

## Introduction

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In 1989, *Text* published a special issue on the semantics of affect, edited by Elinor Ochs, concerned with the ‘potential of language to express different emotions and degrees of emotional intensity’ (Ochs 1989: 1). At about this time, a group of functional linguists in Sydney began work on developing a comprehensive framework for analyzing evaluation in discourse. Initially they were concerned with the role of evaluation in narrative genres (Martin and Plum 1997), drawing on work by Labov (Labov and Waletzky 1967; Labov 1972, 1981, 1984). This broadened over the years to include a concern with responses to narrative in secondary school (Rothery and Stenglin 1997, 2000), writing in secondary school history (Coffin 1997) and creative arts, media discourse (White 1997, 2000), popular science (Fuller 1998), casual conversation (Eggins and Slade 1997), legal and medical discourse and so on.

Like Ochs, these linguists were concerned with a wide range of interpersonal resources and adopted the term APPRAISAL for these on the grounds that affect seemed too closely tied to emotion to do justice to the scope of this semantic reservoir (Martin 2000a).<sup>1</sup> Like Ochs, this group was also concerned with the social function of these resources, not simply as expressions of feeling but in terms of their ability to construct community—to align people in the ongoing negotiations of communal life. As functional linguists and discourse analysts they were especially concerned with developing techniques that could be applied systematically to whole texts from any register, working within the general framework of systemic functional linguistics (hereafter SFL; for basic tools see Halliday 1967, 1985[1994]; Martin 1992a). A good deal of the political impetus and funding for this work arose in the field of educational linguistics and the development of Australia’s genre-based literacy programs (for overviews see Martin 1993, 1997a, 2000b).

Throughout this period there was a good deal of interest in Biber’s comparable work on stance (Biber and Finegan 1988, 1989), in part because of the wide range of resources considered and in part because of the

corpus-based multi-dimensional analyses (hereafter MDA) his research evolved (Biber 1995, Biber and Finnegan 1994, Biber et al. 1998). In December 1998, Doug Biber was able to join the Sydney group for a week of meetings on stance and register variation, from which discussions arose the idea for this special issue of *Text* focusing on stance and APPRAISAL.

The articles in this issue are not a record of that negotiation. But they do reflect something of the range of issues canvassed at that time. One problem which sticks in everyone's mind was the issue of systematicity, which Biber summed up in 1998 with the metaphor of wading into a swamp (taken up by Macken-Horarik in this issue); whether approaching from the perspectives of SFL or MDA many of us had the sense that the criterion-based reasoning that we had inherited from formal grammar classes and which was used to inform automated computational analysis was not serving us so well when analyzing evaluative language. At the same time, neither group was prepared to ignore stance or APPRAISAL simply because of analytical intractability. Biber's tack on this issue seemed to involve semi-automated hand coding alongside automatic analysis, tempered by the need to process large quantities of data. At the time, the Sydney group were concentrating more on qualitative analysis of representative texts, making use of finer distinctions across a wider range of realizations (cf. Lemke 1992; Martin 1992b, 1995a, 1995b, 1996; Martin and White, in preparation; Poynton 1984, 1985 [1989], 1990, 1996; Thibault 1989; Tucker 1999; Ventola 1998). Something of this complementarity is illustrated in the coding schemes deployed by Precht (MDA) and Page (SFL) in their articles in this issue.

The issue reaches a crisis point in the Sydney work around the problem of direct and implied evaluation. Where evaluation is explicitly realized, we feel confident about analyzing the attitude to some event as positive or negative, as in the examples below:

- (1) *Fortunately*, he dropped the ball when he was tackled.
- (2) *Unfortunately*, he dropped the ball when he was tackled.

But what about cases where evaluation is not explicitly inscribed, as in:

- (3) He dropped the ball when he was tackled.

Conservatively speaking, we might argue that there is no need to analyze evaluation here. On the other hand, if someone makes this remark while watching a game of football, it would be clearly evaluative—and no doubt accompanied by the appropriate 'paralinguistic' signals of positive or negative AFFECT (a fan's delight or anguish). How we feel about what happens depends of course on our reading position. In gridiron (American football), we will feel good if the player dropping the ball is on the other team rather than our own; in Australian rules football, where you get penalized for not

letting go of the ball when tackled, our feelings would be the other way round.

