

Evaluative stance in Vietnamese and English writing by the same authors: A corpus-informed *appraisal* study

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Abstract – *Appraisal* theory (Martin and White 2005), an approach to discourse analysis dealing with evaluative language, has been previously employed in analysing newspaper articles and spoken discourses in several earlier studies, although it is gaining in popularity as a framework for comparing first and second (L1/L2) writing. This study investigated 40 English majors' Vietnamese and English paragraphs for evaluative language, a key component of successful academic writing, as realised under *Appraisal* theory. To this purpose, we collected L1 Vietnamese and L2 English data from the same student writers across the same topics and using a corpus-informed Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis approach to the annotation and analysis of *appraisal*. A range of commonalities were present in the use of *appraisal* across the two language varieties, while the results also suggest significant differences between students' evaluative expressions in Vietnamese as a mother tongue and English as a second or foreign language. This variation includes the comparative under- and over-use of specific *appraisal* resources employed in L1 and L2 writing respectively, in particular, regarding writers' employment of attitudinal features. The findings serve to inform future pedagogical applications regarding explicit instruction in stance and *appraisal* features for novice L2 English writers in Vietnam.

Keywords – L2 writing; Vietnamese; corpora; evaluation; *Appraisal* theory; stance

1. BACKGROUND

In Vietnam, English has increased in prominence as the main foreign language taught in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. As many second language (L2) learners in other countries, Vietnamese students do not use English for everyday communication outside the classroom, so it does not seem easy for them to master L2 English. Of the four skills, writing has been found to be one of the most difficult for Vietnamese learners to acquire in both Vietnamese as a first language (L1), as well as L2 English, as observed in Bailey (2006: vii) in that such students “often find the written demands of their courses very challenging.” For this reason, there is now an increasing amount of research dealing with L2 English writing in both Vietnam and other nearby countries, such as Cambodia,

with studies using various methods across a range of linguistic perspectives on L1 and L2 writing for eventual use by English language teachers, educators, and learners.

This trend is also seen in recent studies on evaluative language, a key component of argumentation in academic writing. Hunston and Thompson's (2000) definition of evaluation (as cited in Lam and Crosthwaite 2018: 9) is

the expression of the speaker or writer's attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about.

There have been different definitions and terms associated with evaluation, with a number of frameworks present in the literature (e.g. Goffman 1981; Labov 1984; Chafe and Nichols 1986; Biber and Finegan 1989; Ochs 1989; Simpson 1993; Hyland 2005). A number of recent studies have adopted Martin and White's (2005) comprehensive *appraisal* framework to focus on the interpersonal aspect of language, although there has been little research using this framework to study L1/L2 writing in South-East Asian contexts, a gap this study intends to fill.

Employing *appraisal* theory as a research tool to analyse students' writing, preceding researchers have drawn important conclusions. However, there is still a lack of *appraisal* studies where the same L2 English and L1 Vietnamese writing tasks were conducted by the same writers, which could allow researchers to more accurately determine the nature of L1 transfer on L2 employment of evaluative language in future studies. Seeing the potential for understanding this phenomenon, we seek to address the following research question: How do the same writers writing in both L1 Vietnamese and L2 English project evaluative stance as realised in terms of the *attitude*, *engagement* and *graduation* domains under *appraisal* theory?

In line with this investigation, this paper adopts a corpus-informed approach. According to McEnery and Hardie (2012: 17), the corpus-informed approach utilises "only selected parts of a corpus" and the corpus is considered "simply as a bank of examples to illustrate a theory." This approach was previously used in Lam and Crosthwaite (2018), who analysed all three domains of *appraisal* across texts in L1 English and L2 English written by L1 Cantonese speakers in Hong Kong, produced on the same tasks and under the same conditions, and finding significant variation between L1/L2 writers in the *appraisal* resources employed. We seek to replicate this approach in the current study.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Initiated from the project *Write it Right* and inspired by Halliday's systemic functional linguistic theory, Martin and White (2005) introduced *Appraisal* theory, dealing with the *interpersonal meaning of evaluative language* in written discourse.

It is concerned with how writers/speakers approve and disapprove, enthuse and abhor, applaud and criticise, and with how they position their readers/listeners to do likewise. It is concerned with the construction by texts of communities of shared feelings and values, and with the linguistic mechanisms for the sharing of emotions, tastes and normative assessments. It is concerned with how writers/speakers construe for themselves particular authorial identities or personae, with how they align or disalign themselves with actual or potential respondents, and with how they construct for their texts an intended or ideal audience. (Martin and White 2005: 1).

This theory includes the study of evaluative language over three domains: *attitude*, *engagement*, and *graduation*.

2.1. Attitude

Attitude has three subdomains: *appreciation*, *judgement*, and *affect*. *Affect* reveals "positive and negative feelings" (Martin and White 2005: 42), *judgement* shows admiration for, criticism and condemnation of behaviour, while the assessment of text, process, or natural phenomena belongs to *appreciation*. The interconnection between these subtypes is demonstrated in Figure 1.

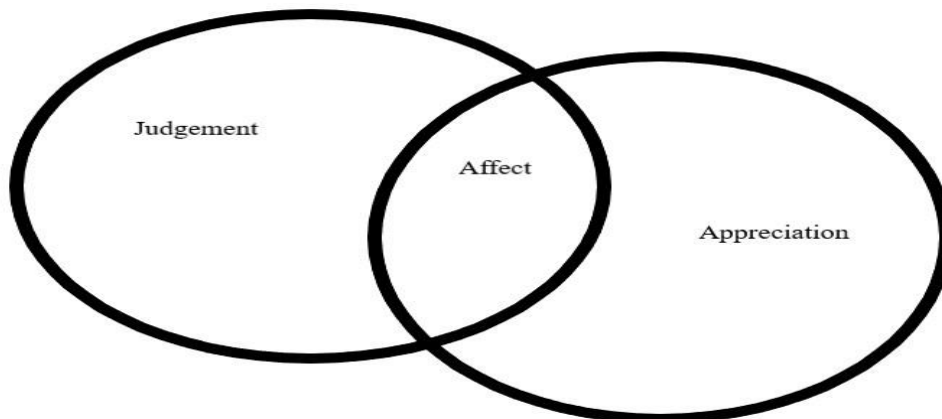


Figure 1: Interconnection between *attitude* domain adapted from Martin and White (2005: 45)

Affect is divided into four subcategories: *un/happiness*, *dis/satisfaction*, *in/security*, and *dis/inclination*. Examples (1) to (4) (from Martin and White 2005: 49, 51) illustrate these resources as follows.

(1) The captain felt **sad/ happy** [*un/happiness*].

(2) The captain felt **fed up/ absorbed** [*dis/satisfaction*].

(3) The captain felt **anxious/ confident** [*in/security*].

(4) Linda is **wary about/ longing for** her upcoming presentation [*dis/inclination*].

Judgement has two main subtypes, *social sanction* and *social esteem*, divided into five further subtypes including *normality*, *capacity*, *tenacity*, *propriety*, and *veracity*. *Normality* answers the question *How special?*, as in (5). Instances, such as (6), responding to the question *How capable?*, belong to *capacity*. *Tenacity* shows the answer for the question *How dependable?*, as in (7). *How honest?* questions of *veracity* as with (8). Finally, example (9), answering *How far beyond reproach?*, is an instance of *propriety* (Martin and White 2005: 53).

(5) I am **unlucky/lucky**.

(6) Mary is **immature/mature**.

(7) He is **timid/brave**.

(8) The woman is **dishonest/honest**.

(9) That captain is **immoral/moral**.

Appreciation consists of *reaction*, *composition*, and *social valuation* (Martin and White 2005: 56). While sentences such as that in (10) illustrate *reaction*, that in example (11) is an example of *composition*, while (12) relates to *social valuation*.

(10) The movie is **boring**.

(11) The young woman looks **shapely**.

(12) This writing is **original**.

