

# Generic structure and appraisal use in English article reviews written by Indonesian EFL doctoral students

<sup>1</sup>Sri Wuli Fitriati\*, <sup>2</sup>Betari Irma Ghasani

<sup>1</sup>English Education Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Salatiga, Indonesia

**\*Corresponding Author**

Email: [SriWuli.Fitriati@mail.unnes.ac.id](mailto:SriWuli.Fitriati@mail.unnes.ac.id)

Received:  
19 January 2024

Revised:  
29 June 2024

Accepted:  
31 July 2024

Published:  
10 August 2024

## Abstract

*A journal article review is an academic writing that summarizes and assesses others' research-based articles. For doctoral students, reviewing a journal article is usually to train them for building their argument and broadening their knowledge of an issue. The purpose of this study is to investigate the quality of article reviews written in English by one class consisting of twelve Indonesian EFL doctoral students in their first semester at a university in Semarang, Indonesia. Twelve reviews written by the students were collected. The evaluation of their writings is based on Systemic Functional Grammar, particularly the interpersonal metafunction analysis, that is, the analysis of generic structure and appraisal. Therefore, this study employs textual analyses. The analysis of generic structure refers to the template from the Writing Centre of Thompson Rivers University, and the analysis of appraisal follows Martin and White's appraisal system (2005). The discussion of this article explains the generic structure and lexico-grammatical realizations of evaluative stances used by the students. The findings indicate that not all doctoral students can organize their review following the generic structure and optimize the use of appraisal items. This exploratory investigation provides some pedagogical implications for the teaching of academic writings in EFL contexts.*

**Keywords:** *generic structure; appraisal; Systemic Functional Grammar; journal article review; text analysis; EFL Doctoral students*

## INTRODUCTION

In creating academic writing in the English language, the choice and use of words and phrases play an important role. As the key to a meaningful text, the combination of words compromised with the context enables writers to precisely communicate to others through their texts. Once they fail to select appropriate diction, the message will be ambiguous or confusing to be understood.

Canvassed by Halliday (1994) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) explores more how language is practiced by someone to make meaning in context and to accomplish an intended goal. The SFL approach emphasizes the relationship between "the communicative

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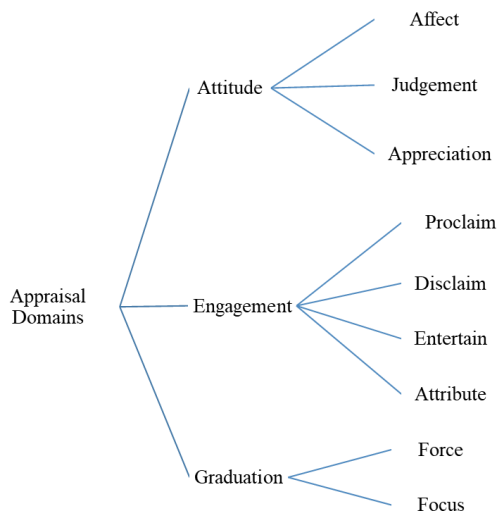
purpose and the discourse features of a text” (Schwarz & Hamman-Ortiz, 2020). In addition, language, based on the perspective on SFL, is constructed to form three categories of meanings including “ideational meanings, interpersonal meanings, and textual meanings” (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Establishing physical, mental, and logical experiences, ideational meanings is constructed in a form of transitivity patterned in someone’s text (Hermawan & Sukyadi, 2017). In ideational meanings, moreover, language is seen as a reflection to define kinds of experience (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Hood, 2019). Furthermore, in textual meanings, it relates to the text organization (Hermawan & Sukyadi, 2017). The speaker or writer needs to consider the flow of information to compose a make-sense text (Hood, 2019). Here, the text is seen as a coherent whole (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Seeing language as an action of the interlocutor (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), interpersonal meanings exchange interlocutors’ positions by giving a specific role such as a sender or a receiver in a text (Hermawan & Sukyadi, 2017). In interpersonal meanings, someone enacts the relationship by informing, questioning, giving orders, and expressing her/his appraisal towards an issue (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Appraisal is seen as the development component discourse semantic system situated in the interpersonal meanings (Hood, 2019; Oteiza, 2017). Including words, phrases, and structures, appraisal refers to the semantic resources used by speakers or writers (Wei et al., 2015). Providing resources to convey emotions, judgments, and evaluations through texts (Wan, 2008), appraisal helps to negotiate solidarity maintained by the author to her/his potential readers/listener (Oteiza, 2017). Martin and White (2005) define appraisal as “discourse semantic resources construing interpersonal meaning (alongside involvement and negotiation)” (pp. 34–35). In SFL terms, the semantic relation is visible in the lexico-grammar.

