ATTITUDE EXPRESSED FROM ONLINE NEWS DISCOURSE ON RUSSIA - UKRAINE WAR: A PERSPECTIVE OF APPRAISAL THEORY

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Abstract: This study explores the attitudinal meaning of three well-known international online news media companies, namely Reuters, CNN News and BBC News. It focused on the media companies' ways of reporting Russia and Ukraine crisis by using the Appraisal theory (Martin, 1992; 2000; Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005). Appraisal concerns the evaluative language of attitude and emotion expressed. The study aims to unfold the main attitudinal resources of the online news discourse analysis that journalists employ to construe and negotiate feelings with their audiences. The results found that the journalists employed both positive and negative attitudinal resources through adjectives, noun phrases or verb phrases. Regarding to the use of appreciation resources shows the largest proportion of particular reaction types which deals with aesthetic assessment. In terms of judgement resources, which concern moral assessments of human behavior, the journalists employ mainly social sanction of propriety type related to ethical behavior and the use of affect resources is the least concerning emotional assessments. The importance of this study contributes to news readers considering a better insight of how journalists convey and negotiate attitudinal meanings with their intended audiences.

Keywords: Appraisal theory, Attitudinal resources, Online news discourse, Russia and Ukraine crisis

1. INTRODUCTION

In a rapidly progressive globalized online mass media, it plays an increasingly important role in transmitting information to the public and significantly impacts how people view the world around them. As international online news, people around the world easily access up-to-date information. However, the use of language in online news could be affected readers' perceptions due to being only the recipients. Therefore, whatever online news people read can influence their judgment. This paper aims at exploring the language evaluation of attitudinal resources through three international well-known online news, namely Reuters, BBC, and CNN news on the newsworthy topic 'Russia and Ukraine war'. Since the end of February 2022, the Russia – Ukraine war has started and its effect on the world, particularly the economy. Many online news publishers pay attention and write this issue every day.

This paper uses the theory of appraisal as an analytical tool for evaluating the ways in which the international news writers negotiate feelings and use attitudinal resources with their readers. Appraisal theory developed by Martin and White and their colleagues in 1999s and 2000s in which it adapted from systemic functional linguistic (Halliday, 1994). This theory concerns evaluative meaning as text delivered positive or negative assessment, the intensity or explicit utterances, the dialogic engagement of writers/ speakers towards the entities (White, 2015: 1). However, the paper focuses on only the way the news writers convey the text with the attitudinal resources.

2. METHODS

This paper mainly focuses on the attitudinal resources of online news discourse analysis employed by appraisal framework. Appraisal framework (AF) is an analytical tool of the data and the author only concentrates on only one out of three main systems, namely 'Attitude system' in order to uncover how journalists utilize the attitudinal resources to reflect and negotiate feelings

with their readers concerning recently popular news – Russia and Ukraine war – among three well-known international online news such as Reuters, BBC News, and CNN News.

2.1. Data collection

The news data in this study were collected from the official website of Reuters, BBC News, and CNN News. These well-known international online news report about Russian – Ukraine war every day, which provides a large sufficient corpus for this study. The author randomly selected 20 news from the three online news companies, since February 24th, 2022 to May 3rd, 2022.

2.2. Data analysis

Regarding the data analysis in the current study, attitude system was employed. The author organized the procedures of data analysis: step 1: the author gathers 20 online news from Reuters, BBC News, and CNN News, step 2: Coding the data followed by attitude system, step 3: Decoding the data, and finally presenting the data. The author arranged the procedures to analyze the data in the following figure 1.

Figure 1. Four steps of data analysis procedures

2.2.1. Abbreviations of Attitude coding scheme

With respect to the abbreviations for coding attitudinal resources, the manual coding was adopted. The data transcription was coded by (1) Attitude system (affect, judgement and appreciation) with the polarity attitude indicated into two kinds: (i) a positive attitude encoded as (+) and (ii) a negative attitude substituted for (-) and an invoked attitude used *'t'*. The coding scheme of Attitude is illustrated in the following table 1.

