

## Hooking the Readers via the Use of Attitudinal Language in Economic Research Article Abstracts

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this study is to investigate the strategic use of evaluative language in economic research abstracts with regard to how authors use Attitude expressions in light of Martin and White's (2005) model to engage their readers and draw more attention to their articles. The analysis of 60 abstracts in English, which were retrieved from the Scopus and Web of Science databases, documented much higher frequencies of Appreciation subtypes (the assessment of objects or phenomena) than of Affect (personal feelings) and Judgment (evaluation of people and their behaviours). Appreciation subtypes deserve much more consideration with regard to objectivity and value judgments. Interestingly, the evaluations of Composition, which include the organisation and structure of objects or phenomena, are almost balanced between positive and negative polarity, which might point to nuances in the presentation of the research area and study contributions. In addition, the results show variation in realisations for the attitudinal types using different parts of speech. Interestingly, concerning lexical realisations, the study finds that the term "optimal" is prevalent in the data, which may signal a feature in the specific discipline examined. These findings provide valuable insights into the strategic use of attitudinal language in the economic discourse community and how one could thereby facilitate communicative success in the publication of writing.*

*Keywords: Appraisal framework; attitude; abstract; evaluative; economics*

### INTRODUCTION

In the realm of evaluation, there is a common misconception that academic writing is emotionless. It is often said to be purely factual with vanishing authors. However, academic writing is more nuanced since scholars contribute to ongoing discussions, aiming both to convey information and definitely persuade readers of their interpretations. Complete objectivity is hardly obtained as their arguments are contingent on evaluations and judgments (Hyland Ken & Polly, 2004; Swales, 1990). Showing results alone is no longer the sole aim of academic writing. Researchers have recently focused on the ways in which writers use language to evaluate, analyse, and engage with their audience in addition to presenting information. The persuasive attempt encompasses elements such as directives, reporting verbs, hedges, and voice choices (Hyland, 2004a; Hyland Ken & Polly, 2004), "that" clause (Biber et al., 1999) or the realisation of *Attitudes* and *Engagement* (Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005).

In order to investigate the use of evaluative language in academic research, several approaches have been proposed, among which the *Appraisal* approach (Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005) is considered prominent thanks to its systematic classification of evaluative resources (Thompson & Alba-Juez, 2014, p. 5). This approach enables researchers and scholars to identify the types of evaluative resources and their uses in discourse. Also, it can be applicable to a variety of genres, encompassing research articles. A number of studies (Križan, 2016; Puspita & Pranoto, 2021; Sukma et al., 2021; Zhang, 2015) have delved into the *Appraisal* language in such genres; however, the insightful analysis of the abstract section in economic research articles has

received scant attention. In fact, the abstract is of paramount importance in the rhetorical structure of a research article since it is usually the first-read part and serves as a hook to readers. Knowing how to use evaluative language properly in this part will afford the writer a chance to have their article accepted and their viewpoint justified and engaged.

This study explores the usage of one fundamental subsystem in the *Appraisal Framework, Attitude*, in economic research article abstracts. To reach the aim, 60 economic research articles were collected from English journals within Scopus and the Web of Science databases. Then, the frequency of use and the approach of using *Attitude* resources are examined to comprehend how writers interact in their field. This report will start by defining “*Attitude*”, followed by an explanation of the research method and an in-depth analysis of the findings. Specifically, this study investigates the use of *Attitude* resources in the abstracts of economic research articles for a better understanding of how evaluative language works in this particular genre and a particular discipline while shaping academic discourse. In order to do so, it seeks to address these two questions:

1. How are *Attitude* resources used in the abstract sections of English economic research articles?
2. Which *Attitude* resource patterns stand out in the corpus, and what is their implication?

The approach used in this research was a hybrid method combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to achieve its goals. To be precise, the research began with a detailed analysis of *attitudes* in abstracts from selected articles in quality publishing houses. The nature of these sources was then systematically coded using the *Appraisal Framework*. The various articles that were selected for this study came from English language journals indexed under the Web of Science and Scopus databases. A sample size of 60 articles for the period between 2019 and 2023 was employed to ensure the relevance of the data. Qualitative data was then quantified, which permitted the identification of significant values with calculated percentages for the attitudinal tokens. The present study will focus on the following main subcategories, all of which belong to the umbrella category of *Attitude: Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation*. In the concluding part of the paper, from the findings, the author gave a detailed description of how attitudinal resources were strategically employed by the article writers. The explanation showed what actually motivated the writers in their selection and use of attitudinal language in their various works and what communicative objectives they pursued.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### PREVIOUS STUDIES ON APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK AND ACADEMIC WRITING

Evaluative language has been investigated over time using different approaches. The study of how language is used to evaluate things saw a boom in attention in the early 21st century. Some frameworks may focus on evaluative syntactic features (Biber et al., 1999; Hunston & Thompson, 2000), and some may focus on semantic ones (Martin & White, 2005). *Appraisal*, one well-known systematic framework that aids in understanding the speaker's or writer's attitude toward a topic, was put forth by Martin and White (2005). It also looks at how engaged - strong or weak - the writer is with the topic. *Appraisal* theory goes deeper than these surface-level features. It examines the particular language tools that individuals employ in order to interact, compromise, and eventually normalise particular relationships and viewpoints within a discourse community.

Scholars have long given *Appraisal* language particular and in-depth attention thanks to its crucial function in discourse. It can be claimed that research on appraisal language has exploded in the last several decades, spanning numerous domains and levels of analysis. This is evidenced

by the growing number of *Appraisal* language studies that have utilised the *Appraisal Framework* developed by Martin and White (2005) in relation to genres such as news and comments (Arunsirot, 2012; Cavasso & Taboada, 2021; Marsakawati, 2022; Tran & Ngo, 2018), political discourses (Jalilifar & Savaedi, 2012), textbooks (T. L. H. Nguyen, 2018; Sukma et al., 2021), etc. One prominent genre that is often explored is academic articles.