The speaker’s or writer’s diction, in terms of the appraisal system, portrays how the writer or the speaker approves or disapproves. Exploring appraisal means examining someone’s position (as a listener or writer) of the targeted text situated by the speaker or the writer by performing varied evaluative language to convey an attitude about a phenomenon (Martin & White, 2005, p. 1).

In the appraisal theory, suggested by Martin and White (2005), it is explained that the appraisal system shows how the listener or reader position made by the speaker or the writer “to do in communication by using evaluative language to express an attitude regarding one thing or matter” (p. 1). Concerning how the speakers or writers judge and feel (Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 22), appraisal gives a realization of interpersonal semantics which they have to do with interlocutors’ feelings, the judgments they make about others’ behavior, and the value they place on their experience.

Established in the discourse semantic system of interpersonal meanings (Hood, 2019; Martin, 2017; Oteiza, 2017), appraisal, in the form of a positive or negative attitude, is used to negotiate our relationship with others (Wan, 2008) by emphasizing the “personal” dimension of the interpersonal meanings itself (Martin, 2014). There are three domains or systems in appraisal items including “attitude, engagement, and graduation” (Martin, 2014; Martin & Rose, 2007; Martin & White, 2005).



**Figure 1.** Appraisal domains proposed by Martin and White (2005)

Attitude system relates to “emotional reactions, judgments of behaviour, and evaluation of things” (Martin & White, 2005). Attitude system creates a general categories of expressed values (Hood, 2019). This system recognizes feelings as a system of meanings (Oteiza, 2017). Martin and White (2005) proposes three subsystems of attitude including affect, judgement, and appreciation that are elaborated on Table 1.

In Appraisal, engagement system deals with “sourcing attitudes and the play of voices around opinions in discourse” (Martin & White, 2005). This systems relates to the interpersonal negotiation (Oteiza, 2017). This system creates options for introducing and managing space in a discourse (Hood, 2019). Martin and White (2005) propose that there are four subsystems in engagement system, including proclaim, disclaim, entertain, and attribute. Those subsystems are explained further on Table 1.

According to Martin and White (2005), graduation system in appraisal relates to “grading phenomena whereby feelings are amplified and categories blurred”. Creating options for scaling meanings by using degree (Hood, 2019), this system has two subsystems including focus and force (Martin & White, 2005).

The definitions of each subsystem in appraisal items domain mentioned above are proposed by several expert (such as Hood, 2019; Oteiza, 2017; White, 2015) which is originated by Martin and White (2005). Those definitions are expounded further as follows:

**Table 1.** The definitions of each subsystem in Appraisal Domains

Appraisal	Definition
Attitude      Affect	Involving positive and negative feelings and emotions (Hood, 2019; Martin & White, 2005; Oteiza, 2017).

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	Judgement	Dealing with attitudes towards behaviour (“admire or criticise” and “praise or condemn”), ethics (Martin & White, 2005; Oteiza, 2017), or other social norms (White, 2015)
	Appreciation	Involving evaluations of semiotic, entities, natural phenomena, and events (Hood, 2019; Martin & White, 2005)
Engagement	Proclaim	The textual voice sets itself against, suppresses or rules out alternative positions (Martin & White, 2005)
	Disclaim	The textual voice positions itself as at odds with, or rejecting, some contrary position (Martin & White, 2005)
	Entertain	Explicitly presenting the proposition by expanding a range of varied and possible positions (Martin & White, 2005). The writer or speaker may use modality as a key in this subsystem (Hood, 2019)
	Attribute	Portraying proposition by acknowledging or distancing a possible positions (Hood, 2019; Martin & White, 2005)
Graduation	Force	Grading according to intensity including scalar assessment and assessment of size, vigor, extent, proximity and etc. (Martin & White, 2005). The writer or speaker may “raise” or “lower” her/his attitude’s value in the discourse (Oteiza, 2017)
	Focus	Grading based on the prototypicality (focus) and the degree of semantic category (Martin & White, 2005). The writer can “sharpen” or “soften” the boundaries of a phenomena (Oteiza, 2017; White, 2015)

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Moreover, reviewing or evaluating other people’s work based on specific text structure relates to applying and manifesting language. In the genre-based approach, this text type refers to a critical review. As the communicative purpose of a critical review is to demonstrate extensive research and critical evaluation by summarizing and critically evaluating other people’s work (Booth et al., 2016; Efron & Ravid, 2019), the use of the appraisal is to “negotiate the relationship between the writer and the reader” by positive or negative attitudes (Wan, 2008).

Most studies drawing on appraisal in written discourse focus on appraising items only (e.g. Auman, 2014; Gallardo & Ferrari, 2010; Geng, 2015; Jakaza, 2013; Kawamitsu, 2012; Pascual & Unger, 2010; Pekarová, 2011; Wan, 2008; Xinghua & Thompson, 2009). For example, Pascual and Unger (2010) examine appraisal in chemistry and physics grant proposals done by Argentinean researchers. In their study, they focus on the engagement system. The various use of engagement resources found in the grant proposal as their data suggest that the writer tends to invite varied audiences through their writing rather than challenge their colleagues’ views (Pascual & Unger, 2010).