Table 1. The abbreviations of Attitude coding scheme

Polarity	ATTITUDE SYSTEM		
	Affect	Judgement	Appreciation
+ 'positive attitude'	**des** 'affect: desire/ non-desire	**norm** 'judgement: normality'	**reac** 'appreciation: reaction'
- 'negative attitude'	**hap** 'affect: un/ happiness'	**cap** 'judgement: capacity'	**comp** 'appreciation: composition'
	sec 'affect: in/ security	**ten** 'judgement: tenacity'	**val** 'appreciation: valuation'
Invoked	**sat** 'affect: dis/ satisfaction'	**ver** 'judgement: veracity'	
t		**prop** 'judgement: propriety'	

Source: Adapted from Martin and White, 2005: 71

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The appraisal framework (AF) is a system of interpersonal meanings developed from Systemic Functional Linguistics theory. This framework concerns the evaluative language of expressed attitudes or emotions (Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005). Appraisal resources

are made to negotiate social relationships and build shared solidarity values. The author chooses this framework as a functional model of evaluative language at the level of discourse semantics. There are three main areas of meaning identified as "Attitude, Graduation and Engagement"; however, this study only focuses on the Attitude domain. The other two fields, graduation and engagement, were not used for analyzing in the study. This is because the main objective of this study is to provide the attitudinal language choices of international news online.

The attitude domain is concerned with sensations, including emotional response (affect), behavioral evaluation (judgement), and things evaluation (appreciation). The attitudinal meaning can be expressed directly as an attitude of "inscribing" and indirectly as a known attitude of "invoking". The inscribed attitude or explicit feelings are feelings that are overtly sufficient to be understood lacking the interpretation. It can be evaluated through some kind of adjectives. The implicit or invoke attitude, on the other hand, are the feeling that need to be interpretation, they often realize through lexical metaphors, ideational meanings, and non-core vocabulary items (Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005). The system of attitude composes three semantic domains are 'affect, judgement, and appreciation'.

The field of engagement refers to resources that describe the speaker's or writer's voice as 'positioning oneself in relation to, and thus 'engage' with, other voices and alternative positions is understood to be taking place in the present communication event". (Martin & White, 2005, p. 94). The graduate field deals with resources for assessing how someone or something is (Martin & Rose, 2007), there are two types of resources to amplify. First of all, it's called "force". It is about increasing or decreasing the volume and the second type known as "focus" refers to enhancing or calming different types of people and things. The basic system of Appraisal theory is shown in the following figure 2.
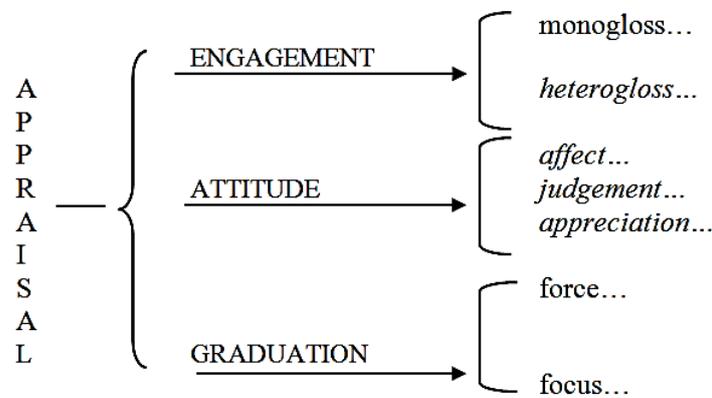

Figure 2 The system of Appraisal framework (Martin & White, 2005:38)

