

Attitudinal Resources in the English Textbook *Life – Upper Intermediate*: A Systemic Functional and Intercultural Perspective

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Abstract—This study investigates attitudinal resources in the international English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook *Life – Upper Intermediate* through the lens of the Appraisal framework (Martin & White, 2005). It focuses on how evaluative meanings are distributed and realized across different text types to shape stance and interpersonal positioning in pedagogical discourse. A qualitative discourse analysis was conducted on selected reading passages to identify instances of Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation, with particular attention to their polarity, distinguishing between positive and negative instances. The findings reveal that Appreciation predominates, highlighting the textbook's emphasis on valuing human achievements, social harmony, and cross-cultural understanding. Judgement and Affect appear more selectively, constructing moral perspectives and empathy in the narratives. These attitudinal patterns demonstrate how the textbook constructs an implicitly positive worldview aligned with global educational discourse. The study contributes to the understanding of evaluation in instructional materials and offers insights into the linguistic realization of stance in international EFL publishing.

Index Terms—attitudinal resources, stance, EFL textbook, intercultural communication, cultural values

I. INTRODUCTION

Evaluation is an essential dimension of human communication, shaping how people construct stance, negotiate meaning, and express shared values. Within the Appraisal framework (Martin & White, 2005), evaluation is theorized as a system of linguistic choices through which speakers and writers express emotions, judge behaviours, and appreciate phenomena. These attitudinal resources – categorized as Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation – constitute the foundation of interpersonal meaning in discourse, linking linguistic expression to cultural and ideological positioning. They enable texts not only to inform but also to persuade, align, and socialize readers into particular worldviews.

While evaluation has been widely examined in political, media, and literary discourse (e.g., Coffin, 2006; Thompson & Hunston, 2000; Hyland, 2005; Hood, 2010; Geng & Wharton, 2016), its realization in educational materials – particularly international English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks – remains underexplored. Yet textbooks are among the most powerful forms of practical discourse: they shape not only linguistic knowledge but also the attitudes, ideologies, and cultural perspectives of learners. Through lexical and grammatical choices, textbooks construct implicit systems of value that guide how readers perceive the world and their role within it. As Gray (2010) and Tomlinson (2012) have shown, global ELT materials do not merely teach English; they embody cultural narratives and moral stances that frame what is desirable, admirable, or universal. However, relatively few studies have systematically examined *how* these evaluative stances are linguistically constructed or *what kinds of worldviews* they promote. This gap in Appraisal-based textbook research motivates the present study.

Addressing this gap is crucial for several reasons. Theoretically, analyzing evaluative meanings in textbooks extends Appraisal research beyond spontaneous discourse into a designed pedagogical genre – a domain where linguistic, educational, and ideological functions intersect. It allows investigation of how Attitude operates in texts that are crafted to motivate, instruct, and model cultural values simultaneously. Pedagogically, such inquiry exposes the hidden curriculum embedded in international teaching materials: the value systems, moral orientations, and affective positions that accompany language input. For teachers, awareness of these meanings enables more reflective material adaptation; for learners, it provides a path toward critical literacy and intercultural awareness – skills central to English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and global citizenship education.

In higher education, particularly in non-Anglophone contexts such as Vietnam, international coursebooks like *Life – Upper Intermediate* are widely used across university programs. They function as linguistic resources, but also as discursive models that socialize students into particular ways of seeing, feeling, and valuing. Despite this influence, little empirical work has examined how these materials linguistically encode stance and intercultural values. Accordingly, this study investigates attitudinal resources in twelve reading passages (approximately 6,800 words) from *Life – Upper Intermediate* (Dummett et al., 2021). Drawing on Appraisal-based discourse analysis, this study examines how Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation are realized in *Life – Upper Intermediate*, focusing on polarity patterns and their role in constructing stance and intercultural meanings.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Background

Appraisal theory, developed within Systemic Functional Linguistics, offers a systematic model for analyzing evaluative meaning (Martin & White, 2005). It distinguishes three interrelated subsystems: **Engagement** (resources for dialogic positioning), **Attitude** (Affect, Judgement, Appreciation), and **Graduation** (scaling of meanings). Figure 1 presents an overview of the Appraisal Framework as a whole.