In recent years, along with the prevalence of research on rhetorical moves (Nguyen & Pham, 2024; T. T. L. Nguyen, 2018) there has been a surge of interest in analysing appraisal language in research articles across various disciplines (Affandi & Maulluddul, 2023; Alotaibi, 2019; Amornrattanasirichok & Jaroongkhongdach, 2017; Arsyad & Wardhana, 2022; Arvey & Tanko, 2004; Cheng & Unsworth, 2016; Fryer, 2013; Wang & Hu, 2022). This growing body of research recognises the importance of comprehending how researchers in different fields communicate their findings by means of evaluative language. In terms of research fields, linguists have studied evaluative language in medicine (Fryer, 2013; Wang & Hu, 2022), biochemistry (Kanoksilapatham, 2005), psychology (Loi et al., 2016), and more focus of Engagement has been placed in education field (Alotaibi & Arabi, 2020; Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011), and applied linguistics (Affandi & Maulluddul, 2023; Amornrattanasirichok & Jaroongkhongdach, 2017; Arsyad & Wardhana, 2022; Arvey & Tanko, 2004; Cheng & Unsworth, 2016; Nguyen, 2023). However, research on evaluative language in the economic field remains limited.

The majority of these studies have focused on *the Engagement* subsystem in *Appraisal Theory*, identifying the contractive and expansive voices in the research articles, especially incorporated with the rhetorical moves of the research articles. Their findings reveal that *Engagement* use varies across different disciplines (Kanoksilapatham, 2005; Nguyen, 2023; Pascual, 2010). Studies have analysed the language used to express *Engagement* in different sections, such as the introduction (Alotaibi & Arabi, 2020; Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011; Loghmani et al., 2020), the discussion (Geng & Wharton, 2016), and the conclusion (Loi et al., 2016). These studies confirm that *Engagement* is employed in scientific writing, although the extent and distribution may vary. Most research designates that articles accepted for publication in journals exhibit a high degree of *Engagement* in language use (Alotaibi & Arabi, 2020; Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011; Hood, 2010; Nguyen, 2023).

The abstract section of research articles has received limited attention in the literature. Yet, there exists one scholar who is particularly interested in this area - Hyland. He extensively investigated this field but through the lens of metadiscourse rather than *Appraisal Theory*. His works (Hyland & Tse, 2005; Jiang & Hyland, 2022) remain highly relevant for researchers in academic writing. However, examining *Attitude* within the framework of Appraisal Theory can complement existing research and offer writers valuable insights into the use of *the Attitude* subsystem in research article abstracts. This study aims to address this gap in the literature.

Novice second language learners often struggle to meet implicit expectations in academic writing (Hirvela & Belcher, 2001; Ivanič & Camps, 2001). Research has indeed pointed to the linguistic and rhetorical differences between second language learners and native speakers' writing. Thus, the need for improved pedagogical practice is highlighted in light of such findings (Hyland, 2007; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Mauranen, 1993). A key issue that second language writers face is projecting an appropriate author voice, which, in many cases, gives way to undue subjectivity (Hyland & Milton, 1997). Research on academic writing has highlighted the *Engagement* strategies in students' essays by deep analysis, comparison between the high-scoring and low-scoring papers, or students' writing and experts' writing and confirms that *Engagement* strategies play significant roles in effective academic communication; however, there normally

exists the inefficiency of its use in many of students' essays (Brooke, 2014; Lancaster, 2011; Liardét, 2018; Mei, 2006; Rungkarn et al., 2021).

Although a number of studies have underscored the importance of explicit instruction in *Engagement* areas, particularly for second language learners, to enhance their academic writing skills, research into the use of the *Attitude* subsystem (Martin & White, 2005) is scant. A rare study by Hood (2004) investigating writing by both established academics and English for Academic Purposes students shows that for effective academic writing, the former tends to favour evaluative discourse with regard to research itself. To put it another way, expert writers have a predilection for evaluating things or phenomena (*Appreciation*), while novice writers tend to use mostly expressions related either to the expression of personal feelings (*Affect*) or judgments about individuals (*Judgment*) (Hood, 2004). This renders their writing personal and subjective. Therefore, this study (investigating *Attitude* but in another discipline) can be beneficial by enhancing knowledge in a specific discipline of academic writing, i.e. economics.

#### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Appraisal theory is composed of three subsystems: *Attitude*, *Engagement*, and *Graduation* (Martin & White, 2005). Attitude is influenced by feelings, which embrace emotional reactions, behavioural evaluations, and appraisals of objects or phenomena. *Engagement* is a measure of how speakers and writers put forward their points of view and how those points of view align with those of others. *Graduation* tackles the phenomena of grading, which gives rise to a spike or diminution in emotional intensity. The *Appraisal* system and its subsystems are depicted in Figure 1 below. Each of these subcategories has a unique set of realisations and can make use of a variety of syntactic and semantic options.

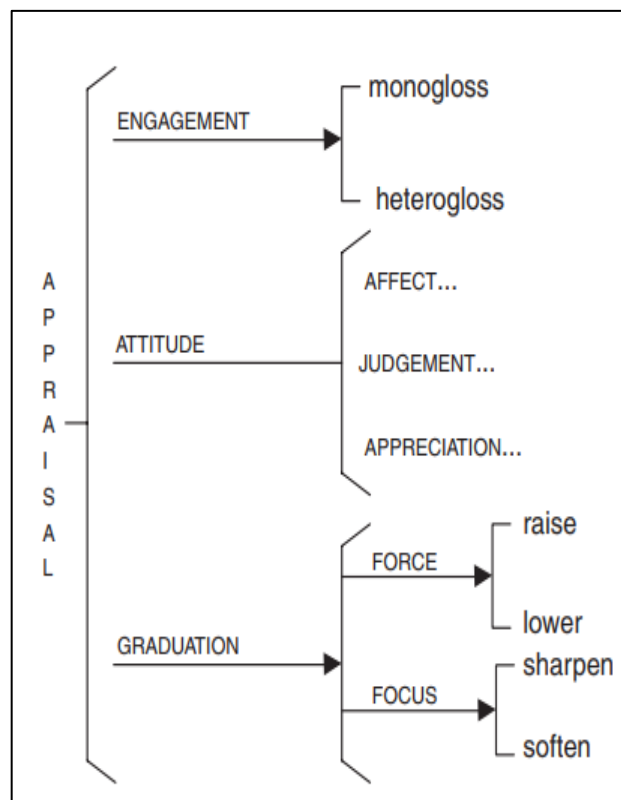


FIGURE 1. An overview of the Appraisal Framework (Martin & White, 2005, p. 38)