The problem here is that evaluation is implied even where it is not directly realized and this creates something of a coding nightmare, especially for qualitative analysts. Sticking to overt categories means that a great deal of the attitude implied by texts is missed and we have to ask in what ways this qualifies Och's discussion (1989: 3–4) of Biber's finding that affect is more often realized in personal letters than in chat (cf. Eggins and Slade 1997). Page and Macken-Horarik take up this issue in their articles, demonstrating two important points as they do so. One is that evaluation is prosodically realized, so that direct realizations tend to color accompanying discourse and thus provide some confirmation of implied evaluations. The other is that texts can be understood as naturalizing a reading position for an 'ideal' reader, and if we can access this position through appropriate ethnography then we are in a stronger position to reach agreement about implied evaluations—reading from the naturalized position of this ideal.

Relevant dimensions of APPRAISAL and stance analysis are introduced by contributors below, and it would be redundant to preview them all here.<sup>2</sup> There are however a few research questions arising from the complementarities among stance and APPRAISAL analysis and related approaches which are worth considering. One has to do with attitudinal meanings (gradable resources for negotiating empathy, aligning values and sharing tastes), which Conrad and Biber (2002: 60) describe as difficult to group into subclasses. APPRAISAL theory proposes splitting these into three groups, labeled AFFECT, JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION. AFFECT construes emotion, canonically in the grammatical frame *I feel (very) 'x' . . .*:

(4) I feel very *happy/sad* . . .

JUDGMENT construes attitudes about character, designed to sanction or proscribe behavior, canonically in the grammatical frame *It was 'x' off/for her/him to do that*:

(5) It was *kind/cruel* of him to do that.

APPRECIATION construes attitudes about texts, performances and natural phenomena, and fits into frames such as *I consider it 'x'*:

(6) I consider it *innovative/unimaginative*.

Martin (2000a) suggests that each type of attitude involves positive or negative feeling, and that JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION might be interpreted as institutionalizations of AFFECT which have evolved to socialize individuals into various uncommon sense communities of feeling—JUDGMENT as AFFECT recontextualized to control behavior (what we should and should not do), APPRECIATION as AFFECT recontextualized to manage taste (what

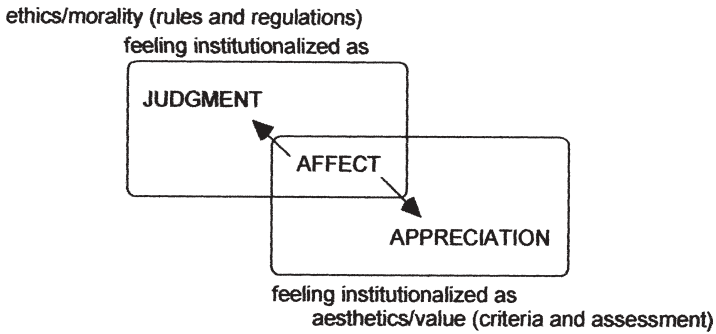


Figure 1. *JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION as institutionalized AFFECT* (from Martin 2000a: 147)

things are worth). This way of thinking about types of attitude is outlined in Figure 1, and taken up again in this issue by Painter, Page and Macken-Horarik. Certainly more work is needed on the use of arguments from grammar and discourse (including corpus studies) for reasoning about a classification of this order, and any subclassification it affords (Niemeier and Dirven 1997; Lemke 1998 are important resources in this regard). But the experience of APPRAISAL analysts is that unclassified attitude is far too blunt a tool for many kinds of text analysis.

Another research question has to do with what is often glossed as hedging (Hyland 1998) and variously described under headings such as epistemic stance (Conrad and Biber 2002), evidentiality (Chafe 1986), intensity (Labov 1984) and so on. APPRAISAL theory proposes organizing these meanings into two sets of resources, one having to do with the attribution of APPRAISAL to one source or another (ENGAGEMENT), and the other with the grading of the feelings themselves (GRADUATION). ENGAGEMENT is taken up in detail by White in this issue. Broadly speaking it is concerned with the ways in which resources such as projection, modality, polarity, concession and various comment adverbials position one opinion in relation to another—by quoting or reporting, acknowledging a possibility, denying, countering, affirming and so on. White develops a social dialogic perspective on these resources, many of which have tended to be read in truth functional terms as markers of uncertainty in the hedging literature (see, however, Myers 1989; Hunston 1993; Fuller 1998; White 2000). For White the key factors affecting their use in discourse are intersubjective, and have to do with whether or not and how speakers acknowledge alternative positions to their own—monoglossic or heteroglossic construals (after Bakhtin, e.g., (1935 [1981])—and whether they are opening up alternatives (expand) or shutting them down (contract).