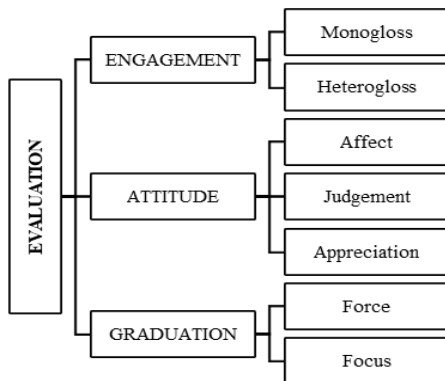


Figure 1. An Overview of the Appraisal Framework (Adapted From Martin & White, 2005)

In essence, Appraisal theory provides a comprehensive lens to explore how language encodes values and interpersonal meanings. Martin and White (2005) argue that the realization of Attitude tends to appear in all kinds of discourse, regardless of grammatical boundaries (p. 35). They therefore proposed a unified appraisal system comprising three key components: Engagement, Attitude, and Graduation. It explains how speakers and writers adopt stances, invite alignment, and scale their evaluations, thereby linking the micro-level of lexical choice with the macro-level of discourse and ideology. While the Appraisal framework comprises three subsystems, the present study focuses exclusively on Attitude, given its central role in encoding affective, ethical, and aesthetic values. Figure 2 illustrates the Attitude subsystem of the Appraisal framework, outlining its three domains – Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation – with their respective subcategories.

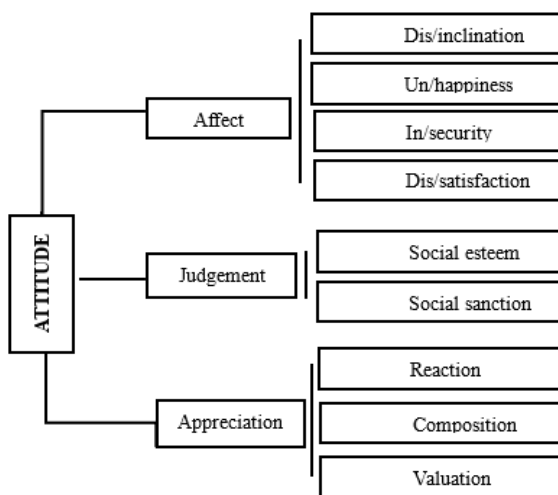


Figure 2. Attitude in Appraisal Framework (Adapted From Martin & White, 2005)

Affect is realized when emotional states are made explicit, as in “The captain felt happy (+ happiness) / sad (– happiness)”, which encodes feelings of joy or sorrow. Affect also covers desires and security, illustrated by “The student was eager to join the discussion (+ inclination) / reluctant to participate (– inclination)” and “She felt confident before the exam (+ security) / anxious about the outcome (– security)”. **Judgement** evaluates human behavior, capacity, or ethics. For instance, “He is honest (+ veracity) / dishonest (– veracity)” signals integrity, while “The leader was brave in facing challenges (+ tenacity) / cowardly in avoiding responsibility (– tenacity)” reflects perseverance. **Appreciation** refers to evaluations of objects, processes, and phenomena. This can be seen in “The book is remarkable (+ valuation) / dull (– reaction), The design was harmonious (+ composition) / unbalanced (– composition)”, or “The lecture was inspiring (+ reaction) / boring (– reaction)”.

These examples show how Attitude systematically encodes positive and negative values across emotions, behaviors,

and phenomena. They also highlight how evaluative meanings are not restricted to isolated words but operate through full sentences, shaping stance and alignment in discourse.

