

Linguistics in Literary Discourse: Exploring Meaning, Construction and Alternatives Approaches

Tinashe C. Matiyenga¹ & Oluwatoyin Ayodele Ajani¹

¹ Language and Social Sciences Education, University of Zululand, KwaDlangezwa, South Africa

Correspondence: Oluwatoyin Ayodele Ajani, Language and Social Sciences Education, University of Zululand, KwaDlangezwa, South Africa. E-mail: oajani@gmail.com

Received: June 23, 2024

Accepted: August 15, 2024

Online Published: January 24, 2025

doi:10.5430/wjel.v15n3p376

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v15n3p376>

Abstract

This paper examines literary discourse patterns using the Appraisal Framework (Martin & White, 2005) and the Extended Pragma-dialectic Theory of Argumentation (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1984, 1992, 2004). It aims to demonstrate how these approaches offer systematic and logical methods for studying literature. By focusing on the linguistic tools through which authors and texts express, negotiate, and promote particular viewpoints, the study shows how these frameworks help reveal the ways writers convince readers of the acceptability of arguments. The Appraisal Framework provides insight into how texts reflect inter-subjective and ideological positions, while the Extended Pragma-dialectic Theory highlights how propositions justify or refute claims and counterclaims within a text. Furthermore, the paper explores the value of linguistics in literary analysis by integrating Bakhtin's concept of dialogism. This perspective supports the idea that texts are inherently dialogic, reflecting a constant interaction of voices and ideas. By combining linguistic and literary analysis, the study argues that the Appraisal Theory and Pragma-dialectic Theory provide useful tools for understanding how texts persuade and engage readers in complex argumentation. Ultimately, it validates the relevance of these linguistic theories within literary studies.

Keywords: Appraisal Theory, discourse analysis, Extended Pragma-dialectic Theory of Argumentation, intertextuality, dialogism

1. Introduction

This paper investigates the connection between linguistics and literature, highlighting how linguistic tools contribute to the interpretation and understanding of literary texts. Traditionally, literary criticism has focused on thematic, symbolic, and structural elements, often neglecting the underlying linguistic strategies that shape meaning. However, in recent years, there has been growing recognition of the role language plays in constructing and conveying ideas in literature. By examining how linguistic resources are employed to influence readers' perceptions and responses, this study offers a fresh lens through which to view literary discourse.

Linguistics provides a systematic way of analysing how language functions within texts, particularly through frameworks like the Appraisal Theory and the Pragma-dialectic Theory of Argumentation. The Appraisal Theory, developed by Martin and White (2005), categorises the language of evaluation, helping us to understand how authors express emotions, judgments, and values in their writing. Similarly, the Pragma-dialectic Theory of Argumentation, put forward by van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984, 1992, 2004), focuses on how arguments are structured and justified in discourse. Both frameworks are invaluable for exploring how authors negotiate meaning and persuade their readers.

At the heart of this study is the Bakhtinian concept of dialogism, which emphasises the inherently dialogic nature of texts. According to Bakhtin (1981), every text is part of a broader conversation, shaped by the interaction of different voices and perspectives. This idea is central to understanding how meaning is constructed in literature, where authors often engage with and respond to other texts, social ideologies, and readers. Dialogism provides a rich theoretical foundation for examining how texts function not in isolation but as part of an ongoing dialogue within society.

By incorporating the Appraisal Theory and the Pragma-dialectic Theory into literary analysis, this study bridges the gap between linguistics and literature, offering an interdisciplinary approach that enhances our understanding of how meaning is constructed in texts. Literary works are not simply artistic expressions; they are also deeply embedded in linguistic practices that shape how ideas are conveyed and received. This perspective acknowledges that the way language is used in literature can reveal much about the underlying ideological and emotional dimensions of a text.

The Appraisal Theory, for instance, allows us to explore how authors use language to express attitudes, whether through emotional responses (affect), moral evaluations (judgment), or assessments of objects and phenomena (appreciation). These elements help to position readers, guiding them toward certain interpretations of the text. Martin and White (2005) argue that such linguistic choices are key to understanding how authors influence readers' engagement with the narrative and its themes. By examining these elements, we can uncover the subtle ways in which authors manipulate language to shape meaning.

On the other hand, the Pragma-dialectic Theory focuses on the argumentative structure of texts, highlighting how authors justify or refute claims through logical reasoning. This approach is particularly relevant when analysing literary texts that engage with social, political, or moral debates. By applying the Pragma-dialectic Theory, we can see how authors construct persuasive arguments and counterarguments, presenting their viewpoints in a way that seeks to convince or challenge readers. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2004) argue that argumentation is a key component of discourse, and its presence in literature is often overlooked.

This study also recognises that literary texts are more than just stories; they are platforms where authors express and negotiate ideologies. Through the careful use of language, authors can promote or challenge prevailing societal norms and values. As Morris (1993) notes, literature has long been a medium for ideological expression, and understanding the linguistic mechanisms that facilitate this process is crucial for a deeper appreciation of literary works. By analysing how language is used to construct and convey ideologies, this study sheds light on the broader social and political functions of literature.

Moreover, the combination of Appraisal and Pragma-dialectic frameworks enables a dual focus on both the emotional and logical dimensions of literary texts. While the Appraisal Theory focuses on the subjective, affective side of meaning-making, the Pragma-dialectic Theory deals with the more structured, rational aspect of argumentation. This integrated approach offers a comprehensive understanding of how authors engage readers on both an emotional and intellectual level, revealing the complexity of literary discourse.

In sum, this research moves beyond traditional literary criticism, which often focuses on thematic and symbolic interpretations, by incorporating linguistic analysis to offer a more detailed and nuanced understanding of literary texts. By applying the Appraisal Theory and the Pragma-dialectic Theory, the study provides insights into how authors use language to construct meaning, convey ideologies, and persuade their readers. Ultimately, this approach validates the relevance of linguistic theories in the study of literature, demonstrating their potential to enrich our understanding of literary discourse.

Through this exploration, the paper seeks to contribute to both linguistic and literary studies by demonstrating how these two fields can inform each other. By drawing on the work of scholars like Martin, White, van Eemeren, and Bakhtin, this study positions itself at the intersection of linguistics and literature, offering a fresh perspective on the analysis of literary texts. It argues that linguistic frameworks like the Appraisal Theory and the Pragma-dialectic Theory provide valuable tools for uncovering the intricate ways in which language shapes meaning in literature.

