EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE IN CONCLUSION SECTIONS OF VIETNAMESE LINGUISTIC RESEARCH ARTICLES

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Abstract: Evaluative language has recently been of great concern as, according to Hunston, “evaluation is one of the most basic and important functions of language worth studying deeply” (2011, p. 11). However, the term seems to be rather new in Vietnamese linguistic community. In order to shed further light on the use of evaluative language in Vietnamese, this article is to examine how evaluative language is exploited by Vietnamese linguists in the conclusion section of their research articles. This study combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyse the ways explicit evaluative language is used in the corpus of 30 Vietnamese empirical research articles in three reputable journals of linguistics in Vietnam. More specifically, the study investigates various evaluative acts classified in the three systems of the Appraisal Framework (by Martin & White, 2005) including Attitude, Engagement and Graduation. Findings are expected to show outstanding patterns of evaluative language used in this section of linguistic research articles such as the salient occurrence of certain evaluative domains or sub-systems, etc. Results of the study are hoped to be of reference for article writers as well as to enrich literature materials for the fields of evaluative language and academic writing pedagogy in Vietnam.

Key words: evaluative language, conclusion, attitude, engagement, graduation

1. Introduction

Evaluative language has recently been of great concern as, according to Hunston (2011), “evaluation is one of the most basic and important functions of language worth studying deeply” (p. 11). Thus, evaluative language can be found in various fields and genres for different communicative purposes even in the highly objective language style of academic writing, especially research articles. Research articles are linguistic products with unique features of the academic style. Academic discourses are intentionally interactions between the writer and the reader where the writer tries to present his writing clearly to establish a discoursal relationship by creating a dialogue space and expressing his viewpoints (Dontcheva-Navrtilova, 2009). So far, there have been a lot of studies on discoursal interactions on the corpus of academic writing in general, and research articles in particular. However, these studies are mainly based on meta-discourse and genre analysis theories. Academic textual analysis from evaluative language perspective has rarely been considered. In Vietnam, the term “evaluative language” seems to be rather new in the

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linguistic community. Studies in evaluative language, especially evaluative language of research articles, is an open space needing further concerns.

The above reasons encouraged us to carry a research entitled “Evaluative Language in Conclusion Sections of Vietnamese Linguistic Research Articles”. The study is aimed at exploring how evaluative language is used in the Conclusion section of Vietnamese empirical articles based on the Appraisal Framework outlined by Martin and White (2005). To achieve the aim, the study attempts to answer two research questions:

1. How is evaluative language used in the Conclusion sections of Vietnamese empirical research articles?
2. What are salient patterns of the evaluative resource found in the corpus and their implications in Vietnamese context?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Previous Studies

In the past decades, there have been a number of studies on how language can be used to express people’s feelings and evaluation. These studies were mainly approached from the perspectives of Meta-discourse theory (Hyland & Tse, 2004), language of evaluation (Hunston, 1994, 2011; Hunston & Sinclair, 2000), and especially the Appraisal theory of Martin and White (2005) developed from SFL background with emphasis on evaluative meaning from the interpersonal aspect.

The Appraisal Framework of Martin and White (2005) is adopted as the theoretical background to analyse evaluative language in many studies on various materials and for different purposes: (1) on a variety of fields and genres such as political discourses (Jalilifar & Savaedi, 2012; Mazlum & Afshin, 2016), language of advertisements (Kochetova & Volodchenkova, 2015); textbooks, historical materials (Coffin, 2006; Myskow, 2017, 2018); (2) to prove pedagogical implications and practicality of applying the framework in English teaching and learning (Hu & Choo, 2015; Liu, 2010); (3) to give evidence that the framework can be applied in other languages beside English such as Korean (Bang & Shin, 2012, 2013), Spanish (Taboada & Carretero, 2010), Chinese (Kong, 2006), Vietnamese (Ngo, 2013), etc.

Especially, evaluative language of academic discourses is examined on various corpora from students’ persuasive or argumentative essays (Chen, 2010; Giles & Busseniers, 2012; McEnery & Kifle, 2002) to the Introduction or Discussion sections of master’s and doctoral theses (Gabrielatos & McEnery, 2005; Geng & Wharton, 2016), etc.

Notably, Wu (2005) combined both Hunston's model of evaluative language (1989) and the Appraisal theory (White, 2002) in her contrastive analysis of undergraduate students’ argumentative essays within two disciplines – English Language and Geography. The multi-dimensional contrastive analysis brings about quite comprehensive findings with relatively sufficient interpretations and explanations to prove the supportive relations of the two frameworks. Results of the study indicate that in both disciplines – English and Geography, stronger and weaker students have different uses of Engagement resources. Stronger students in English language use Appreciation more frequently and Graduation resources more effectively. Stronger students in Geography, on the other hand, deal with Engagement resources more effectively, especially in identifying the issues and giving evidence, than weaker students.