To clarify the subclasses of the attitudinal domain, they include systems of affect, judgment, and appreciation. Three attitude domain systems are depicted in Figure 3.
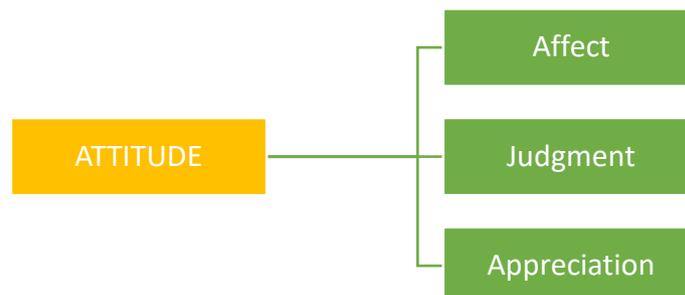
Figure 3 The system of attitude domain

Affect is the emotional region that deals with the expression of feelings, opinions, and emotions. Affect can be grouped into four categories: dis/inclination, un/happiness, in/security and dis/satisfaction. "Dis/inclination" refers to the speaker's degree of inclination or disinclination towards something; un/happiness involves feelings of happiness or sadness; in/security related to feelings of peace and anxiety; and finally, dis/satisfaction refers to feelings of accomplishment and disappointment about the activities people are engaged in. Figure 3 shows the details of the affect system with its categories.
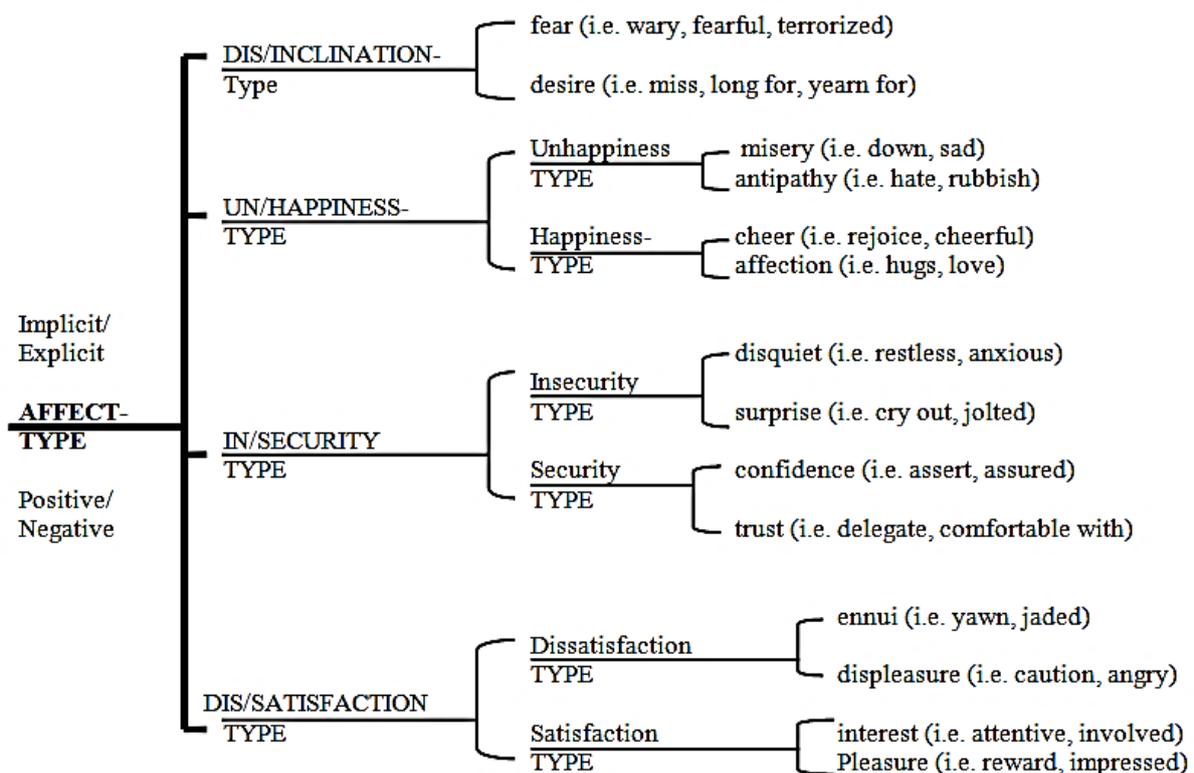

Figure 4 Affect system (Martin & White, 2005:48-51)

The examples of online news snippets below illustrate the analysis of the affect system with its categories as shown by underlined italic letters in square brackets.