The theory builds on earlier and broader scholarship on evaluation. Thompson and Hunston (2000) and Channell (2000) both emphasized the interpersonal nature of evaluation, showing that it expresses attitudes and values to build solidarity between writer and reader and that corpus-based patterns of evaluative lexis shape positive or negative connotations in discourse. White (1998) had already extended Systemic Functional Linguistics to analyzing news discourse, revealing how journalistic language constructs ideologically informed judgements and laying the groundwork for later Appraisal studies. In his subsequent publications, White (2006, 2016) further demonstrated how journalistic and media texts use evaluative language to position readers. These studies – ranging from theoretical accounts (Thompson & Hunston, 2000), corpus-based insights (Channell, 2000), to discourse analyses of media texts (White, 1998, 2006) – demonstrate the diversity of approaches that underpin Appraisal theory. They all confirm that evaluation is not an optional stylistic feature but a fundamental dimension of communication, essential for constructing stance, aligning readers, and organizing discourse. Following these foundational studies, numerous subsequent works have also continued to apply Appraisal theory to a wide range of genres, further demonstrating its versatility in analyzing evaluative meaning. Studies have examined political speeches (Ross, 2016), advertising discourse (Sahragard & Meihami, 2016), and literary texts (Hashim, 2022). The extensive use of Appraisal theory across genres – from political and media commentary to academic writing and literary analysis – demonstrates its broad explanatory potential. The following section of the literature review narrows its focus to academic and educational discourse, where evaluation functions as a linguistic resource for constructing stance and intercultural values in EAP contexts.

B. *Related Studies on Evaluation in Academic Contexts*

Within EAP, evaluation has become a prominent concern, not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a pedagogical priority. Early studies established the foundation for understanding stance in academic writing, highlighting its interpersonal nature and revealing that non-native writers often underuse attitudinal resources, leading to more impersonal prose (Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2009). Subsequent large-scale and diachronic research, such as Hyland and Jiang (2016), further demonstrated how disciplinary and pedagogical contexts shape meta-discourse practices over time, underscoring the dynamic and context-sensitive nature of evaluative expression in EAP.

Recent research highlights both the continuity and innovation of Appraisal studies across academic, pedagogical, and technological domains. In higher education, evaluative language has been shown to support critical thinking and academic engagement (Chou, 2022), while also playing a key role in the construction of authorial voice through Graduation resources (Vo & Le, 2025). More broadly, stance is understood not as individual attitude expression but as a dialogic process through which writers negotiate knowledge, identity, and alignment with readers (Siromaa & Rauniomaa, 2021; Ebrahimi & Mohsenzadeh, 2022; Khamkhien, 2014; Kim, 2025). Across classroom and academic contexts, evaluative language consistently underpins disciplinary meaning-making – from legitimizing knowledge in science and history discourse (Martin & Veel, 1998; Coffin, 2006) to constructing stance, authority, and interaction in academic writing and feedback (Hyland, 2017; Hood, 2010; Geng & Wharton, 2016; Muti'ah & Azizah, 2024). Collectively, this body of research affirms evaluation as a central linguistic resource for constructing knowledge, argumentation, and engagement in EAP.

A promising yet relatively underexplored strand within Evaluation research in EAP concerns textbooks as carriers of evaluation, highlighting how instructional materials embed and transmit cultural, moral, and pedagogical values through language. Rather than neutral vehicles of information, textbooks construct meaning through evaluative framing that legitimizes particular values and perspectives. From Coffin's (2006) analysis of historical narratives to later studies on global and Asian EFL materials (Gray, 2010; Tomlinson, 2012; Myskow, 2017; Nguyen, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2025), evidence consistently shows that evaluative resources – especially Judgement and Appreciation – function to integrate language learning with ideological and moral education. These studies underscore that textbooks act as sites of socialization, embedding cultural identities and value systems within their linguistic fabric.

Despite growing attention to ideology and representation in ELT coursebooks, there remains limited understanding of how attitudinal meanings systematically shape stance and intercultural values in global EFL publishing. Previous research has rarely traced how linguistic patterns of Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation contribute to constructing solidarity, empathy, and global perspective in textbook discourse. Addressing this gap, the present study applies Appraisal-based discourse analysis to the *Life – Upper Intermediate* textbook, aiming to uncover how evaluative meanings function as semiotic resources for intercultural communication and stance construction in international higher-education contexts.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. *Research Questions*

Drawing on Appraisal-based discourse analysis, this study examines the linguistic realization of Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation in reading passages from *Life – Upper Intermediate* and addresses two research questions:

1. How are attitudinal resources (Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation) distributed and linguistically realized in the

textbook’s main reading passages?