Geng and Wharton (2016) attempts to find out similarities and differences between the evaluative language of L1 Chinese and L1 English writers in discussion
sections of doctoral theses in terms of the Engagement domain of the Framework. Results show that there is not a big difference between two groups of writers – Chinese and English. The researchers argue that when experience and language competency increase, both Chinese and English writers (at least in their study) can convey interpersonal meanings very effectively. They conclude that at the highest level (doctor), the native language (Chinese) of writers may not have as much influence on their academic writing as often argued when writers are at lower levels. However, with a relatively small corpus (12 discussions), this conclusion might not ensure the validity and universality.

There are not many studies on ways to express stance, evaluation and opinions in different sections of a research article. Most of them focus on grammatical structures such as attitudinal verbs in Arts and History articles (Tucker, 2003), modality of certainty in Biological and Physical articles (Marcinkowski, 2009). Khamkhien (2014) examines evaluative functions and stance in Discussion section of research articles. Overall, the analysis reveals some sets of co-occurrences of linguistic features including epistemic modality, communication verb with that clause, extrapolated it’s... that complement clauses controlled by predicative adjectives, to complement clauses controlled by adjectives, and personal pronouns contributing to different writers’ evaluative stance in academic discourse. Linguistic features found in the study led to the same conclusion with Marcinkowski (2009) that the writers can express their evaluative stance in academic writing by using some linguistic features to work together as communicative functions in discourse even though it is usually seen as objective and impersonal. As found in the study, epistemic modality can be used to present the assumption, the assessment of possibilities, and confidence of the writers whereas communication verbs can indicate precise presentation of the results. Personal pronouns are used to refer to both speakers and audience to involve what the article is about, and to reflect the importance of the subjects of the study.

The Appraisal Framework is adopted as the theoretical background in the corpus of 20 literature reviews in Thai and English languages carried out by Supattra et al. (2017). Results show that there is a minor difference between the two sub-corpora in the use of engagement resources. The supposed reason is that Thai people are aware and capable of writing their paper according to the international format. However, international articles use more countering and confrontational factors than Thai ones to persuade the readers to agree with their opinions and stance. This makes statements in Thai articles more arbitrary.

With regards to the corpus of Vietnamese research articles, Đỗ and Nguyễn (2013) studies the length and structures commonly used in the titles of linguistic articles while Nguyễn (2018) investigates hedges and boosters in Social research articles. Nguyễn (2018) might be the most related study to ours. However, in this study, the Appraisal framework just plays a minor role in examining the effectiveness of interpersonal relations expressed through hedges and boosters in English and Vietnamese social texts. Only some categories of the framework are explored. The conclusions clarify that in both types of texts, writers appreciate and concentrate on evaluative elements, especially evaluations of interpersonal meanings within the text itself and with the readers. Both Focus and Force resources in Vietnamese corpus are higher than those in English corpus.

The overall picture of evaluative language studies in the world and in Vietnam shows that evaluative language of
Vietnamese scientific articles, especially in linguistic discipline, has not been exploited. However, previous studies on academic writing and research article genre are a precious reference for the implementation of this study.

2.2. The Appraisal Theory

The Appraisal theory by Martin and White originates from the Systematic Functional Language approach led by Halliday (1994). According to SFL, language performs three functions: ideational function, interpersonal function and textual function. Martin and White (2005) locates their framework as an interpersonal system at the level of discourse semantics. The framework is divided into three main domains: Attitude, Engagement and Graduation. Systems and subsystems of the Appraisal framework are outlined in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**
An Overview of the Appraisal Framework (Martin, 2005)

```
  ENGAGEMENT
     ↑
   ATTITUDE
     ↓
  GRADUATION

  monogloss
  heterogloss
  AFFECT...
  JUDGEMENT....
  APPRECIATION...
  raise
  lower
  sharpen
  soften
```

2.2.1. Attitude

Attitude reflects human feelings and emotions, including emotional interactions, behavioural judgment and evaluation of things and entities. The corresponding subsystems are named: Affect, Judgment and Appreciation.

- **Affect** refers to sources of emotional reactions. Feelings can be positive (+) or negative (-), can express Dis/inclination, Un/happiness, In/security or Dis/satisfaction.
  - Dis/Inclination is the expression of desire or fear, such as *miss/long for/ yearn for* (inclination +) or *wary/fearful* (inclination -).
  - Un/Happiness covers emotions concerned with “affairs of heart” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 49) – *sadness/hate* (happiness -) or *happiness/love* (happiness +).
  - In/Security refers to our feelings of peace and anxiety in relation to our environs such as *worry/surprise* (security -), *confidence* (security +), etc.
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feelings of achievement and frustration in relation to the activities in which we are engaged” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 50): ennuï/dissatisfied (satisfaction -), interest/pleasure (satisfaction +), etc.

- Judgment is the assessment of human behaviors based on normative principles. Accordingly, assessments can be categorized into Social Esteem (Normality, Capacity and Tenacity) and Social Sanction (Veracity and Propriety).
  - Social esteem is the judgement of someone in terms of how unusual he/she is (normality), how capable he/she is (capacity) and how resolute he/she is (tenacity). For example: She is always fashionable (normality +); he is a skilled worker (capacity +); he is absolutely impatient (tenacity -).
  - Social sanction is the judgement of people in terms of how truthful they are (veracity) and how ethical they are (propriety). For example: Judy is a frank girl (veracity +); he is always cruel to his own son (propriety -).

