Attitudinal Expressions in Discussion Sections of High-Quality Journals: an Appraisal Analysis

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A B S T R A K

Banyak penelitian membahas asesmen dalam teks akademis, namun masih terdapat kesenjangan yang signifikan dalam literatur mengenai peran spesifik sumber daya asesmen dalam mengekspresikan sikap dalam bagian diskusi artikel jurnal berkualitas tinggi. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi pemanfaatan ekspresi sikap (sistem Affect, Judgement, dan Appreciation) dalam bagian diskusi artikel jurnal berkualitas tinggi. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan penelitian metode campuran, penelitian ini memadukan analisis kualitatif dan kuantitatif untuk lebih memahami praktik linguistik evaluatif dalam penulisan akademis. Data dikumpulkan dari lima bagian diskusi berkualitas tinggi yang diterbitkan pada tahun 2024 di jurnal Scopus Q1, termasuk TESOL Quarterly, CALL-EJ, English Teaching & Learning, Australian Review of Applied Linguistics, dan Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education. Analisis kualitatif melibatkan pengodean tematik dan pengembangan iteratif untuk mengidentifikasi dan mengkategorikan ekspresi sikap, sedangkan analisis kuantitatif menggunakan teknik statistik untuk mengukur frekuensi dan distribusi ekspresi ini. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sistem penilaian merupakan kategori yang paling sering digunakan (59,60%), diikuti oleh sistem apresiasi (37,50%) dan sistem pengaruh (4,80%). Sistem pengaruh terutama digunakan untuk menyampaikan perasaan dan respons emosional, sedangkan sistem apresiasi digunakan untuk menyampaikan evaluasi dampak dan signifikansi penelitian. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penulis akademis secara strategis menggunakan bahasa evaluatif untuk menegaskan signifikansi penelitian dan terlibat secara kritis dengan literatur. Secara pedagogis, penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya mengajarkan keterampilan menulis akademis tingkat lanjut, khususnya penggunaan bahasa evaluatif, untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam mengomunikasikan penelitian mereka secara efektif.

A B S T R A C T

Numerous studies discuss assessment in academic texts, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding the specific role of assessment resources in expressing attitudes within the discussion section of high-quality journal articles. This study explores the utilization of attitudinal expressions (the systems of Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation) in the discussion sections of high-quality journal articles. Employing a mixed-methods research approach, the study integrates qualitative and quantitative analyses to better understand evaluative linguistic practices in academic writing. Data were collected from five high-quality discussion sections published in 2024 in Q1 Scopus journals, including TESOL Quarterly, CALL-EJ, English Teaching & Learning, Australian Review of Applied Linguistics, and Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education. The qualitative analysis involved thematic coding and iterative development to identify and categorize attitudinal expressions, while the quantitative analysis utilized statistical techniques to measure the frequency and distribution of these expressions. Results indicated that the Judgement system was the most frequently used category (59.60%), followed by Appreciation system (37.50%) and Affect system (4.80%). The Affect system was primarily used to convey feelings and emotional responses, the Appreciation system was to convey evaluations of the research's impact and significance. The findings suggest that academic authors strategically use evaluative language to assert research significance and engage critically with literature. Pedagogically, this study highlights the importance of teaching advanced academic writing skills, particularly the use of evaluative language, to enhance students' ability to communicate their research effectively.

1. INTRODUCTION

In academic writing, particularly in high-quality journal articles, the discussion section serves as a crucial platform where authors interpret their findings, engage with existing literature, and make claims about the significance of their research. The core of appraisal theory is the attitudinal resources, which include the systems