GRADUATION on the other hand is concerned with gradability. For ATTITUDE, since the resources are inherently gradable, GRADUATION has to

do with adjusting the degree of an evaluation—how strong or weak the feeling is. This kind of GRADUATION is called force; realizations include intensification, comparative and superlative morphology, repetition, and various graphological and phonological features (alongside the use of intensified lexis—*sprint* for *run fast* and so on). In general there seem to be more resources for turning the volume up than for turning it down:

- (7) raise really upset, utterly devastated . . .
- (8) lower a little upset, fairly upset . . .

In the context of non-gradable resources GRADUATION has the effect of adjusting the strength of boundary between categories,<sup>3</sup> constructing core and peripheral types of things (cf. Channel 1994); this system is called focus and is exemplified below:

- (9) sharpen a real policeman, exactly 4. . .
- (10) soften a policeman kind of, about 5. . .

An overview of these APPRAISAL systems is presented as Figure 2. Various subcategories are introduced as required in this issue by Painter, Page, Macken-Horarik and White. For a brief introduction to the system see Martin (2000a) and Martin and Rose (in press). Peter White's Appraisal website and discussion group provide internet access to these tools, URL: <[www.grammatics.com/appraisal](http://www.grammatics.com/appraisal)>.

The distinction drawn here between ENGAGEMENT and GRADUATION raises a question as to why these resources are so commonly grouped together in the literature. One factor influencing this is that APPRAISAL resources never freely combine in a particular register, but form themselves into syndromes of choice called keys<sup>4</sup> (introduced in Martin 2002a, based on media discourse analysis by Susan Feez, Rick Iedema and Peter White [Iedema et al. 1994]).<sup>5</sup> Soft focus, low force and heteroglossic engagement that expands the play of voices can be interpreted as working in concert to 'hedge ones bets', as it were, and are contrasted with a more 'assertive' alternative below:

- (11) hedging I think I kind of feel a little tired, maybe.
- (12) asserting Of course I DO feel completely exhausted, absolutely.

The status of hedging as a key in academic registers is well documented (Hyland 1998); and it crops up again in Precht's data as factor 3 (hedged opinion) in her article in this issue. But Precht's factor analysis comes up with other keys as well—'informal affect' and 'boulomaic planning'; and it seems premature to privilege a key such as hedging over the others by establishing it as a core semantic resource when so little is known about comparable syndromes across registers involving the same and overlapping APPRAISAL realizations.