This research focuses on the *attitude* language used in the abstracts of economic articles, which is potentially beneficial but underexplored in the literature. Also, it may take a considerable amount of time to analyse the entire framework; therefore, only the key subsystem (*Attitude*) is investigated. Among many disciplines, economics is the field of choice since few studies have been done in this field. The investigation in such a field can contribute to a more precise analysis of the content and the language. Both linguistics stakeholders and writers in this discourse community may benefit from this study. The Attitude domain encompasses three components: *Affect*, *Judgment* and *Appreciation*. The polarity of these components will also be examined, with a focus on distinguishing between depictions of emotions, judgments, and appreciations that are favourable (supporting) or negative (critical). The *Attitude* subsystem is depicted in Figure 2 below.

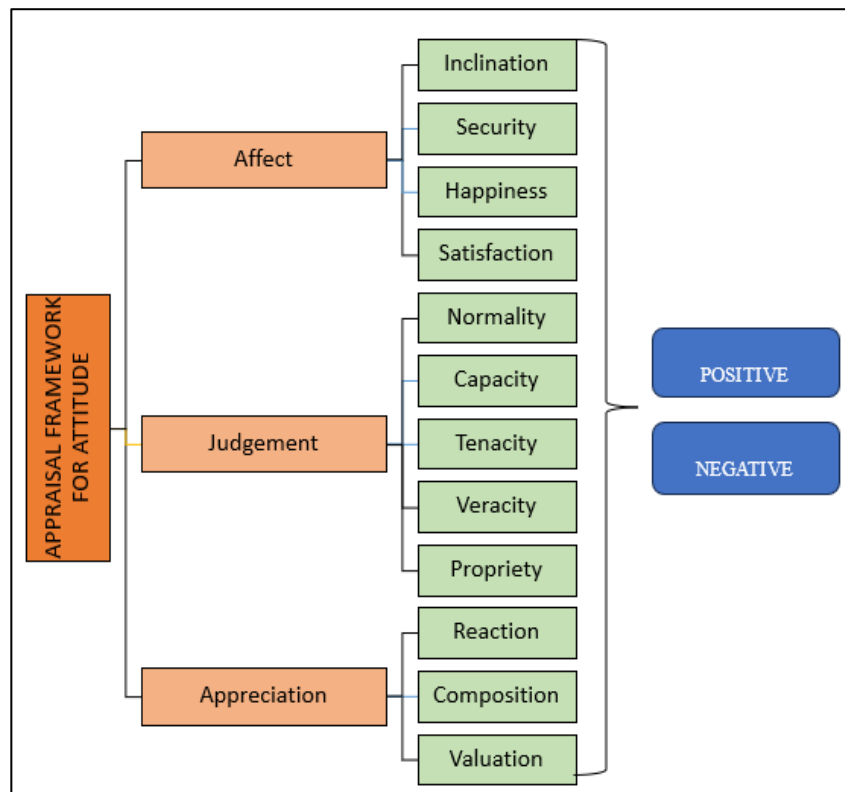


FIGURE 2. Attitude Breakdown (adapted from Martin and White (2005, pp. 42-91)

The *Attitude* subsystem confers a framework for examining the ways in which the writer utilises various resources to express feelings, Judgments, and assessments. Three main facets of this subsystem are broken down as follows:

*Affect* interprets our emotions and is further divided into four primary categories: *Inclination*, *Security*, *Happiness*, and *Satisfaction* (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2005). *Inclination* pertains to how we generally feel about something, such as being thrilled, melancholy, or uninterested. *Security* relates to how safe or dangerous we feel in the situation, such as being secure or concerned. *Happiness* includes joy and grief, such as being cheerful or miserable. *Satisfaction* has to do with how satisfied or dissatisfied we are with something, such as being chuffed or furious. Polarity analysis allows us to distinguish between positive and negative emotions, judgments, and



assessments. In Example 1 below, “aspiring” indicates a positive attitude, that is, the ambition, eagerness, and hopefulness in these “researchers” for the developed scale with positive qualities proposed by the writers. While the overall statement carries authorial Appraisal with respect to the quality of the scale, the word “aspiring” itself does carry a non-authorial appraisal. It is a positive evaluation of the ambition and potential of the researchers. On the other hand, in Example 2, “irreversible investments” create feelings of disinclination, that is, negative Inclination on the consumers' part.

- (1) *The scale developed has desirable, reliable, and valid properties that could be used by **aspiring** researchers. (BTA53)*
- (2) *In many cases, final consumers make **irreversible** investments to join an ecosystem before downstream prices are set. (BTA60)*

While *Affect* involves how someone feels, *Judgment* refers to the assessment of the behavior of others (Martin & Rose, 2003). The focus of *Judgment* is on how we evaluate the conduct of people's actions. Judgments are shaped by social norms, context, and culture and fall into two categories: *Social Esteem* and *Social Sanction*. *Social Esteem* assesses an individual's attributes, including his or her *Normality*, *Capacity* and *Tenacity*. On the other hand, *Social Sanction* (including *Veracity* and *Propriety*) entails commendation as well as criticism, frequently with legal ramifications. *Judgments* can also be positive or negative. In the following examples, “top”, “-savvy”, and “unable” refer to the *Judgment* of capability; however, Example 3 refers to a positive evaluation, whereas Example 4 refers to a negative one. In Example 3, “top experts” explicitly express a positive evaluation of the interviewees with respect to their expertise in their field. The term “IPR-savvy” reinforces this positive Judgment about the company having a good understanding in dealing with intellectual property rights issues. This underlines their competence and specialist knowledge and adds to the Judgment regarding the stringency and soundness of the research. Conversely, in Example 4, there is a negative evaluation of their ability to make a decision. The word “unable” creates a lack while “base their decisions on what they observe” suggests a reliance upon the available though partial information. This implies that due to the absence of full information, not all consumers may be equally adept at making choices.

