

An Appraisal analysis of interpersonal meaning in letters to Editors Written written in English and Vietnamese

Phân tích nghĩa liên nhân trong chuyên mục phản hồi của độc giả gửi ban biên tập bằng
tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt theo thuyết Đánh giá

Van Thu Van^a, Ha Nhu Hang^{bc*}
Văn Thu Vân^a, Hà Thị Như Hằng^{bc*}

^aEast Gia Lai's Ethnic Minority Boarding High School, Gia Lai, Vietnam

^aTrường THPT Dân tộc nội trú Đông Gia Lai, Gia Lai, Việt Nam

^bSchool of Computer Sciences, Duy Tan University, Danang, 550000, Vietnam

^bTrường Khoa học máy tính, Đại học Duy Tân, Đà Nẵng, Việt Nam

^cGraduate School, Duy Tan University, Danang, 550000, Vietnam

^cBan Sau đại học, Đại học Duy Tân, Đà Nẵng, Việt Nam

(Ngày nhận bài: 05/03/2021, ngày phản biện xong: 15/03/2021, ngày chấp nhận đăng: 29/03/2021)

Abstract

This paper investigates the interpersonal meaning of English and Vietnamese letters to the Editors by using Appraisal Theory, which focuses on the interpersonal metafunction of language. The data were chosen from 100 samples of letters to the Editors. Attitude system was employed to find out the similarities and differences in construing interpersonal meaning between English letters to the Editors (ELTEs) and Vietnamese letters to the Editors (VLTEs). The findings of the study reveal that in terms of frequency of Attitude values distributed in the two sets of data, the common feature shared by the two languages is that both English and Vietnamese writers used a wide range of three systems of Attitude in their letters. Appreciation is predominant in the attitudinal coding. The second highest is Judgement found in the two languages. Affect is found to occur at the lowest rate in the two corpora. As regards the resources of evaluative language chosen by the writers with the aim of highlighting the interpersonal meaning, the study reveals that English and Vietnamese letters to the editors share some similarities at level of various lexical items to convey emotional reactions. Via Affect, Judgement and Appreciation analysis, the similarities and differences between ELTEs and VLTEs in the way they use subtypes of values to construe interpersonal meaning are pointed out.

Keywords: Appraisal theory; attitude system; interpersonal metafunction; English letters to the editors (ELTEs); Vietnamese letters to the editors (VLTEs).

Tóm tắt

Bài báo này nghiên cứu nghĩa liên nhân trong chuyên mục phản hồi của độc giả gửi ban biên tập bằng tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt. Thông qua việc sử dụng thuyết đánh giá, tập trung vào việc phân tích tập các chức năng ngôn ngữ để xử lý dữ liệu gồm 100 mẫu thư gửi cho ban biên tập. Hệ thống Thái độ đã được sử dụng để tìm ra những điểm giống và khác

* Corresponding Author: Ha Nhu Hang; School of Computer Sciences, Duy Tan University, Danang, 550000, Vietnam; Graduate School, Duy Tan University, Danang, 550000, Vietnam.

Email: hatnhuhang@duytan.edu.vn

nhau trong cách hiểu ý nghĩa giữa các cá nhân trong các thư tiếng Anh (ELTEs) và thư tiếng Việt (VLTE). Kết quả của nghiên cứu cho thấy xét về tần suất của các giá trị Thái độ trong hai bộ dữ liệu, người viết tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt đều sử dụng một loạt ba hệ thống Thái độ trong các bức thư của họ. Thứ tự cao thấp của các hệ thống thái độ này được xếp như sau: Sự đánh giá cao, Sự phán xét, Sự ảnh hưởng. Liên quan đến các nguồn ngôn ngữ đánh giá được người viết lựa chọn với mục đích làm nổi bật nghĩa liên nhân, nghiên cứu cho thấy rằng thư tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt gửi cho các biên tập viên có một số điểm tương đồng về mức độ dùng các loại từ khác nhau để truyền tải cảm xúc. Thông qua phân tích Ảnh hưởng, Phán xét và Đánh giá cao, những điểm giống và khác nhau giữa ELTE và VLTE kết quả có thể sử dụng để xây dựng các nghĩa liên nhân khác nhau.

Từ khóa: Thuyết đánh giá; hệ thống thái độ; Nghĩa liên nhân; Thư gửi ban biên tập bằng Tiếng Anh; Thư gửi ban biên tập bằng Tiếng Việt.