- Appreciation deals with sources to evaluate things, including semiosis and natural phenomena (product or process). Appreciation can be divided into Reactions to things, Composition and Valuation.
  - Reaction is related to the impact of things on evaluators, thus answers two questions “Did it grab me?” and “Did I like it?” For example: This book is really interesting (reaction +).
  - Composition reflects the evaluation on the balance (Did it hang together?) and complexity (Was it hard to follow?) of things or entities. For example: This is an illogical essay (composition -).
  - Valuation answers the question related to the value of things (Was it worthwhile?). For example: The council gave a relevant answer (value +).

2.2.2. Engagement

Martin and White (2005) confirmed that “all utterances are... in some way stanced or attitudinal” (p. 92). This means that whatever the speaker states, he/she reflects his/her attitude or point of view towards it. The speaker’s attitude can be a bare assertion (which does not overtly reference other voices or recognise alternative positions to the text) or be expressed as one view among a range of possible views. In other words, utterances are classified as “monogloss” when they make no reference to other voices and viewpoints and as “heterogloss” when they do invoke or allow for dialogistic alternatives. For example: “The government has been successful” is monoglossic because here the proposition that the government has been successful is no longer at issue, not up for discussion or taken for granted. Therefore, there suppose no other viewpoints on this. Meanwhile, the proposition “I think the government has been successful” construes a heteroglossic environment populated by different views on whether the government has been successful or not.

The engagement system mainly focuses on overtly dialogistic locutions and the different heteroglossic diversity which they indicate. Accordingly, the system is divided into two broad subsystems based on the writer’s intention of whether or not to close down or open up the space for other voices into the text: Contract and Expand.

- Contract consists of meanings which, though creating a dialogistic
backdrop for external voices, at the same time, constrain or exclude these dialogistic alternatives into the text. This subsystem is classified into two categories: Disclaim and Proclaim.

- Disclaim deals with the way authorial or textual voice is presented as to reject other contrary voices. This can be reflected through Deny or Counter expectation.
  - Deny is the writer’s negation of something.
  - Counter or counter expectation represents the current proposition as replacing or supplanting a proposition which would have been expected in its place.

For example: Although (counter) they have tried hard, they could not (deny) win the race.

- Proclaim presents the authorial support or warranty of a proposition in ways that it eliminates or rules out other positions. Proclaim is expressed through categories of Concur, Pronounce and Endorse.
  - Concur “involves formulations which overtly announce the addresser as agreeing with, or having the same knowledge as, some projected dialogic partner” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 122). For example: It is the fact that most children prefer outdoor activities to indoor ones.
  - Endorse “refers to formulations by which propositions sourced to external sources are construed by the authorial voice as correct, valid, undeniable or otherwise maximally warrantable” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 126). For example: Results show that it is feasible to integrate extensive reading activities into traditional classes.
  - Pronounce “covers formulations which involve authorial emphases or explicit authorial interventions or interpolations” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 127). For example: we can conclude that..., I contend...

- Expand refers to meanings which are open for alternative positions and voices beside the authorial voice in the text. Two broad categories of this system are Entertain and Attribute.
  - Entertain is meant that the authorial voice is just one of possible positions and therefore, creates a dialogistic space for other possibilities and voices. Entertain can be expressed via modal auxiliaries (may, might, could, etc.), modal adjuncts (perhaps, probably, etc.), modal attributes (it’s likely that, etc.), and via expressions like in my view, I think, etc. For example: I think he might have broken the vase.
  - Attribute is concerned with the presentation of external voices in the text. Reported speech is the most popular formula to convey this meaning: X argue that, X believe that, X claim that, etc. Attribute is divided into Acknowledge and Distance.

- Acknowledge consists of “locutions where there is no overt indication... as to where the authorial voice stands with respect to the proposition” (Martin &
White, 2005, p. 112). For example: Peter argues (acknowledge) that understanding global warming and climate change is essential.

- Distance is an explicit distancing of the authorial voice from the attributed material, most typically realized by the verb “to claim”. For example: “Tickner has claimed (distance) that regardless of the result, the royal commission was a waste of money...” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 114).

### 2.2.3. Graduation

Graduation deals with gradability of evaluative resources. Through the system of graduation, both feelings (Attitude) and authorial voices (Engagement) can be modified or adjusted to describe more clearly how strong or weak they are. Graduation is classified into two subsystems based on the scalability: Force and Focus.

- Force is the evaluation of things which are scalable. It covers assessments as to degrees of intensity and as to amount.
  - Intensification is the assessment of the degree of intensity including qualities and processes. It can be realized via intensification, comparatives and superlative morphology, repetition and various graphological and phonological features, etc. For example:
    
    *This difference was highly robust* (quality).
    
    *He runs very quickly* (process).
  - Quantification is the imprecise measuring of number (many, a few) and the presence/ mass of entities (large, small). For example:
    
    *The vast majority* (number) of participants were university students.
    