- (3) *The evaluation, following an original framework developed by the authors, is based on a literature review, web analysis, and interviews carried out with some of the **top** experts from **IPR-savvy** multinational companies. (BTA01)*
- (4) ***Unable** to observe future prices, consumers base their decisions on what they observe about the market structure within each ecosystem, including vertical contracts signed by the upstream firms. (BTA52)*

*Appreciation* evaluates items and occurrences or circumstances (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2005). This falls into three subsections - *Reaction*, *Composition* and *Valuation*. *Reaction* describes how we feel about something, such as whether we are drawn to it or repulsed by it. *Composition* emphasises the structure or organisation, like depth or clarity, that exists inside something. *Valuation* explores the degree to which we value or interpret the significance of something. In the *Attitude* subsystem, *Appreciation* can refer to positive or negative Appraisal. In the following examples, both “**accurate and explainable**” and “**adversely affect**” refer to the *Judgment* of reaction; however, the former denotes a positive evaluation, whereas the latter denotes a negative one. Example 5 illustrates a positively appreciative attitude about the machine learning model. The terms “predictively accurate” and “explainable” underscore that these are favoured qualities of the model, meaning it is effective and interpretable. Example 6 illustrates a negative

appreciation of the impact of COVID-19. The use of the phrase “adversely affect” and the mention of heightened “volatility” designates a negative Judgment of the situation. It also means that the implications of COVID-19 on financial markets are considered unconstructive and destructive.

- (5) *The machine learning model used is both predictively **accurate and explainable**. (BTA31)*
- (6) *Using high-frequency daily data across 53 emerging and 23 developed countries from January 14 to August 20, 2020, we find that COVID-19 cases and deaths **adversely affect** stock returns and increase **volatility** and trading volume. (BTA30)*

Although evaluative language research has been quite popular worldwide, its application within scientific article abstracts, particularly those in the economic field, remains under-explored. This offers the author a great chance to conduct additional research. Thankfully, prior research on academic writing and the genre of research articles offers a solid framework for this investigation.

## METHODOLOGY

To accomplish the objectives, this research study used a mixed method, combining qualitative and quantitative procedures. The first stage was a meticulous analysis of *Attitude* in abstracts from selected articles from reliable sources. These resources' attributes were methodically and suitably coded in accordance with the *Appraisal* methodology. The chosen articles were sourced from English-language publications that were listed in the Web of Science and Scopus databases. A sample of 60 publications covering the years 2019 to 2023 was selected in order to guarantee temporal diversity and appropriateness of the data. The qualitative data was then quantified, which made it possible to pinpoint significant values and calculate the percentages of attitudinal tokens. The investigation concentrated on examining key subgroups - *Affect*, *Judgment*, and *Appreciation* - within the larger category of *Attitude*. Based on the findings, the author then gave a thorough explanation of the reason why the article writers strategically used attitudinal resources. The underlying motives and communicative objectives that guide the writers' selection and application of attitudinal language in their individual pieces are explained.

To be specific, the corpus of 60 economic research abstracts were extracted from four journals which are written in English as publications in English are more prevalent and accessible among journals in the Web of Science and Scopus databases. Also, these journals were chosen due to their ranking (from Q3 to Q1 for Scopus, and impact factors more than 0.3 for WoS ) and their large coverage of topics in economics. Table 1 illustrates the data.

TABLE 1. Descriptive statistics of the data

	Journal of Economics and Finance (published by Springer US)	European Journal of Management and Business Economics (published by Emerald, UK )	The Journal of Industrial Economics (published by Wiley, US)	Journal of Economics and Business (published by ScienceDirect, US)
Number of articles	15	15	15	15
Total number of papers			60	
Total number of words			9433	
Average number of words			157	

The abstracts were then converted into plain text and then loaded into Excel for manual analysis, which is definitely beneficial for statistical analysis. *Attitude* types were then categorised and coded in light of *Appraisal Theory* by Martin and White (2005). To be more specific, based on the identification of the emoter (one who has a feeling) and appraised entities (a person who has a quality, or an object or phenomenon) to identify *Affect*, *Judgment* and *Appreciation* types accordingly. In the subsequent step, based on the list of *Attitude* realisations (Martin & White, 2005, pp. 46-81) and their meaning in the context, they are categorised into specific *Attitude* subtypes. For example, in “*This extended model might be more appropriate in the post-Covid-19 era*” (BTA41), the appraised entity is the model (object), the word “appropriate” is listed in the *Appreciation* table by Martin and White (p. 56), and the context does reveal that it refers to the value of the model, so it is coded *Valuation* and signals a positive attitude.

However, the list provided was not exhaustive, as confirmed by Martin and White (2005). Thus, the authors read between the lines and based on the definition of *Attitude* type to find out other instances of *Attitude* realisations. For example, “*Our main observation is that, in contrast to conventional wisdom, an upstream monopolist merging with one of its downstream affiliates will find it profitable to continue to serve downstream competitors, even when products sold downstream are homogeneous*” (BTA 43), although “profitable” does not appear in Martin and White's (2005) lists of *Attitude* realisations, it does refer to the evaluation of the appraised practice, which is a merger between upstream and upstream companies. Such cases were identified and added to the annotation. Then, the speech of such instances was recorded based on the textual context. This entire process was rigorously reviewed over four months to guarantee accuracy. In the subsequent steps, statistic analysis in Excel was executed to compute the number of instances and percentage of *Attitude* resources as well as extract prevalent *Attitude* realisations. Finally, the author presented the findings visually through tables, enriching them with detailed descriptions and explanations.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### GENERAL FINDINGS

This section illustrates the *Affect*, *Judgment*, and *Appreciation* dimensions of *Attitude* revealed from the result. Table 1 delineates the allocation of the attitudinal resources found in the data.