2. Method

The methodology employed in this study is based on a qualitative approach, focusing on the analysis of literary texts using linguistic frameworks. The primary aim is to explore how literary discourse is constructed, negotiated, and evaluated through language by applying two key theoretical models: the Appraisal Framework (Martin & White, 2005) and the Extended Pragma-dialectic Theory of Argumentation (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1984, 1992, 2004). These frameworks offer systematic ways to analyse the linguistic tools used by authors to express and promote specific viewpoints, as well as to engage readers in argumentation and persuasion. Through this approach, the study seeks to highlight the complex interplay between language, ideology, and persuasion in literary texts.

The research design involves a detailed analysis of selected literary texts, which are examined through the lens of the Appraisal Framework and the Pragma-dialectic Theory. The Appraisal Framework is employed to categorise and analyse the attitudinal, engagement, and graduation resources in the texts, which reveal how authors position themselves and their readers. This framework allows for an exploration of how literary works reflect inter-subjective and ideological positions through linguistic choices. The Pragma-dialectic Theory is applied to analyse the argumentation structures within the texts, focusing on how propositions are presented, justified, and refuted. This theory provides a framework for understanding the logical structures that underpin the persuasive elements in literary discourse.

The data collection process involves selecting literary texts that are rich in ideological content and argumentation, allowing for an in-depth analysis of how language is used to convey complex arguments and viewpoints. The selection is based on texts that reflect a range of social, political, and cultural ideologies, ensuring a diverse representation of discourse patterns. The texts are then subjected to a systematic linguistic analysis, where the focus is on identifying the linguistic resources that convey attitudinal values, engage readers, and construct arguments. This process is designed to uncover the ways in which language in literature functions as a tool for persuasion and meaning-making.

The data analysis process is carried out in two stages. In the first stage, the Appraisal Framework is applied to the selected texts to identify the use of affect, judgment, and appreciation, as well as how authors engage with other voices and perspectives. This involves examining the language choices that reveal emotional responses, moral evaluations, and aesthetic appreciations, providing insight into the author's positioning. In the second stage, the Pragma-dialectic Theory is used to analyse the argumentation structures, focusing on how claims and counterclaims are negotiated within the text. The analysis seeks to understand how authors construct logical arguments and persuade readers through linguistic strategies.

Throughout the analysis, Bakhtin's concept of dialogism is integrated to support the idea that texts are inherently dialogic, meaning they are shaped by the interaction of multiple voices and perspectives. This theoretical perspective is particularly relevant when examining how authors use language to engage with and respond to alternative viewpoints, thereby creating a dynamic discourse. Dialogism

enhances the study by providing a framework for understanding how texts operate as part of a broader social and ideological dialogue, reflecting the interaction between the author, the text, and the reader.

The overall methodology of this study provides a comprehensive framework for analysing literary texts from both a linguistic and argumentative perspective. By combining the Appraisal Framework and the Pragma-dialectic Theory, the research offers a nuanced understanding of how literary discourse operates at both an emotional and logical level. The approach highlights the importance of linguistic analysis in uncovering the persuasive and ideological dimensions of literature, validating the use of these linguistic theories in literary studies.

3. Results

The results of this study provide a detailed analysis of the selected literary texts using the Appraisal Framework and the Extended Pragma-dialectic Theory of Argumentation. The findings highlight how linguistic resources, such as attitudinal positioning, engagement strategies, and argumentation structures, are employed by authors to convey emotions, negotiate viewpoints, and persuade readers. By examining the texts through these theoretical lenses, the results reveal the intricate ways in which authors construct meaning, express ideologies, and engage in dialogue with both readers and other texts. The analysis also demonstrates the interplay between emotional appeal and logical argumentation within literary discourse, offering insights into how language functions to influence interpretation and understanding.

3.1 Discourse Analysis

In recent times, the field of Discourse Analysis (DA) has gained popularity as a means of analysing written and spoken texts across various genres. Discourse analysis (DA) studies language patterns in texts and their relationship to socio-cultural contexts (Paltridge, 2006). This definition recognises the ability of DA to explore how language use is influenced by participant relationships and the impact it has on social identities and relationships (Paltridge, 2006, p. 2). Equally important is the understanding that DA allows for an examination of how discourse shapes worldviews and social identities. This perspective provides a solid foundation for this study, enabling a comprehensive understanding of literary works within diverse contexts of meaning creation.

Discourse analysis is an interdisciplinary field that rapidly evolves and is concerned with studying language use in specific contexts (Martinez, 2011, p. ix). Consequently, literary texts are also seen as instances of language in use. Therefore, "literary works, far from being isolated aesthetic realms, are intricately intertwined with ongoing processes of discourse within society as a whole" (Sell, 1991, p. xxi). It is crucial to recognise that literature is more dynamic than it appears on the surface, as it contains inherent discursive relationships (Matiyenga, 2012).

Linguistics, as the study of language, and literature, as the study of an art form created through language, share a natural and interconnected relationship, highlighting the concept of interdisciplinarity (Bednarek, 2007). However, since the 1960s, there has often been a contentious relationship between literary analysis and language study. Literary critics have criticised the "cold" and "scientific" approach used by language scholars in their analyses of literary texts, while linguists have accused their literary counterparts of being too vague and subjective in their analyses. It is important to recognize that literary experience is fundamentally mediated through language. In engaging with literary works, comprehension relies solely on the language in which they are written (Lodge, 1966). As Lodge (1966) states, "The novelist's medium is language: everything he does as a novelist is done through language" (p. 11).

3.2 Constructs to the Study of Literature

3.2.1 Ideology

The study of literature is primarily rooted in comprehending the philosophies or ideologies that underpin literary works. Ideology encompasses consciously held systems of beliefs that individuals adopt or reject (Morris, 1993). It can be seen as a framework of concepts and beliefs utilised by groups, societies, institutions, classes, or individuals to organise and interpret reality. Numerous scholars emphasise the influential role of discourse and language in shaping individuals' perceptions and conceptualisations of their worlds, as well as in creating and upholding societal structures. Thus, within the linguistic realm, language possesses the power to create and sustain ideologies, which encompass beliefs about the distribution of goods within society.

Literary works effectively convey their messages through language, which becomes the medium of ideology. In literature, writers contemplate how various ideologies shape the experiences of individuals and society at large. Literary theory is a methodical examination of the character of literature and the analytical approaches employed to study it, rooted in these ideologies (Culler, 1997, p. 1). Given the impact that ideologies have on their recipients, writers harness the capacity of ideology to not only convey their worldview but also to influence the worldview of their readers in the process.