2. How do these evaluative patterns construct stance and intercultural values, and what discursive and pedagogical implications do they suggest for higher-education contexts where global materials are used?

B. Corpus

The corpus consists of the main reading passages in *Life – Upper Intermediate* (Dummett et al., 2021), a coursebook widely adopted in university programs and designed for learners at the upper-intermediate (B1+ to B2) level. To ensure comparability, only extended reading texts were included; supplementary exercises, captions, and isolated task prompts were excluded. In total, 12 units were analyzed, amounting to approximately 6,800 running words.

To provide a clearer picture of the data, Table 1 summarizes the twelve reading passages included in the corpus, highlighting their thematic scope and intercultural orientation. The selection covers a wide range of global issues – education, technology, art, psychology, environmental ethics, leadership, and innovation – thereby illustrating the pedagogical philosophy of the *Life* series: connecting language learning with knowledge of the world and shared human values.

TABLE 1
OVERVIEW OF READING PASSAGES IN *LIFE – UPPER INTERMEDIATE*

Unit	Title of reading passage	Content focus
1	<i>Bloodlines</i>	Explores migration, ancestry, and cultural identity; highlights how heritage shapes belonging and personal values.
2	<i>Once Upon a Time</i>	Examines storytelling traditions through the Brothers Grimm tales; reveals moral and cultural lessons in folk narratives.
3	<i>Appropriate Technology</i>	Discusses sustainable innovation and context-sensitive design; shows how simple technologies improve lives in developing communities.
4	<i>Why do we need music?</i>	Investigates music as an emotional and creative force; connects musical experience to empathy and cultural expression.
5	<i>The teenager mind</i>	Explores adolescent brain development and risk-taking; explains how neurological and emotional factors shape teenage behaviour and identity formation.
6	<i>Unusual places to stay</i>	Describes alternative, experiential forms of travel that promote empathy, authenticity, and intercultural understanding beyond conventional tourism.
7	<i>Cultural Conventions</i>	Analyses intercultural communication and social etiquette; emphasizes respect and adaptability across cultures.
8	<i>Saving Madagascar</i>	Profiles environmental activism and leadership; highlights conservation and ethical responsibility as global values.
9	<i>From Hero to Zero</i>	Examines media portrayal of heroism; invites critical reflection on fame, ethics, and public perception.
10	<i>The King Herself</i>	Narrates the life of Hatshepsut, the female pharaoh; illustrates women’s agency and historical significance.
11	<i>Who’s a Clever Bird, then?</i>	Explores scientific research on animal intelligence; links cognition, empathy, and human–animal interaction.
12	<i>Start-up</i>	Focuses on entrepreneurship and innovation; celebrates creativity, resilience, and forward-thinking as global ideals.

This textbook was selected for three main reasons. First, as an internationally distributed EFL series, *Life – Upper Intermediate* represents a prototypical example of global teaching materials designed for culturally diverse learners. Second, it is widely adopted in Asian tertiary education across various English-major and general English programmes, serving not only as a linguistic resource but also as a vehicle for cultural learning and critical reflection. Third, its reading texts, developed from authentic *National Geographic* content, combine factual reporting with attractive storytelling, providing a fertile basis for examining how evaluative language constructs stance and aligns learners with particular social values and worldviews.

C. Instruments

The primary analytical instrument was an Appraisal-based coding framework grounded in the taxonomy proposed in *The Language of Evaluation* (Martin & White, 2005). A coding sheet was used to record each identified attitudinal instance, including: (i) the evaluative expression, (ii) subsystem and subtype (Affect, Judgement, Appreciation), (iii) polarity, and (iv) the full sentence/clausal context for reference. When relevant, Graduation resources modifying Attitude were also noted.

D. Data Collection Procedures

This study adopted a qualitative discourse-analytical approach combined with basic descriptive quantification. Qualitative analysis enabled close reading of evaluative patterns in their immediate textual context, while frequency counts were incorporated to show overall tendencies across the corpus. This mixed orientation follows established practice in Appraisal-based educational research (Hood, 2010), where interpretive precision is complemented by numerical transparency.