    *There is a big* (mass) difference between the two versions of mobile phones.
  - Focus is the adjustment of boundaries between categories of ungradable resources. By Focus, the specification of things can be up-scaled/ sharpened or down-scaled/ softened, indicating a prototypicality (real, true) or a marginal membership of a category (kind of, sort of). For example:
    
    *This is a true* (focus +) romantic love.
    *I want some fabric of sorts* (focus -).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. The Corpus of the Study

To answer the research questions, we compiled a corpus consisting of 30 conclusions from three reputable journals of linguistics in Vietnam during a five-year period from 2015 to 2019 (see appendix for the list of selected articles). The focus of this study is on empirical research articles reporting investigations that employ a quantitative, qualitative or mixed approach to collect and analyse primary data (Benson et al., 2009; Gao et al., 2001). For the standardization and the equivalence of the materials employed, all articles selected follow the typical IMRD model of an empirical research paper as suggested by Swales (1990) which has at least four parts: Introduction – Methods – Results – Discussion/ Conclusions. Moreover, as many articles combine Discussion and Conclusions sections of the article into one, this study attempts to separate them and only selects those articles which have a conclusion section. Within the scope of this small-scaled study, investigations on other parts of the article are left for further research.
3.2. Methods of the Study

The study does not seek to draw broad generalisations about how evaluative language is used in different disciplines or different sections of an article or of various types of articles. Instead, this research prioritizes in-depth analysis over all systems and categories of the Appraisal framework (Martin & White, 2005) used in the final section to conclude the article. For exploring the types of evaluative acts, all three systems of the Framework – Attitude, Engagement and Graduation were analysed. Each system was then detailed to smaller subsystems and categories such as: Attitude (Affect, Judgment, Valuation); Engagement (Contract, Expand); Graduation (Quantification, Intensification, Focus).

For the purpose stated, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches is appropriate for this study. The qualitative approach was used when the author herself analyses the corpus carefully to explore how writers of the articles exploit semantic resources to express their evaluation. All evaluative words, phrases, expressions are then classified into different categories, subsystems and systems of the framework. The quantitative approach was then employed to systematically synthesize the frequency of each category, subsystem and the whole framework and make comparison between them.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. General Findings

Table 1 shows the number and ratio of three evaluative resources, Attitude, Engagement and Graduation. As can be seen from the table, generally, the frequencies of three systems of the appraisal framework are quite diverse. It is clear that Graduation appears most frequently (nearly half of the total evaluation resources used in the whole corpus) whereas Engagement seems to be used the least (just 27.82%). Another noteworthy finding is about the polarity of evaluations. Attitudinal expressions are mainly towards positive polar, which is more than twice negative feelings. Similarly, in the Graduation system, writers prefer emphasizing or upscaling their evaluations to downscaling them. This indicates that in the final section of the article, Vietnamese researchers focus more on showing their positive attitudes and upgrading them. Engaging other voices into the text or consideration of opening or closing the dialogue is of the least frequent use. The next part will examine each system and subsystem in more detail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive/upgrade</th>
<th>Negative/downgrade</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATTITUDE</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>30.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGAGEMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>163</td>
<td>27.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADUATION</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>41.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>586</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2. The Appraisal Systems: Attitude, Engagement and Graduation

4.2.1. Attitude

Table 2 displays the amount of positive and negative attitudinal resources across three subsystems - Affect, Judgement and Appreciation, from which outstanding findings can be easily identified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>+</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AFFECT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclination</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>78.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JUDGEMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normality</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenacity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veracity</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propriety</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPRECIATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuation</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                      | 125| 53 | 178   | 100

Firstly, the distribution of the attitudinal system varies greatly with the domination of Appreciation over the other two subsystems – Affect and Judgement. While evaluations of things and entities account for up to 82.6% of the total attitudinal resources, Affect and Judgement appear much less (10.7% and 6.7% respectively). This shows that in presenting their studies, Vietnamese linguistic researchers focus more on evaluations of things/ entities, they rarely express their feelings explicitly and extremely eliminate judgement on human behaviours. This might be easily explained as the focus of writing a research paper is on presenting and arguing findings against others in the same community, therefore, judging human behaviours is not of the main concern. As a result, evaluating things and events appears the most whereas only few attitudes are reflected towards human beings. In addition, the style of academic writing is traditionally seen as an objective, faceless and impersonal form of discourse (Khamkhien, 2014), which clearly accounts for the modest number of explicit expressions of authorial emotions (just about 10%) in the corpus.

Secondly, as an outstanding feature throughout the whole corpus, a much higher
frequency of positive attitude reflections is found than negative ones (more than twice) except for Judgement. Judgment is the only category where the number of negative assessments is higher than negative ones. Nevertheless, it does not affect the overall trend of preferring revealing positive attitude towards things to negative ones of research presenters. A more detailed examination into subsystems and categories will help us identify the typical word choice or preference of Vietnamese authors.