1. Introduction

With the trend of global integration and development, the media, an essential and indispensable tool, takes an important role in our life. It is also a mean to bring us to the world and makes the world known to us. One of the most popular, paramount sorts of mass media, the main sources for spreading news and events throughout the world today, is online newspapers. We, especially, can keep track on the latest news of every areas happening all over the world, from or with every part of the world through online news. There is a variety of items in an online article nowadays. The up-to-the-minute news and events of serious, time-sensitive issues of politics, economics, business, technology, science, education, etc which are immediately reported by journalists are regarded as hard news while arts, entertainment and lifestyle are considered as soft news. It can be believed that most newspaper publishers are highly aware of leaving a place for communities to discuss, contribute, share, or address common issues spurred by news articles. And this site for reader contribution in an article is under the terms of opinion pieces, which involves Editorials, Op-Ed, and Letters to the editor. Among them, Letters to the Editors (LTEs) section which is ranked as one of the most widely read items is an important part of newspapers. It is calculated that about half of readers indicate reading the LTEs (Hynds, 1994). The roles of LTEs are of great

importance in interactive media. In a written way of talking to readers of a regularly printed publication, it aims to express writer's opinions with respect to previously published articles, to offer an idea, to raise awareness, comment on an issue or suggest a solution. LTEs, more importantly, enables the writer's voice to be heard in the community; it is expressed to educate the public, influence public opinion. Language, a way used to transmit news in general, in LTEs in particular, has become the most effective means in news media through which people can share information, convey our ideas as well as make the public sphere become a global interconnectedness of media. On account of this importance, it is essential to have the knowledge of language used in letters to the editor.

In general, newspaper editors may receive many LTEs on any given topic, but they are not obligated to publish all; they want pieces that not only display expertise; but they are also well written, timely and provocative, all the hallmarks of any good nonfiction writing. Thus, the LTEs' writers have to choose the source of language to demonstrate its values to the readers. The writers always put an emphasis on the use of the linguistic resources for which they come to express opinions or attitudes towards people or things, negotiate and convey evaluation and position oneself with respect to the evaluations of other people, which is regarded as the interpersonal meaning and

realized through appraisal theory by Martin and White (2005). Presently, the study on interpersonal meaning of different aspects of discourse is becoming increasingly popular. However, the investigation of interpersonal meaning in the genre of news captured from the framework of Appraisal theory has little been observed. Specifically, research on LTEs is still relatively sparse. This study aims to investigate Interpersonal meaning from the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), based on Appraisal framework proposed by Martin and White (2005). Attitudinal values will be employed to explore this mode of meaning in 100 pices of English and Vietnamese LTEs. The findings of the study will be of great help to Vietnamese learners of English as a foreign and second language, especially those who have paid attention to editing and writing LTEs section in articles.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Letters to the editors (LTEs) as a genre

Hyland (2004) states that a genre is a term for grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to recurring situations. According to Iedema et al. (1994), there are different sub-genres of media in terms of the functions they serve for a particular communicative purpose. LTEs are considered as a professional genre which are "products of a set of established procedures that form an important part of the disciplinary culture within a profession" Bhatia (1993, page number). They are defined as letters written by readers of a newspaper, magazine, or other sources on topics relevant to the publication's audience. They address diverse topics, from commentary on local, state, national, and international current events, to responses to opinions and stories previously put forth in the publication (Beckett, 2008).

2.2. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

SFL is a linguistic school, developed by Halliday, describing and models language in functional than formal terms. SFL views language as a recourse for making meaning descriptions which are based on extensive analyses of written or spoken texts (Halliday, 1995). There are three social functions or metafunctions of language: Interpersonal, Textual, and Ideational. The *ideational* metafunction is realized in transitivity and serves to represent situations and events in the world and the entities, actions and processes involved (Halliday, 2007). The *interpersonal* metafunction conveys how language is used to interact with other people, and how language is used to express judgments and attitudes. The *textual* metafunction is about the verbal world, especially the flow of information in a text, and is concerned with clauses as messages.

2.3. Interpersonal meaning

Interpersonal meaning is a fulfillment in clarification of the metafunctions of language. It is a mode of meaning for people to negotiate their attitudes and feelings in social relationships with others. Butt et al. (2000) asserts that the interpersonal metafunction uses language to describe interaction, to show our propositions, to explain ideas about obligation and inclination, and to express our points of view or attitudes. In Martin and White's new book (2005) - *The language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*, interpersonal meaning can be construed by one of the major discourse semantic resources from appraisal perspectives. From this view, the interpersonal function of language serves to establish and maintain social relations. Appraisal is defined as an approach to exploring, describing and explaining the way language is used to evaluate, to adopt stances, to construct textual, to manage interpersonal

positioning and relationships (White, 2005). It offers a functional model of interpersonal meaning by attending to three axes along which the speaker's/writer's intersubjective stance may vary. Appraisal system has three interacting domains: *Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation*. The language resources for amplifying attitudinal meanings coded to show the domain attitude are under the terms of *Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation*.