Similarly, investigating attitude appraisals items, Xinghua and Thompson (2009) explore students’ argumentative writing in their research. In their study, they examine both English and Chinese argumentative essays on Chinese EFL students. The result shows a similar pattern of appreciation items. However, in the students’ writing, there are clear differences in other appraising items, affect, and judgment. Furthermore, they also map out that the trend of using appraisal in EFL/ESL students’ writing decreased (Xinghua & Thompson, 2009).

Another study was conducted by Geng (2015). He examines the appraisal of doctoral theses’ discussion section in the English Language Teaching/Applied Linguistics discipline at Warwick University. Here, the engagement resources

are used more frequently than Attitude and Graduation indicating high interaction between the writer and the reader (Geng, 2015). These two studies (Geng, 2015; Xinghua & Thompson, 2009) have provided exemplars of appraisal research on the final production of writing.

In the context of the Postgraduate program, more specifically in the Indonesian university where sources of the data in this present study were taken, the doctoral students frequently were required to make a critical review of a journal article as part of their assignment. A journal article review is a frequent task in college and graduate school. Reviewing journal articles is a paramount task on its own or as part of a much more enormous research paper. It was assumed that doctoral students were at the advanced level in learning English as they are lecturers of the English language at some local universities. Moreover, they are foreseen to “structure and link the text co-textually and contextually”, so it progresses logically from one topic to another topic (Bowen & Thomas, 2020).

In a genre-based approach, a critical review is a written text in which the writer summarizes and evaluates the other work. By applying this text type, a writer can review other work such as a book, a book chapter, a thesis, a dissertation, or a journal article. A critical review text must contain some related discussion including the author’s motivation, the author’s approach to the subject matter, the words used, the work’s structure, and the coherency of the author’s work (Taylor, 2009).

Having a similar structure in general, a critical review text is formed into an introduction, summary, analysis, and conclusion. Keiran Rankin and Sara Wolfe from the Writing Centre of Thompson Rivers University suggest a template that can be used as guidance in writing a critical review. Table 2 is the critical analysis template suggested by Rankin and Wolfe.

**Table 2.** A critical review templates

Structure	Explanation
Introduction	The writer states the information of the work, outlines work’s main ideas, identify the author’s thesis, and propose her/his personal thesis statement and main idea dealing with the reviewed work. e.g. “ <i>This book is informative because...</i> ”
Summary	The writer briefly summarizes the main ideas other works such as book, article or film, and chooses to confer the structure, style or point of view. e.g. “ <i>This book is about...</i> ”; and “ <i>The authors conclude...</i> ”

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Analysis	The writer critically states what she/he like and dislike about the work, explains ideas with specific examples, assesses whether the author has achieved their intended goal, and examines whether the work is “ <i>focused, understandable, persuasive, clear, informative, original, exciting, interesting, well-written, directed at the appropriate audience, meeting the purpose, well researched, with appropriate conclusions, and etc.</i> ”. This analysis part comprises of several paragraphs.
Conclusion	The writer restates her/his paraphrased-thesis argument, summarizes her/his main ideas, and includes a call to action for your reader. e.g., <i>You must read this book because ...</i>

Inspired by the researchers’ previous research findings on appraisal and undergraduate student’s ability to write critical review text presented at *the 6<sup>th</sup> ELTLT International Conference* (see Fitriati & Ghasani, 2017), this study intends to explore further appraisal and generic structure of critical review texts done by the doctorate students. In addition, our preliminary study, especially the first author’s experience, and observation showed that Doctoral students’ writing lacked in the exploration of appraisal resources. In this regard, this present study aims at gaining deeper insights into the students’ use of appraisal in their writings, by investigating first how they organized the generic structure of their text. Furthermore, based on the researchers’ review of previous studies, research on this topic is still limited. Therefore, by using the critical review proposed by Thompson that is relevant, this study needs to be done.

This paper was divided into five parts. Following this introduction, appraisal and critical review are further elaborated in the theoretical background. It is followed by the research methodology, findings, and discussion. This paper ends with a conclusion presenting some pedagogical implications for the teaching of English as a foreign language.

## METHODS

This is a case study in which a detailed examination of a particular case is given to a particular group of students. Therefore, this investigation is an exploratory qualitative study that employs a written discourse analysis. According to Bavelas et al. (2002), discourse analysis acts as “the systematic study at meaning-level of natural communication”. Moreover, Celce-Murcia & Olshtain (2000) propose that discourse analysis explores beyond the sentence boundaries. It analyses the use of language related to the context (Hodges et al., 2008; Kamalu & Osisanwo, 2015). Examining written and spoken text form, it explores daily conversation, an all-types written discourse, and narrative (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000).