- As for Affect, most evaluative resources express authors’ inclination or desire for their research and outcomes, by using such words as mong, mong muốn, cầu mong, hy vọng (want, desire, wish, hope) or determination for future plans. For example:

  (1) Nghiên cứu chỉ cầu mong (inclination +) cho tiếng Việt mai đây còn được nói trong các gia đình Việt Nam càng lâu càng tốt. (Vres 8)

  (The study just wishes that in the future Vietnamese would still be spoken in Vietnamese families for as long as possible.)

  (2) Chúng tôi sẽ tiếp tục khảo sát sâu hơn,… nhằm có những đánh giá toàn diện và đề xuất giải pháp hiệu quả hơn… (Vres 9)

  (We will continue to do further research… to have more comprehensive evaluations and suggest more effective solutions…)

- Concerning Judgement, its low occurrence may be of no surprise for the course of the above explanation. If there are any, they are mostly negative judgments of human Capacity while there are just two evaluations of Tenacity and Normality. For example:

  (3) Tuy nhiên, khả năng khai quật hóa sự vật, hiện tượng (của trẻ 2-3 tuổi) còn thấp (capacity -). (Vres 10)

  (However, the ability of generalising things and events of two-to-three-year-old children is low.)

  (4) Họ luôn tích cực (tenacity +) hoàn thành các bản báo cáo đọc sách, đọc đâu đến hàng tuần 30 phút đầu giờ học. (Vres 2)

  (They always actively fulfil book reading reports, weekly spend 30 minutes reading before class.)

- The high fluency of Appreciation is unsurprising but still noteworthy. To evaluate things, authors tend to focus on their Composition which accounts for up to 67% of total resources used. They rarely express their own Reactions and use much more positive evaluations than negative ones. Realizations of appreciation are mostly adjectives, such as: mới mẻ (new), phổ biến (popular), cơ bản (basic), quan trọng (important), hữu ích (useful), hiệu quả (effective), etc. For example:

  (5) Kết quả nghiên cứu là những chỉ báo đáng chú ý (reaction +) đối với việc định hướng giáo dục văn hóa học đường nói riêng, văn hóa giao tiếp cho giới trẻ nói chung. (Vres 25)

  (The findings are remarkable signs for the orientation of schooling culture in particular and communicative culture among youngsters in general.)

  (6) Kết hợp dạy từ mới trong nhiều hoạt động ngôn ngữ là điều quan trọng (valuation +), đem lại hiệu quả cao (valuation +). (Vres 10)

  (Combining teaching new words with other language activities is important, and highly effective.)

4.2.2. Engagement

Table 3 shows details of categories of the Engagement systems which reflect
how Vietnamese writers contract or expand possibilities of external, alternative voices in their writing. As stated above, in comparison with Attitude and Graduation resources, Engagement has the lowest frequency. However, some categories of this system have higher frequency than those of other systems, notably Counter (of Disclaim) and Entertain. In general, there are some remarkable findings concerning “meanings which in various ways construe for the text a heteroglossic backdrop of prior utterances, alternative viewpoints and anticipated responses” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 97).

**Table 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Frequency of Categories of the Engagement System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proclaim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attribute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firstly, authors tend to contract their voices – close down the space for dialogic alternatives rather than expand them – open up the dialogic space for alternative positions, with frequency of contractions nearly three times the other (121 and 42 respectively).

Secondly, of various strategies to eliminate alternative voices in the dialogue, Disclaim resources are more preferred and Counter of disclaim has the highest frequency of all (60). It can be inferred that writers tend to position their textual voices as at odds with or rejecting some contrary positions. To deny or reject alternative positions, Vietnamese writers use such expressions as không còn là (no longer), không thể (can’t), không + động từ (do not/ does not + V). For example:

(7) Chỉ mới đến thế hệ thứ hai, tiếng Việt đã không còn linh hồn thì đến thế hệ thứ ba, thứ tư, nó mất đi cũng là chuyện tất yếu.
(Vres 8)

(Just to the second generation, Vietnamese no longer has its soul, it’s disappearance in the third and fourth generation is a matter of fact.)

(8) … nhiều sinh viên không có kế hoạch học tập cụ thể, hệ quả là họ không làm chủ được phần kiến thức cần phải nắm được.
(Vres 20)

(Many students do not have study plans, as a result, they cannot master the necessary knowledge.)

To express Counter expectation – a
proposition which would have been expected in its place, such words are used: mặc dù (although), nhưng (but), trong khi (while), tuy nhiên (however), etc. For example:

(9) Mặc dù mức độ thường xuyên chưa cao nhưng đây cũng là một thay đổi tích cực. (Vres 3)

(Although the regularity is not high, this is still a positive change.)

Though not as frequently used as Disclaim resources in total, authorial voices to endorse propositions from external resources of the Proclaim subsystem are also of high frequency (24), ranking the 4th of the whole Engagement system. In other words, Endorsement has the highest frequency of Proclaim resources (in comparison with strategies like Concurring and Pronouncing). Writers use verbs like các nghiên cứu chứng minh (studies prove that), khảo sát cho thấy (the survey shows/reveals), điều này thể hiện (this shows), etc.