Extract 1:

She said Ukraine was seeing "another wave of implementation of this terroristic plan of [the] Russian Federation". Ms. Stefanishyna claimed Russia *was suffering [aff - unhappiness]* "enormous losses" of soldiers and equipment, but this "does not deter Russia". "It only encourages further aggression," she said.

Source: BBC News, March 6th, 2022.

Extract 2:

Kuleba also reserved criticism for Coca-Cola and McDonalds as two multinational companies that continue to do business in Russia. "We *were upset [aff - dissatisfaction]* to hear companies like Coca-Cola and McDonald's remain in Russia and continue providing their products," he said.

Source: CNN News, March 6th, 2022.

According to the examples of the analysis of affect system, the majority of negative and inscribed attitudes were found in the online news and its categories were un/happiness, dis/inclination, and some dis/satisfaction. As the results, it could be said that the news writers convey the messages as unpeaceful and unpleasure feelings.

The next system is called "Judgement", which deals with the assessment of people's behaviors/characteristics. Judgment can be divided into two categories: social esteem and social sanction. Social esteem should be founded on "norm" (how special is someone?), "capability" (how capable are they?) and "tenacity" (how special are they?). Most of the time, its shared values happen in the formation of a social network, such as family, friends, colleagues, etc. (Martin & White, 2005: 52). Social sanction should be based on "veracity" (how honest are they?) and "property" (how ethical are they?) (Martin & White, 2005, pp. 52-53). Follow an introductory tour through the Appraisal Theory website, the system of judgment, or how people judge abilities, standards, ethics, honesty, is often based on their culture. Here is below the Judgment classification with the vocabulary.

Table 2. The categories of Judgement with the lexical instantiations (Martin & White, 2005:53)

SOCIAL ESTEEM	Positive (admire)	Negative (criticize)
Normality (how special?)	lucky, natural, fashionable…	unlucky, odd, eccentric…
Capacity (how capable?)	robust, mature, clever, successful…	weak, childish, slow, unsuccessful…
Tenacity (how dependable?)	resolute, brave, dependable…	cowardly, despondent, undependable…
SOCIAL SANCTION	Positive (praise)	Negative (condemn)
Veracity (how honest?)	truthful, honest, credible…	dishonest, lying, deceitful …
Propriety (how far beyond reproach?)	good, moral, respectful, ethical…	bad, immoral, unfair, selfish…

On the analysis of the judgment system and its types, several resources were found as illustrated below.

Extract 3:

The U.S. government said in the wake of <u>Moscow's invasion</u> *[jud - propriety]* of Ukraine last week it will implement export controls designed to cut Russia off from semiconductors and other advanced technology crucial to its weapons development and biotechnology, measures that could hurt chipmakers including Samsung.

Source: Reuters, February 28th, 2022.

As the examples of the analysis of judgement system with its categories, it showed that the category of propriety in which under the social sanction displayed frequently and followed by the category of tenacity, normality and capability belonging to social esteem that assess someone's determination to accomplish a particular piece of work (Souza, 2006:542). According to the results of the analysis of judgement system, the news writers often deliver the messages in terms of moral and ethics domain.

The final system is called "Appreciation". It refers to interpersonal resources to express positive and negative things, texts, natural phenomena, and processes (Martin & White, 2005:56). The system can be divided into three categories as reaction, composition and valuation. In three categories, subcategories are provided. Reaction involves assessing the impact people have on

something and its quality. Composition is **about assessing** the balance and complexity of something, and **valuation is about** the value of something as illustrated below.