3.2.2 Dialogism

According to Bakhtin (1981), the novel embodies its themes and presents a comprehensive portrayal of the world of objects and ideas through the utilisation of various speech types and individual voices that thrive within a socially diverse context. Within the novel, we encounter authorial speech, the voices of narrators, inserted genres, and the speech of characters. These elements serve as the fundamental building blocks that allow heteroglossia to permeate the novel. In other words, the novel possesses a complexity that extends beyond

initial perceptions. It can give voice to diverse social and ideological interests through a multitude of social voices and a wide range of connections and interrelationships.

Dialogics or dialogism, as defined by Bakhtin (1981), refers to the process through which meaning emerges from interactions among the author, the work, and the reader. The social and political contexts in which these elements exist shape and mould them. Within the discourse of the novel, unfamiliar words and diverse accents come together, either harmonising or grappling with one another. In its dialogic nature, language is comparable to a game of chess, where each word is aimed at a response and cannot evade the profound impact of the anticipated response word (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 280). Bakhtin terms this phenomenon as the "internal dialogism of the word."

Within a text, the language should be perceived as more intricate due to the dynamics involved in its interpretation. Bakhtin celebrates the multiplicity of voices present in a novel as a vibrant representation of reality, free from the dominance of a singular, centralised worldview. The continuous pursuit of understanding and appreciating meaning has led to the emergence of intertextuality, highlighting the interconnectedness of texts and the ongoing dialogue between literary works.

3.2.3 Intertextuality

The concept of intertextuality, influenced by Bakhtin's ideas on dialogism and developed further by Kristeva (1986), provides a framework for examining the interactions between texts, authors, readers, and conventions in both the process of reading and writing. Intertextuality suggests that all texts, whether spoken or written, are constructed and acquire meaning through their connections with other texts within a particular social context. In other words, the interpretation and significance of a text are shaped by the relationships it establishes with prior texts and how text users engage with those texts (Thibault, 1994, p. 1751). Intertextuality emphasises the interconnectedness and interdependence of texts within a broader cultural and literary landscape, highlighting the dynamic and dialogic nature of textual production and reception.

Bakhtin (1987) points out that all texts or utterances are dialogical and gain meaning through their relationship with other texts. Intertextuality refers to the intersection and interaction of various utterances from different texts within a given text, creating complexity (Kristeva, 1986, p. 36). Texts combine and transform different codes, genres, and meanings, forming a productive entity (Kristeva, 1986, p. 69). They exist along horizontal and vertical axes, connecting authors and readers, and linking to other texts (Kristeva, 1986, p. 69). Texts are shaped and interpreted in relation to other texts in related social contexts (Thibault, 1994). Intertextuality challenges traditional literary values like originality, singularity, and autonomy, emphasizing interconnectedness (Allen, 2000).

The framework for analysing engagement in appraisal analysis is particularly relevant when examining intertextuality from a linguistic viewpoint. In appraisal analysis, engagement deals with the meanings that contribute to constructing a heteroglossic backdrop of previous expressions, alternate perspectives, and expected responses for the text (Martin & White, 2005, p. 97). Within the engagement concept, we can identify two broad categories of resources: 'contract' resources that pertain to the internal voice of the writer, encompassing assertions, disclaimers, or expressions of probability, and 'expand' resources that involve explicitly incorporating external voices into the text (Martin & White, 2005).

Based on the preceding discussions regarding the interplay between linguistics and literature, it can be reasonably concluded that literature operates as a second-order semiotic system, with language serving as its foundation. This realisation also highlights the significance of linguistics in providing a confident and methodical approach to the study of language, fostering an analytical mindset that accounts for the inherent differences found within language (Aitchison, 1972). The conventional perspective on literature regards it as a linguistic act that can be examined from a behaviouristic standpoint. However, the appraisal and argumentation approaches advance this viewpoint by introducing a more systematic outlook on understanding the function of language in literature (Barfield, 1964). This approach enhances the appreciation of language's function within literary works, offering a comprehensive framework for analysis.

3.3 The Appraisal Theory

The Appraisal framework provides a system for categorising the language used to convey evaluation, illuminating how English language users express attitudes (such as emotions, judgments of individuals, and appreciation of things) and engage with the evaluations of others. Additionally, the framework explores how writers can adjust the intensity of their attitudes and engagement within their texts (Martin & White, 2005). Appraisal analysis recognises the subjective existence of authors in their texts as they assume ideological positions directed at the content they present and the intended audience they communicate with. The framework consists of three overarching categories that interact with one another:

- i. **Attitude**, the central conception in Appraisal Theory that revolves around the aspect of personal affect, encompassing individual emotions, evaluations of people, and the recognition of object value.
- ii. **Engagement**, the resources of inter-subjective stance that pertain to the positioning of oneself concerning the opinions of others (heterogloss) and concerning one's own opinions (monogloss).
- iii. **Graduation**, the up-scaling and down-scaling prototypicality (Focus) and intensity (Force) that pertains to how language is used to enhance or diminish the attitude and engagement expressed in a text.

Researchers have applied the underlying descriptive principles of the Appraisal framework to study other languages and to compare evaluative meanings across languages (Thompson & White, 2008). This opens up avenues for investigating the meanings present in

literary works that incorporate indigenous languages in the authors' writing style, which expands beyond the initial focus on English in the development of the Appraisal theory. The model encompasses a typology of words that encompasses emotions, opinions, author-audience engagement, and the modulation of expressed sentiments.

Appraisal theory aims to elucidate the presence of writers in their texts and their relationship with the subject matter and readers (Martin & White, 2005, pp. 1-2). It seeks to describe the various strategies employed by writers to accept, reject, praise, criticise, and persuade, and how the writers employ these methods to influence their readers (ibid). Through appraisal analysis, linguists can explore how writers employ texts to construct communities and the diverse means by which emotions and preferences are expressed. Appraisal theory also addresses how writers establish their identities within texts, their presentation in relation to readers, and the construction of an audience for their work. In the context of this study, the systematic approach provided by appraisal theory allows for the examination of evaluations in literary texts and the communication strategies employed by the selected writers to engage with their readers. The terms and definitions of appraisal presented by Martin and White (2005) are considered more comprehensive and clearer compared to earlier frameworks. Therefore, this study will employ the introduced terms of attitude, graduation, and engagement, which will be further discussed in the paper. The overall organisation of the Appraisal system is depicted in Figure 1 below.