The source of the data was critical reviews written by a group of twelve Indonesian doctoral students majoring in the study program of English as a foreign language (EFL) education at a state university in Indonesia in the academic year of 2018/2019. The critical review writing was part of a course assignment on Discourse Studies. The students themselves chose a journal article that had to be in the discipline of English language teaching. Providing practical guidance about the generic structure of a critical review text, a template taken from Thomson Rivers University Writing Center was provided by the lecturer. They, the doctorate students and the lecturer, discussed the template together. The writing process was done outside the class hours, and

the students submitted their work after two weeks of the assignment instruction day.

Using words, phrases, and clauses as the units of analysis this study was textual analysis (Abu-Ayyash, 2020). According to Crosthwaite (2013), in discourse, the use of words, phrases, and clauses demonstrates the linguistic competence of the writer. Those units imply “the generic structure and the varied appraising items applied in the students’ written texts” (Abu-Ayyash, 2020). Moreover, in their critical review, those units contain information the writer needs to highlight to convey their thoughts (Lee, 2019).

In the data analysis, the procedure was as follows: a) reading the students’ critical review multiple instances, b) identifying the clauses and/or clause complexes boundaries, c) writing down words, phrases, and other lexical bundles determined as appraising items in a table, d) examining the organization of the texts and identifying simultaneously appraising items used.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section is segregated into two main parts in line with the two research objectives: the organization of the students’ critical review (i.e., the generic structure) and the appraisal resources used. The discussion will highlight the effects of generic structure and the application of appraisal resources on the quality of the doctorate students’ critical reviews.

### Generic structure analysis

A critical review is organized into some paragraphs which include an introduction, summary, analysis, and conclusion. Table 1 shows the findings of how the students structure their critical reviews.

**Table 3.** The generic structure/text organization

Student	Introduction	Summary	Analysis	Conclusion
1	√	√	√	√
2	√	√	√	x
3	√	√	√	x
4	√	√	√	√
5	√	√	√	√
6	x	√	√	√
7	√	√	√	√
8	√	√	√	√
9	√	√	√	x
10	√	√	√	√
11	x	√	√	√
12	√	√	√	√

Table 1 presents that nearly all the twelve students structured their texts according to the recommended critical reviews’ generic structure, that is, introduction, summary, analysis, and conclusion. From Table 1, two students did not provide an introduction in their critical reviews (Texts 6 and 11), and the other three students did not draw any conclusion (Texts 2, 3, and 9). The explanation of these findings is elaborated as follows:

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**Introduction section**

An introduction of a critical review includes the title of the reviewed work, the author's name and the date of publication, an outline of the main ideas of the journal article, identification of the journal's author, thesis statement. This part might also state the writer's thesis statement, and main idea related to the reviewed work. Introduction in the students' texts can be seen in the following data. For example:

**Text 3**

*"This article entitled 'Repair strategies in EFL classroom talk' by Fotovatnia and Dorri seeks to address the use of nine repair strategies done by teacher and students and among students themselves in the teaching process referring to the gender of teachers."*

Text 3 clearly states the title of the reviewed article and the author's name. Another example of introduction found in Text 1

**Text 1**

*"In this article, Suryati investigates the teachers' use of interaction strategies in English Language Teaching, (ELT) in lower secondary level of education in Malang, East Java. The main purpose of this article was to describe and report the interaction in their English class. She argues that improving students' oral communicative competence in English language is not easy in Indonesia."*

Different from Text 3, besides mentioning the author by stating "Suryati investigates the teachers' use of interaction strategies in English Language Teaching, (ELT) in lower secondary level of education in Malang, East Java", Student 1 also summarizes the main ideas of the paper by stating "The main purpose of this article was to describe and report..."

Furthermore, two students do not make an introduction. They directly made a summary in their critical reviews which means leading the reader into confusion. As can be seen below Text 11 directly wrote the first paragraph or the beginning of her journal article review as follows:

**Text 11**

*"Austin (1962) defined speech acts as the actions performed in saying something. Speech act theory said that the action performed when an utterance produced can be analyzed on three different levels. Furthermore, Austin developed that the performative hypothesis behind every utterance is a performative verb, such as "to order", "to warn", "to admit", and "to promise"."*

Text 6 also does not contain an introduction. The review begins:

**Text 6**

*"Appraisal is one of three major discourse semantic resource construing interpersonal meaning. Appraisal itself regionalized as three interacting domains – 'attitude', 'engagement', and 'graduation'. Here, the researcher related to the System, and each one of the evaluative choices made by the user, , will be instantiated and realized in the Text lexicographically..."*