Manual coding was deliberately chosen for its suitability to context-sensitive interpretation of evaluative meaning, which cannot be reliably automated. The procedures were as follows. First, attitudinal resources were identified at the lexical level and interpreted in their immediate clause or sentence context to ensure accurate classification. Second, each instance was entered into the coding sheet with the relevant coding fields. Third, coding decisions were verified

and refined through iterative checking against the Appraisal taxonomy to ensure consistency. The entire corpus was re-examined in multiple rounds, allowing minor adjustments and confirmation of intra-coder reliability. All data were documented transparently to allow replication and further comparative research.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Overview of Evaluative Tendencies

The analysis yielded several noteworthy tendencies. Across the corpus, a total of 358 attitudinal instances were identified, confirming that evaluative language permeates the textbook discourse. Among the three subsystems, Appreciation emerged as the most frequent category, accounting for 47.21% of all occurrences, followed by Judgement (34.92%) and Affect (17.97%) (see Table 2). This means that expressions of value occur nearly one and a half times more often than moral or emotional expressions. The predominance of Appreciation demonstrates that the textbook primarily evaluates phenomena, processes, and cultural themes rather than individuals' emotions or behaviours.

TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION AND POLARITY OF ATTITUDE RESOURCES IN *LIFE – UPPER INTERMEDIATE*

Attitude Category	Frequency	% of total	Positive (%)	Negative (%)
Appreciation	169	47.21	79.40	20.60
Judgement	125	34.92	66.70	33.30
Affect	64	17.97	72.92	27.08
Total	358	100%	—	—

The data further reveal a strong positive orientation across all subsystems. Approximately three-quarters of all attitudinal tokens are positive in polarity, constructing a discourse of affirmation, motivation, and encouragement. For example, the statement “Getting a good education is **a must**” (Dummett et al., 2021, p. 15) assigns high social value to education and self-development. The expression “is a must” inscribes positive Appreciation (+ Valuation) by attributing necessity and high worth to the act of pursuing education. Rather than describing emotion, the clause constructs education as a socially endorsed value and a prerequisite for success. The choice of the modalized noun phrase *a must* maximizes intensity, construing education as a socially endorsed necessity and attributing high value to its pursuit. Through such formulations, the textbook promotes a stance that celebrates self-improvement and aligns learners with values of diligence and achievement.

In comparative perspective, these findings extend prior Appraisal-based research. Earlier studies of educational and textbook discourse (Hood, 2010; Geng & Wharton, 2016; Nguyen et al., 2025) revealed a stronger focus on Judgement, particularly moral or civic evaluation. In contrast, *Life – Upper Intermediate* privileges Appreciation, suggesting a shift from moral instruction to cultural and humanistic affirmation. This pattern reflects a broader transformation in global ELT publishing, where pedagogical discourse increasingly promotes intercultural awareness, social harmony, and positive engagement rather than prescriptive morality.

B. Appreciation: The Core of Evaluation

Appreciation constitutes the core of evaluation in the textbook, serving as the dominant means through which value and worth are construed. Within Appreciation, three subcategories were identified – Reaction, Composition, and Valuation – distributed by polarity in Table 3.

TABLE 3
APPRECIATION SUBCATEGORIES BY POLARITY (PER 1,000 WORDS)

Subcategory	Polarity	Freq./1000 words
Composition	Positive	0.74
	Negative	0.44
	Total	1.19
Reaction	Positive	2.07
	Negative	0.59
	Total	2.67
Valuation	Positive	16.00
	Negative	3.85
	Neutral (±)	1.19
	Total	21.04

Among these, Valuation is by far the most salient subtype, accounting for over three-quarters of all Appreciation tokens. It systematically foregrounds the value, worth, and social significance of phenomena, especially those related to education, technological innovation, cultural heritage, and social development. An illustrative example is “He wanted **affordable** technology that would lead to **greater social equality**.” [+ Valuation] (Dummett et al., 2021, p. 39).