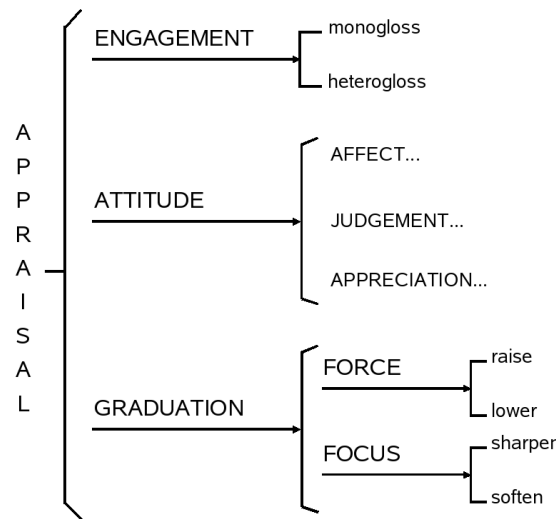


Figure 1. Appraisal System (Martin and White, 2005)

3.3.1 Attitude

Adjectives are crucial in expressing attitude, enabling differentiation of Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation (Martin & White, 2005, p. 58). Affect, related to emotions, holds a central position in the attitude framework, categorising positive and negative feelings conveyed by the author (Martin & White, 2005, p. 58). Judgement focuses on critiquing or praising behaviour, actions, words, beliefs, motivations, etc., expressed explicitly or subtly (White, 2005, p. 17). Personal and non-personal evaluations of societal appropriateness, customs, and ethics are apparent. Writers convey their emotional experiences while evaluating characters, impacting their esteem within the community (White, 2005).

Judgement consists of two primary sub-systems: social sanction and social esteem. Social esteem refers to the perception of being esteemed by the public, representing the idea of 'normality' (Iedema, Feez & White, 1994, p. 14). It focuses on how uncommon one is (e.g., *Trained affiliates of the youth wing group on....*), 'capacity', how proficient they are e.g. *The organising secretary of the team is an intelligent comrade* and 'tenacity', how unyielding they are (e.g., *The strong-minded Minister of Home Affairs ensured the plans were completed*) (Martin & White, 2005; White, 2007). Social sanction judgements deal with 'veracity' (how honest one is e.g. *The doctors were very candid with each other in the conversation on the COVID-19 pandemic*) and 'propriety' (how principled one is e.g. *The haughty police officer continued advancing...*). Research on social esteem as a component of judgement has demonstrated its prominence in oral communication, manifested through diverse approaches and channels like tales, anecdotes and chatter (Eggs & Slade, 1997; Martin & White, 2005).

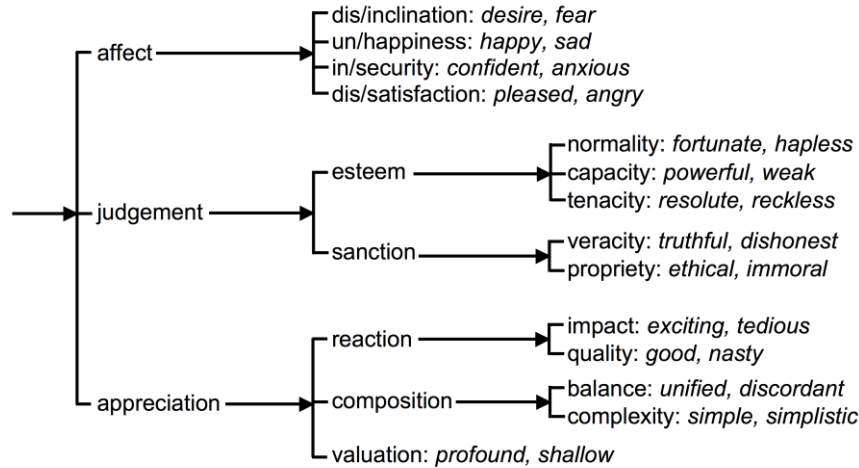


Figure 2. The Attitude System (Martin and White, 2005)

Appreciation involves evaluating things, artefacts, procedures, and states of affairs rather than social conduct, focusing on positive and negative assessments (White, 2005, p. 13). It encompasses aesthetic evaluation, assessing the value and worth of things such as creations and performances, reflecting the writer's attitude towards them (Martin & White, 2005, p. 56). Appreciation also extends to non-aesthetic categories of "social valuation," including interpretations of significance and harm (White, 2005, p. 24). Additionally, human participants may be subject to appreciation, not primarily based on the rightness or wrongness of their behaviour, but as entities rather than active participants (White, 2005, pp. 13, 25).

3.3.2 The Interplay Between Attitudinal Values

Affect, judgement, and appreciation as attitudinal values are interconnected. Affect, being the primary value, deals with the expression of emotions. Considering the complete textual setting, it is challenging to perceive emotionally detached judgements or appreciations. However, it is possible to differentiate affect from judgement and appreciation. Affect denotations are realised through an oral procedure experienced by a mindful participant, whereas judgement and appreciation are institutionalised emotions reorganised as qualities existing in the appraised phenomena (Martin & White, 2005, p. 45; White, 2007), for example, *Thus, a stunning goal* (Appreciation: reaction (+), and *That's a stunning sportsperson* (Judgement: capacity (+)).

The connection between judgement and appreciation can be ambiguous. Nevertheless, it is argued that a negative evaluation (judgement) of something or someone (appreciation: valuation) necessarily suggests a negative assessment of the person responsible for creating it (Martin & White, 2005). For example,

A **talented** student (judgement: +capacity)

A **well-drafted** essay (Appreciation: +valuation)

Attitudes can be elicited in three ways (Martin & White, 2005; White, 2005) as follows:

- a. **lexical metaphor** utilisation
- b. Non-core lexis selection - **flagging**
- c. Ideation options - **affording**

Attitude evaluation involves considering the emotion sources and authors' depiction of authorial attitude or others' emotions (Ethelston, 2009; Hunston & Thompson, 2000; Bednarek, 2008; Martin & White, 2005; White, 2005). Through an authorial stance, writers aim to elicit solidarity, sympathy, or alignment with the depicted emotional response (White, 2005, p. 8). Readers' interpretations of a text depend on their reading positions, influenced by their beliefs and expectations, leading to diverse evaluations (White, 2005, p. 7). This process allows writers to emphasise their subjective presence in the communication, acknowledging that readers bring their perspectives to the text.