Table 1 summarises the sub-categories of the *attitude* domain.

<i>Attitude</i>	<i>Affect</i>	<i>un/happiness</i> <i>dis/satisfaction</i> <i>in/security,</i> <i>dis/inclination</i>
	<i>Judgement</i>	<i>normality</i> <i>capacity</i> <i>tenacity</i> <i>propriety</i> <i>veracity</i>
	<i>Appreciation</i>	<i>reaction</i> <i>composition</i> <i>social valuation</i>

Table 1: The *attitude* domain adapted from Martin and White (2005: 45–58)

2.2. Engagement

Engagement evaluates whether the writer uses a single voice (*monoglossia*) or recognises dialogistic alternatives (*heteroglossia*) when expressing his or her ideas. The examples in (13) and (14) (from Martin and White 2005: 100) illustrate *engagement* resources:

(13) The banks have been greedy [*monoglossic*].

(14) **In my view** the banks have been greedy [*heteroglossic*].

In other words, *engagement* reveals if *bare assertions* or *expansive* and *contractive* options are employed by the writer.

Expansive options include *entertain* and *attribute*, while *contractive* ones consist of *disclaim* and *proclaim*. *Entertain* examples can be found in (15a–b), while (16a–b) are instances of *attribution*. *Disclamation* is divided into *negation*, as in (17) or *concession* as in (18). *Proclamation* has further subtypes including *concurrence* as in (19), *justification* as in (20), *pronouncement* as in (21), and *endorsement* as in (22) (Martin and White 2005: 100–127). More specific information can be found in Figure 2.

(15a) **I believe** he did this.

(15b) It **seems** that he did this.

(16a) **Some believe** that he did this.

(16b) **It is rumoured that** he did this.

(17) I **didn't** see her.

(18) It is raining, **but** I want to go out.

(19) **Naturally**, they enter the competition.

(20) He did this **because** he wanted to make me surprised.

(21) I **contend** that you have decided to join this.

(22) They **have shown** Mary did enter the room.

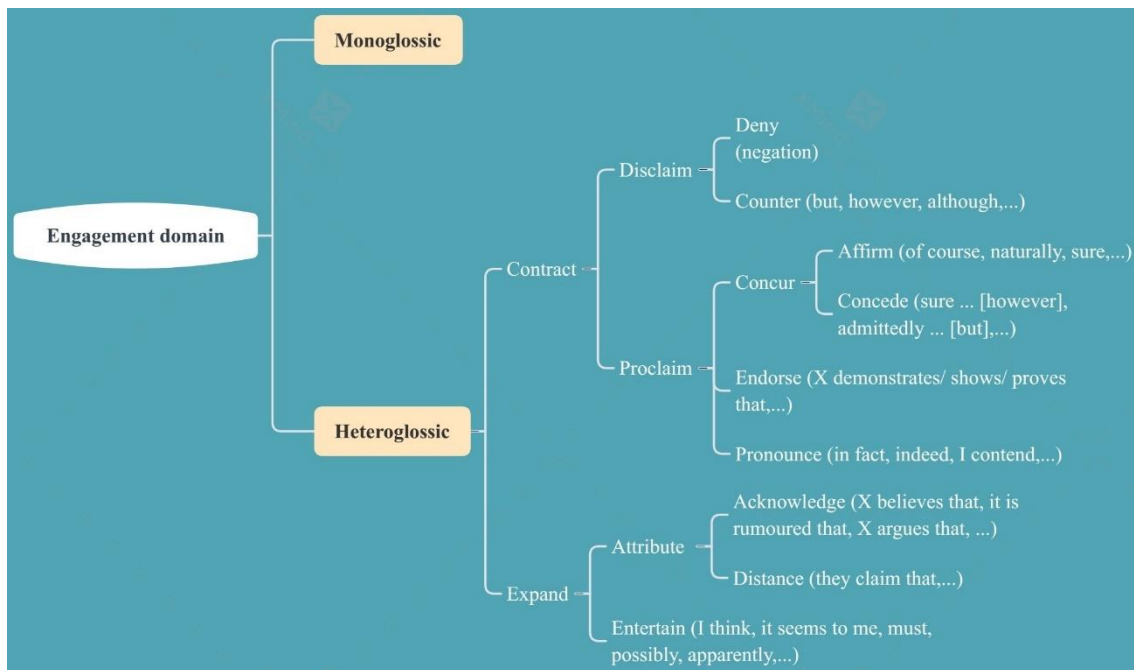


Figure 2: *Engagement domain* (adapted from Martin and White 2005: 134)

2.3. Graduation

Graduation deals with the notions of *force* and *focus*. *Force* (Martin and White 2005: 141–149) indicates the scalability of *intensification* and *quantification*. *Focus* (Martin and White 2005: 137) expresses the *sharpening* or *softening* of semantic boundaries. Examples are provided in (23) to (26), and further examples are illustrated in Figure 3.

(23) This film is **very** [*intensification*] interesting.

(24) They have made **many** [*quantification*] good friends.

(25) They don't play **real** jazz [*sharpen*].

(26) They play jazz, **sort of** [*soften*].

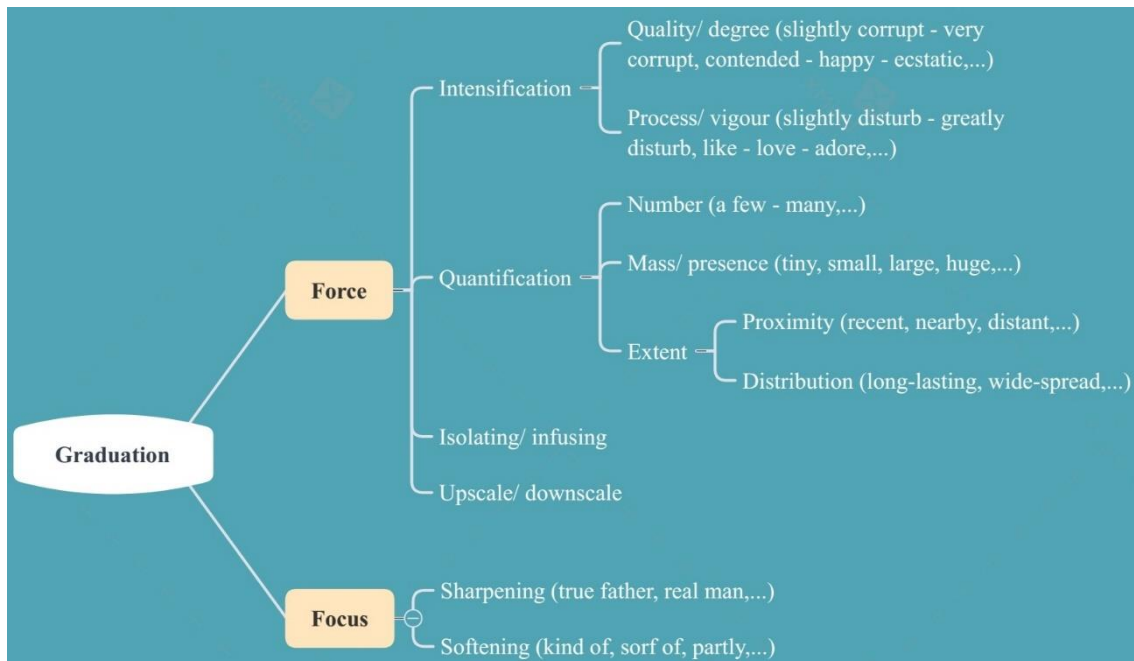


Figure 3: *Graduation* domain adapted from Martin and White (2005: 154)

3. PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS INTO APPRAISAL FOR L2 WRITING

Appraisal has been a topic of interest attracting a large body of research (e.g. Coffin and Hewings 2004; Hood 2004, 2006; Derewianka 2007; Swain 2007; Lancaster 2011; Geng and Wharton 2016, among others). Comparing the employment of *attitude* in research introductions written by L2 English learners in a tertiary education setting with experts' L1 writing, Hood (2004) recognised a combination of evaluative values was employed in student writers' texts. Explicit emotion and judgements on behaviour were adopted in evaluation in students' writing suggestive of a personalised treatment within their introductory passages, whereas experts' texts featured frequent *appreciation*. Geng and Wharton (2016) conducted a study on *engagement*, recognising that L2 English writers of L1 Mandarin background were affected by negative L1 transfer of *engagement* features

while trying to convey their stance in L2. This finding helps to explain why low-graded English essays in Coffin and Hewings (2004) tended to heavily feature *pronounce* features, or the expression of overtly authorial voice, resulting in making writers' claims less persuasive, as would be found in Mandarin. These two studies indicate that balancing dialogic expansion and contraction remains an issue for L2 writers. Lancaster (2011: 18) suggests that students who were more proficient in argumentative and critically reasoning writing tended "to be authoritative and dialogically open," as opposed to lower level learners. Exploring the adoption of *graduation* in L2 students' writing, both Hood (2006) and Derewianka (2007) agreed that L2 learners need not only be taught relevant linguistic devices but also how to manage such resources to enhance their production of evaluative values.