The evaluative meanings in this clause centre on the expressions “affordable” and “greater social equality”, both of which realise (+ Valuation). The adjective “affordable” attributes worth to technology through its accessibility and usefulness rather than prestige or sophistication, defining value in practical and humanistic terms. Meanwhile, the noun

phrase “greater social equality” projects a moral dimension of value, presenting technology as a means of achieving fairness and inclusion. This configuration encapsulates the text’s humanistic stance that “appropriate technology” should empower communities and promote equitable development rather than privilege technological advancement for its own sake.

Another instance of Valuation appears in the sentence “There are hot dog and hamburger vans selling ‘**cheap eats**’ along the roadside” (Dummett et al., 2021, p. 147). The phrase “cheap eats” conveys negative Valuation, suggesting low price coupled with inferior quality. This negative appraisal is immediately contrasted with the subsequent depiction of Kogi BBQ, which is praised for offering “better-quality food at a reasonable price.” By placing these expressions side by side, the text uses the negative example as a rhetorical foil that amplifies the positive attributes of Kogi BBQ. The contrast not only highlights the value of high-quality food but also foregrounds the diversity and richness of contemporary culinary culture. Such juxtaposition demonstrates how evaluative meaning operates dialogically, constructing cultural preferences and positioning readers to appreciate particular social values.

Several other expressions in the textbook likewise realize positive Valuation, reinforcing its broadly humanistic and optimistic stance. In Unit 1, for instance, the description of the USA as “well known for being a **melting pot** of different ethnic groups and cultures” (Dummett et al., 2021, p. 15) constructs cultural diversity and social cohesion as admirable national attributes. In Unit 2, the assertion that the Grimm collection “should be used as ‘**a manual of manners**’” (Dummett et al., 2021, p. 27) elevates the tales’ moral and didactic purpose, framing them as culturally enduring and socially instructive. Similarly, in Unit 4, the claim that music “can **make** a verbal message **stronger**” (Dummett et al., 2021, p. 51) highlights its communicative and affective power. Together, these expressions foreground the value of cultural richness, ethical guidance, and artistic influence, illustrating how positive Valuation is deployed to endorse socially desirable qualities throughout the textbook.

The predominance of Valuation thus demonstrates the textbook’s orientation toward promoting optimism, progress, and social contribution. Rather than encouraging critique or detachment, the discourse cultivates an affirmative worldview that celebrates what is admirable or worth emulating. While this tendency aligns with patterns observed in many ELT and educational materials, where positive evaluative meanings help construct culturally affirmative narratives (e.g., Gray, 2010; Tomlinson, 2012; Nguyen et al., 2018; Nguyen et al., 2025; Nguyen, 2023), it contrasts with findings from other genres. In history textbooks, for example, Judgement frequently dominates, particularly in the appraisal of human actions, responsibilities, and moral character (Coffin, 2006; Myskow, 2017; Nguyen et al., 2025). Similarly, political and argumentative discourse often foregrounds critical, adversarial, or morally charged evaluations (Ross, 2016; Termjai, 2025). The prominence of Valuation in the present corpus therefore highlights a comparatively humanistic and intercultural evaluative orientation, distinguishing ELT textbook discourse from other textbook genres and political discourse, where Judgement and more overtly moral or adversarial evaluation tend to be more central.

Reaction and Composition occurred far less frequently but nonetheless contributed subtle layers to the evaluative texture of the discourse. Reaction, expressed through affective adjectives such as *amazing*, *impressive*, *exciting*, and *rousing*, evokes emotional resonance, while Composition, realized through references to clarity or balance (e.g., *simple*, *work simply*, *understandable*), assesses the structural and aesthetic qualities of phenomena. Across all subcategories, positive polarity overwhelmingly dominated, producing a discourse of affirmation and admiration that privileges human progress, creativity, and cultural enrichment. This tendency aligns with broader findings in research on ELT and educational materials, where positive evaluative meanings often reinforce culturally affirmative narratives and promote humanistic, optimistic values.