Appraisal theory, as a relatively recent framework, offers a suitable foundation and theoretical framework for language analysis. Evaluation analysis in discourse is a specific focus of this study, but further research is required to enhance its efficacy. This study, therefore, aims to contribute to this ongoing research by critically examining aspects of linguistic theory based on findings from literary discourse. By doing so, it seeks to engage with the challenges and complexities of appraisal theory and contribute to its development.

3.3.3 Engagement

Engagement within the framework of appraisal theory focuses on the linguistic tools employed by writers to express their attitude to the value positions referred to in the utterance and towards the intended audience (Martin & White, 2005, p. 92). It encompasses the linguistic

phenomena through which writers interpret their perspectives and employ resources to assume specific stances to the objects of their evaluations. The concept of engagement aligns with Stubbs (1996) in acknowledging that all utterances convey a particular point of view. Additionally, it resonates with Bakhtin (1981) by recognising that utterances occur within a broader context of other utterances on the same topic and that they carry both implicit and explicit responses to one another. In essence, all texts are inherently dialogic as they encode the authors' reactions to their experiences.

The engagement system, drawing from dialogism and heteroglossia developed by Bakhtin and Voloshinov, recognises that all texts are inherently dialogic (Martin & White, 2005). This means that texts respond to something, affirm certain ideas, anticipate possible objections or responses, and seek support. Every sentence is written against the backdrop of prior discourse, whether real, potential, or imagined and takes into account the readership (Martin & White, 2005). In other words, texts are not isolated entities but are in constant dialogue with other texts and readers, shaping and being shaped by the ongoing conversation. The engagement system acknowledges the dynamic and interactive nature of language use, where texts are influenced by and respond to the broader discursive context. This can be detected in such situations when authors overtly utilise words such as *apparently*; *I trust*; and *certainly*. In these instances, the textual voice primarily functions to acknowledge, interact with, and align itself with positions that present alternatives to those being put forth in the text (White, 2007).

Engagement encompasses both a retrospective aspect, where authors acknowledge and align or disalign with the viewpoints of others who have previously evaluated a subject, and a prospective aspect, where they anticipate the answers of their targeted audience and incorporate counter-responses in the original text. Writers' alignment is determined by the degree of agreement in terms of attitudinal assessments and assumptions about the world. If their appraisals are in approximate agreement, they are aligned, whereas if there is disagreement, they are considered disaligned (Martin & White, 2005).

These relationships can be broadly classified as monogloss and heterogloss. Monogloss denotes utterances that implicitly reference other background utterances, while heterogloss involves explicit or implicit acknowledgement of a range of converging and diverging socio-semiotic realities. The engagement perspective regards texts as heteroglossic, as they explicitly address or tacitly recognise these socio-semiotic realities. It focuses on linguistic resources that indicate the presence of such insinuations in the utterance and the writer's perspective on them. This perspective challenges the traditional notion that some words are impartial, accurate or objective, while others are considered opinionated or attitudinal. It highlights the interconnection of different voices and perspectives within texts, underscoring the active role of language in conveying evaluations and attitudes.

Within the framework of engagement, heteroglossic utterances can be further classified into two main subcategories: dialogic contraction (intra-vocalisation) and dialogic expansion (extra-vocalisation) (Martin & White, 2005, p. 102). Dialogic contraction (intra-vocalisation) involves the use of linguistic resources to reject or refute alternative positions. In this case, the author explicitly challenges or dismisses opposing viewpoints, narrowing the range of perspectives being considered. On the other hand, dialogic expansion (extra-vocalisation) encompasses the use of linguistic resources that actively accommodate or acknowledge dialogically alternate views and voices. Authors employing dialogic expansion demonstrate an openness to different perspectives, allowing for a broader range of viewpoints to be considered within the discourse.

These two subcategories reflect how authors engage with heteroglossia, either by narrowing down the range of perspectives or by actively incorporating and accommodating alternative positions. By utilising these resources, writers shape the dialogic nature of their texts and indicate their stance towards different viewpoints.

3.3.4 Graduation

Graduation is central in the meaning-making process within the appraisal framework. It provides resources for grading attitudinal meanings and engagement values, as emphasised by Martin and White (2005, p. 135). Graduation denotes the linguistic tools employed by writers to modify the intensity or strength of their appraisals. It is an inherent characteristic of all attitudinal meanings, including affect, judgment, and appreciation. These meanings can be expressed with varying positivity or negativity degrees through lexico-grammatical realisations (Martin & White, 2005, p. 135). Graduation is also generally present in the engagement system, as the values of engagement scale per the writer's level of commitment to a particular value position (Martin & White, 2005).

In essence, gradability is intrinsic to both attitude and engagement. In terms of attitude, gradability allows writers to express different levels of positivity or negativity. In the context of engagement, gradability scales the writer's conviction or commitment in their utterances. Graduation, therefore, occupies a fundamental spot in the entire Appraisal system, as both attitude and engagement can be seen as fields of gradability that contrast primarily in the kind of interpretations that are graded (Martin & White, 2005, p. 136).

Graduation grades interpretations through a dual semantic process consisting of force and focus. Force focuses on the lexico-grammatical words which reduce or raise the capacity of the gradable rate (e.g., *They were not impressed. I was extremely disappointed*). On the other hand, focus is concerned with the attitude and engagement values that, usually, are ungradable from a pragmatic viewpoint (e.g., *That is an oversight, this was a grave oversight*). The resource of graduation is critical in the assessment of literary discourse. It will reflect the author's level of engagement and the dialogical narrowing and widening in relation to existing and probable suggestions. Figure 3 below provides an overview of graduation resources.