Based on the examples above, it is clearly shown that there is no Introduction section on their text. In the introduction, they need to introduce the article reviewed following by a brief evaluation done by the student. The students above do not make any introduction well since they directly write about the theory mentioned in the article. As the researchers did not interview the students for asking them why they did not include an introduction, it was assumed that they did not make it of their inability in understanding the text organization. Or, it can be because EFL students face difficulties in writing a critical review due to different conventions in-text pattern (Teramoto & Mickan, 2008). When the language instruction is different with their first language, EFL students are lack experience in demonstrating this genre in their language as this text-types receive insufficient attention within academic writing (Woodward-Kron, 2003). Moreover, they may lack high-quality writing exposure and language instruction (Maamuujav et al., 2021).

### **Summary section**

After an introduction, the next structure in a critical review is a summary. In this section, the writer states the main ideas of the work. In this part, the key points (such as structure, style, or point of view), examples, author's purpose/intentions, and text's description are presented. Although Swales and Feak (2012, p. 189) state that there is no certain length of a summary in a critical review, Keiran and Wolfe (2017) from Thompson Rivers University propose that it should make up only one-third of the text. Table 1 shows that all the students' texts contain a summary. Text 5 and Text 10 are some examples of summaries.

#### **Text 5**

*“Four cases were selected for investigation, consisting of one large class (around 40 students) and one small class (around 25 students) at the same level taught by the same teacher on the same topic over a series of ESL lessons covering all four language skills. This design controlled the variables that would have an impact on classroom interaction and classroom learning.”*

#### **Text 10**

*“The abstract of this study has been explained clearly about the background of the study, the reasons for choosing the topic, the objectives the study, the scope of the study, the methodology, and the findings and discussion. We can see from the abstract that the study investigated the communication strategies used by two EFL teachers and their beginner level student; and the potential factors that influence the communication strategies they use in class.”*

Based on the instances above, it is clearly shown that all the students make a summary section in their texts. In the academic setting, summarizing what others have written or said is an fundamental part of “students' preparation for an exam, a class discussion, a research paper, a thesis, or a dissertation” (Swales & Feak, 2012). Therefore, as summarizing is one familiar activity to students, all students provide a summary in their critical review.

### **Analysis section**

The next structure of a critical review, after introduction and summary, is analysis. The writer, in this part, explains the ideas providing concrete examples based on the work and evaluates whether the author's intended goal has been

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accomplished. The analysis should be a balanced discussion and evaluation of a journal article including the strengths, weaknesses, and other notable features. The review writers need to decide overall what their judgment is. The evidence can be seen in Text 5.

**Text 5**

*“On the other side, the writer already use the reference from the experts, but this is not clear enough. The Sinclair and Coulthard model was devised in 1975 and slightly revised in 1992. It, like Halliday’s model, is also a rank scale model and consists of five ranks. These are ‘lesson; transaction; exchange; move and act; and these are related to one another in a “consist of” relationship.’ Willis (1992: 112).”*

In Text 5 the student explains her ideas by examining what the work’s focus and providing the weakness of the article. Another example of an analysis section can be seen in Text 8.

**Text 8**

*“Thirdly, the article contained the problem indentation. In the journal guideline, it was clearly stated that the first line of paragraph should be indented. In fact, some of the first lines in the first paragraph following the subheading were indented (:106, :120) but some of them were not (:108, :110, :114, :117, and :121)”*

Based on the examples above, it maps out that every student analyzes their texts. In this section, the students evaluate clearly about the article. Since they interpret critical review as the task of critically analyzing someone’s work (Woodward-Kron, 2003), the students are successful in writing analysis for giving their judgment. Furthermore, since in this section, they make judgments towards the article, an appraisal was found more often here to make the evaluation. And this is also the focus of the investigation which will be discussed later.

**Conclusion section**

The last part of a critical review is the conclusion. This is usually a very short paragraph. In the conclusion, the writers compose “a general interpretation of the results” based on the provided evidence and present “implications for future practice or research” (Booth et al., 2016, p. 285). In other words, the writer restates his/her overall opinion of the journal article and briefly presents recommendations. An example of a conclusion can be seen in Text 10.

**Text 10**

*“After reading this article I conclude that the limitations of this study are (1) the total number of participant in each group is not the same; (2) the teacher doesn’t have the same background and experience. This study improves language teaching and learning, and increase the use of CSs in the classroom especially in the beginner level.”*

Text 10 ended its critical review by restating a judgment about the article by using an explicit phrase ‘I conclude that.’ By this, she appears to summarize her review in stronger words.

Table 1 shows that there are three texts which do not include a conclusion. Instead, the texts end with an analysis which is not the final part of a critical review. This might be because of their inexperience in writing a conclusion for critical review text (Teramoto & Mickan, 2008).