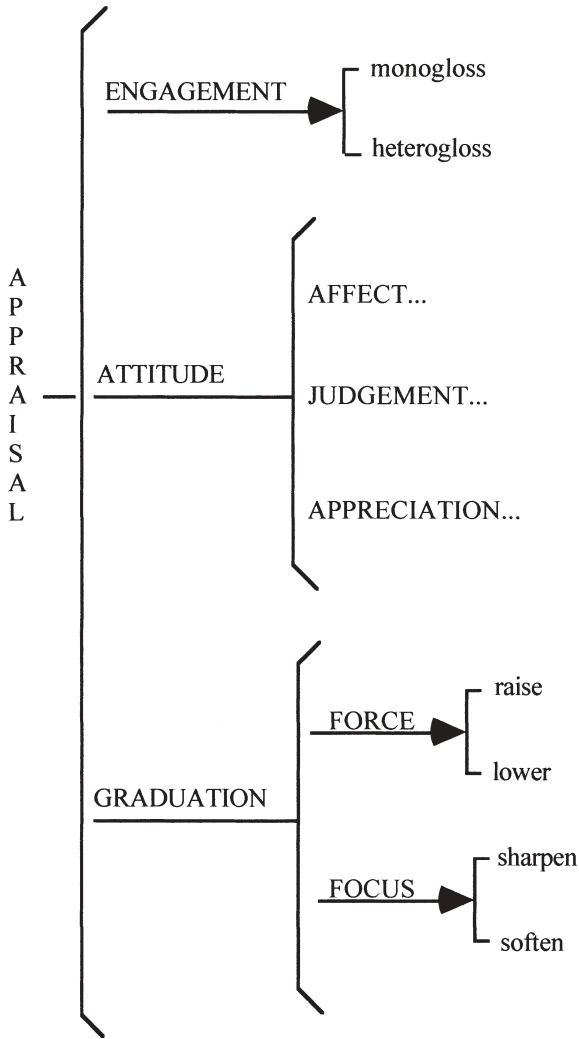


Figure 2. *An overview of APPRAISAL resources*

The cutting edge of the articles on stance and APPRAISAL presented here is the development of a social intersubjective perspective on evaluation. Painter takes empathy as point of departure for her contribution on the ontogenesis of APPRAISAL, focusing on exchange of feeling as driving not only the development of APPRAISAL resources per se but as motivation for critical developments right across the linguistic system from the very beginning of its ontogenesis. Precht draws on a social constructionist

approach to interpret her data, focusing on patterns in the relationships between interlocutors, their relative status and presentation of the self. Page is careful to discuss the different kinds of solidarity relevant to the distribution of APPRAISAL choices in her childbirth narratives, taking into account her relationship as interviewer with the mothers, fathers and female birthing partners as well as their respective relationships with one another. Both Macken-Horarik and White focus in detail on the kind of ways in which their texts naturalize a reading which welcomes certain readers into communal relationships with one another with respect to shared values, while at the same time excluding others. In spite of Brown and Gilman's inaugural insistence (1960) on the importance of considering both power and solidarity in relation to interpersonal meaning, I have the strong impression that a focus on power has tended to dominate twentieth century research—and thus the attention given to deference (to hedging and negative face, for example) in the literature (Martin in press). The articles in this issue balance this to some degree by adopting a social perspective which focuses on solidarity (alongside power), thus laying a foundation for further studies of the rhetoric of negotiated alignment in discourse. It goes without saying, I hope, that the results of any research of this kind will be culturally and subculturally specific, as the articles in this issue by Page and Precht emphasize.

The various complementarities among the articles speak for themselves, and I will not dwell too long on them here. As already noted, Precht approaches EVALUATION from the perspective of MDA (stance); the other four articles draw on SFL (APPRAISAL). Macken-Horarik and White focus in detail in the unfolding of evaluation in a single text, whereas Page and Precht analyze corpora (a set of childbirth narratives and a much larger corpus of conversations respectively); these 'synchronic' studies are complemented by Painter's ontogenetic focus on the development of APPRAISAL in the four middle-class Sydney children for which relevant diary studies are available. Assembling this range of perspectives has been a deliberate strategy on the part of the editors, especially the inclusion of detailed studies of individual texts. Discourse analysis in recent years has placed considerable emphasis on the importance of context, at times apparently losing sight of the importance of co-text (Martin 2000c); but we will never understand the function of evaluation in a culture if our studies are based, however quantitatively, on the analysis of 'deco-textualized' examples. It is texts that mean, through their sentences and the complex of logogenetic contingencies among them—they do not mean as a selection from, or a sum of, or worse, an average of, the meanings within the clause.

Connections are important, and this introduction has made only a few of the most relevant ones (others are included in the references below). For further reading on related approaches to evaluation, see Hunston and

Thompson (2000). Martin (2002b) surveys recent work on discourse analysis (including APPRAISAL analysis) within SFL. Schiffrin et al. (2001) is a useful recent handbook of discourse analysis in general (including various approaches to evaluation). Harking back to Ochs and Schiefflen's article 'Language has a heart' (1989) perhaps we can envoi by suggesting that alongside having heart languages also ongoingly enact their dialogic soul.

## Notes

1. To avoid confusion between technical and non-technical uses of terms, references to APPRAISAL systems and their subtypes are in small caps.
2. In addition I have tried to avoid taking away from the stand-alone readability of the various contributions by making them overly dependent on material I might have removed and consolidated here.
3. Readers who enjoyed the recent Indian movie *Monsoon Wedding* will have been amused by the event manager's recurrent use of 'exactly and approximately' in his undertakings; from the perspective of graduation, he appears to be using contradictory focus in a misguided effort to increase force.
4. Precht uses the term 'mood' (defined as 'as the set of stance markers that occur together and which communicate the tenor of a conversation') for comparable syndromes, a term we had to avoid because of its prominence for different purposes in Halliday's interpersonal grammar of the clause (1985 [1994]).
5. This group uncovered three recurrent keys in media discourse, referred to as types of authorial voice—commentator, correspondent and reporter voice; Coffin (in press) adapts these to history discourse as adjudicator, interpreter and recorder voice respectively.

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