(10) Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy việc kết hợp hoạt động đọc rộng vào chương trình học của lớp học truyền thống là hoàn toàn khả thi... (Vres 25)

(Results of the study show that integrating extensive reading into the curriculum of traditional classes is totally feasible...)

Thirdly, though apparently writers seem not as willing to open up space for other voices in the dialogue as to close them down, the Entertaining category is actually the second most preferred strategy of all. That is very interesting while Contract in general is much higher than Expand but Entertain of Expand is also very favoured. Many authors conclude their articles proposing that their argument is just one of the possibilities and leaving the space for other ideas. For example: luôn như (seem), có lẽ (maybe), có thể (may/might/can), chắc chắn (must), åt hẳn (certainly, surely), tác giả bả viết cảm thấy rằng (the author thinks that), etc.

(11) Sinh viên... dựng như cảm thấy quan tâm nhiều hơn vào bài học và tham gia chủ động hơn trong lớp. (Vres 2)

(Students... seem to be more concerned about the lesson and participate more actively in the classroom.)

To sum up, concerning ways to open or close spaces for other voices in the dialogue, results of the study indicate that authors most prefer Counter expressions, then come Entertaining, indicating that authorial voice is but one of a number of possible positions and to greater and lesser degrees makes dialogic space for those possibilities. Deny and Endorsement have almost equal frequency, ranking the 3rd and the 4th of preference. No Distance is used while Concur and Acknowledge are rarely employed. These findings are partly similar to Geng and Wharton (2016) on the corpus of Discussions of linguistic doctoral theses, Lancaster (2011) on economic articles and Fryer (2013) on medical articles, which all share the same conclusion that English writers are aware of engaging other voices in the text, leading to the widely use of Expand in their writing.

4.2.3. Graduation

As “central to the appraisal system” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 136), Graduation undoubtedly and unsurprisingly outnumbers the other two systems of the framework. By graduation, writers upgrade and downgrade the neutral meanings of the resources to express more exactly their attitudes and voices in the text. Results of the study prove this with a much higher frequency of Graduation (245) than Attitude (178) and Engagement (163). Table 4 shows details of all categories of the Graduation system, from which some noteworthy findings can be pointed out: firstly, almost all assessments are to gradable entities (account for up to 99% of total number of graduation resources). Just 3 out of 245 assessments are to ungradable entities. In other words, a
The majority of assessments is Force (242) while Focus extremely rarely appears (just 3 times). Secondly, up-grade evaluations are exploited far more frequently than down-grade ones with frequencies of 173 and 72 respectively. Thirdly, the Quality Intensification sub-system has the highest frequency (74) while the lowest frequency is of Focus (3).

Table 4
The Frequency of Categories of the Graduation System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Up</th>
<th>Down</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Quantification</td>
<td>84</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intensification</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td></td>
<td>158</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A closer look at the table reveals more interesting things as to how differently subsystems and categories are employed, showing writers’ preferences in evaluation to conclude their articles.

- In the Force subsystem, generally, evaluation of number, amount (quantification) is less frequently used than intensification of quality and process. To quantify and measure things, most evaluations refer to numbers (56), the presence of entities (size, weight, distribution or proximity) appears less frequently (20). This is understandable and easy to explain as what researchers do with their articles is to show findings, mostly displayed in numbers. Whatever evaluations made are, they are, therefore, mainly to do with numbers. Expressions and examples of measuring numbers and presence/mass of entities are as follows:
  - Numbers: hâu hết (almost), nhiều (many), khá nhiều (quite a lot), đáng kể (considerable), đa
số (majority), một số (some),
một vài (several), chỉ có (only),
hồng nhiều (not many),…
(12) Số lượng đáng kể các cụ không
có Chu cảnh để tập trung vào trình bày nội
dung cót lời của mệnh đề. (Vres 25)
(A considerable number of sentences
do not have circumstances to focus on the
core of the clause.)

○ Presence/ mass: lớn (big), rộng
lớn (large), khá lớn (quite big),
cao (high), rất cao (very high),
nhỏ (small), rộng đôi nhỏ (relatively small), hẹp (narrow/
limited),…
(13) Với một nền tảng dữ liệu
rộng lớn như vậy, chúng ta có thể đạt được mô
hình dự đoán mang tính chính xác cao
hơn… (Vres 23)
With such a large database, we can
get a more accurate model…

With regards to the Intensification
sub-system, frequency of assessments to
quality of entities is a little higher than to
processes. However, both quality and
process intensifications share two features.
Upscaling intensifiers are more frequently
used than downscaling ones. Furthermore,
according to Martin and White (2005),
intensifications can be realised via isolated
lexemes (either grammatical or lexical),
semantic infusion or via repetition. In this
corpus, intensifications are only realised via
grammatical, lexical isolation and infusion.
Repetition does not appear. Grammatical
isolations have higher frequency than the
other two. Table 5 illustrates the realisations
of quality and process intensifications.