of Affect (emotions), Judgment (evaluative responses to behavior), and Appreciation (evaluative responses to entities). Effective use of attitudinal expressions is essential in this context, as it enables authors to convey their stance, persuade readers, and establish credibility. The appraisal analysis serves as a valuable tool for researchers examining the relationship between language use and writing effectiveness (Jowsey et al., 2020; Yusop et al., 2022). Attitudinal stance, which has been defined in multiple ways, refers to the writer's "attitudes, evaluations and/ or personal feelings and emotions". The core of Appraisal Theory is the attitudinal resources, which include affect (emotions), judgment (ethics), and appreciation (aesthetics). The critical role of such attitudinal expressions is particularly evident in the discussion sections of research articles, where writers typically engage in a more interactive dialogue with their readers (Braun-Lewensohn et al., 2019; Hermann & Menzel, 2013). This interaction involves the negotiation of dialogic space, allowing writers to position themselves and their arguments within the broader academic discourse. However, mastering this aspect of writing possesses significant challenges, especially for novice researchers and non-native English writers. Therefore, the way writers convey their assessments, judgments, and personal attitudes has garnered substantial attention from applied linguists in recent times (Cheung, 2010; Cookson & Stirk, 2019; Deng et al., 2019).

As a system of interpersonal meanings, appraisal focus on evaluation (evaluative language): the types of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the intensity of the emotions involved, and the methods in which values are sourced and readers or listeners are in congruence (Abdi Zarrin et al., 2020; Lei et al., 2023). This approach regionalizes attitudinal expression into three systems: attitude, engagement, and graduation. The three systems represent complete systems for realizing evaluative languages in texts. As the heart of appraisal framework, attitude is the system concerned with our feelings that encompass emotional realizations, judgments of people's behavior, and evaluations of things. Within the attitude system, key concepts include affect, judgment, and appreciation. Affect pertains to the expression of feelings and emotions, encompassing aspects such as happiness, security, and satisfaction. Through analyzing these judgments, it becomes possible to understand how authors evaluate the stance of a text and position individuals within their discourse. Appreciation relates to the evaluation of objects, events, and processes that focuses on reactions (how things impact us emotionally), composition (balance and complexity), and value (innovativeness, authenticity, and timeliness) (Karisan & Zeidler, 2017; Oco, 2022). This part of the attitude system helps to explain how authors assess and convey the significance of various elements within their writing to shape the reader's perception and engagement with the text. It gives insights into the criteria authors use to appraise different aspects of their subject matter.

Meanwhile, engagement system incorporates various options to realize the engagement with others and with knowledge. The engagement system enables researchers to examine the way a writer develop their identity, represent others or other voices, and position him-/herself in relation to knowledge in his/her text as he/she engages with his/her readers (Cahyono et al., 2016; Vartiainen et al., 2016). Lastly, graduation deals with the resources for grading the intensity of feelings or qualities. There are two types of resources for amplification: 'force' and 'focus.' 'Force' concerns turning the volume up or down on feelings or qualities, while 'focus' deals with sharpening or softening the categorization of people and things (Hamid et al., 2020; Kuo et al., 2019). These resources allow authors to modulate the strength and clarity of their attitudinal expressions to enhance the impact of their evaluative language on the audience. Previous research has extensively examined various aspects of academic writing, including coherence, cohesion, and the use of metadiscourse. Recent research highlights the diverse applications and significant insights derived from Appraisal Theory in various contexts. previous study employed the attitude system, a subsystem of Martin's appraisal theory, to analyze attitudinal vocabularies in apologetic statements by an online car-hailing company to reveal a shift in the company's attitude toward apology over time (Kolisnyk et al., 2022). Similarly, previous study explored the use of attitudinal resources in financial news articles that focus on the evaluative language used to influence readers' perceptions (Yıldırım, 2016). Meanwhile, other study examined the role of affect in language acquisition through evaluate attitudinal language in early child language development (Dhanarattigannon & Thienpermpool, 2022). Other study analyzed students' reflections in a play performance class, finding that affect resources were most frequently used to express feelings, while judgment and appreciation resources evaluated behaviors and learning processes (Chen & Chuang, 2021). Further studies illustrate the versatility of appraisal theory in different genres and media. Previous study examined the expressions of emotions in the fiction "Winds and Clouds over a Funeral" using the appraisal framework to identify a predominant use of negative feelings (Froiland & Davison, 2020). Other study refined the attitude system to account for evaluative language in spoken discourse among postgraduate students (Castañer & Oliveira, 2020). It broadens the scope of appraisal theory's applicability in educational contexts. Previous study focused on appraisal resources to assess students' use of persuasive language in argumentative essay (Yusop et al., 2022). Other study analyzed English song discourses, finding that the frequent use of affect and appreciation resources reflected Western humanistic thought (Lestary & Seriadi, 2019). Comparative studies underscore the adaptability of appraisal theory across different fields. Previous study found variations in the utilization of affect, judgment, and appreciation when comparing attitudinal resources in research paper abstracts across fields (Braun-Lewensohn et al., 2019), in their analysis of the essays written by Indonesian EFL students. Previous study found common