TABLE 2. Allocation of Attitude resources across three main subcategories

TYPES OF ATTITUDES	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	INSTANCE	PERCENTAGE
Affect	9	7	16	6.1%
Judgment	28	17	45	17.2%
Appreciation	140	61	201	76.7%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>100%</b>

The distribution of the attitudinal resources is shown in Table 2. It is apparent from the data that all three dimensions of *Attitude* were used, with *Appreciation* ranking the highest and *Affect* the lowest. *Appreciation* instances are 201 in total, constituting approximately 76% of the total instances, whereas there are a mere 16 instances of *Affect*, accounting for only 6.1% of the total instances. *Judgment* is second on the list; however, it accounted for nearly one-fifth of the



total instances. This demonstrates the emphasis on subjectivity in academic writing (Hyland, 2016; Khamkhien, 2014). In addition, the finding also indicates that there is indeed evaluation in the abstract section of a research article. Another important finding relates to the polarity of *Attitude*. Positive polarity is the majority of *attitude* expressions. Especially in the case of *Appreciation*, positive evaluations are nearly twice that of the negatives, with 140 and 61 instances, correspondingly.

Such strategic emphasis on positive evaluation in these sections is justifiable because both abstracts and conclusions aim to serve the same objective: drawing attention to the importance and significance of the research done. In the abstract, positive evaluations are used to tempt readers, highlighting the novelty of the contributions and potential impacts of the research, which may encourage readers to delve deeper into the article. In the conclusion section, positive evaluations further reinforce the importance of the research, leaving an impression on the reader and possibly influencing future research directions. By placing positive evaluations at this strategic place in the article, a researcher may achieve an effective portrayal of the value of their work and amplify its overall impact within the academic community. Such practice underlines the importance of rhetorical awareness and strategic communication in academic writing as authors struggle in the complex landscape of scholarly discourse.

The finding is consistent with previous research in that research articles pay little attention to emotions (Nguyen, 2021; Zhang & Cheung, 2018). Another conspicuous result discovered is the figures for *Judgment* resources and *Affect* resources. To illustrate, the percentage of *Judgment* tokens in this study is more than that of *Affect* tokens. In contrast, the opposite can be seen in the study conducted by Nguyen (2021). Her study confirmed a higher proportion of *Judgment* (10.7%) compared to *Affect* (6.7%). This contrast in *Appraisal* types could likely be attributed to the different disciplinary contexts of the two studies. The current study, being focused on economic research articles, may show a higher occurrence of authorial appraisals where authors themselves write evaluations and judgments. On the other hand, Nguyen's study, being centred on the linguistics research article conclusion, may demonstrate a number of non-authorial appraisals, where the evaluations are attributed to sources and perspectives that are external to the authors themselves (Nguyen, 2021).

The finding also confirms the argument that there are differences in the expression of *Attitude* by different discourse communities (Biber et al., 1999; Hyland, 2004b; Hyland & Tse, 2004). The difference in *Appraisal* types can also be ascribed to the difference in article sections under investigation. The current research explores article abstracts, which usually represent the compact overview of the study and the main point of the findings and interpretations. On the other hand, Nguyen's study looks at article conclusions that have a broader reflection of the research implications (Nguyen, 2021). In addition, the finding also corroborates with other studies (e.g. Nguyen's (2021) as regards the polarity of *Attitude*. The positive polarity overpasses the negative one to highlight the contribution of the research, which is of paramount importance to draw readers' attention. In the next section, each system and subsystem of *Attitude* from the selected abstracts will be looked at in great detail.

THE BREAKDOWN OF ATTITUDE RESOURCES

ANALYSIS OF AFFECT RESOURCES

TABLE 3. Types and percentages of Affect resources

AFFECT	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	INSTANCE	PERCENTAGE
Happiness	0	0	0	0%
Inclination	9	1	10	66.67%
Satisfaction	0	3	3	20%
Security	0	2	2	13.33%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>

Affect encompasses a variety of sensations and emotions that are felt by the appraisers or emoters (Martin & Rose, 2003). Table 3 provides a synopsis of the Affect resources. Table 3 shows that with 66.67% of the total, *Inclination* is in the lead. Careful examination of the data revealed that the main evaluator is the writer of the article, though expressed indirectly via the aim of the research. The writer expects to carry out a study to embrace a complete source of information as in Example 7 and improve the situation (“*optimise corporate social responsibility*” as in Example 8. Besides, common emoters are customers, the main stakeholders of the company, who often express concern or expectation toward the company’s product and service quality or responsibility. For example, Example 9 reveals customers’ expectations for “*transparency*” and the increase in social responsibility.

- (7) ***Instead of ignoring (Affect: Inclination: Positive)*** this information and using a main effects approach, all the available information in the data set is taken into account. (BTA4)
- (8) ***Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate how to optimise (Affect: Inclination Positive) corporate social responsibility (CSR) when communicating via social media. (BTA7)***
- (9) ***In particular, the communication type, cause proximity, and CSR motives are addressed facing the increased demand (Affect: Inclination: Positive) for transparency and the grown consumers’ expectations (Affect: Inclination: Positive) towards socially responsible brands. (BTA7)***

The fact that the writer expresses their expectation in a dehumanised way (i.e. using *the purpose is to optimise...* instead of *we aim to optimise...*) reconfirms the assertion that the research article is primarily objective, trying to avoid mentioning individuals in the discourse. The sizable share of *Inclination* realisations in the *Attitude* aspect also signals that the writer always desires to stress the aim of the research, making the intention of the writer clear to the audience when conducting the research. In addition, all of these evaluations are positive, signifying the importance of the study to stakeholders. Interestingly, the writer could only find negative polarity in the *Happiness* and *Satisfaction* categories. In these cases, emoters are not writers but other stakeholders such as customers and employees who express concern in the unpleasant situations. This also serves as a ground for the writer to start his or her research. Similar to the previous research (Nguyen, 2021), most of the realisation of *Inclination* is made by verbs or verb phrases. These can be exemplified by typical words in the abstracts, such as “*validate*”, “*optimise*”, “*demand*”, and “*obtain*”. Although the cases of *Affect* do not comprise a significant share in the *Attitude* subsystem, all of the cases detected provide a basis for the study, denoting the aim and the importance of conducting the research.