As mentioned, in Vietnam there have been several studies employing *Appraisal* theory in analysing newspaper articles (Vo 2011; Vo 2017) and spoken discourses (Tran 2011; Ngo and Unsworth 2015), although works on students' L2 English writing using this approach are still limited. Ho (2011) conducted a contrastive study comparing his students' L2 English essays with experts' L1 Vietnamese and L1 English essays, using the *engagement* domain of *appraisal* theory as his research tool. One of the findings is that L2 English Vietnamese students produced expanding resources in their English texts more frequently than those in L1 native and L1 English essays. However, students' over-reliance on their personal points of view may lead to a perceived lack of persuasiveness in their L2 writing. Chung (2018) found in her students' L2 intermediate English paragraphs the two subcategories of *attitude*, *affect* and *appreciation* were used in relative balance, while *judgement* was predominantly employed when making evaluation, and *heteroglossia* was adopted twice as much as *monoglossia*. L2 writers of Vietnamese background in this study were inclined to assess behaviour more than to express feelings or evaluate things, a distribution considered against the norms of academic writing.

4. METHODS

4.1. Corpus data

38 Vietnamese third-year tertiary students majoring in English were enrolled in a course named *Vietnamese in Practice* from February to June 2018 in Tra Vinh University in Vietnam. In this course, they were taught how to use L1 Vietnamese properly from word

choice to sentence and paragraph level (many students entering tertiary education lack experience in writing in L1). Paragraph writing was a requirement for both mid and final examinations, and therefore constitutes the unit of investigation for the present study. All procedures were performed in compliance with relevant laws and institutional guidelines and they have been approved by the appropriate institutional committee. Informed consent was obtained for experimentation with human subjects and the privacy rights of human subjects must always be observed. Participant information is shown in Table 2.

No.	Language Group	Quantity	L2 English Proficiency	Notes
1	Vietnamese	38	Intermediate	Females – 25
2	English	38		Males – 13
				Ages – 18–21 = 38

Table 2: Course participants

Students were asked to write in Vietnamese first and in English later with a one-week time gap. Both tests were limited in timeframe and under the supervision of the lecturer. The first writing topic was based on prior reading about the meaning of *narcissus*, and students were asked to write their own understanding of this term in a short paragraph. The second topic asked students to reflect on a certain lifestyle from an excerpt they had read in a previous question. The selected data for analysis were chosen randomly from the entire pool of students' writing regardless of gender or age (Table 3). While small, the corpus is suitable for a corpus-informed (rather than corpus-based) approach as seen in other *appraisal* studies such as Lam and Crosthwaite (2018).

Task	L2 English		L1 Vietnamese	
	Texts	Words	Texts	Words
Flower	10	521	10	855
Lifestyle	10	963	10	1,436
Total	20	1,484	20	2,291
Total corpus size = (n=40)				

Table 3: Corpus detail

4.2. Research instruments and coding

We employed a corpus-informed approach following a Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis methodology (CIA²) proposed by Granger (2015) in terms of the text types and language varieties under investigation (Figure 4). Granger (1996: 43) states “CIA does not established comparison between two different languages but between native and learner varieties of one and the same language.” However, as a response to accusations

of the comparative fallacy (Bley-Vroman 1983), Granger (2015) introduces CIA² in which the Interlanguage Varieties (ILV) referring to the learner language can be the learner's mother tongue.

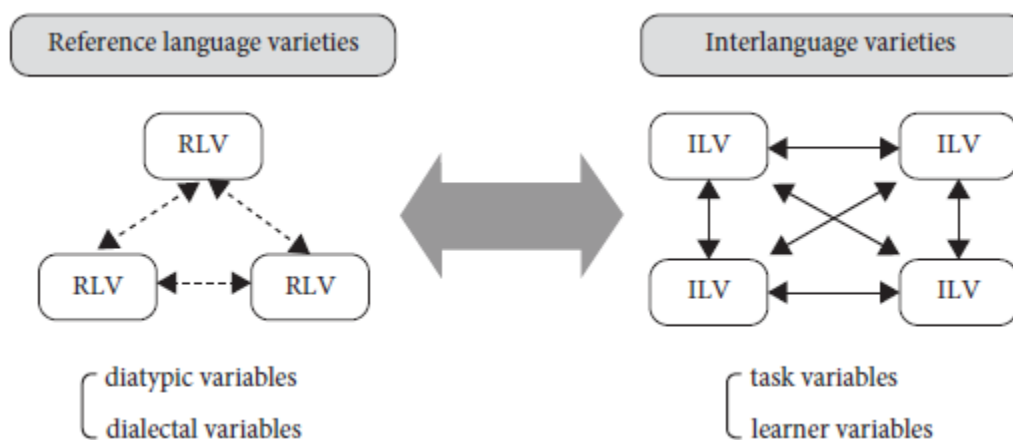


Figure 4: CIA² sourced (from Granger 2015: 17)

Diatypic variables may consist of register (field, mode, tenor) or text types. In addition, dialectal variables can include (non-)standard dialects, regional dialects, social dialects, temporal dialects, or expert/novice dialects. The task variables might range from complexity to genres while the learner varieties can be their L2, third language (L3), or their mother tongue.

The paragraphs were annotated following *Appraisal* theory, including the components *engagement*, *attitude*, and *graduation*, using *UAMCorpusTool* (v3.3) software developed by O'Donnell (2016). This study combined a qualitative method in identifying the similar and different *appraisal* resources used in students' L1 Vietnamese and L2 English writing, and quantitative methods in calculating the frequency of coded features by UAM software. Since the original *appraisal* framework may be considered overly comprehensive for our purposes, this paper adapts Martin and White (2005) as well as Lam and Crosthwaite (2018) to build a simplified version of the coding scheme (see Figure 5). The three primary domains are kept with a reduced set of subcategories per domain. Specifically, besides *affect*, *judgement* and *appreciation*, the *attitude* domain needs to consider (non-)authorial evaluation of emotions, explicit/implicit evaluation and the valence of attitudinal resources. The multi-voiced argumentation of *engagement* is explored through contraction (denials, countering, concurring, endorsing, justifying, and pronouncing) and expansion (entertaining and attributing). Meanwhile, the *graduation*

domain features the scaling of *force*, while the vagueness or exactness of attitudinal values are managed through *focus*.