C. *Judgement and Affect: Supporting Interpersonal and Emotional Functions*

Table 4 summarizes the subcategories of Judgement and Affect together with their polarity values normalized per 1,000 words.

TABLE 4
JUDGEMENT AND AFFECT SUBCATEGORIES BY POLARITY (PER 1,000 WORDS)

Subsystem	Subcategory	Positive	Negative	Neutral (±)	Total
Judgement	Capacity	4.59	1.04	—	5.63
	Normality	1.19	1.33	—	2.52
	Propriety	3.70	3.26	0.15	7.11
	Tenacity	2.37	—	—	2.37
	Veracity	0.30	0.44	—	0.74
Affect	Happiness	1.19	0.74	—	1.93
	Inclination	0.74	0.15	—	0.89
	Satisfaction	3.70	0.15	—	3.85
	Security	0.74	1.33	0.15	2.22

While Appreciation predominated, Judgement and Affect served complementary interpersonal and emotional functions within the evaluative configuration of the textbook. Judgement emerged as the second-largest subsystem, with most instances clustering around Propriety and Capacity. Positive Judgement frequently highlighted ethical responsibility and competence, as in the sentence “He has **persuaded** the locals **to stop cutting down trees**” (Dummett et al., 2021, p. 39). The phrase “persuaded to stop cutting down trees” encodes positive Propriety, foregrounding

environmentally responsible behaviour and communal benefit. In contrast, negative Propriety targeted negligence or harmful practices, exemplified by the description of a "new leader with **little interest in protecting the environment**" (Dummett et al., 2021, p. 39). Here, "little interest in protecting the environment" expresses negative Propriety, condemning indifference to ecological issues.

Rather than foregrounding harsh critique, the textbook relied mainly on positive Propriety and Capacity to promote responsibility, competence, and environmentally ethical behaviour. This pattern aligns with observations that global ELT materials frequently embed "soft" moral narratives and avoid ideological confrontation in order to remain culturally acceptable across diverse markets (Gray, 2010; Tomlinson, 2012). At the same time, the relatively restrained use of negative Propriety underscores an orientation toward encouragement rather than blame, reflecting the genre's pedagogical aim of fostering global citizenship and cooperative values.

Affect, although the least frequent subsystem, played a strategic role in humanizing narratives and fostering empathy. The most salient subtype was positive Satisfaction, as seen in the portrayal of multicultural communities where "second-generation Puerto Ricans live alongside third-generation Greeks and first-generation Koreans, all united by a **common feeling of pride** in their American identity" (Dummett et al., 2021, p. 15). By depicting second-, third-, and first-generation immigrant groups living alongside one another, the text frames collective satisfaction as arising from a shared sense of belonging that transcends generational and cultural differences. Negative Affect appeared only sporadically, serving pragmatic guidance rather than emotional intensity. For example, "Bear in mind that if you stay during the week, you might be **disappointed**" [- Satisfaction] (Dummett et al., 2021, p. 75) uses the adjective "disappointed" to signal unmet expectations and to guide readers toward realistic anticipation during their vacation stay.

Other subtypes occurred with lower frequency but contributed diversity. Happiness included positive items such as *emotional reunion*, *loved*, *happily ever after*, and *cheerful optimism*, alongside negatives like *didn't like*, *betrayed and desperate*, and *depressed*, indicating a balanced portrayal of emotion. Security contrasted stability (e.g., *comforted*, *calming*) with vulnerability (e.g., *caught in a trap*, *alarmed*, *at risk*). Satisfaction was mainly positive (e.g., *pride*, *proud*, *celebrate*, *feels like a treat*), with occasional negatives (e.g., *disappointed*). Inclination was mostly positive (e.g., *ambition*, *prefer the company*), with infrequent negatives (e.g., *refuse*).

The distribution of Judgement and Affect indicates a complementary interpersonal orientation that supports the strong presence of Appreciation in the corpus. Judgement functioned as a resource for shaping moral positioning in a relatively soft and constructive manner, while Affect contributes a restrained emotional dimension, primarily through positive Satisfaction, without introducing strong emotional intensity. The scarcity of negative Affect strengthens the textbook's affirmative tone and avoids emotional dissonance. These patterns resemble tendencies in other educational contexts where emotional alignment is used to scaffold learner motivation and promote inclusive identities (Nguyen, 2023).