ANALYSIS OF JUDGMENT RESOURCES

*Judgment* involves opinions about individuals and their actions. The low level of *Judgment* in the abstracts does justify the typical research style (objectivity and clarity). Table 3 below provides a synopsis of the results on *Judgment* resources.

TABLE 4. Types and percentages of Judgment resources

TYPE OF JUDGMENT	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	INSTANCE	PERCENTAGE
Capacity	11	6	17	68%
Propriety	1	4	5	20%
Veracity	0	2	2	8%
Tenacity	0	1	1	4%
Normality	0	0	0	0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

The ratios of the tokens used to build the various forms of *Judgment* are shown in Table 3. The table indicates that approximately two-thirds of *Judgments* are attributed to *Capacity* (68%). *Propriety* accounts for almost a fifth of *Judgment* tokens, followed by *Veracity* (20%) and *Tenacity* (4%). *Normality* is not found in the data. The number of *Capacity* expressions is almost evenly distributed among positive and negative polarity. Whereas the former is often associated with the aim of the research (enhancing the capability of employees and companies), as shown in Examples 10 and 11, the latter tends to convey the ability of a variety of stakeholders such as investors, customers and lenders as shown in Example 12. The negative evaluation of *Capacity* serves as the ground for setting the context, raising a problem that needs to be addressed, or presenting the findings of the research. The following examples also aid in clarifying *Judgment* realisations and demonstrate where the *Judgment* resources are situated within the text. It is also noted that in Example 11, the passive voice is used, yet the focus is on the ability of the government and company to manage the patent system appropriately. The purpose of passive voice usage is to try to achieve objectivity in an academic style.

- (10) *Exploring this connection develops a deeper understanding (Capacity: Positive) of the derivatives of employee motivation as it pertains to its effect on readiness, satisfaction, performance and achievement dyads. (BTA5)*
- (11) *If used appropriately (positive Capacity), it should support frontier technologies and nurture new firms. (BTA16)*
- (12) *Indicating a spiral relationship, these results suggest that institutional investors perform poorly (Capacity: Negative) during financial crises, which is also observable in the volatility patterns in dollar fund flow. (BTA34)*

One interesting point to discover is that the *Judgment* of people or behaviour is realised via a number of parts of speech, including not only adjectives (“top”, “savvy”, “understanding”, “influential”) but also nouns/ noun phrases (“surprisingly significant role”, “success”), and verb phrases (“able to use the agents’ information more effectively”, “avoiding the need to speculate”). This reconfirms the idea that the list of realisations provided by Martin and White (2005) is not exhaustive, signifying that other realisations can be added to the list (Jalilifar & Moradi, 2019, p. 148; Martin & White, 2005, p. 50). The fact that *Judgment* is variously expressed in these linguistic forms testifies that evaluation can be realised by various lexical resources, and more research can be done to build up the list of evaluative lexis. These findings also indicate that research into evaluative language needs to take more into account the wide range of linguistic cues through which *Judgment* may be encoded subtly in several grammatical structures other than adjectives.

One inference based on the observed trends that could be drawn is that authors use evaluative language in their research reports, especially *Judgment*, in abstracts in a strategic manner to convey and present research aims. This use of *Judgment* is made with much purposefulness and subtleness. To put it another way, most frequently, negative *Judgment* is taken for the background and justification of the research, while positive *Judgment* is strategically used to highlight the contributions that would be made and the objectives of the study. For instance, Example 13 inscribes the negative capability in the patent system that is misused. The term “perniciously” underscores a negative evaluation of managers' Capacity in using the patent system. The lack of such capability will bring harm by impeding innovation and sustaining the dominance of the existing tech giants. In contrast, a positive judgment is inscribed in Example 14, illustrating the desirable ability to have insight into factors leading to employee motivation. When the author presents such desirable ability, they further confirm the rationale for the study, which is generating beneficial outcomes (leading to better Capacity for managers in dealing with employee motivation).

(13) *Used perniciously (Capacity: Negative)*, it can stifle innovation and protect established technological behemoths. (BTA16)

(14) *Exploring this connection develops a deeper understanding (Capacity: Positive)* of the derivatives of employee motivation as it pertains to its effect on readiness, satisfaction, performance and achievement dyads. (BTA05)

The result of the present study agrees with the finding of (Hashemi & Mahdavi-rad, 2023) regarding the rare use of *Judgment* resources in PhD dissertation abstracts. Their study targeted the hard sciences (Physics and Mathematics) and soft sciences (Linguistics, Literature, Art, Psychology, and Philosophy), and the following trend has been observed: The former group avoided *Affect* and *Judgment* resources altogether; the latter made use of them only minimally. The preference for *Appreciation* resources over *Judgment* resources in both studies underlines the emphasis on objective evaluation and description in scientific writing. As expected, the low count of *Affect* resources is further indicative of avoiding emotional language in academic writing to maintain neutrality and impersonality in tone. Since consistent results have been obtained in similar studies conducted across subjects, this resource usage pattern may well be considered a characteristic feature of scientific writing to reflect objectivity and avoid personal biases or subjective interpretation of data.

However, the present study differs in that several instances of *Judgment* can be found especially for cases of *Capacity*. This difference might be attributed to the difference in the disciplines examined. The present study deals with economics, which often embraces assessing the capabilities and potentials of various economic entities, such as suppliers, managers, marketers, salespersons, governmental bodies, etc. Evaluating their Capacity to perform certain actions or achieve particular outcomes may necessitate the use of *Judgment* resources in the abstracts. The frequency of usage of positive *Judgment* tends to indicate that there has been a preference for human Capacity and individual capabilities rather than solely focusing on societal or moral behaviours. This may be considered a conscious drive of the authors to highlight the potential merits and positive outcomes deriving from their research, thus making it of greater perceived value and impact. The strategic use of evaluative language offers a sophisticated technique to move the readers through the abstract - by establishing the significance of the research, pointing out its potential contributions, and enticing readers to go through the full article.