manifestations of attitude and how these affected the quality of the writing (Djamdjuri et al., 2014). With an emphasis on the reflective writings of ESL students, both good and negative, affected self-evaluation. Those studies show how appraisal theory can be used as useful methods for studying evaluative language in a variety of textual and communicative contexts. Studies have also explored the role of appraisal resources in constructing evaluative language and managing interpersonal relationships in texts (Zill-e-Huma et al., 2021). Appraisal theory, a framework within Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), provides a detailed account of how language is used to express attitudes, engage with readers, and grade evaluations. Attitudinal expressions, as a component of appraisal theory, have been shown to be crucial in articulating the author's stance and in shaping the reader's interpretation and engagement with the text. Despite the substantial body of work on appraisal in academic texts, a noticeable gap exists in the literature regarding how appraisal resources specifically contribute to attitudinal expressions in the discussion sections of high-quality journal articles. Addressing this gap, the novelty of present study focuses on analyzing attitudinal expressions in high-quality discussion sections of Scopus-indexed journal articles through the lens of appraisal theory. The purpose of this study is to analyze how appraisal resources are employed to convey attitudinal expressions in high-quality discussion sections of Scopus-indexed journal articles and identify the specific linguistic elements that contribute to the construction of these attitudinal expressions.

2. METHOD

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methods to examine how interpersonal positioning is constructed through attitudinal expressions in high-quality discussion sections of Scopus-indexed journal articles (Froehlich et al., 2020). The qualitative component provides an in-depth thematic exploration of attitudinal expressions, while the quantitative analysis supports the findings by quantifying the frequency and distribution of these expressions. The combination of both methods allows for a more robust and comprehensive understanding of the linguistic patterns used in academic writing. A purposive sampling method was employed to select five high-quality discussion sections from Scopus-indexed journal articles in the field of Applied Linguistics. The selection criteria focused on articles published in Q1 Scopus journals in 2024 to ensure the relevance and timeliness of the data. The selected journals included *TESOL Quarterly*, *CALL-EJ*, *English Teaching & Learning*, *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, and *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*. Articles were sourced directly from the Scopus database using search terms related to attitudinal expressions and academic discourse, and inclusion was based on the availability of full-text articles that specifically focused on language analysis in academic writing. To gather data, each discussion section was read multiple times, and attitudinal expressions were manually coded using a coding scheme based on appraisal framework (Jin et al., 2022).

Table 1. Framework Analysis of Attitudinal Expressions

Category	Sub-category	Description	Example Words
Affect	Happiness	Expression of happiness, joy, satisfaction	Happy, joyful
	Security	Expression of security, safety, confidence	Secure, safe, confidence
	Satisfaction	Expression of satisfaction, fulfillment	Satisfied, fulfilled, gratified
Judgement	Normality	How usual or typical something is	Typical, usual, normal
	Capacity	Evaluations of capability, competence	Competent, effective, skilled
	Tenacity	Evaluations of dependability, resolution	Dependable, persistent, resolute
Appreciatio	Reaction	Evaluations of impact, significance	Striking, significant, impressive
	Composition	Evaluations of balance, complexity	Balanced, complex, detailed
	Valuation	Evaluations of worth, value	Valuable, important, worthwhile