Table 3: The category of Appreciation with the lexical instantiations (Martin & White, 2005:56)

Type of Appreciation	Positive	Negative
Reaction Impact (did it grab me?)	arresting, exciting, fascinating …	dull, boring, tedious, dry…
Quality (did I like it?)	okay, fine, good, splendid, lovely…	bad, nasty, ugly, plain, repulsive…
Composition Balance (did it hang together?)	balance, harmonious, unified, symmetrical…	unbalance, discordant, irregular…
Complexity (was it hard to follow?)	simple, pure, elegant, clear…	ornate, extravagant, unclear…
Valuation (was it worthwhile?)	profound, innovative, creative…	shallow, reductive, insignificant…

According to the international online news, the appreciation system found largely proportions in which the reaction sub-system resources were mainly used in the online news. It could be said that the news writers frequently expressed by evaluating the entire, process and phenomenon in the Russia – Ukraine war. The examples demonstrated the appreciation resources as follow.

Extract 4:

Her comments follow Friday's attack on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, which she said reflected *a "dangerous new escalation" [app – reaction: impact]*in Russia's invasion. Moscow's ambassador, Vasily Nebenzya, dismissed reports that Russian troops attacked the plant as "lies" and "disinformation". Meanwhile in Russia, *a new law [app + reaction:quality]* signed by President Vladimir Putin that would impose prison terms of up to 15 years on people charged with spreading *"fake news" [app – reaction:quality]*about the war in Ukraine has seen several western media outlets, including the BBC, suspend operations in the country.

Source: BBC News, March 6th, 2022.

Extract 5:

The doctor's stress levels are through the roof. This is *a dangerous journey [app – value: harmful]* for children who need *palliative care [app + reaction: quality] in the best of circumstances [app +reaction: quality]*. Now 12 of them are doing it in a war.

Small and frail bodies are hoisted up for the last time in weary mothers' arms as they descend from the bus. Some are gently handed over to waiting doctors and nurses. For others, their health is too delicate and requires extra help to *safely transport [app + reaction: quality]* them on to the train, which will take them to Poland.

Source: CNN News, March 4th, 2022.

According to the online news, the writers mostly used the category of reaction both positive and negative attitudes. Martin (2000) explains that reaction values are related to the extent to which the entity, process or phenomenon captures our attention and its emotional impact on us.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study can be summarized and discussed in the following points.

First, the expression of attitude resources embedded in online news discourse is more overwhelmingly applied than the expression of the invoked attitudinal resources. According to Martin (1997:155), inscribed evaluations are "harder to resist or ignore" than indirect assessments because they are more prescriptive about feelings, values, and normative behaviors that the author of they want readers to share. Similarly, the analysis of the national anthems the author uses mainly the introspective attitude (Souza, 2006). This is because "the direct message is easier to understand than what the writer wants to convey to the reader" (Badklang, 2019). It is therefore intended to help a better comprehension of the mindset of online news writers and the personal position they reflect in news discourse.

Second, the analysis shows that the appreciation system plays an important role in the problem of online information. High-frequency of appreciation subsystems used by online news writers to negotiate shared feelings about aesthetic assessment. As Martin (2000) explains, reaction values are related to the extent to which the entity, process or phenomenon captures our attention and its emotional impact on us. Also, online news writers often use a negative attitude, it can imply that the online news matter is in crisis, so news writers tend to use negative language choices. In contrast, research by Jing and Lihuan (2021) related to Covid-19 news shows that the distribution of polarized attitudes on China Daily mainly uses positive rather than negative attitudes. They claim that "attitude-polarity can indicate that Chinese reporters and people have positive attitudes towards COVID-19, believing that we can overcome the current difficulties and overcome the epidemic together (p.177)."

This study helps encourage news readers to approach news stories by effectively considering the ways of news writers deliver texts in news details. Likewise, Arunsirot (2012) was 'designed to contribute an effective means of supporting Thai media consumers, especially in terms of practical methods of analysis when reading varying opinions and standpoints in newspapers.' Therefore, news readers should be awareness of how language is used to represent and evaluate the world. Consequently, language of evaluation can lead news readers to critical texts because the appraisal perspective focuses on the relationship between text choices and social context, which is an important tool for audiences perceive how the news writers generate news and seek to negotiate attitudes with their readers in the discourse of international news online.

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