ANALYSIS OF APPRECIATION RESOURCES

The *Appreciation* resources are used to assess the worth of objects, natural occurrences, and other phenomena. These three elements refer to our “*reaction*” to things (whether they grab our attention), the “*composition*” (if they are balanced or complex), and their “*value*” (whether they are significant). These resources occupy a large share of the whole *Attitude* resources. The statistical results are summarised in Table 5. The table demonstrates instances of polarity-based variations in *Appreciation*. It is obvious from the table that the largest proportion of the total is composed of positive *Valuation* (61%), followed by *Composition* (29%) and *Reaction* (10%). Interestingly, the data for positive and negative *Composition* resources are almost the same, with 31 and 27 tokens, respectively. There is only a small number of negative *Reaction* expressions (merely 3 cases).

TABLE 5. Types and percentages of Appreciation resources

TYPE OF APPRECIATION	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	INSTANCE	PERCENTAGE
Valuation	92	31	123	61%
Composition	31	27	58	29%
Reaction	16	4	20	10%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>100%</b>

A close examination of the appraised entity reveals the expected result. To illustrate, a large number of positive *Valuation* resources are associated with the research itself, delineating the significance of the research to readers. For example, Example 15 states that the writer's study has made a substantial contribution to our knowledge of how BA affects PV and BT. Their strength, as contrasted to previous studies that might have lacked data-driven analysis, comes from their use of an empirical, quantitative approach. Similarly, in Example 16, the writer implies that the findings of his or her study are particularly helpful for those who establish regulations for insurance businesses (regulators) and for governmental organisations that occasionally serve as backup insurance providers (reinsurers).

- (15) *The authors' work deepens (Valuation: Positive) the study of the effects of BA, or its various antecedents, on PV and BT, enhancing the research with an empirical, quantitative analysis. (BTA2)*
- (16) *The results are potentially valuable (Valuation: Positive) to insurance regulators and government entities acting as reinsurers of last resort. (BTA8)*

Another crucial finding is the almost equal number of positive and negative *Compositions*. A close investigation reveals the justification behind such a balance. The positive *Composition* is often related to the method used. However, the negative one refers to the unfavourable context or the inefficient method, which urges the writer to conduct the result in an attempt to aid in solving the problem provoked by this context. Examples 17 and 18 illustrate this point of view. In example 17, the writer notes that the study used sophisticated statistical techniques, producing trustworthy results that are consistent with the body of information already known in the field. This supports the validity and possible importance of the study. In example 18, the writer conveys that after looking at the best methods in the current situation for dealing with the effect of AI on intellectual property, it is clear they are not enough. There are still many challenges and complexities related to AI and IPR that the current approaches cannot handle. To put it another way, the writer is making use of *Composition* to state the rationale for the research.



- (17) **Sophisticated (Composition: Positive)** statistical methods were used to generate robust findings, which are in line with the results of similar studies for the US and the UK. (BTA6)  
 (18) After reviewing the techniques, it is clear that the current state-of-the-art is **insufficient (Composition: Negative)** to fully address AI in IPR. (BTA1)

TABLE 6. Realisation of positive *Valuation*

Realisation of positive <i>Valuation</i>	Instance
<i>optimal</i>	16
<i>significant</i>	5
<i>enhance</i>	2
<i>robust</i>	2
<i>important</i>	2
<i>shed light on</i>	2
<i>significance</i>	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>31</b>

The realisation of positive *Valuation* is made by various lexical means. Table 5 only demonstrates those with two or more two instances since lexical items with only one instance are abundant and, hence, not significant for the analysis. It can be noted that “*optimal*” is a favourite word in the abstracts (13 cases). In contrast, Nguyen (2023) showed only 3 cases of “*optimal*” throughout the whole linguistic research articles in her corpus. This likely displays the speciality of language use in the field of economics. In this field, one of the foci of every task is creating a SMART goal (a goal which is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound). Therefore, when setting goals, they always take the achievability of the goal in mind. Instead of referring to solutions or objectives as “*the best*” or “*the crucial*”, they favour using “*optimal*” to describe their goals, showing that to show that this goal is the most possible one. Here are some examples to illustrate this feature.

- (19) The results indicate that the **optimal** solutions for two objective functions are quite different. (BTA8)  
 (20) The authors also consider the benefits of both the ceding company and the reinsurance company to determine **optimal** premium and retention of reinsurance jointly based on maximising social utility: the sum (or the product) of expected utilities of the reinsurance company and the ceding company. (BTA8)  
 (21) We show that the **optimal** search outcomes can be implemented by a sequence of second-price auctions, characterised by declining reserve prices and increasing search intensities (sample sizes) over time. (BTA19)

These examples show the collocation of “*optimal*” with the nouns “*solution*”, “*outcome*”, and “*premium and retention of reinsurance*”. They all refer to the aim of the research or the result of their studies. The plausible explanation might be the nature of the economic field, which focuses on potential solutions and achievable goals. The expressions of negative evaluations are diverse and do not show any typical lexical items. This can be attributed to the varying research areas, which necessitate different evaluative approaches. This diversity is also reflected in the various parts of speech and lexical realisations employed. As Examples 22, 23 and 24 demonstrate, different parts of speech are utilised to express negative evaluations: adjectives (“*slow*”, “*inferior*”), verbs (“*harm*”, “*obstructs*”), and nouns (“*inefficiency*”).

- (22) Foreclosure is more likely if demand growth for the platform's devices is **slow** or **negative**, and it can **harm** consumers if the device-seller's services are **inferior** to those offered by third parties. (BTA12)
- (23) Under centralised communication, eliciting the agents' information may induce the principal to manipulate aggregate information, which **obstructs** an effective use of information. (BTA15)
- (24) We also show that the **inefficiency** of an optimal search auction can stem from its inefficient search rule. (BTA19)

The authors' mastery of *Appreciation* illustrates their skills in preparing persuasive abstracts. The other instances of *Appreciation* given to reinforce the argument that they were focusing on the issue under investigation and not the persons involved, thus making the research to be objective. This objectivity is important for the verification and strength of this study. Moreover, the infrequent occurrence of negative evaluative instances in their writing reflects the authors' strategic communication approach toward research problems and areas of concern. If anything, negative evaluation may pop up occasionally at the beginning just to attract attention to what needs further investigation. As a result, for the most part, positive evaluation – as an enticement – shows findings or innovative ideas in studies to provoke interest among potential readers, indicating how valuable it might be and encouraging them to learn more.