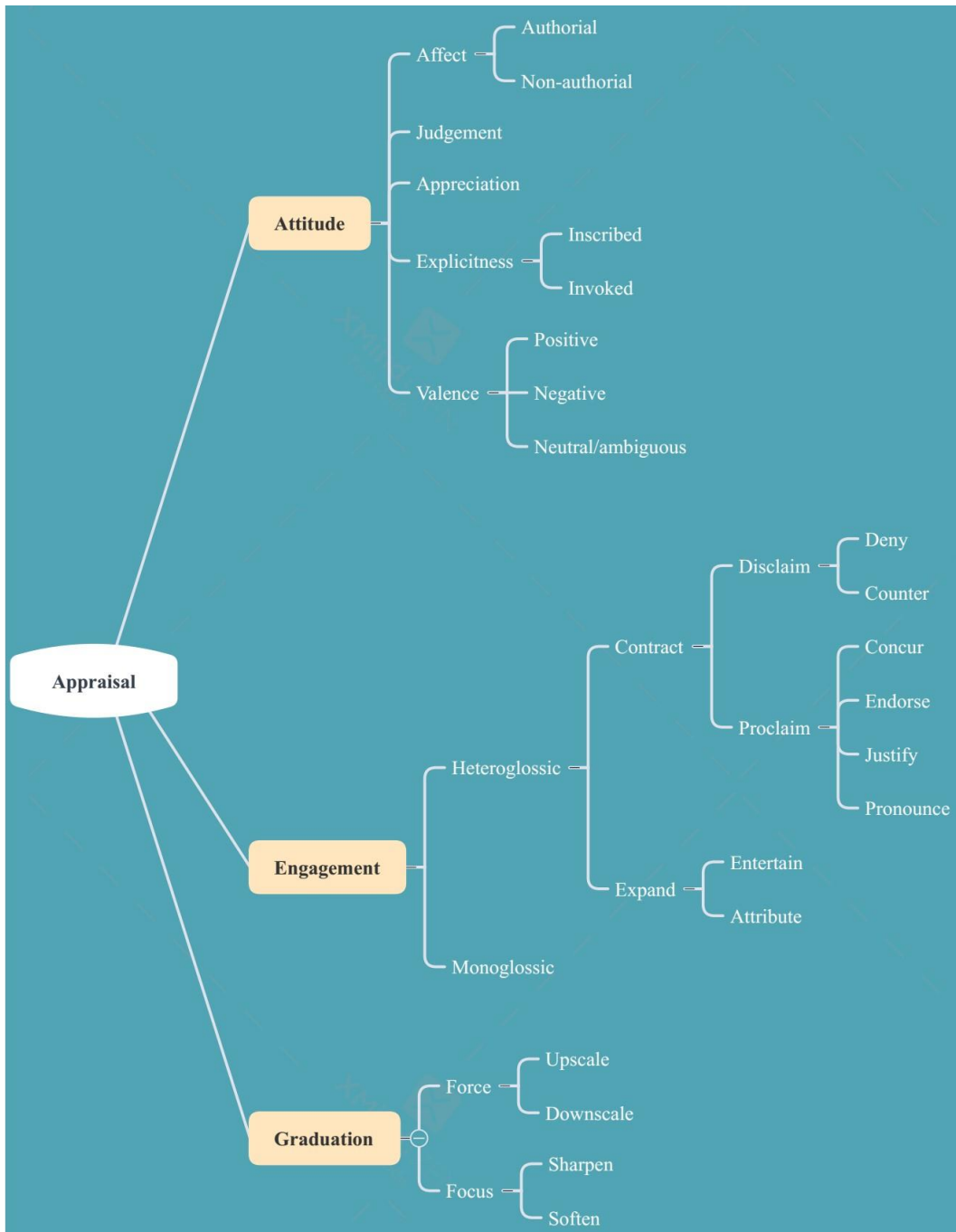


Figure 5: The simplified *appraisal* framework (adapted from Martin and White 2005: 38; Lam and Crosthwaite 2018: 20)

The coding was repeated twice at the interval of two weeks to help the coder gain better understanding and improve the validity of this process. In line with Lam and Crosthwaite (2018), the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC), a statistical measure of rater agreement, was employed to measure the stability of coding. We implemented ICC using

a two-way random model to assess the intra-coder agreement. The ICC result was over .88 (Table 4), which authenticates ‘good’ reliability (Koo and Li 2016).

Reliability		ICC results		
		<i>Attitude</i>	<i>Engagement</i>	<i>Graduation</i>
Stability	Single measures	.938a	.959a	.884a
	Average measures	0.968	0.979	0.938

Table 4: ICC result

5. RESULTS

Across the two tasks in L1 Vietnamese and L2 English, *attitude* constituted the major portion of the three *appraisal* categories. Student writers tended to express their emotions a lot when explaining the meaning of the flower narcissus, as well as arguing about how a certain lifestyle makes people happy. Both assertive claims and multi-voiced arguments were employed to convey the writer’s stance across the two tasks, occupying more than one-third of the overall evaluative resources. Around one-fifth of assessments heightened the actual attitudinal meaning by scaling or sharpening the writer’s instantiation (see Figure 6).

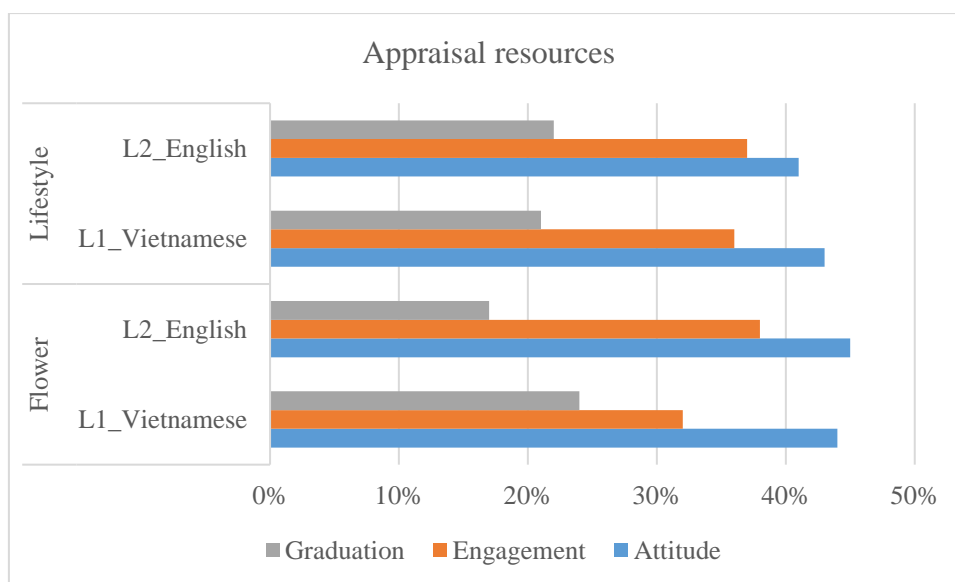


Figure 6: Distribution of *appraisal* resources

5.1. Attitude

For *attitude* resources in the first task, ‘flower’, shown in Table 4, *appreciation* accounted for the most annotations totalling around 50 per cent, while *affect* ranked second and *judgement* had the smallest proportion of annotations.

L1 Vietnamese and L2 English had a relatively balanced distribution of the three subcategories of *attitude*. Both L1 Vietnamese and L2 English writers preferred using *appreciation* to express their stance by aesthetically evaluating what is worth, what is made, and what is performed throughout their writing as in excerpts (27) and (28).

(27) Thủy tiên là một loài hoa **đẹp** [+*appreciation*], **thu hút** mọi ánh nhìn, loài hoa này thường **ngả thân hơi nghiêng xuống** [*neutral appreciation*] chứ **không thẳng** [*neutral appreciation*] như những loài hoa khác. // *The narcissus is a beautiful* [+*appreciation*] *flower that attracts* [+*appreciation*] *all eyes, and this flower usually leans its body down slightly* [*neutral appreciation*] *but is not as straight as* [*neutral appreciation*] *other flowers.* (L1VN)

(28) It's had such a **special** [+*appreciation*] beauty that everyone falls in love with it. [L2EN]

Student writers shared things in common in L1/L2 when talking about the ‘flower’. Evaluation mostly referred to how students emotionally reacted towards the flower or how they reflected on its physical appearance in general (excerpts (29) and (30)).