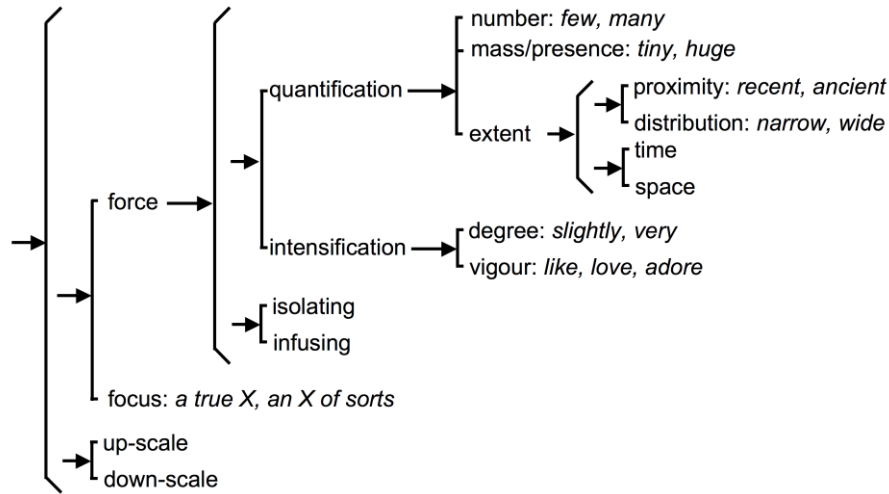


Figure 3. System of Graduation (Martin and White, 2005)

3.4 The Pragma-Dialectic Theory of Argumentation

This section focuses on reviewing the pragma-dialectic theory of argumentation originally advanced by van Eemeren and Grootendorst in various works published between 1984 and 2004. The theory has since been extended by van Eemeren and Houtlosser in 2002 and 2009, as well as by van Eemeren in 2009 and 2010, and by van Eemeren, Garssen, Krabbe et al. in 2014. Argumentation arises as a reaction to or expectation of, a difference of view, regardless of whether this variance of view is actual or perceived (van Eemeren et al., 2014, p. 2). Linguists recognise the pervasive presence of argumentation in various discourse settings, including literary works. Therefore, it becomes crucial to understand what argumentation entails and its relevance in the field of literary discourse studies.

Argumentation is not solely a structure, but primarily a complex communicative act involving the strategic combination of moves (van Eemeren et al., 2014). This communicative function characterises the phenomenological value of argumentation within the field of pragmatics. The functional intent behind argumentation is mirrored in the discourse's operational plan. Additionally, argumentation is an interactive act complex aimed at prompting a reply indicating the reception of the defended viewpoint (van Eemeren et al., 2014). It is essentially part of a dialogue with the addressee and potentially others involved in reaching them. This dialogue can manifest explicitly in a discussion or implicitly when targeting a non-interactive audience. The presence of explicit or implicit dialogue in the discourse moulds the complex interactional act of argumentation.

Given these two critical standpoints critical for understanding the nature of argumentation van Eemeren et al., (2014) describe argumentation, *expressis verbis*, as a communicative and interactional act complex intended to resolve a divergence of view with the addressee. This is achieved by presenting a set of propositions for which the arguer can be held accountable, to make the viewpoint in question acceptable to a rational judge who evaluates the arguments reasonably.

3.5 Strategic Manoeuvring: Bridging Rhetoric and Dialectic

Strategic manoeuvring, resulting from the combination of rhetoric and dialectic, is the continual effort made by the participants in argumentative discourse to resolve the quest for rhetorical efficiency and dialectical rationality (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2009). It addresses the challenge of balancing effectiveness with reasonableness in argumentation, as arguers seek not only understanding but also acceptance and engagement. The theory of speech acts serves a dual purpose, facilitating communication and interaction. In an argumentative discussion, language users seek to balance efficiency and rationality in their moves, considering not only their interests but also those they represent. This is particularly relevant in institutional discourse, where arguments may serve the broader interests of the public. When considering literary texts as institutions, authors strategically manoeuvre to advance arguments aligned with their ideological positions. Throughout the critical discussion and exposition, authors and readers must navigate dialectical and rhetorical objectives to reconcile preferences for effectiveness and reasonableness at each stage (van Eemeren, 2010). To attain this equilibrium, three interconnected features of strategic manoeuvring are recommended:

- A. topical potential;
- B. audience-controlled 'realignments' and
- C. linguistic strategies (van Eemeren and Garssen, 2008; van Eemeren and Houtlosser, 2009; van Eemeren, 2010).

The process of selecting from topical potential involves authors strategically choosing controversial, contentious, and advantageous topics for exposition, elaboration, and discussion. This selection is strategically aimed at resolving differences, gaining an advantage, and is

relevant to all phases of critical discussion. For example, during the argumentation stage, both sides carefully choose effective arguments to defend or attack in the given situation.

Authors aim to make their moves optimally appropriate to the reader by considering audience or reader demands and considering their perspectives and predilections (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2009, p. 6). Throughout the argumentation process, participants establish "communion" with readers through the use of commonly accepted opinions (*endoxa*), concessions, and contextual commitments (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2009, p. 6). The immediate readers, who are part of the wider audience, are integral in the resolution process.

The strategic use of presentational and linguistic devices is crucial in argumentation. Authors not only select elements for their arguments but also determine how to present them for maximum impact. Figures of speech and thought are particularly important linguistic devices for effective argument presentation (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2009). However, the strategic value of a figure of speech depends on its ability to effectively and reasonably support the author's argument. Presentational devices used in the resolution process are considered strategic when they bring new perspectives or insights to meaning resolution, highlighting the role of stylistics and language in argumentation. Arguers aim to win the argument through both reasonable and effective language use. The study emphasises how language is employed to strategically position oneself, agree or disagree with the audience, and demonstrate participation in the advanced viewpoint. Strategic manoeuvring is evident in argumentative moves that encompass three central features as summarised below:

- i. the selection from the range of available alternatives at that point in the discourse, known as the topical potential;
- ii. adapting to the demands of the audience, aligning with the frame of reference of the intended listeners or readers; and
- iii. utilising presentational devices, employing suitable stylistic and expressive means to serve the intended purpose.

The three elements: topical systems examination, audience orientation, and stylistics are the main focus of three established rhetorical research traditions. They converge in oral or written argumentation and are concurrently present in discourse (van Eemeren et al., 2014). Strategic manoeuvring occurs across all the stages in the development of argumentation to resolve variances of views based on merit. Participants pursue the dialectical objective of each stage while aiming for optimal rhetorical outcomes (van Eemeren et al., 2014). This study combines an argumentative perspective and a discourse-analytic perspective, utilising the appraisal and extended pragma-dialectical philosophies to examine literary texts in certain narratives. The following section discusses the motivation behind accepting the complementary nature of these frameworks.

3.6 Appraisal and the Extended Pragma-Dialectical Theory: Common Ground

This paper has examined the key elements of the appraisal and extended pragma-dialectic concepts highlighting their connection and proposing a complementary relationship for analysing and evaluating literary discourse. The paper argues that analysing and evaluating literary discourse from the two viewpoints offers an experiential approach rather than a restrictive one. The philosophies share comparable onsets in discourse analysis. Appraisal emphasises overt and implied language-use to convey evaluation, whether directly or indirectly (White, 2007; Martin & White, 2005). The appraisal expert aims to comprehend the meanings being communicated, whether they are expressed overtly or covertly. In the pragma-dialectic concept, the meta-theoretical concepts of socialisation, externalisation, dialectification and functionalisation are central. Externalisation pertains to making one's thoughts known, and the theory focuses on argumentations that are overtly or covertly expressed. The theories prioritise the analysis of externalised language, avoiding excessive focus on psychology. This consensus on the starting points of analysing and evaluating discourse allows these concepts to complementarily study literary discourse.