The findings on the analysis of the generic structure in the students' critical reviews indicate that most doctoral students have managed to make an acceptable text. As suggested by Swales and Feak (2012, p. 8), in a genre-based approach, writing a particular text type, like a critical review, should be presented in a structured format. By writing in a particular type of text, it is expected that the graduate students are successful in presenting and demonstrating a good academic paper by analyzing, examining, or investigating other's work (Booth et al., 2016; Swales & Feak, 2012). However, some of them seemed to lack careful attention to their generic structure due to different patterns and lack of experience in demonstrating this kind of text (Booth et al., 2016; Teramoto & Mickan, 2008). In the section that follows, we will discuss the findings of the analysis of Appraisal applied in students' critical reviews.

### Appraisal analysis

A critical review is the summarization and evaluation of the ideas and information in a research article. Reviewing an article effectively means that the writer (of the review) question the information in the text under review and present an evaluation or judgment of it. Therefore, the language of evaluation (or, appraisal) should be there in the review. Table 2 is the findings of the appraisal in the students' critical reviews.

**Table 4.** Analysis of Appraisal

Student	Attitude			Engagement			Graduation		
	Affect	Judge- ment	Apprecia- tion	Dis- claim	Pro- claim	Enter- tain	Attri- bute	Force	Focus
<b>1</b>	0	0	12	6	34	1	21	8	1
<b>2</b>	2	1	60	11	25	23	0	15	1
<b>3</b>	0	1	17	1	20	2	11	8	2
<b>4</b>	0	0	9	0	19	7	10	12	0
<b>5</b>	0	0	19	12	17	6	6	12	4
<b>6</b>	0	0	13	1	5	12	1	9	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	26	2	22	2	10	3	2
<b>8</b>	0	1	13	12	23	7	5	13	1
<b>9</b>	0	6	14	5	26	6	15	14	2
<b>10</b>	0	2	16	16	17	6	20	16	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	11	0	1	5	17	5	1
<b>12</b>	0	0	10	3	35	3	12	8	0

Based on Table 2 of appraisal analysis, appreciation, attitude, and proclaim appraising items exceeds than others appraising items. Though critical reviews written by the students does not contain all kind of appraisal, those appraising items were distributed in overall texts. Each subsystem of appraising items is profoundly discussed as follows.

Attitude, according to Hadidi & Mohammadbagheri-Parvin (2015), negotiates how attitudes are used and demonstrated in an English text. Subsystems laid on attitude system are affect (dealing with expressing someone's feeling through emotion), judgment (relating to human behavior or action) and appreciation (about evaluations of things) (Almayouf, 2021).

It can be seen in Table 2 appreciation appraising items is applied more than other appraising items. The high usage of appreciation reveals that the

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writer bestows the judgment concerning phenomena (Martin & White, 2005, p. 42). The instance of appreciation is shown below.

#### Text 8

*“We think that the article contains **valuable** information, **well organized** structure, **systematized** writing, and **scrutinized** paper.”*

Based on the example above, it can be inferred that the student uses 4 appreciation in a sentence. He gives his judgment towards ‘information’ by stating ‘valuable’, ‘structure’ by saying ‘well organized’, ‘writing’ by producing ‘systematized’, and ‘paper’ by claiming ‘scrutinized’. Another example of appreciation can be seen in Text 10.

#### Text 10

*The article is about the proven of how **important** of cohesion and coherence to writing quality.*

The word “*important*” applied by the students shows her appreciation towards the “*writing quality*”. This finding affirms the research done by Xinghua and Thompson (2009), Liu (2013), Hadidi and Mohammadbagheri-Parvin (2015), and Almayouf (2021) revealing that appreciation evaluates phenomena. As the writer examines other paper, appreciation is applied (Hadidi & Mohammadbagheri-Parvin, 2015; Liu, 2013; Xinghua & Thompson, 2009). Moreover, this high occurrence of appreciation rather than judgment and affect makes students’ critical review more appreciative (Liu, 2013). This might be related to the varied topic chosen by the students. For the varied topics and the judgement towards things or phenomena, the appreciation appraising items are found a lot (Martin & White, 2005, p. 42). Appreciation appraising items acts as reaction that to make the reader aware of the work (Hood, 2019).

Furthermore, the argumentative genre is characterised by appreciation (Lee, 2006, 2019; Xinghua & Thompson, 2009). It is in line with Hood (2019) that appreciation acts to make readers aware of the described phenomenon or things. It is used for evaluating objects, texts, persons, systems, or phenomena (Almayouf, 2021). Therefore, as arguments are needed for supporting arguments of the described work in critical reviews written by the students, appreciation seems more appropriate.