(29) Bản thân bạn dù **xấu** [+*appreciation*] **đẹp** [+*appreciation*] như thế nào thì đều **đáng trân trọng** [+*appreciation*] và hãnh diện cũng không nên quá đề cao bản thân mà nên quan tâm những người khác xung quanh bạn. // *You, no matter how ugly* [+*appreciation*] *or beautiful* [+*appreciation*] *you become, are both worthy* [+*appreciation*] *and proud of yourself, [and] you should not overestimate yourself but should care about others around you.* (L1VN)

(30) Daffodils are **beautiful** [+*appreciation*], **luxurious** [+*appreciation*], and **lovely** [+*appreciation*]. (L2EN)

While L1 Vietnamese writing mainly employed affection resources when discussing the flower, L2 English authors preferred a combination of affection, interest and pleasure (see excerpts (31) and (32)). Additionally, the emotions in both languages were primarily non-authorial although L2 writing made a few attempts to show their authorial evaluation as in excerpts (33) and (34) below. Concerning the valence and explicitness of attitudinal evaluation, there was no noticeable variation across L1 and L2 writing, in which positive values (excerpts (31) and (32) accounted for over 65 per cent and inscription occupied

over 93 per cent (excerpts (27)–(34)). Neutrality (excerpt (27)), invocation (excerpt (33)) and negativity (excerpt (34)) constituted under 20 per cent, under ten per cent and under four per cent respectively.

(31) Dù không màu sắc như hoa hồng, hoa cúc chỉ có thể là màu vàng và màu trắng nhưng nó rất **yêu** [+affect] về đẹp riêng của mình như chàng Narziss **yêu** [+affect] về đẹp của chàng và không để tâm đến ai cả. // *Although it is not as colorful as roses or chrysanthemums and can only be yellow and white, it loves [+affect] its own beauty very much as Narziss loves [+affect] the beauty of his and doesn't care about anyone.* (L1VN)

(32) When we have **admired** [+affect] the beauty of these flowers, we must be **passionate** [+affect] [...] Narziss is a great man who makes goddesses **love** [+affect] him, and daffodils make beautiful girls become **passionate** [+affect] about them and **love** [+affect] them. (L2EN)

(33) Nên “thủy” gắn liền với nước, và “tiên” do bông hoa xinh đẹp đến ngỡ ngàng và **ta không thể cưỡng lại sắc đẹp của nó** [t, +authorial]. // *Therefore, “thuy” is associated with water, and “tien” is because of the fact that the flower is surprisingly beautiful and we cannot resist its beauty [t, +authorial].* (L1VN)

(34) The writer wants to show that **we shouldn't be attracted to** [-authorial] beauty in order to not to ignore simple things. (L2EN)

Assessments of ethical or moral standing were frequently used by L1 Vietnamese and L2 English writers. Especially, student writers adopted this resource to mainly criticise the negativity of the flower or the beauty associated with the flower, such as arrogance, pride, selfishness or coldness (excerpts (35) and (36)). The other types of *judgement* were seldom used.

(35) Nhưng nó lại **quá tự cao** [-prop] vào nhan sắc của mình. // *However, it overvalues [-prop] its beauty.* (L1VN)

(36) He is **selfish** [-prop] and **cold** [-prop], so he cannot love everyone. [L2EN]

Regarding attitudinal variation, students' writing in Vietnamese seems more evaluative than that in English. Specifically, in Vietnamese paragraphs, writers tended to add more adjectives expressing their *attitude*, while in L2 English the flower and responsibilities were not described via adjectives (excerpts (37)–(40))

(37) Thủy tiên là một loài hoa **dại** [neutral appreciation] mọc ven hồ [...] // *The narcissus is a wild [neutral appreciation] kind of flowers that grows along the lake [...]* (L1VN)

(38) Thuy Tien is a flower growing near the lake. (L2EN)

(39) [...] không phải lo lắng về trách nhiệm **bất đắc dĩ** [-affect]. // [...] *without worrying about **reluctant** [-affect] responsibilities.* (L1VN)

(40) [...] without responsibility. (L2EN)

Additionally, writers used different words between English and Vietnamese revealing various *attitudes*. Thus, for example, under the same subcategory of *attitude* (*appreciation* and *affect*), different specific *appraisal* features were used to express the beauty of the flower or its feeling (excerpts (41) to (44)). In L2 English, writers preferred to appreciate the flower while in L1 Vietnamese they expressed how the flower felt, as in excerpts (45) and (46).

(41) [...] nó có một vẻ đẹp rất **quyến rũ** [+appreciation: reaction-impact] mà bất cứ ai cũng say mê đắm đuối. [...] *it has a very **seductive** [+appreciation: reaction-impact] beauty that anyone can be passionately infatuated with.* // (L1VN)

(42) It's had such a **special** [+appreciation: social valuation] beauty that everyone falls in love with it. [L2EN]

(43) [...] đặc biệt bông hoa luôn hướng xuống dưới giống như đang rất **buồn bã** [-affect: unhappiness-misery]. // [...] *especially the flower is always facing down as if it is very **sad** [-affect: unhappiness-misery].* (L1VN)

(44) Especially, the flowers are always looking down as [if] they are very upset [-affect: insecurity-disquiet]. (L2EN)

(45) Hoa thủy tiên là một loài hoa rất đặc biệt và là một loài hoa **thích** [+affect: happiness-affection] sự cô độc. // *The narcissus is a kind of flowers that is very special and is a kind of flowers that **likes** [+affect: happiness-affection] its loneliness.* (L1VN)

(46) Thuy Tien is a special flower, [and] it's also a **lovely** [+appreciation] flower. (L2EN)

Task	Flower				Lifestyle			
	L1_Vietnamese		L2_English		L1_Vietnamese		L2_English	
Feature	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Attitude-type	N=77		N=59		N=111		N=105	
affect	28	36%	24	41%	47	42%	43	41%
judgement	13	17%	8	13%	29	26%	34	32%
appreciation	36	47%	27	46%	35	32%	28	27%
Non/authorial evaluation	N=28		N=24		N=47		N=43	
authorial	1	4%	4	17%	14	30%	15	35%
non-authorial	27	96%	20	83%	33	70%	28	65%
Valence	N=77		N=59		N=111		N=105	
positive-attitude	51	66%	41	69%	72	65%	79	75%
negative-attitude	17	22%	11	19%	35	31%	24	23%
neutral/ambiguous	9	12%	7	12%	4	4%	2	2%
Explicitness	N=77		N=59		N=111		N=105	
inscribed	72	94%	57	97%	108	97%	103	98%
invoked	5	6%	2	3%	3	3%	2	2%

Table 5: Distribution of *attitude*

For the ‘lifestyle’ topic (Table 5), the most frequently employed *appraisal* resource across L1 and L2 was *affect*. However, L1 Vietnamese texts used more *appreciation* than *judgement* while L2 English texts preferred evaluating behaviour to appreciating things. Concerning *appreciation*, L1 Vietnamese writing had the tendency to evaluate what was socially valued when arguing about the importance of beliefs and purposes in life. This evaluative tool outnumbered their affective responses to or assessments of the composition of something. On the contrary, L2 English writers reacted to and produced their own social valuation in relatively equal attempts (excerpts (47) and (48)).

(47) Cuộc đời của mỗi con người chính là một chuỗi liên tiếp những **khó khăn** và **thử thách** [-*appreciation*], do đó **quan trọng** [+*appreciation*] là bạn lựa chọn vượt qua nó như thế nào. // *The life of every human being is a series of difficulties and challenges* [-*appreciation*], so the **important** [+*appreciation*] thing is how you choose to overcome it. (L1VN)

(48) The second man lives because of waiting for a **beautiful** [+*appreciation*], **good** [+*appreciation*] life in the future. (L2EN)

With respect to *affect*, writers seemed to utilise the same strategies across L1/L2 production in conveying their emotions. Talking about what makes life meaningful, they often employed positive evaluative resources such as cheering, trusting, confidence, and relaxation (excerpts (49) and (50)). Negative assessments (excerpts (51) and (52)) tended to mention about the obstacles and dissatisfaction in people's life, accounting for slightly over one-third of the overall attitudinal resources in L1 Vietnamese texts while L2 English writing adopted fewer negative emotions. Authorial stance (excerpts (49)–(51)) across the two languages in this task seemed to increase in comparison with the first task, while explicit evaluation was still dominant.

