet in the future stem from the present context. The imminence and momentousness of this threat need to be addressed through preventive measures or else the environment shall very soon pay a costly price.

5.3. Axiological Proximization:

The axiological proximization of threat results from a clash between the home values and ideologies of the IDCs and the alien and antagonistic ideologies and values of the ODCs. This clash can eventually lead to a physical conflict should the ODC values be allowed to materialize in the home territory of the IDCs. Compared to spatial and temporal proximization, axiological proximization features the least in the text analyzed. The conflicting parties in the text are not clearly defined unlike, for example, in the anti-terrorist speeches analyzed by Cap where the IDCs and the ODCs are clearcut (the US vs. Saddam Hussein, terrorist organizations, etc.). In the text analyzed, the IDC role is assigned to Planet Earth (the environment, the human race and other species), and the ODC role is mainly assigned to plastic pollution. As a result, there is no clear ideological conflict between the IDCs and the ODCs. However, in addition to plastic pollution, the ODC role can be assigned to “rich countries” and “fossil fuel companies” as they are partly responsible for this environmental crisis. There are no examples of Category (1) of axiological proximization, which has to do with the positive values of the IDCs, in the text. There is only one example of Category (2), which has to do with the negative values of the ODCs, in the sentence “this is one of those hypocrisies of globalization where rich countries outsource their problems to low-income countries. And we know that these countries do not have the capacity nor the technology to deal with them in a soundly manner”. The word “hypocrisies” indicates a negative value that characterizes rich countries which are partly responsible for the plastic pollution crisis as they only care about industry and making profits and outsource their plastic litter to poor countries where it cannot be recycled and is left to accumulate, polluting the environment. There are no examples of Category (3) in the text.

6. Findings and Discussion:

In the text analyzed, the speaker makes use of the three types of proximization in an attempt to convince her audience of saving Planet Earth from the grave consequences of plastic pollution. The speech includes 259 examples of proximization, 235 (almost 90.73%) of which are examples of spatial proximization, 23 (almost 8.88%) examples of temporal proximization and only one (almost 0.38%) example of axiological proximization. Table (1) shows the percentage of each type of proximization used by the speaker:

Type of Proximization	Category of Proximization Type	Number of Instances	Percentage
Spatial Proximization	(1) Noun phrases (NPs) construed as elements of the deictic center of the DS (IDCs)	67	25.86%
	(2) Noun phrases (NPs) construed as elements outside the deictic center of the DS (ODCs)	108	41.6%
	(3) Verb phrases (VPs) of motion and	34	13.12%

	directionality construed as markers of movement of ODCs towards the deictic center		
	(4) Verb phrases (VPs) of action construed as markers of impact of ODCs upon IDCs	3	1.15%
	(5) Noun phrases (NPs) denoting abstract concepts construed as anticipations of impact of ODCs upon IDCs	10	3.86%
	(6) Noun phrases (NPs) denoting abstract concepts construed as effects of impact of ODCs upon IDCs	2	0.77%
	(7) Verb phrases (VPs) marking acts of resistance of ODCs	7	2.7%
	(8) Noun phrases (NPs) denoting goals of IDCs and the strategies of confronting ODCs	4	1.5%
Temporal Proximization	(1) Noun phrases (NPs) involving indefinite descriptions construing ODC actual impact acts in alternative temporal frames	--	--
	(2) Discourse forms involving contrastive use of the simple past and the present perfect construing threatening future extending infinitely from a past instance	--	--
	(3) Noun phrases (NPs) involving nominalizations construing presupposition of conditions for ODC impact to arise anytime in the future	16	6.17%

	(4) Verb phrases (VPs) involving modal auxiliaries construing conditions for ODC impact as existing continually between the now and the infinite future	7	2.7%
	(5) Discourse forms involving parallel contrastive construals of oppositional and privileged futures extending from the now	--	--
Axiological Proximization	(1) Noun phrases (NPs) construed as IDC positive values or value sets (ideologies)	--	--
	(2) Noun phrases (NPs) construed as ODC negative values or value sets (ideologies)	1	0.38%
	(3) Discourse forms involving linear arrangement of lexico-grammatical phrases construing materialization in the IDC space of the ODC negative ideologies	--	--
Total		259	100%

Table (1): The types of proximization used in the text analyzed

The analysis shows that the proximization of threat in the text is mostly dependent of spatial proximization, particularly Category (2) which alone constitutes 41.6% of the categories of proximization in the text. Cap (2022) argues that even though the use of proximization in a text normally involves the use of the three types of proximization (i.e., spatial, temporal and axiological), a speaker might focus more on of these types at the expense of another if this serves his/her goal (i.e., legitimization) (p.31). Spatial proximization, particularly Category (2) which is extensively used by the speaker, seems to be the most needed type of proximization in this text in order to open the audience’s eyes to the types of ODCs (sources of threat) that they need to combat in order to save the earth (e.g., the accumulation of plastic in the environment, single-use plastic, the countries and sectors which do not mind polluting the environment as they only care about profit, etc.). Another point that is worth noting is that all the categories of spatial proximization are employed by the speaker, which is not the case

for temporal and axiological proximization. Only two categories of temporal proximization are used and not as extensively as the categories of spatial proximization. Axiological proximization in particular is almost missing in the text, being represented by only one instance in the whole text. This could be due to the fact that the IDCs and the ODCs are not very clear in the text; it is the whole planet against an environmental threat, a non-tangible one. Accordingly, it seems that spatial proximization, among the three types of proximization, is the most suitable for fear-generation and drawing the threat of plastic pollution closer to the audience (i.e., proximizing it). This could be effective in convincing the audience of the necessity of taking all the preventive measures needed to save Planet Earth from this threat.

7. Conclusion:

This paper presents an example analysis of the proximization of threat in anti-plastic discourse. Using the proximization theory proposed by Cap (2013a), the paper presents an analysis of a Ted Talk delivered by scientist and environmentalist Patricia Villarrubia Gómez who sheds light in her speech on the environmental threats of plastic pollution and the catastrophes it could lead to if the problem remains unresolved. Regarding the first research question, which is concerned with the types of proximization (i.e., spatial, temporal or axiological) employed by the speaker, the analysis reveals that the speaker makes use of the three types of proximization but makes extensive use of spatial proximization in her attempt to narrow the distance between the threats of plastic pollution and the audience. Temporal proximization indicates the imminence and momentousness of the threat, warning the audience that the negative consequences of plastic pollution are anticipated to be felt in the near future. Axiological proximization is almost missing, with only one instance featuring in the text due to the type of threat proximized (i.e., an environmental issue). Concerning the second research question, which is concerned with the lexicogrammatical categories of proximization used in the text, the speaker makes use of all the categories of spatial proximization, relying on their effects of generating the audience's fear of the plastic pollution crisis. Only two categories of temporal proximization are used for their effect of compressing the time axis to stress the imminence of the threat and hence the necessity of combating plastic pollution. As far as axiological proximization is concerned, the speaker makes use of only one instance which belongs to the second category (i.e., negative values of the ODCs) in order to criminalize the countries and companies which contribute to the crisis of plastic pollution as they only care about profit. Regarding the third research question, which is concerned with legitimization through the proximization of threat, the speaker presents her cause of the necessity of plastic pollution as necessary, legitimizing, through the proximization of threat, the preventive measures she proposes to end the crisis in an attempt to solicit her audience's approval of accepting such measures as changing their plastic consumption patterns as well as any initiatives that could be taken by concerned international bodies to end the crisis.

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