Table 5
Realisations of Quality and Process Intensifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality intensifications</th>
<th>Process intensifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammatical isolation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Process intensifications</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| khá (quite), rất (very), hoàn toàn (absolutely), chỉ
mới (just), mới chỉ (just, only), hầu như không
hardly), gần (nearly). For example:
(14) Về cơ bản, nghi thức cắm ơn trong tiếng Việt
và tiếng Anh có khá giống nhau... (Vres 25)
Basically, thanking strategies in Vietnamese and
Australian English are quite similar to each
other...
| khá (quite), ít nhiều (a little bit), không đáng kể
(not much), nhẹ (slightly), rất nhiều (very
much), quá (too), đáng kể (considerably). For
example:
(17) Mức độ tham gia của sinh viên vào giờ học
nơi cũng tăng lên đáng kể. (Vres 11)
The participation of students in speaking classes
increases considerably.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical isolation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| rỗ ràng (clearly), đặc biệt là (especially), nhất là,
vô cớ bẩn (essentially). For example:
(15) Trên cơ sở lý thuyết của ngôn ngữ học trí
nhiên, đặc biệt là ảnh hưởng của, quá trình tri
nhận tình yêu thông qua các hiện tượng mùa trong thi
cả được hiểu và giải thích khả rotor ràng trong
nghị nhân của này. (Vres 1)
On the background of cognitive linguistics,
especially conceptual metaphors, cognitive
processes of love through seasonal expressions in
poetry are understood and interpreted quite
clearly in this study.
| khá rotor ràng (quite clearly), thay đổi tích cực
(positively), một cách khoa học (scientifically),
một cách hiểu quả (effectively), rất độc đáo
(very uniquely), dễ nhận thấy (easily), khá mở
nhaft (quite faintly)
(18) Thay đổi của sinh viên thay đổi tích cực.
(Vres 2)
Students’ attitudes change positively.
Semantic infusions

ngày càng (more and more), nhất (most), quan trọng hơn (more important), cao nhất (highest), tuyệt đối, tiêu biểu nhất (the most typical), lớn hơn (bigger), thiên về (inclinable), sống động hơn (livelier), thấp nhất (shortest), ngắn hơn (shorter),… For example:

(16) … loại có từ 1 đến 3 thành tố là phổ biến nhất và có số thuật ngữ chiếm tỷ lệ cao nhất… (Vres 15)

The group of one-to-three element words is the most popular and has the highest ratio of terminology.

In summary, the graduation system is the most frequently used with various upscaling and downscaling evaluations, of which Force is more popular than Focus, upscaling greatly exceeds downscaling. These outstanding findings are totally similar with Nguyễn’s (2018) investigation into Vietnamese social research articles. However, there is a key difference: while Nguyen’s study shows that intensifications are only realised via lexical and grammatical isolations, in this paper, there is also occurrence of infusion. Disciplinary features may account for this difference, which inspires further and deeper research.

5. Conclusion

This paper has reported findings from an in-depth study on evaluative resources across three systems of the Appraisal framework in the corpus of 30 conclusions of Vietnamese linguistic empirical research articles. The analysis has revealed some salient features reflecting how writers’ personality is expressed to conclude their articles. First, Graduation dominates the whole evaluative language resources employed in the corpus. In the Graduation system, almost all assessments are on scalable things (Force), especially on intensification of qualities and processes. Realisations of Intensifications are
grammatical and lexical isolations and Infusion. Second, Engagement has the lowest frequency of all. One noteworthy point in this system is that writers prefer closing down the dialogistic space to opening it up. The two mostly used categories are Counter and Entertain. This means that writers usually present contrary positions at once to emphasize their position and avoid assertions by suggesting that their position is just one of the possibilities. Third, the Attitude system is not as preferred as Graduation but more frequently used than Engagement. Writers’ feelings are mainly towards things and entities. Whatever evaluation is made, it is generally focused on Composition and Valuation of things. Finally, it seems that all writers are inclined to look at the bright side of their studies, which means that positive attitudes are more frequently expressed than negative ones, and thus, it may be the reason why up-scaling graduation is also more preferred.

Findings of the study indicate that in presenting an empirical research, evaluative language is frequently exploited as a tool for researchers to enhance the persuasiveness and effectiveness of their presentation. To do so, the neutral voice is coloured or intensified by graduation resources. The focus is on figures and outcomes of different studies; therefore, there are a lot of assessments on composition and valuation of things. Moreover, to conclude the research paper, writers do not forget to suggest that their findings is just one of the possibilities to open the dialogistic space and invite other opinions from outside the text. They at the same time make their paper more convincing by introducing and/or rejecting contrary positions as a protection for theirs. These may be considered as the outstanding linguistic features of the conclusion section of an empirical research article.