The appraisal framework, considering the variability of language use in different contexts, focuses on analysing and evaluating how writers assume specific positions and relations. It recognises the role of linguistic resources in conveying these positions and relations in the communicative event. According to the theory, the selection of specific lexical or syntactic items aims to introduce fresh perspectives and establish connections between authors and readers engaged in the discourse. This viewpoint is not in conflict with the pragma-dialectic theory.

During a critical argument intended to resolve a conflict of views, the participants express their disagreements at the confrontation phase and assume positions in that opening phase. In the argumentation segment, they present their arguments to persuade each other and reconcile their differing opinions. In presenting their opinions, the participants must manoeuvre strategically and adapt to the demands of the audience. Similar to the idea of alignment and disalignment in the concept of appraisal, arguers must convince the audience by employing persuasive arguments and utilising linguistic resources effectively.

With the argumentative framework of the pragma-dialectic model, the appraisal framework can effectively illustrate how parties in literary discourse adopt specific positions and align or disalign themselves with each other or the audience at different phases of the process to resolve differences. For illustration, the appraisal framework can demonstrate the use of the graduation resource to showcase how one expresses their disagreements or doubts strongly during the confrontation phase. Both the appraisal and pragma-dialectic theories recognise the significance of context in analysing and evaluating discourse. Comprehending the attitudinal meanings conveyed and the writer-reader interaction necessitates an understanding of the linguistic, socio-cultural or situational context of the discourse. Without context, phenomena like dialogical contraction and expansion can be misinterpreted or inaccurately assessed. For example, without considering the context, dialogical expansion may mistakenly be interpreted and assessed as a deficiency of confidence or decisiveness.

The pragma-dialectic framework incorporates the pragmatic aspect into argumentative discourse analysis, acknowledging the significance of context in the analysis and evaluation of language (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004). In this framework, both the protagonist and antagonist, being mindful of the pragmatic and dialectic situation, carefully choose the most suitable topic, adapt to the audience's expectations, and utilise available presentational resources when presenting their pro-arguments and counter-arguments. By considering context, a more comprehensive understanding of how language is strategically employed in argumentative discourse can be achieved.

Aristotle viewed rhetoric as a counterpart to dialectic, and the integration of the two perspectives reveals that their goals are complementary rather than contradictory (Krabbe, 2002; van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2002). To bridge the potential gap between rhetoric and dialectic, van Eemeren and Houtlosser introduced the strategic manoeuvring concept, thereby extending the pragma-dialectical approach. They propose a heuristic method for analysing argumentative discourse, including literary discourse, in which the parties involved in the resolution process strive to achieve not only reasonable but also effective argumentation. This approach aims to balance both rhetorical and dialectical objectives, recognising the harmonious relationship between the two.

The appraisal resources of attitude, engagement, and graduation, which form the language of persuasion, provide valuable insights into the effective use of language in winning arguments. The pragma-dialectic theory offers an understanding of the character of argumentative discourse, while the appraisal model provides resources for analysing argumentation language. By integrating these two approaches, a comprehensive study and evaluation of literary discourse and argumentative discourse in general can be achieved. By adopting an appraisal and evaluation perspective, examining strategic moves utilised by parties during the process to resolve arguments, such as dissociation, fallacies, and uncovering inconsistencies in the opponent's arguments, can be thoroughly examined. This approach facilitates a deeper understanding of the persuasive strategies employed in discourse.

4. Discussion

The Appraisal Framework and Extended Pragma-dialectic Theory offer structured, logical approaches to studying literature, moving beyond subjective interpretation by focusing on how language conveys meaning, emotion, and argumentation (Martin & White, 2005; van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004). This highlights the value of linguistic tools in providing a more objective analysis of literary texts. By integrating linguistics into literary analysis, this study bridges two disciplines that have historically been at odds. The application of linguistic theories such as Appraisal and Pragma-dialectic Argumentation challenges the notion that literary texts should only be evaluated aesthetically, revealing the layers of meaning constructed through language use (Bednarek, 2007; Martinez, 2011).

Bakhtin's theory of dialogism demonstrates that texts are inherently dialogic, involving multiple voices and viewpoints. This study applies Bakhtin's concept to show how literary works engage in a constant dialogue with other texts, readers, and societal ideologies, enriching the interpretation of meaning and intention (Bakhtin, 1981; Kristeva, 1986). Literary texts not only mirror but actively shape ideologies. Through the lens of Appraisal Theory, this study illustrates how authors use language to express, challenge, and reinforce ideological positions, thus influencing readers' perspectives on societal norms and values (Morris, 1993; Culler, 1997).

The Pragma-dialectic Theory reveals that literary texts often function as forms of argumentation, where authors present and defend viewpoints, challenge counterarguments, and seek to persuade the reader. This approach provides a new way to understand how authors build their cases through narrative and linguistic strategies (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004). The Appraisal Framework's focus on attitude shows how texts engage readers by expressing emotions, judgments, and appreciation. By analysing these attitudinal values, the study reveals how authors strategically evoke empathy, trust, or opposition, guiding readers towards specific interpretations of characters and events (Ajani, 2024; Martin & White, 2005).

Kristeva's concept of intertextuality highlights how texts gain meaning through their relationships with other texts. This study argues that literary works are not isolated but are interconnected with other cultural and social narratives, thus broadening the scope of literary analysis (Kristeva, 1986; Thibault, 1994). Van Eemeren's theory of strategic manoeuvring, which combines rhetoric and dialectic, explains how authors in literary texts balance persuasion with logical argumentation. This study demonstrates how authors carefully craft their language to both persuade and engage readers, often aligning their arguments with the audience's values (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2009).

The concept of graduation in Appraisal Theory shows how authors scale the intensity of their evaluations and arguments. This study illustrates how literary texts employ language to subtly or overtly increase emotional impact or argumentative strength, shaping the reader's response (Martin & White, 2005). By using the Appraisal Framework and the Extended Pragma-dialectic Theory, this study proves that linguistic theories offer a robust set of tools for analysing how literature functions as a medium for communication, argumentation, and persuasion. These approaches contribute to a deeper understanding of how language operates in literary texts to influence readers (White, 2007; van Eemeren et al., 2014).