(49) Từ đó bản thân ta sẽ **vui vẻ** [+affect; +authorial], **lạc quan** [+affect; +authorial] và ngày càng yêu đời hơn. // *Since then, we will be **happy** [+affect; +authorial], **optimistic** [+affect; +authorial] and love life more and more.* (L1VN)

(50) Therefore, living **happily** [+affect; +authorial] and making ourselves feel **happy** [+affect; +authorial] is enough. (L2EN)

(51) Vậy tại sao chúng ta không thể tập cho bản thân chúng ta có cái nhìn tích cực hơn mà lại **than thở** [-affect, +authorial] **trách móc** [-affect, +authorial] tại sao chuyện như thế này, như thế kia. // *Therefore, why can't we train ourselves to have a more positive outlook? But we just **complain** [-affect, +authorial] and **blame** [-affect, +authorial] why things happen like this or like that.* (L1VN)

(52) That is the reason why people feel **unhappy** [-affect], and they are **stressful** [-affect] in their life. (L2EN)

Relating to the overall pattern of evaluation of behaviour, writers from both groups made the most use of judgments of the *capacity*, *normality*, and *propriety* of the subject matter, although L2 English writers did so more frequently (excerpts (53) and (54)). Assessments of how truthful or honest a person is were not employed in the task 'lifestyle', presumably because of a lack of common ground required for such assumptions.

(53) Lý tưởng là những nguyên tắc do ta **đặt ra** [+judgement] và **cố gắng thực hiện** [+judgement] trong cuộc sống. // *Ideals are the principles we **set out** [+judgement] and **try to implement** [+judgement] in life.* (L1VN)

(54) Living with the ideal **helps** [+judgement] us overcome the fear, unexpectation, and **have more responsibilities** [+judgement] in life. (L2EN)

The vocabulary and structures used between English and Vietnamese versions in the second task apparently indicate that students used attitudinally identical terms (excerpts (55)–(58)).

(55) Sau khi đọc đoạn trích, tôi nhận ra vai trò **quan trọng** [+appreciation] của niềm tin trong cuộc sống. // *After reading the excerpt, I realize the **important** [+appreciation] role belief plays in life.* (L1VN)

(56) After reading the paragraph below, I notice that belief plays **important** [+appreciation] role in life. (L2EN)

(57) Vì thế, dù bạn **đang gặp khó khăn** [neutral judgement] hay có những suy nghĩ **tiêu cực** [-appreciation] thì xin hãy tin rằng ngày mai sẽ **tốt hơn** [+appreciation] hôm nay. // *Hence, although you are **struggling** [neutral judgement] or have **negative** [-appreciation] thoughts, please believe that tomorrow will be **better** [+appreciation than today.* (L1VN)

(58) Therefore, when you meet **difficulties** [-appreciation] or have **bad** [-appreciation] thoughts, please believe that tomorrow is **better** [+appreciation and force: upscale] than today. (L2EN)

5.2. Engagement

Regarding the first task ('flower'), as illustrated in Table 6, L1 Vietnamese texts contained more heteroglossic resources than monoglossic ones. However, L2 English had slightly more bare assertions than multi-voiced arguments.

Task	Flower				Lifestyle			
	L1_Vietnamese		L2_English		L1_Vietnamese		L2_English	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Engagement-type	N=56		N=50		N=93		N=97	
mono-glossic	18	32%	27	54%	20	22%	15	15%
hetero-glossic	38	68%	23	46%	73	78%	82	85%
Heteroglossic-type	N=38		N=23		N=73		N=82	
contract	25	66%	14	61%	39	53%	37	45%
expand	13	34%	9	39%	34	47%	45	55%
Contract-type	N=25		N=14		N=39		N=37	
disclaim	17	68%	7	50%	16	41%	15	41%
proclaim	8	32%	7	50%	23	59%	22	59%
Disclaim-type	N=17		N=7		N=16		N=15	
deny	8	47%	5	71%	9	56%	10	67%
counter	9	53%	2	29%	7	44%	5	33%
Proclaim-type	N=8		N=7		N=23		N=22	
concur	1	13%	1	14%	2	9%	1	5%
pronounce	2	25%	1	14%	3	13%	2	9%
endorse	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
justify	5	63%	5	71%	18	78%	19	86%
Expand-type	N=13		N=9		N=34		N=45	
entertain	11	85%	8	89%	30	88%	40	89%
attribute	2	15%	1	11%	4	12%	5	11%

Table 6: Distribution of *engagement*

Under the umbrella of *heteroglossia*, contraction was preferred to expansion across L1 and L2 texts. Specifically, while writers using L2 English applied as much *disclaim* as *proclaim*, in L1 Vietnamese writing disclamation outweighed proclamation. Within the disclamation subcategory, writers using L1 Vietnamese had a relatively balanced usage of denial and countering. When writing in L2 English, writers relied mainly on denying. Regarding the distribution of *proclaim*, both L1 Vietnamese and L2 English texts did not adopt endorsement, while of the remaining three *proclaim* types, writers in both languages employed justification more frequently than the other types (excerpts (59) and (60)).

- (59) Cũng chính vì [*justify*] chàng tự say mê sắc đẹp của mình một cách thái quá nên dẫn đến cái chết thương tâm. // It is also **because** [*justify*] he is too infatuated with his own beauty that leads to tragic death. (L1VN)

(60) **For this reason** [*justify*], he felt confident in his beauty and dealt with his death. (L2EN)

Regarding expansive resources, modality of usuality and probability via the modal verb *can* contributed to one-fourth of the total entertainment instances across the L1 and L2 texts (e.g. excerpt (61)). Other resources included personalisation, modalised cause *if* and cases of obligatory modality. A few external sources as attribution were also employed to open alternatives for other viewpoints (excerpt (62)).

(61) From the story, people **can** [*entertain*] know the source of “Narcissus.” (L2EN)

(62) Thủy tiên, **theo cách gọi tên hoa** [*attribute*] có nghĩa là “tiên nước”, vị tiên nơi thủy cung. // *Thuy Tien, according to the way naming flowers* [*attribute*], has the meaning of “water fairy”, the fairy in the underwater imperial palace. (L1VN)

There are instances where L2 English paragraphs included more features of *engagement*, while L1 Vietnamese equivalents included fewer features by count, but the features that were employed spanned multiple words (excerpt (63)). Furthermore, there were instances in which *engagement* resources were present in L2 English but not in L1 Vietnamese (excerpts (64) and (65)). Besides, the authorial stance in excerpt (64) was strongly emphasised while in excerpts (65)–(67) non-authorial treatment was employed.

(63) **From the story** [*attribute*], Narziss is a pretty boy. (L2EN)

(64) When we have admired the beauty of these flowers, we **must** [*entertain*] be passionate. (L2EN)

(65) Khi chiêm ngưỡng vẻ đẹp của hoa, người ta càng thêm say đắm. // *When admiring the beauty of the flower, people are more and more infatuated.* (L1VN)

(66) The beauty can make **everything** infatuated with it. (L1VN)

(67) From the story of Narziss, we can see that **narcissus** is very beautiful. (L2EN)

In relation to the second task, ‘lifestyle’, L2 English texts employed the most heteroglossic resources, though the average word counts of these paragraphs appeared to be smaller than their L1 Vietnamese counterparts. The distribution of specific

heteroglossic types between L1 Vietnamese and L2 English was similar. Both lacked the usage of endorsement, as in the first task.