The coding was conducted using NVivo software to ensure the systematic categorization of linguistic features and to facilitate both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The selected data in this study is based on Martin and White's (2003) theory of appraisal, which is used to categorize and interpret attitudinal expressions. The appraisal framework includes three main components: Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation, each with sub-categories as described in Table 1. In this qualitative analysis, a detailed exploration of how attitudinal expressions are constructed in high-quality discussion sections is conducted. Thematic analysis is employed to examine how

attitudinal expressions (affect, judgement, and appreciation) are utilized in the selected discussion sections of the data sample. Thematic analysis in this study involves several structured steps to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the data. Initially, the selected articles were read and re-read to familiarize the researchers with the content and to identify sections relevant to the research focus. During this stage, attitudinal expressions were meticulously coded and categorized based on their linguistic functions and contextual usage. This coding process allowed for the identification of recurring themes and patterns, which were further refined through iterative analysis. As the themes developed, detailed textual excerpts and examples were extracted to illustrate key findings, providing concrete evidence of the identified patterns.

In addition to the qualitative thematic analysis, a quantitative analysis was conducted to provide empirical support for the qualitative findings. This quantitative approach involved the use of statistical analysis to quantify and compare the usage of Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation across the selected articles. A systematic coding scheme was developed to categorize instances of these attitudinal expressions. Each instance was coded based on predefined criteria, ensuring consistency and accuracy in the analysis. The coded data were then subjected to statistical analysis, which involved calculating the frequencies and distributions of the attitudinal expressions across the sample. The results of this analysis were presented through descriptive statistics and visual representations, such as charts and graphs, to complement and enhance the qualitative findings.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study examined the use of attitudinal expressions in the discussion sections of high-quality journal articles, focusing on how authors interpret their findings, contextualize them within existing research, and provide recommendations for future investigations. Based on the data analysis of the discussion sections from five high-quality journals, the attitudinal expressions fall into three main categories: Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation. The data reveal varying frequencies and distributions across these categories, as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. The Result of Data Analysis

Attitude	Sub-category	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	Total	Percentage
Affect	Security	1	2	0	0	0	3	2.88%
	Satisfaction	0	0	0	2	0	2	1.92%
Judgement	Capacity	4	11	9	7	10	41	39.42%
	Normality	4	0	1	1	1	7	6.73%
	Complexity	0	2	5	0	0	7	6.73%
	Quality	0	0	2	5	0	7	6.73%
Appreciation	Valuation	3	0	4	3	13	23	22.12%
	Reaction	2	0	0	0	5	7	6.73%
	Impact	0	3	3	0	0	6	5.77%
	Alignment	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.96%
	Composition	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.96%
Total		**14**	**18**	**25**	**18**	**30**	**105**	**100%**

Base on Table 2, the attitudinal expressions in the data fall into three main categories: Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation. Affect accounts for 4.80% of the total expressions, Judgement constitutes the majority with 59.60%, and Appreciation makes up 37.50%. These categories capture different dimensions of attitude, reflecting the varied ways in which emotions, evaluations of behavior, and appraisals of phenomena are expressed across the five documents (D1 to D5). In judgement category, capacity is the largest sub-category, with 41 instances, representing 39.42% of the total expressions. This sub-category is notably prevalent in D2, which alone accounts for 11 instances. Normality, Complexity, and Quality each occur 7 times, making up 6.73% each. These expressions are dispersed across the documents, highlighting the focus on evaluating capacities and behaviors. Normality, making up 6.73% of the total, includes instances like the excerpt, "In line with previous studies, our analysis identified a proficiency attainment window during upper-elementary grades." This excerpt falls into the Normality sub-category as it evaluates the typicality or expectedness of a finding, indicating that the results align with what is generally observed in other studies, thus portraying them as usual or standard. Complexity, also at 6.73%, is exemplified by the statement, "Our study highlights that such an effect may be much more complex than what a dichotomously defined home language variable (Spanish- vs. non-Spanish-speaking) can reveal." This excerpt fits the Complexity sub-category as it underscores the intricate and multifaceted nature of the observed effect, suggesting that the phenomenon cannot be adequately captured by a simple binary variable. Another 6.73% quality is demonstrated by the excerpt, "This study took a different approach by examining topic familiarity from

the perspectives of the students who actually produced a piece of writing." This falls into the Quality sub-category because it assesses the methodological innovation and value of the study's approach. It emphasizes how it diverges from traditional methods to gain unique insights from the students' perspectives.

