EVALUATIVE USES OF LANGUAGE: THE APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK

Manuel A. Hernández Hernández
and *María José González Rodríguez*,
guest-editors

INTRODUCTION

In this monographic issue, devoted to "Evaluative Uses of Language: The Appraisal Framework," we offer different aspects related to the language of evaluation in discourse.

In the special section of *RCEI* 40 April 2000, where papers around Systemic Functional Linguistics were presented, Hernández wrote that "SFL continues today to lead and inspire new developments even as we stand at the threshold of the 21st Century" (229). No doubt the reason for the appearance of these new trends is the generous and open personality of Michael Halliday, and also that "as a grammarian he has built a grammar richer than anyone has ever done before. He's looked farther out than any grammarian has ever done," as Jim Martin said to me (246). We can say today, twelve years later, that the Appraisal System is one of those future perspectives and developments mentioned in that issue. Demonstrably, we can see how linguists and students all over the world are applying the principles of analysis of appraisal to different types of discourses and registers, and its presence is felt across languages and cultures. Readers interested in the ongoing development of appraisal are invited to join the discussions at the website established by Peter White in 1998: <http://www.grammatics.com/appraisal>, and an updated bibliography for appraisal is now online: <http://www.monikabednarek.com/10.html>.

Appraisal is related to work on evaluation in other models, but all the papers presented here are directly concerned with the system of appraisal, as described by Martin and White in their now seminal 2005 book, *The Language of Evaluation*. In this book evaluation is presented as one of the three major discourse semantic resources construing interpersonal meaning, alongside involvement and negotiation. In the appraisal system, attitude, engagement and graduation are distinct resources but attitude is in some sense focal. Attitude deals more comprehensively with feelings, distinguishing three regions: affect, judgement and appreciation. Most of the articles in this section offer a discussion on attitude.

In the first article, Isabel Alonso, after a careful bibliographic revision, reports on the results of the application of the attitude system, to explain how EFL student teachers construe themselves and their teaching experiences in their written narratives. Affect, judgement and appreciation regions are considered essential to explore the field. She detects the lack of research in the area and suggests further points of study in a more extended corpus of EFL for lexico-grammatical realizations along the parameters of expectedness, importance, easiness/difficulty and usefulness.

Halliday's work on mood and modality was extended not only to the analysis of written texts, but also to that of turn-taking in dialogue. One of the most

representative developments was the book about conversation exchanges written by Eggins and Slade in 1997. In this second article of the series, Suzanne Eggins applies the appraisal framework to clinician–patient interactions in hospital emergency departments. She concludes that the evaluation invoked by ideational information helps explain how patients and clinicians make meanings collaboratively in this critical social context. She also suggests that the attitudinal meanings around health could be better explained through a new category of "un/wellness" in Martin and White's lexical elaboration of affect.

In the next essay, María José González and Manuel A. Hernández apply the system of attitude within the appraisal framework to analyse the differences in the use of evaluative language in two British national newspapers. Building on work done, these authors point out that different cultural idiosyncrasies between the two newspapers are mainly reflected a) in the use of affect forms, since tabloids tend to be highly attitudinal and emotional while the formal language of broadsheets is more neutral and objective; and b) in the high degree of personalization found in tabloids. The article argues that the overall framework of SFL has made possible new dimensions for discourse analysis in register, genre, and ideology contexts.

Jim Martin transformed himself into a whistle blower persona from the moment he put the title to his essay, giving a wink to Joseph Conrad (*Heart of Darkness*). As he says, this paper is "an exercise in positive discourse analysis," by which he means "an analysis that focuses on discourses which strive to make the world a better place," balancing in this way the usual focus of CDA of semiosis in the service of hegemony. The choice of the data reflects this concern as he analyses Ron Ridenhour's texts in connection to the My Lai massacre in 1969, during the Vietnam War. He uses the elements of the appraisal system to compare a letter and an essay, in particular, within the domains of attitude and engagement. Ridenhour's identity shifting in the two genres is also approached through Bernstein's notion of reservoir and repertoire. In the last section of his paper, he suggests the need to supplement work on realization and instantiation in more than 50 years of research in SFL by proposing a third hierarchy, "individuation." In this way Martin is contributing for the umpteenth time to open up more theoretical space in SFL "as far as users in uses of language are concerned."

In his article, Jeremy Munday addresses translation and interpreting from the perspective of the lexical expressions of attitude in interaction with graduation, as described in the appraisal system. From the beginning of his study, he points out the importance of the speaker as the "intruder" in Halliday's interpersonal meaning for a better understanding of the term "intervention," recently adopted in translation studies for the characterization of the intrusive role of the translator. He argues that although his findings in relation to the description of the lexical indicators of attitude in the texts studied might be important, the goal of the paper is to point out the need for future work of an interdisciplinary nature between appraisal theorists and translation theory specialists. He closes his perceptive paper recommending research work in the areas of engagement and reader response. He also invites appraisal theorists to consider how far mode of communication may be a general determinant of graduation.

The next article explores the positive role that software programmes can play in the performance of linguistic studies using appraisal analysis. For this, Mick O'Donnell uses his own UAM CorpusTool, software for corpus annotation and exploration. As in most of the papers included in this monograph, this one also deals with the attitudinal elements of the appraisal system, but here the techniques demonstrated for attitude could also be applied to the other two components, engagement and graduation. To avoid the problems of a "pen and paper" approach, he shows a step by step methodology for the identification of the attitudinal tokens, using the computer for analysis. More importantly, he explains how such software can be used in terms of the different voices in a text, in the design of one's scheme of attitudinal features and the actual annotation of text with statistical studies, as well as visualisation of patterns within a single text and of patterns over a corpus of texts.

Elena Quintana and Margarita E. Sánchez report on the use of two modal auxiliaries, "can" and "may," in introductory and concluding sections of computing research articles. They illustrate the findings with examples taken from a multidisciplinary corpus which is part of a bigger research project. As a result of their research, it is worth pointing out that, in terms of Martin and White's engagement system—the system orientated towards anticipated reactions and responses of the audience—while in introductions, the evidential uses of the modals *can* and *may* "entertain" the possibility of dialogistical alternative, in conclusions, instead, they are directed towards "dismissing" an alternative viewpoint. It is also important to mention that the authors, following Alonso-Almeida's views on epistemicity, conclude that there is also a functional variation of contrast in the predominant occurrence of epistemic interpretations of the modals in introductions and that of evidential interpretations in conclusions, where genre selection and authors' aims play an important role.

Finally, in the last article, Peter White focuses our attention on how, by extending the applications of attitudinal meanings to translation and to contrastive studies, we need develop comparative maps for the analysis of the system of attitudinal valeur present in different languages. After examining some examples as models, he points out that by applying the criteria described in appraisal, the same taxonomy of the judgement sub-system established in the appraisal framework should be modified to make more delicate distinctions. However, the author also underscores the difficulty that the extension of the subcategories would involve to move beyond the initial reference to modal systems operating within the appraisal framework.

We would like to finish this introduction by expressing the authors our sincere thanks for their prompt response to collaborate in the project and for their willingness and promptness during the editorial process.

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Manuel A. Hernández Hernández
María José González Rodríguez

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