V. CONCLUSION

This study examined the distribution and realization of attitudinal resources in *Life – Upper Intermediate*, an internationally distributed EFL textbook widely used in higher education. The findings reveal a clearly affirmative evaluative profile across the corpus. Among the three Attitude subsystems, Appreciation – particularly Valuation – emerged as the dominant resource, while Judgement played a secondary but systematic role and Affect occurred less frequently and in a more controlled manner. The predominance of Appreciation together with a strong positive polarity indicates an evaluative configuration that directs attention toward positively valued phenomena and cultural practices, shaping an affirmative stance toward the world. These findings carry important theoretical and discursive implications.

A. Theoretical Implications

This analysis contributes to Appraisal-based research by demonstrating how attitudinal meanings are systematically embedded in the discourse of EFL textbooks, a genre of growing global significance in tertiary education. The dominance of Appreciation corroborates previous Appraisal analyses of academic and instructional discourse, where evaluation typically targets processes and phenomena rather than persons. However, in contrast with national or locally authored textbooks that rely heavily on Judgement to transmit moral or civic norms, *Life – Upper Intermediate* privileges Appreciation to celebrate learning, innovation, and cultural achievement. This pattern suggests a broader tendency toward epistemic celebration rather than overt moral prescription in contemporary global ELT discourse.

From a stance perspective, the study enriches existing research by situating stance within the discourse-semantic system of Attitude. The cumulative pattern of evaluation suggests that stance is constructed primarily through appraisal attached to phenomena and practices, rather than through explicit authorial engagement. In this way, the study bridges Appraisal Theory and stance research, extending stance analysis from lexical and syntactic realizations to a systemic account of meaning, and highlighting stance as a socially embedded and ideologically charged phenomenon in educational discourse.

B. Discursive and Intercultural Implications

The evaluative configuration identified in *Life – Upper Intermediate* also reveals how stance and ideology are jointly constructed at the discursive level. The textbook's evaluative language operates as an affiliative framework, gradually

aligning readers with an affirmative worldview rather than engaging in argumentation. Recurrent positive Appreciation, particularly the Valuation of education, science, and cultural achievement, invites learners to participate affectively in narratives of progress and cooperation. Judgement resources further reinforce an image of humanity defined by competence, responsibility, and goodwill, while the restrained use of Affect maintains a controlled emotional tone.

These patterns realize what may be described as an affirmative intercultural stance, one that prioritizes harmony, cooperation, and shared progress while backgrounding conflict or contestation. Intercultural understanding is constructed not through the negotiation of difference, but through the normalization of shared virtues and universally desirable goals. Even negative evaluations – such as criticism of pollution, ignorance, or corruption – function to reaffirm improvement and inclusion rather than to polarize perspectives. This confirms that evaluation operates as a macro-level stance resource, sustaining interpersonal alignment through the thematic and lexical architecture of the text rather than through explicit authorial presence.

Pedagogically, recognizing such evaluative framing is crucial for fostering critical literacy. When learners are guided to examine how Appreciation and Judgement encode cultural assumptions and value hierarchies, they become better equipped to recognize how positivity functions to universalize certain perspectives while marginalizing others. For materials designers and teachers, these insights suggest that explicit reflection on evaluative language can deepen intercultural competence, transforming affirmation into critical awareness rather than passive alignment.

C. Recommendations for Future Research

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that point to directions for future research. First, the analysis focused on a single textbook and was restricted to the Attitude subsystem, leaving Engagement and Graduation unexplored. Future studies could extend the analysis to these subsystems to provide a more comprehensive account of evaluative meaning-making in instructional discourse. In particular, examining Engagement resources would help clarify how dialogic space, alignment, and alternative viewpoints are managed in international EFL textbooks, especially in relation to the presentation of cultural and social issues. Second, comparative research across textbooks of different proficiency levels or publishing traditions would help determine whether the affirmative evaluative profile observed here is characteristic of global EFL materials more broadly.

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