These findings are, to certain extent, meaningful to both research writers and further study. As for researchers of linguistics, they should recognize that evaluative language actually plays a role in their study presentation. However successful or meaningful a study is, the importance is how to make it publicly recognised and accepted. It is where evaluative plays its role. Therefore, when writing a research article, researchers, especially novice researchers, should pay attention to and make use of evaluative language to make their paper more persuasive. Then, the salient patterns of evaluative language found in this study (for instance, which system and subsystem are more frequently used; which one should be eliminated, whether or not to totally expand or contract the space for alternative voices, etc.) can be a useful reference for researchers when presenting their work. However, the fact that this study is limited to a minor corpus may leave space for further study. For further study, more research is needed on a number of issues raised in this paper. For example, while this article shows that Entertain resources are widely used, it is not clear whether or not this category is also popular in other sections of the article (Introduction, Methods, Results) or in articles of other disciplines (Biology, Physics, etc.) or in other types of articles (reviews, theoretical articles, etc.). Thus, this study might be just a beginning and inspiration for further studies in the future.

References


Appendix

List of Selected Articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>JOURNAL</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Vres 1</td>
<td>Language and Life, (274), 3-8</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Tri nhận tình yêu qua hiện trường mùa trong thi ca</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Vres 2</td>
<td>Language and Life, (274), 69-74</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Sinh viên không chuyên đổi với hoạt động đọc rộng tại lớp ở Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Vres 3</td>
<td>Language and Life, (271), 69-73</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Khảo sát việc học mở rộng trong học tiếng Anh ở một trường đại học</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Vres 5</td>
<td>Language and Life, (239), 13-19</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Nghi thức lời cảnh ơn nhà văn hóa Việt và Úc</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Vres 6</td>
<td>Language and Life, (239), 7-12</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Ý nghĩa bổn phần trong &quot;Luân lí giáo khoa thứ&quot;</td>
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<td>V.</td>
<td>Tác giả</td>
<td>Tựa đề</td>
<td>Quyển và Trang</td>
<td>Năm</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Vres 7</td>
<td>Language and Life, (246), 65-72</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Những lỗi sai cơ bản về cách sử dụng quan từ trong văn bản học thuật tiếng Anh của người Việt</td>
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<td>Language and Life, (246), 15-21</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<td>Đặc điểm từ vựng của ngôn ngữ trẻ em từ 2-3 tuổi</td>
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<td>11.</td>
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<td>Language and Life, (274), 75-81</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Dùng hoạt động khảo sát thông tin nhằm thúc đẩy hoạt động và tham gia của sinh viên trong giờ nội</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Vres 12</td>
<td>Language and Life, (288), 44-51</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Sử dụng từ tính thái như phương tiện rào đón trong các phần hỏi văn bản học thuật tiếng Anh</td>
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<td>Lexicography &amp; Encyclopaedia, (41), 39-46</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<td>Lexicography &amp; Encyclopaedia, (45), 91-97</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Chuyển đi ngôn ngữ đối với phạm chất nguyên âm trong phát âm âm tiếng Anh của sinh viên Việt</td>
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<td>Lexicography &amp; Encyclopaedia, (54), 85-91</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Các tổ hợp từ trong báo cáo trường hợp y hoc tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt</td>
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<td>Vres 19</td>
<td>Lexicography &amp; Encyclopaedia, (61), 96-102</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Tiên Quân Ca dưới góc nhìn phân tích diễn ngôn phân biệt</td>
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<td>Vres 20</td>
<td>Lexicography &amp; Encyclopaedia, (59), 67-72</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Tạo lập thời quan từ chủ thể tập từ vựng cho sinh viên không chuyên ngữ</td>
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<td>Lexicography &amp; Encyclopaedia, (60), 115-120</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lời thưởng gặp trong dịch văn bản kỹ thuật Việt - Anh của sinh viên năm thứ tư tại Đại học Công nghiệp Hà Nội</td>
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<td>23.</td>
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<td>Language, (6), 11-31</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Tiếng Việt khóa học trong sách giáo khoa phổ thông: khảo sát đặc điểm ngữ pháp từ vựng của 7 bài học trong Sinh học 8 từ bình diện chuyển tác</td>
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NGÔN NGỮ ĐÁNH GIÁ TRONG PHÂN KẾT LUẬN CỦA BÀI TẬP CHÍ NGÔN NGỮ TIẾNG VIỆT

Nguyễn Bích Hồng
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79 Hồ Tùng Mạnh, Cầu Giấy, Hà Nội, Việt Nam

Tóm tắt: Ngôn ngữ đánh giá hiện đang thu hút được nhiều sự quan tâm lớn, theo Hunston, “đánh giá là một trong những chức năng cơ bản và quan trọng nhất đang được nghiên cứu chuyển sang” (2011, tr. 11). Tuy nhiên, thuật ngữ này được sử dụng khá nhiều trong các bài báo của Việt Nam. Việc đánh giá người ngữ đánh giá trong phân tích ngôn ngữ hiện Đại học có nhiều hạn chế, điều này cần được khắc phục trong tương lai. Tóm lại, đánh giá người ngữ đánh giá trong bài báo của Việt Nam là một trong những vấn đề của ngôn ngữ học và cần được nghiên cứu tiếp.

Thứ tự đề: Ngôn ngữ đánh giá, kết luận, thảo luận, tham dự, thảo luận, tham dự

Từ khóa: ngôn ngữ đánh giá, kết luận, thảo luận, tham dự, thảo luận, tham dự