5. Conclusion

This paper has explored the connection between literature and linguistics, demonstrating how literary discourse can be analysed using specific linguistic theories: the modified Appraisal Framework (Martin & White, 2005) and the Extended Pragma-dialectic Theory of Argumentation (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1984, 1992, 2004). These theories offer effective and logical methods for studying literature in a systematic and objective way. They highlight the linguistic tools authors use to express, negotiate, and normalise particular viewpoints and ideologies. Additionally, these frameworks show how texts persuade readers by justifying or challenging claims and

counterclaims.

The importance of linguistics in literature has been underscored by engaging with Bakhtin's concept of dialogism, which supports the integration of these linguistic approaches into literary analysis. By using Appraisal Theory and the Extended Pragma-dialectic Theory, this paper provides a solid foundation for analysing literary works through a discourse-analytic lens, offering new ways to understand how texts convey meaning and engage readers.

Acknowledgments

Not applicable

Authors' contributions

For a manuscript with multiple authors, it is important to provide a clear description of each author's contribution to the study. We kindly request that you provide further clarification regarding the contributions of each author to this manuscript. Please specify the individual roles and contributions of each author in the research process, data analysis, and manuscript preparation.

Funding

Not applicable

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Informed consent

Not applicable.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Sciedu Press.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

Open access

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

References

- Aitchison, J. (1972). Mini-malapropisms. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders*, 7(1), 38-43.
<https://doi.org/10.3109/13682827209011552>
- Ajani, O.A. (2024). Enhancing Pre-Service Teacher Education Curriculum for English Language Instruction in South African Classrooms: Navigating Technological Advancements and Cultural Diversity, *World Journal of English Language*, 14(6), 234-243.
<https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v14n6p234>
- Allen, G. (2000). *Intertextuality*. London: Graham Allen. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203131039>
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). "Discourse in the Novel." In *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, edited by Michael Holquist, translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, 259-423. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1987). *The Dialogic Imagination*. Translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Barfield, O. (1964). *Poetic Diction: A Study in Meaning*. London: McGraw-Hill.

- Bednarek, M. (2007). Teaching English Literature and Linguistics Using Corpus Stylistic Methods. In *Bridging Discourses: ASFLA 2007 Online Proceedings*.
- Culler, J. (1997). *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: OUP.
- Eggins, S., & Slade, D. (1997). *Analysing Casual Conversation*. London: Cassell.
- Ethelston, G. (2009). 'Appraisal in evangelical sermons: the projection and functions of misguided voices,' *Text and Talk: An interdisciplinary Journal of language, discourse and communication studies* 29: 6, Walter de Gruyter, pp 683- 704. <https://doi.org/10.1515/TEXT.2009.035>
- Hunston, S., & Thompson, G. (eds.) (2000). *Evaluation in text: Authorial stance and the construction of discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198238546.001.0001>
- Iedema, R., Feez, S., & White, P. R. R. (1994). *Media literacy*, Sydney: Disadvantaged schools' program, NSW Department of School Education.
- Krabbe, E. C. (2002). 'Meeting in the house of Callias: An Historical Perspective on the Rhetoric and Dialectic' in van Eemeren, F. H. and P. Houtlosser (eds.). pp 29- 40. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-015-9948-1_3
- Kristeva, J. (1986). *The Kristeva Reader: Introduction*. Toril Moi. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Lodge, D. (1966). *Language of Fiction*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Martin, J. R., & White, P. R. R. (2005). *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230511910>
- Mart ínez, D. F. (2011). *Introducing Discourse Analysis in Class*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Matiyenga, T. C. (2012). *Appraisal in Literary Texts: A Study of Appraisal Resources Used in Mission to Kala and Scarlet Song*. [Unpublished master's thesis]. Midlands State University.
- Morris, P. (1993). *Literature and Feminism*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Paltridge, B. (2006). *Discourse Analysis: An Introduction*. London: Continuum.
- Sell, R. D., (ed.) (1991). *Literary Pragmatics*. London, Routledge.
- Stubbs, M. (1996). "Towards a modal grammar of English: A matter of prolonged fieldwork." In *Text and Corpus Analysis*, 196–228. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Thibault, P. J. (1994). "Intertextuality." In Ron E. Asher (Ed) *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics, Volume 4*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Thompson, E., White, P. R. R., & Kitley, P. (2008). "'Objectivity" and "hard news" reporting across cultures: Comparing the news report in English, French, Japanese and Indonesian journalism', *Journalism studies* 9:2. Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, pp 212-228, accessed 2023/06/09. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700701848261>
- van Eemeren, F. H. (2009). *Examining Argumentation in Context: Fifteen studies on strategic maneuvering*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1075/aic.1>
- van Eemeren, F. H. (2010). *Strategic Manoeuvring in Argumentative Discourse*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511616389>
- van Eemeren, F. H. & Grootendorst, R. (2004). *A Systematic theory of argumentation: The pragma-dialectical approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- van Eemeren, F. H., & Garssen, B. (2008). *Controversy and confrontation: Relating controversy analysis with argumentation theory*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1075/cvs.6>
- van Eemeren, F. H., Garssen, B., Krabbe, B. E. C. W., Henkemans, F. S., Verheij, B., & Wagemans, J. J. M. (2014). *Handbook of Argumentation Theory*. Dordrecht: Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-9473-5>
- van Eemeren, F. H., & Grootendorst, R. (1992). *Argumentation, communication, and fallacies: A pragma-dialectical perspective*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- van Eemeren, F. H., & Grootendorst, R. (1984). *Speech acts in argumentative discussions: A theoretical model for the analysis of discussions directed towards solving conflicts of opinion*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110846089>
- van Eemeren, F. H. and P. Houtlosser eds. (2002). *Dialectic and rhetoric: The warp and woof of argumentation analysis*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-015-9948-1>
- van Eemeren, F. H. & Houtlosser, P. (2009). 'Strategic maneuvering: Examining argumentation in context' in van Eemeren, F. H. (ed.). pp 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1075/aic.1.02eem>

White, P. R. R. (2005). 'The language of Attitude, Arguability and Interpersonal Positioning'. Manuscript. (Printout Version)
(www.grammatics.com/appraisal accessed 2023/09/10)

White, P. R. R. (2007). *Appraisal*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. (Available at www.grammatics.com/appraisal accessed 2023/09/11)