Moreover, the example excerpt, "We found that primary disability type, primary home language, and retention all had significant effects on the probability of proficiency attainment, whereas home and school language experiences had negligible to small effects," includes a claim of authority regarding the research findings and falls under the subcategory of Capacity. The phrase "had significant effects" means that some variables (primary disability type, primary home language, and retention) were found to have a significant impact on the probability of proficiency attainment. This implies that these variables have the ability to meaningfully influence the outcome of interest. The statement's polarity is positive because it highlights significant effects, indicating that these variables are important factors to understand proficiency attainment. For instance, the excerpt: "In line with previous studies, our analysis identified a proficiency attainment window during upper-elementary grades…" falls under the category of Judgement because it involves an assessment or evaluation of the research findings in relation to existing knowledge. It highlights a significant focus on assessing human behaviors and capacities. The prevalent sub-category of capacity reflects authors' emphasis on competence and effectiveness, particularly evident in discussions about methodological robustness and participants' abilities.

In contrast, Affect and Appreciation sub-categories show lower percentages compared to Judgement. Appreciation was the next most prevalent category, comprising 37.50% of the expressions, highlighting the positive evaluation of research processes and methodologies. Appreciation complements judgment by evaluating objects, processes, and phenomena. The frequent use of valuation underscores the importance of assessing the worth and significance of various research elements, such as participant diversity and methodological approaches. It includes five sub-categories: Valuation, Reaction, Impact, Alignment, and Composition. Valuation is the most frequent, with 23 instances (22.12%), predominantly found in D5, which accounts for 13 instances. The excerpt, "The investigation involved a diverse group of participants... displaying significant disparities in their English language skills," falls into Valuation as it assesses the worth and importance of the study's sample diversity and their varying language skills. Reaction appears 7 times (6.73%), mostly in D1 and D5. An example is the excerpt, "The participants reported minimal or no prior proficiency in English listening skills." This falls into the Reaction sub-category as it captures the immediate responses or feelings of the participants regarding their own skills, reflecting their direct experiences and perceptions. Impact is present 6 times (5.77%), particularly in D2 and D3. The excerpt, "The long-term benefits of L1 exposure/instruction, and the equity it brings, may be more strongly manifested if the ELs are tracked for longer than 6 years," fits into the Impact sub-category. This excerpt assesses the significant effects and implications of L1 exposure over an extended period, emphasizing the lasting influence and the broader consequences of such instruction on English learners. Alignment and Composition are the least common, each occurring once (0.96%), with Alignment in D3 and Composition in D5. These sub-categories reflect specific aspects of appreciation related to coherence, alignment with standards, and the structural composition of the elements being appraised. Overall, the Appreciation category emphasizes the evaluation of worth, reactions, and impact, providing a nuanced understanding of various attributes and their significance. Reactions and impact sub-categories capture immediate responses and long-term implications, respectively. The least dominant category is Affect, which accounts for 4.80% of the total expressions and is divided into two sub-categories: Security and Satisfaction. Security is noted 3 times (2.88%), with instances in D1 and D2. An example of this sub-category is the excerpt, "Participants expressed concern that the program did not sufficiently address their specific needs." This falls into the Security sub-category as it reflects the participants' feelings of concern and uncertainty regarding the adequacy of the program in meeting their needs. It indicates their sense of insecurity. On the other hand, the expressions of satisfaction emphasize feelings of contentment and positivity which indicate effective participation and motivation, especially in response to comprehensive and captivating content. Expressions of security point to areas where the research may need to be improved upon or where participant demands are not fully met. They also express worries and uncertainties. Satisfaction appears twice (1.92%), both in D4. An example is the excerpt, "The participants reported that they felt motivated to watch the videos because they consumed comprehensible video content and watched the videos multiple times." This excerpt belongs into the Satisfaction sub-category as it conveys the participants' positive emotions and fulfillment derived from engaging with the video content. It shows their motivation and satisfaction with the comprehensibility and repeated viewing of the videos.