- *Affect* deals with resources for expressing feelings or author's emotion as represented by the texts; it evaluates an entity, process or state of affairs emotionally. Affect is typically realized through mental processes of reaction, attributive relationals, nominalization, and it may be realized as nouns. Values are also classified into Authorial and Non-authorial ones (Martin and White, 2005).
- *Judgement* refers to the act of judging peoples' character in discourse; it also deals with author's attitude towards the *human behavior* ethically. This type of evaluation is divided into two broad categories and five narrower subtypes within these two categories (Martin and White, 2005). *Social esteem* is the region of judgments in which the evaluation of people's conduct is based on social ethics and on a standard of appropriateness. In this region there are judgments of *normality, capacity, and tenacity*. *Social sanction* is the region of judgments in which the evaluation of people's conduct is based on legal/ religious rules. Those rules on which social sanctions are based are usually confided and written; they may be legal or moral and hence judgments of social sanction turn on questions of legality and morality. This region comprises judgments of two traits involving *veracity*, and *propriety*.

- *Appreciation* is the system by which aesthetic or functional evaluation of things, processes and states of affairs is made. It typically evaluates natural objects, manufactured objects, texts, as well as more abstract constructs such as plans and policies. Like both *affect* and *judgment*, values of *appreciation* have either positive or negative status harmonious versus discordant, beautiful versus ugly, etc.

3. Methodology

3.1. Data collection

English and Vietnamese letters to the Editor (50 letters to the Editor written in English (ELTEs) and 50 letters to the Editor written in Vietnamese (VLTEs)) were collected from two newspapers of high prestige and wide circulation rates. The New York Times (<http://www.nytime.com>) is a good choice because it is the official newspaper in America and has had a long foundation since 1887; it is also read in more than 180 countries in the world. The Thanh Nien (<http://www.thanhvien.com.vn/pages>), one of the largest Vietnamese newspapers with a daily circulation of more than 400,000 copies, and provides a wide range of areas. The letters were selected with respect to their content, topic, taking into account their length with a minimum of 150 words. Data were the results of a relatively random selection from 100 texts published from June, 2009 to June, 2015. Random sampling is one of the simplest forms of collecting data from the total population. Under random sampling, each member of the subset carries an equal opportunity of being chosen as a part of the sampling process. Random sampling ensures that results obtained from the sample should approximate what would have been obtained if the entire

population had been measured (Shadish et al., 2002). The English and Vietnamese texts were classified into two types: type 1 (of from 150 to

250 words) and type 2 (of more than 250 words) in Table 1.

Table 1. Description of the Corpus

Types	Type 1 ≤ 250 words	Type 2 > 250 words	Total
ELTEs	155 (77.5%)	45 (22.5%)	200
VLTEs	176 (88%)	24 (12%)	200

3.2. Data Analysis Procedures

With the collected data from 100 samples of letters to the Editor written in English and in Vietnamese, the procedure for analyzing will follow. The data are grouped into categories: ELTEs (English Letters to Editors) and VLTEs (Vietnamese letters to Editors) to identify the interpersonal meaning of this genre. The specific analysis will be done as follows:

- (1) Identifying, presenting, and describing the types of attitudinal meanings (Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation) in ELTEs and VLTEs.
- (2) Analyzing and counting the number of subtypes of attitude in letter.
- (3) Describing the samples qualitatively in terms of interpersonal meaning in ELTEs and VLTEs.
- (4) Describing the samples quantitatively in terms of interpersonal meaning performed in ELTEs and VLTEs, and illustrating in some tables based on the distribution of frequency of attitudinal meaning types.
- (5) Comparing the similarities, and differences in distribution of attitudinal values between the two newspapers to convey interpersonal meaning.
- (6) Discussing the results of findings on the basis of the analysis of Interpersonal meaning from the SFA perspective, the Appraisal framework by Martin and White (2005) which will be employed to

analyze in English and Vietnamese letters to the Editor.