The next appraisal category elaborated further in this study is engagement. Engagement relates to additional voices around opinions in discourse (Martin & Rose, 2007). When the writer adopt a position in a referenced text, engagement acts as the linguistic resources they address (Martin & White, 2005, pp. 97–98). In addition, based on the finding in Table 2, it maps out that proclaim exceeds the other categories. The instance of proclaiming found in critical review written by the students is shown as follows.

#### Text 6

*So, **the researcher presents** intensification cases in which modifiers were used to reinforce the negative aspect of other modifiers or by interposing a modifier between epithets.*

By stating “the researcher present...”, the student use proclaim appraising items to adopt or address the writer in his critical review. Another example of proclaim can be seen in Text 5.

#### **Text 5**

*The writing system of Amy B M Tsui’s article seemed to be research report rather than a research-based article.*

Based on the example above, proclaim refers to the writer of the reviewed journal. Furthermore, there is also a high occurrence of proclaim (see Table 2) as a subsystem in engagement applied by the students. According to Martin and White (2005), proclaim represents the position or voice in a context. In proclaim, a space of negotiation of a position is supported (Hood, 2019).

By applying to proclaim, it means the student insists on the validity of others’ work (Mei, 2007). As the student’s intention in composing a critical review is for giving evaluation towards others’ work, they need a theory or argument stated by the writer who writes the writing product they reviewed. Therefore, proclaim appraising items help students to highlight supporting evidence provided and reinforce the strength of the student’s argument itself (Mei, 2007).

The next subsystem is graduation. Relating to the grading phenomena, graduation helps the writer to produce meaning by degree (Hood, 2019). This subsystem defines the attitudinal meanings on “vague language” including grading as intensity and quantity (Hood, 2010) The example of graduation appraising items is shown below.

#### **Text 2**

*“Based on my analysis to the article, it’s **certainly** just to explain the effect of cohesion and coherence to essay writing quality through quantitative data.”*

By producing “certainly” in his critical review, the student tries to grade the phenomena for emphasizing their judgment. Another instance of graduation is displayed in the following example.

#### **Text 9**

*It also shows that the findings are not **mostly** related to the politeness strategies proposed by Levinson.*

In text 9, the writer used “mostly” for grading the phenomena mentioned on the work. Jakaza (2013) proposes that graduation is utilized binary scaling including focus and force. Based on Table 2, it is shown that force appraising items exceeds focus appraising items. This finding is in line with the result of the research done by Liu (2013) that force appraising items is manifested to “strengthen persuasion”. Showing a significant use of force in his study, Wan (2008) propose that the high occurrence of force is to express meaning of a described situation or a complained problem written by the writer.

The result of the analysis done by the researchers shows the high occurrence of appreciation appraising items of attitude system, proclaim appraising items of engagement system, and force appraising items of graduation system. Based on the explanation above, this result confirms that

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the critical review is utilized for assessing work effectiveness towards a phenomenon of a text. Moreover, manifested appraisal applied in students critical review that is varied and numerous is in line to the related theory proposed.

**The distribution of appraising items on the students' critical review**

Appraisal appraising items are distributed on each part of the critical review text. The summary of the findings of appraising items distribution on students' critical reviews text is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** The distribution of appraising items on the students' critical review

Students	Introduction		Summary		Analysis		Conclusion		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
<b>1</b>	5	6	14	17	56	67	8	10	83	100
<b>2</b>	9	7	21	15	108	78	0	0	138	100
<b>3</b>	6	10	8	13	48	77	0	0	62	100
<b>4</b>	3	5	12	21	34	60	8	14	57	100
<b>5</b>	2	3	14	18	47	62	13	17	76	100
<b>6</b>	0	0	6	15	32	78	3	7	41	100
<b>7</b>	15	22	13	19	36	54	3	4	67	100
<b>8</b>	11	15	20	27	37	49	7	9	75	100
<b>9</b>	3	3	33	38	52	59	0	0	88	100
<b>10</b>	2	2	32	34	53	57	6	6	93	100
<b>11</b>	0	0	13	33	22	55	5	13	40	100
<b>12</b>	6	8	17	24	43	61	5	7	71	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	62	7	203	23	568	64	58	7	891	100

Based on Table 3, it revealed that there are found several appraising items contribute to the critical reviews done by the students. In the Introduction, there are found 62 appraising items (7%). In the introduction of the text of the critical review, the writer only provides a rationale for choosing the article and definitions of significant terminology (Woodward-Kron, 2003). Therefore, the students only apply some appraising items in this section.

This result contradicts the theory proposed by Hood (2010) that the writer should construct evaluative representation in introduction. Moreover, Yang and Xiaojuan (2015) propose that the most commonly used appraising items found are "in the introduction". By writing evaluative appraising items in introduction, it demonstrates that the writer acknowledge her/his idea, present her/his research topic and method briefly (Hood, 2010; Yang & Lv, 2015). In contrast, in critical reviews, the introduction only states the work's title, a rationale for choosing the article, a preview of the evaluative account, and any definitions of significant terminology (Woodward-Kron, 2003).