Discussion

The data revealed that Judgment and Appreciation are prominent categories of appraisal found in Scopus-indexed articles. Judgment, which involves assessing human behavior, and Appreciation, which focuses on evaluating objects, processes, and phenomena, work together to create a compelling narrative that critically engages with research findings. This aligns with study language as a tool for meaning making, where the ideational function construes the world of experience, and the interpersonal function, including the appraisal system, allows writers to manifest their attitudes and categorize meaning assessment (Milana, 2021; Zakiyah & Fitrawati, 2020).

Previous study on appraisal in forensic discourse found that the pattern of lexical appraisal, particularly negative attitudes, is prominent, with extensive use of evaluative language expressing emotions both implicitly and explicitly, as well as aesthetic assessments (Hidayati, 2017; Yusop et al., 2022). This supports previous study observation that the appraisal system of attitude, particularly the subcategory of Appreciation, is the most dominant form of evaluation in academic discourse (Zottola & De Majo, 2022). The prominence of Judgment and Appreciation in scholarly writing underscores the strategic use of evaluative language to assert the significance of research outcomes and critique other works in the field. This finding aligns with study assertion about the challenging nature of balancing evaluation and engagement in academic writing (Alkhasawnh & Alqahtani, 2019). Similarly, other study emphasized that judgment is a critical resource for academic writers to establish their stance and engage with the academic community, reinforcing the central role of evaluation in academic discourse (Agustini et al., 2020; Arif, 2017). Judgments allow writers to make authoritative claims about the strengths, weaknesses, or implications of their own findings, as well as critically evaluate the work of others in the field. This strategic use of judgment helps to establish the writer's credibility and the overall persuasiveness of the research. Furthermore, it was also revealed that judgement category consists of four sub-categories: Capacity, Normality, Complexity, and Quality. The use of these four sub-categories in the discussion sections of high-indexed journal articles reflects a strategic approach to academic evaluation. The presence of **Normality** and **Complexity** in the data analysis results indicates the study's recognition of the nuanced and detailed aspects of the research findings. **Normality** suggests that the authors are positioning their findings in relation to established norms or expectations within the field, providing a critical evaluation of how the results align with or diverge from prevailing knowledge. It allows authors to position their findings within the broader academic context, showing whether the results align with or deviate from established norms in the field. **Complexity,** on the other hand, reflects the acknowledgement of multifaceted challenges or intricacies in the research. It is employed to critically assess the competence of methodologies or theoretical frameworks, highlighting their strengths or limitations in achieving the research goals.