While writers were still in favour of contracting options for alternative voices when writing in their L1, writers using L2 preferred expanding chances for multi-voiced argumentation. However, both L1/L2 texts shared several things in common in highlighting the use of proclaiming, denying, justifying, and entertaining. Particularly, the authorial voice revealed in L1 texts seemed adding emphasis to the overall stance while the pronouncement in the L2 was adopted to doubtlessly reinforce the cohesion of the writing (excerpt (68) and (69)). Being dialogically open, both L1/L2 texts favoured personalisation in their claiming (excerpt (70) and (71)), leaving a scattered range of other resources related to probability, usuality, obligation, and modalised cause. Similarly, to task one, attribution was also employed around ten per cent across the two languages.

(68) **Trong thực tế** [*pronounce*], sự lạc quan hay sự thoải mái về mặt tinh thần là một vũ khí giúp ta có thể vượt qua những trở ngại trong cuộc sống cũng như có thể là một vị thuốc tốt nhất để chữa trị những căn bệnh hiểm nghèo. // **In fact** [*pronounce*], *optimism or mental comfort is a weapon that can help us overcome the obstacles in life and can be the best medicine to cure serious illnesses.* (L1VN)

(69) **Additionally** [*pronounce*], there are many things you need to think and scare. (L2EN)

(70) Sau khi đọc đoạn trích, **tôi nhận ra** [*entertain*] vai trò quan trọng của niềm tin trong cuộc sống. // *After reading the excerpt, I realize* [*entertain*] *the important role belief plays in life.* (L1VN)

(71) **I think** [*entertain*] we shouldn't worry about anything, though our lives still have so many difficulties and sadness. (L2EN)

Moreover, L2 English writing's employment of *proclaim* and *entertain* (excerpt (72)) was different from the L1 Vietnamese writing's adoption of only *proclaim* (excerpt (73)). Also, L2 English tendency to favour medium modality of obligation *should* contradicted L1 Vietnamese preference of its high obligatory degree *must* (excerpts (74) and (75)). One interesting fact is that L2 English writing used redundancy while there was no equivalent in L1 Vietnamese as in excerpts (76) and (77). This goes against claims that Vietnamese students of English seem to transfer their L1 redundancy to their L2 English such as in *Although ..., but ...* (Ho 2011: 183).

- (72) **Because** [*proclaim: justify*] **I believe** [*entertain*] in “After raining, the sun is rising”, I come over my challenge. (L2EN)
- (73) Cũng **vì** [*proclaim: justify*] có niềm tin “sau cơn mưa trời lại sáng” thì có bao nhiêu khó khăn có đáng là gì. // Also **because** [*proclaim: justify*] there is the belief “after the rain, it will be sunny again”, it’s worth facing difficulties. (L1VN)
- (74) Bản thân của mỗi người **phải** [*entertain*] biết tìm ra cho mình một lý tưởng sống. // Each person **must** know how to find out for himself or herself an ideal of life. (L1VN)
- (75) We ourselves **should** [*entertain*] find an ideal. (L2EN)
- (76) Sau khi đọc đoạn trích trên, **theo em nghĩ** [*entertain*], sống vui vẻ và hạnh phúc là sống không lo lắng sợ hãi, không chờ đợi [...] // After reading the above excerpt, **in my opinion** [*entertain*], living cheerfully and happily is living without worry or fear, without waiting [...] (L1VN)
- (77) After I read the passage, **in my opinion I think** [*entertain*] to live for a happy and good life is to live without worry, without scare, without waiting for something [...] (L2EN)

Matching L1/L2 heteroglossic resources were noted in the use of entertainment and justification in excerpts (55) to (58) in Section 5.1. For example, **tôi nhận ra** [*entertain*] and **I notice** [*entertain*] as well as **vì thế** [*justify*] and **therefore** [*justify*] were perfectly matched as if they were translated from L1 into L2. Another similarity identified in the second task, ‘lifestyle’, is that the sequence *I think* in English and its counterpart in Vietnamese, *Tôi nghĩ*, appeared five times in both ILVs.

5.3. Graduation

Force was dominantly used in comparison with *focus* in both tasks. As shown in Table 7, upscale gradability was in major usage and sharpening was preferable. However, there existed some variation across L1 Vietnamese and L2 English texts.

Task	Flower				Lifestyle			
	L1_Vietnamese		L2_English		L1_Vietnamese		L2_English	
Feature	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Graduation-type	N=41		N=22		N=53		N=57	
force	34	83%	19	86%	44	83%	46	81%
focus	7	17%	3	14%	9	17%	11	19%
Scale	N=34		N=19		N=44		N=46	
upscale	30	88%	16	84%	42	95%	46	100%
downscale	4	12%	3	16%	2	5%	0	0%
Focus-type	N=7		N=3		N=9		N=11	
soften	0	0%	0	0%	1	11%	0	0%
sharpen	7	100%	3	100%	8	89%	11	100%

Table 7: Distribution of *graduation*

Regarding the task ‘flower’, the majority of *force* focused on intensification with some exceptions of quantification. L1 writing adopted only one instance of quantifying by using time distribution (excerpt (78)) while L2 texts employed numbers (excerpt (79)). Additionally, both degree or quality and vigour or process were intensified in relatively balanced distribution although in L1 vigour was slightly dominant (excerpt (66), repeated here as (80)) and in L2 degree was favoured (excerpt (67), repeated here as (81)).

(78) Không thể phủ nhận rằng vẻ đẹp của thủy tiên làm người ta muốn sở hữu **mãi** [*force: upscale*]. // *There is no denying that the daffodil's beauty causes ones to desire to have it forever* [*force: upscale*]. (L1VN)

(79) And “tien” has an amazing beauty, so **all** [*force: upscale*] people are attracted to it. (L2EN)

(80) The beauty can make everything **infatuated** [*force: upscale*] with it. // (L1VN)

(81) From the story of Narziss, we can see that narcissus is **very** [*force: upscale*] beautiful. (L2EN)

Specifically, no comparatives and superlatives were used to intensify what was to be conveyed in the first task. Instead, intensifiers such as *very/rất* and *too/quá* were over-employed in both L2 English and L1 Vietnamese paragraphs (excerpts (82) and (83)). Especially, no equivalent between L1 Vietnamese and L2 English can be noted in excerpts (84) and (85). The English version used resources of *graduation* to emphasise the act of lonely but selfish living whereas the Vietnamese one preferred using emotions to praise the relaxation of living.

(82) Tác giả cũng muốn cho ta thấy đừng **quá** [*upscale*] chìm đắm vào cái đẹp để rồi quên đi những thứ giản dị bình thường. // *The author also wants to show us not to be **too** [*upscale*] immersed in beauty and then forget about the ordinary simple things.* (L1VN)

(83) But it's **too** [*upscale*] proud of its beauty. (L2EN)

(84) Hoa thủy tiên không quan tâm những gì xung quanh nó, cứ **bình thản** [*+affect: security-quiet*] sống. // *The narcissus does not care about what is around it but lives **at ease** [*+affect: security-quiet*].* (L1VN)

(85) Thuy Tien flowers don't care anything around them, [and] they just [*upscale*] live.

Regarding the second task, 'lifestyle', quantification was employed more frequently in L2 via the use of number (excerpt (86)), and vigour was intensified three times as much as degree in L1. Only one instance of softening value was recorded in L1 writing (excerpt (87)). In particular, L2 English demonstrated the largest adoption of upscale grading. However, L1 Vietnamese allowed for use of *focus* and downscale attitudinal values (excerpt (87)). The over-representation of *force* as well as the under-adoption of *focus* in L2 English writing might result from lack of linguistic devices.