The next part is a summary where 203 (23%) appraising items are discovered. The summary section is in the second place where appraising items are mostly found. In the summary section, the student briefly outlines the main ideas of others' work. By using appraising items, the students try to add credibility to his/her claim (Swales & Feak, 2012, p. 188). It confirms the study done by Woodward-kron (2003) that a summary provides supporting evidence in the form of an explanation, an example, and/or a citation.

The next part is analysis. Here, appraising items occur 568 (64%) which means that analysis is in the first place where appraising items are mostly located. Since the writer needs to evaluate and discuss others' work (Booth et al., 2016, p. 285), an appraisal helps the writer to explain the ideas by providing examples and assesses whether the intended goal has been achieved by the author. Therefore, it endorses the idea by Liu (2013) and Pascual and Unger (2010) that proper use of evaluative language through appraisal system in a writing product helps establish personal voice. The use of appraisal also promote the writer in revealing their feelings with greater or lesser degrees of intensity for positioning herself/himself in a context (White, 2015)

The last part is the conclusion. Since in conclusion the writer only provides a general interpretation of the result (Booth et al., 2016, p. 285), there is a low occurrence (58 times or 7 %) of appraising items in this section. By restating the statement and producing appraising items, the student ends her/his critical review and confirms the theory of speech structure and appraisal system.

In writing a text, the readers expect the information given by the writer is presented in a structured format (Swales & Feak, 2012, p. 8). The generic structure (or structured format), in common, helps the reader to follow the information given by the writer, even if the writer makes language errors in the text (Swales & Feak, 2012, p. 9). The generic structure of a text act as a rhetorical function (Frow, 2005) in which how the text is structured in such a way as to achieve a certain effect (Shaw, 2016). Moreover, the generic structure combined with the linguistic choices applied by the writer shows his/her purpose within a context (Schwarz & Hamman-Ortiz, 2020).

In general, critical reviews written by the students based on the framework given were good in terms of the generic structure. In writing academically, they need to analyze, synthesize, and explain their complex idea (Maamujav et al., 2021). Though some students did not produce some parts of critical reviews' generic structure such as conclusion, they succeeded in performing critics. By producing academic texts, they establish their scholarly identity (Zhang & Hyland, 2021).

Furthermore, in critical review, the students learn "to express their evaluative comments within their field's accepted standards of judgment" (Swales & Feak, 2012, p. 228), so the critics can be fair and reasonable. Here, they need to give more evaluative words such as evaluation and judgment in order to convince the reader about their opinion in the analysis part of their own critical reviews. The evaluative word (appraisal) needs to be applied for expressing emotions, judgment, and so on in critical reviews (Woodward-Kron, 2003).

According to Teramoto and Mickan (2008), EFL students face difficulty in composing a critical review due to "the lack of experience in demonstrating critical thinking in this genre and different patterns of text". Therefore, when they are lack performing appraisal resources in their critical reviews, it may imply that they need to develop their critical thinking and to read a lot.

## **CONCLUSION**

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Almost all the doctoral students in this study resulted in a well-managed and well-organized written critical review. The high use of appraising items indicates the doctorate students' appreciation (attitude subsystem), proclaim (engagement subsystem), and force (graduation subsystem) towards a phenomenon reviewed. This finding confirms and relates to the theory proposed by some experts that critical review text is written and intended to evaluate other work. In addition, some areas need improvement to increase their ability to write a critical review, particularly in enlarging their vocabulary repertoire to show appraisal. Therefore, it is worth reckoning the corpus-driven genre pedagogy to mediate academic writing learning. This pedagogy involves a collection of the actual language use and patterns. The corpus can be both from the expert writing corpus and students' writing corpus to provide massive examples of the rhetorical structure and the linguistics realizations of critical reviews. The doctoral students in this present study are also English language teachers or lecturers, so it is a must that they improve and develop their writing to provide a good model for their students. Despite focusing on grammar accuracy, evaluative meanings conveyed through lexicogrammatical constructions warrant further concerns, especially in English instruction in the EFL/ESL context. To encourage students to explore various evaluative language resources for appraising appraisal items, they should be explicitly taught how to build up, position, and strengthen their voices or ideas in critically reviewing others' works.

### AUTHOR STATEMENT

**Author 1** provided the source, analyzed the data, and wrote the findings and discussions together with **Author 2**. Also, proofread the article drafts several times before submission. **Author 2** analyzed the data, alternatively interpreted the findings, and checked the manuscript with the journal template.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank the article's reviewers for their constructive feedback. Also, we thank the doctoral students of English language education at Universitas Negeri Semarang for their contribution to providing data.

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**Conflict of Interest Statement:** The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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