The analysis also found the presence of quality, which reflects an evaluation of the study's merit and effectiveness in exploring the topic. This sub-category is particularly significant in high-indexed journal articles, as it allows authors to assess not only the robustness of their research methods but also the value their findings contribute to the broader academic discourse. By emphasizing quality, writers in the discussion sections reinforce the credibility and impact of their work, as well as highlight the effectiveness and reliability of both the research process and the findings. Furthermore, the sub-category capacity suggests that authors prioritize demonstrating the capabilities and reliability of their research methods and subjects, which reinforces the credibility and significance of their studies. It aligns with study that emphasizes the importance of evaluative language to shaper the readers' perceptions (Shrestha, 2022). Similarly, other study emphasized the functions of attitudinal resources in financial news articles, underscoring the role of evaluations in influencing reader perceptions (Bybee & McCrae, 2011). Meanwhile, the expressions of normality sub-category often situate findings within established research, portraying them as typical or expected, which helps align new results with existing knowledge. By employing these sub-categories, writers in high-indexed journals construct a robust and persuasive argument that both validates their own work and critically engages with existing literature, thereby establishing credibility and contributing meaningfully to scholarly discourse. This strategic use of evaluative language emphasizes the significance of the findings within the study's context, reinforcing assertion of previous study the crucial role of evaluation in academic writing (Bacha, 2002). Additionally, by aligning their research with previous study state that writer further underscore the validity and importance of their work (Nurvrita, 2020). The dominance of judgment in discussion sections reflects the need for authors to position themselves within the academic community and assert the relevance and impact of their research. The "Affect" category provides insights into the emotional responses and satisfaction levels of the participants. However, the study's finding on the minimal emphasis on emotional or subjective responses contrasts emphasis on the foundational role of affect in language acquisition finding that affect resources were frequently used in student reflections (Zuraida et al., 2020). It also showcased a more restrained use of emotional expressions in high-quality journal discussions, focusing more on evaluative and appraising language. This aligns with study assertion that academic writing typically prioritizes objective evaluation over personal emotional expression (Solikhah, 2015). To sum up, the findings indicate that the discussion sections of high-quality journal articles predominantly utilize Judgement and Appreciation to convey attitudinal stances, emphasizing the importance of evaluation and appraisal in establishing the credibility and significance of research within the academic community. This trend is consistent with previous studies that highlight the critical role of these attitudinal resources in academic discourse (Bybee & McCrae, 2011). Appreciation, as a linguistic tool, allows writers to evaluate entities and events in a way that minimizes overt personal bias, favoring a more measured and impersonal tone (Okal, 2014; Shrestha, 2022). The focus on appreciation reinforces the expectation that English writers distance themselves from the subject matter, thus enhancing credibility and perceived impartiality.

The findings from this research have several important pedagogical implications. First, educators can incorporate these results into academic writing courses, emphasizing the strategic use of appraisal resources to construct effective attitudinal expressions in scholarly writing. This can help students develop a more nuanced understanding of presenting their arguments, engaging with the literature, and addressing their audience in a scholarly context. Additionally, instructors can provide more targeted feedback on students' use of appraisal resources in their writing, guiding them to refine their evaluative language and stance, thus enhancing their ability to express attitudes effectively. Moreover, by understanding how attitudinal expressions are constructed through appraisal resources, students can become more critical readers of academic texts. This skill can help them better analyze and evaluate the arguments and positions of other scholars, fostering a deeper engagement with the literature. Non-native English writers, who often struggle with the subtleties of evaluative language and attitudinal expressions, can particularly benefit from these insights. Specialized instructional materials and workshops can be developed to support these writers in mastering these aspects of academic writing. The minimal use of Affect indicates that emotional expressions are not central to the discussion sections of high-quality journal articles. This aligns with the genre's emphasis on objective analysis and evaluation over personal sentiment. Therefore, this study provides insight into the rhetorical strategies employed by authors in high-quality journals, revealing a strong preference for Judgement and Appreciation to communicate their research findings. The restrained use of Affect suggests a deliberate choice to maintain a focus on objective evaluation. The limitation of this study lies on a small sample of high-quality journals, which may not fully represent the diversity of academic writing. Future research could explore a larger and more varied sample of journals to provide a broader perspective on the use of attitudinal expressions as well as examining other sections of research articles, such as introductions or conclusions, could offer insights into how attitudinal resources are employed throughout the entire manuscript. Longitudinal studies could also examine changes in the use of attitudinal expressions over time. Additionally, exploring the impact of cultural and disciplinary differences on the use of attitudinal language in academic writing could provide deeper insights into the rhetorical strategies employed by authors.

4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore how attitudinal expressions; namely Affect, Appreciation, and Judgement; are utilized in the discussion sections of high-quality journal articles. The findings reveal that Judgement and Appreciation are the dominant attitudinal resources, while Affect is used minimally. Authors frequently employ Judgement to evaluate the significance of their research outcomes, critique methodologies, and establish their research's credibility within the existing literature. This usage demonstrates how evaluative language is integral to asserting the value of research findings and engaging critically with previous studies. Appreciation, though less prevalent than Judgement, also plays a significant role. It reflects the authors' focus on evaluating and acknowledging the quality and impact of their research processes and outcomes. This attitudinal expression helps authors to highlight the positive aspects and contributions of their work.

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