The predominance of positive evaluations over negative ones reflects the authors' strategic choice. Negative evaluation cases are concerned with the introduction of the issue that needs discussion. We need to be notified of this without further comments. Consequently, these cases receive minimal evaluative elaboration. In contrast, a significant amount of evaluation is dedicated to the significance of the study. This strategy attracts editors and readers who normally prioritise the study's benefits and values before engaging with a detailed analysis of the problem. Different *Attitude* resources serve different purposes. For example, the positive emoters can be customers, the main stakeholders of the company, who often express concern or expectation toward the company's product and service quality or responsibility.

This strategised bias between negative and positive evaluation also attests to academic convention while showing off the author's dexterity in using evaluation to attract the readers. Thus, it provides information regarding the worthiness of a particular investigation by maintaining objectivity and scholarly rigour. In summary, this partiality enables a simultaneous interaction with readers. A large number of positive *Valuation* resources are associated with the research itself, delineating the significance of the research to readers. The positive *Composition* is often related to the method used. However, the negative one refers to the unpleasant context or the ineffective method which urges the writer to conduct the research. The author purposefully and tactfully uses different evaluative language to serve the purpose. It is like the strategy of an advertisement where advertisers project the solution and the benefits to customers rather than detailing the problems they face. This is definitely a suitable move in an abstract that hooks readers.

Such dominance of the resource of *Appreciation* over *Judgment* and *Affect* in economic research abstracts is in line with the findings by Hashemi and Mahdavi (2023) while observing a similar pattern in PhD dissertation abstracts across different disciplines. In other words, this consistent preference for *Appreciation* resources operating within the course of evaluation and description of phenomena has been oriented toward objective assessment. This would imply that the relative rarity of *Judgment* resources, those dependent on personal evaluation of humans or their actions, continues to reinforce the emphasis on objectivity and avoidance of subjective interpretation throughout academic discourses. Furthermore, the relatively high frequency of *Appreciation* resources in abstracts may indicate a strategic attempt to advertise research findings and propagate the importance of the study. According to Swales (1990), abstracts are often used

to raise interest in the reading of the complete article; most authors, therefore, focus on the positive presentation of the results that add value to their research. In relation to the findings obtained in the current study, this would explain why the results are so important and what their implications are.

The result also corroborates the findings by Jalilifar and Moradi (2019) that attitudinal resources, especially *appreciation* resources, form part of the backbone of academic writing. The high frequency of *Appreciation* resources in most sections of the research article, including the abstract, serves to bring into view the evaluation of past research, position the research context and highlight the significance of the result. This suggests that evaluative language can be productive in having the reader communicated and attended to. Furthermore, the varied linguistic realisations of *Judgment* - developed through adjectives, nouns/noun phrases, and verb phrases - indicate that authors use various methods to encode their evaluations in subtle ways. The strategic use of different kinds of linguistic devices to express evaluations enables authors to perform subtle shifts between objectivity and subjective interpretation, allowing increasing evaluative content in their abstracts without necessitating a breach of the norms of scientific writing.

## CONCLUSION

This study investigates how *Attitude* language is utilised to create compelling economic research abstracts. The finding shows that attitudinal language is appropriately used by researchers to improve the attractiveness and persuasiveness of their studies. Although all aspects of *Attitude* are detected in the data, the number of *Appreciation* tokens far outweighs those of *Affect* and *Judgment*. The purpose is to maintain the objectivity trait of the research genre while endeavouring to be persuasive. Besides, the number of positive statements far outweighs the number of negative ones. Positive *Judgment* is often associated with the aim of the research. The negative *Capacity* serves as the foundation for setting the context and raising a problem that needs to be addressed.

This study reaffirms the sound theory in academic discourse, which is the subjectivity of their styles, and also confirms the way that academics use language purposefully to reach their aim. This study is significant as it is the first one to investigate abstracts in evaluative terms in light of Martin and White's *Appraisal Theory*. Scant research has been done on this. This study illustrates the strategic ways writers use to hook readers. Novel researchers can then know how to construct an abstract appropriately to increase the likelihood of paper acceptance as well as the attention of readers. Using the appropriate level of Appraisal of appraised entities (whether a person, a thing, a phenomenon, or one's emotion) is the key. Authors should use more *Appreciation* than *Judgment*. Besides, they should use more positive *Appreciation* to hook readers, showing the cognisance and relevance of their research. Negative appraisals can be used to introduce the issue (a concern in reality or the problem concerning previous studies), which leads to the gap being filled. This study can be of help to the economic discourse community.

This study, therefore, proposes the development of specific writing pedagogies for the economics discipline. Rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, the inclusion of Appraisal resources in discipline-specific ESP courses provides the student with the ability to negotiate their discipline and its specific conventions of evaluative language. Such integration may create an avenue for the much-needed development of skills in writing, critical thinking, and competence in evaluative language upon the incorporation of Appraisal theory in teaching materials, coursebooks, and tasks, as has been suggested by Hashemi and Mahdavi-rad (2023). The plan should be to provide a knowledge of *Appraisal* used in academic writing in general, followed by nuanced differences in

the field of economics, especially the focus on preferable lexis in this discipline for students. Students, hence, should be equipped with knowledge of the framework, the ability to realise *Appraisal* instances and then the ability to use it in their writing of an economics-based abstract. Through this, the learner will gain a keener sense of how to construct an argument in writing that is clear, convincing, and even compelling.

As suggested in this study, different disciplines and parts of the study vary in the use of attitudinal language. This first investigation opens the door for more research in this area. Future studies can scrutinise how attitudinal language is used in various article parts (Introduction, Theoretical Background, Methods, Results and Conclusion) and across many academic fields other than economics.

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