(86) It helps us to develop and discover **many** [*force: upscale*] new things in our live. (L2EN)

(87) **Có lẽ** [*force: downscale*] **một phần** [*focus: soften*] do bệnh nhân ấy đến từ một vùng quê nên không hiểu về những gì bác sĩ nói về căn bệnh của mình nên có suy nghĩ mình sẽ khỏi bệnh. // **Perhaps** [*force: downscale*] **partly** [*focus: soften*] because the patient was from the countryside, he did not understand what the doctor said about his illness, and he thought he would be cured. (L1VN)

Unlike the first task, comparatives and superlatives to indicate isolating intensification were over-represented in both L1 Vietnamese and L2 English in the second task (excerpts (88) and (89)).

(88) Từ đó bản thân ta sẽ vui vẻ, lạc quan và **ngày càng** yêu đời **hơn** [*upscale*]. // *Since then, we will be happy, optimistic and love life **more and more** [*upscale*].* (L1VN)

(89) It's the **best** [*upscale*] medicine to treat many diseases. (L2EN)

6. DISCUSSION

The present study has explored the three primary domains of *appraisal* to discover how evaluative resources were employed in native Vietnamese and intermediate L2 English paragraphs written by the same writers, across the same tasks and under the same conditions. Based on CIA² model and using a corpus-informed approach, these two ILVs were compared and contrasted with findings intended to help researchers and English language teachers identify areas where their students need improvements.

The overall pattern of *appraisal* resources in both tasks across L1 and L2 is characterised by the use of *attitude*, *engagement*, and *graduation* resources in descending order of frequency. Writers in both languages had a particular tendency to express their emotions, assess phenomena and judge behaviour in generalising the flower's beauty and lifestyle in connection with people's well-being. Multi-voiced reasoning was preferred in general, with the exception of L2 English texts in the first task. These particular writers frequently adopted bare assertions when discussing about the flower. On the whole, intensifiers were mostly employed to emphasise the intended meaning. This general distribution of *appraisal* resources was in line with Chung (2018) in that L2 English writers from Vietnamese background in Chung (2018) expressed a lot of their personal feelings when reasoning. However, the findings of the present study were different from Lam and Crosthwaite (2018), in that the native English writers and L2 English writers from an L1 Cantonese background in that study tended to make frequent use of personal claims and alternative voices in their persuasive argumentation. As Lam and Crosthwaite dealt with Cantonese, further investigation is required to examine whether speakers of Vietnamese adopt this style in L2 English based on intrusion from their L1 or a lack of required L2 resources.

Within the *attitude* domain, L1 Vietnamese used such resources more frequently than in L2 English, mainly as the writers' L1 Vietnamese production tended to add adjectives to modify nouns (excerpts (37)–(40)). This echoed Phan's (2011) analysis, which indicated that Vietnamese writing usually adopted 'flowery style'. Regarding the first task, the present research discovered the prevailing use of *appreciation*, which was in harmony with expert writers' L1 English production in Hood (2004) and in agreement with L1/L2 English texts in Lam and Crosthwaite (2018). However, for the second task, *affect* was predominantly used. This finding is in opposition to Derewianka (2007), who indicated that low proficiency writers had the tendency to overuse emotions and

assessment of behaviour in their evaluation. However, in our study the same writers performed both tasks, and so the variation in attitudinal evaluation was less likely to have been caused by proficiency, as was the case with Derewianka's study. Hood (2004) also showed L2 English writers are often inclined to embed personalised treatment through emotions, yet this was not found in the first task. Our findings, based on having the same writers perform both tasks, may suggest that the topic may be more responsible for this difference in distribution.

As for the *engagement* category, L2 writing in the first task favoured *contractive* resources in stancetaking over those seen in L1 texts, echoing Coffin and Hewings (2004) and Lam and Crosthwaite (2018). One explanation may be that L2 learners possess a limited range of vocabulary and structures for expansive resources related to the specific topic. L2 writing in the second task, however, was more open for alternative viewpoints, which was in line with Ho (2011) who found speakers of Vietnamese frequently adopted expansive resources in their arguments. Again, the nature of the task may be ultimately responsible for this variation, over issues related to L1/L2 differences. The major presence of justification in the first L2 task is found in line with Lam and Crosthwaite (2018) where L2 English writers from L1 Cantonese (Hong Kong) backgrounds provided reasons for their propositions through overuse of transitions and frame markers (*because, since, the reason for, etc.*). Through justifying their claims, L2 writers of Vietnamese background tried to show their reasoning skill in the target language. That heteroglossic employment was preferable in L2 texts in the second task, 'lifestyle' is consistent with the findings of Ho (2011), Lancaster (2011), and Lam and Crosthwaite (2018) in that L2 students prefer to engage in explicit dialogue in their writing when conveying their ideas while opening space for discussion with readers, at the expense of monoglossic asides or reflection.

In terms of *graduation*, both L1/L2 tasks reflected the dominance of *force* although more *focus* was placed on use in L1 than in L2, as already shown by Lam and Crosthwaite (2018). *Upscale* resources were over employed to heighten the intended meaning while *focus* was under adopted. Particularly, in the second task, upscale evaluation made the largest contribution in L2 texts, which is similarly found in L1 English writing in Lam and Crosthwaite (2018). Overuse of *force* in L2 English and lack of sharpening or softening non-gradable attitudinal meanings may be beyond their L2 language proficiency, as also indicated in Lam and Crosthwaite (2018). The unbalanced *force-focus*

adoption in L2 texts suggested that Hood (2006) and Derewianka (2007) are right in recommending both the equipping of linguistic resources and managing these resources to help L2 learners better deploy the scaling and sharpening/softening of their attitudinal evaluation.

Our hypothesis that our students tended to directly translate their L1 Vietnamese use of *appraisal* into L2 English writing is partially supported by the data. Identical evaluative resources in excerpts (55)–(58) were presented when writers appreciated the importance of belief in people's lives and assessed their obstacles. L1 is found to be useful in almost all writing stages from planning, reformulating to revising and monitoring (Sasaki 2002), while nearly half of skilled L2 writers in Beare and Bourdages (2007) adopted translation from L1 as their primary writing strategy. Lam and Crosthwaite (2018) also discovered cases of L1 transfer when L2 writers tried to make extensively positive or negative evaluation. However, the matching of *appraisal* resources in those excerpts did not hinder the conveyed meaning, suggesting learners were able to positively transfer *appraisal* resources from L1 to L2 writing, and L2 teachers should be cognisant of the funds of knowledge that L2 writers can bring from their L1.

7. CONCLUSION

In summary, the present study has presented a range of similarities and differences in *appraisal* resource usage between L1 Vietnamese and L2 English. English language teachers should pay more attention to which *appraisal* resources their Vietnamese students tend to overuse or underuse in their English writing to help them better adjust future instruction and materials preparation. In particular, successful argumentative writing has to relatively balance *expansive* and *contractive* alternatives in which the former should outweigh the latter (Lancaster 2011). In line with Hood (2004) and Lam and Crosthwaite (2018), this research suggests L2 English writers need to be provided with these interpersonal resources in improving their writing. However, as L1 Vietnamese writing is also filled with *appraisal*, L2 writing instructors are advised to maximise positive transfer of L1 features in L2 texts where appropriate. The value of the present study is that corpus analyses of this nature help to reveal which L1 features positively transfer in L2 production and which do not do so as readily.

In terms of limitations, the small scale of this research makes it difficult to generalise findings beyond the sample surveyed. Also, a one-week time gap between the

two writing tasks might indicate the possibility that student writers could transfer what they wrote between L1 and L2, although this is unlikely. Further research involving more diatypic and dialogic variables needs to be considered for full use of the CIA² approach (Granger 2015). Moreover, as this is a descriptive discourse analysis paper covering a small dataset, we have not sought to compare writers' production of *appraisal* resources across the two writing tasks through inferential statistical, providing instead a descriptive overview of the writers' production across both tasks in the results section. We are working on a follow-up study that will explore task effects in more quantitative detail. Finally, our aim in this paper is to provide an overview of *appraisal* using the whole framework, which is possible given the relatively small dataset. A more detailed analysis of L1/L2 writer's production across individual *appraisal* categories is the subject of forthcoming research.

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