- (7) Giving some implications for teaching and learning both languages and some suggestions for further research.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Attitude in ELTEs and VLTEs

There were 454 items of attitude in ELTEs and 505 in VLTEs. The authors of ELTEs and VLTEs are similar in the way they prefer choosing the language resources to adopt their stance towards phenomenon and to judge states of affairs to exposing their reactions to attract social evaluation. In ELTEs, of 454 attitudinal values, the dominant category is Appreciation (217 instances, accounting for 47.8%), suggesting that letters are concerned with evaluating aesthetics, form, appearance, construction, presentation or impact of objects and entities. Ranked the second is Judgment with 154 instances, making up 33.9%. The value of Affect is found to account for the lowest percentage, which explains the fact that ELTEs do not focus much on exposing emotional reactions to what have been reflected (Figure 1).

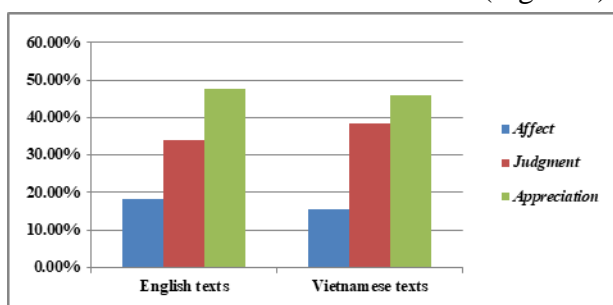


Figure 1: General Distribution of Attitudinal resources in ELTEs and VLTEs

The following are the examples of Affect, Judgement and Appreciation in ELTEs taken from the collected data:

(EL 3) I truly **hope** – [Affect - Inclination - desire] that Margaret Morganroth Gullette and those she **loves** [Affect - Inclination - desire] never experience the disease as my family has. I **implore** her not to use her public platform to minimize the **horror** [Affect- disinclination] that is Alzheimer’s. It is, as has been accurately described, **death on an installment** [App - reaction] plan.

(EL 5) **May** [Judgement - cability] she use her voice instead to **draw positive attention to elder-care issues**, [Judgement - implicit] including the profound emotional and financial costs of providing decent care. You do not need to minimize **Alzheimer’s to advance such concerns**.

Here are some instances of attitudinal items in VLTEs:

(VL 1b) Năm nào cũng vậy, tại các dịp lễ hội đều có những hình ảnh **phản cảm** [App-valuation] mà nguyên nhân chính là do **ý thức của nhiều người quá kém** [Explicit Jud- propriety]

(VL 1c) **Chuyện xả rác bừa bãi, giẫm đạp lên cỏ, bẻ hoa lá, chen chúc nhau giành lối đi** [Explicit Jud- veracity]... lại xảy ra. **Đây là những hình ảnh đáng xấu hổ** [App-valuation] mà năm nào cũng nói, năm nào báo chí cũng phản ánh nhưng chẳng ăn thua gì [Judgement – implicit].

4.2. Affect in ELTEs and VLTEs

Frequency of Affectual values in ELTEs and VLTEs

Table 2 displays the detailed distribution of Affectual values investigated in ELTEs and VLTEs. In ELTEs, there are 18 instances, comprising 21.7%, and VLTEs also show 18 instances of Inclination, making up 22.8%. The highest use of Inclination in both types of texts reveals that for the problems indicated, the readers construe their emotions by longing for the shared reaction from the community involved; they express their attitude with an emotion of wishful thinking to find out a proper solution for the issues concerned.

Table 2: The detailed distribution of Affectual values in ELTEs and in VLTEs

Affect	Sub-types	Occurrence in English texts	Percentage (%)	Positive	Negative	Occurrence in Vietnamese texts	Percentage (%)	Positive	Negative
Disinclination	fear	6	7.22 %		6	6	7.6%		6
Inclination	desire	18	21.7%	18		18	22.8%	10	8
Unhappiness	misery	5	6.02 %		5	9	11.4%		9
Happiness	cheer	3	3.62%	3		3	3.8%	3	
	affection	3	3.62%	2	1	5	6.3%	2	3
Insecurity	disquiet	5	6.02 %		5	11	13.9%		11
Security	confidence	10	12.05%	10		5	6.3%	5	
Dissatisfaction	displeasure	16	19.3%		16	16	20.3%		16
Satisfaction	interest	7	8.4 %	7		2	2.53%	2	
	pleasure	10	12.05%	10		4	5.07%	4	
Total overall		83	100%	50	33	79	100%	26	53

The excerpts comprise *Inclination* affect in the two kinds of data was shown below:

(EL3) I was **hopeful** [*Inclination - desire*] in reading “The Body Politic,” that in the continuing discussion about menopausal treatments for middle-aged women, some mention might be given to the option of bioidentical hormone replacement.

(EL5) I **truly hope** [*Inclination - desire*] that Margaret Morganroth Gullette and those she **loves** never experience the disease as my family has.

(VL 2) **Rất mong** [*Inclination - desire*] Bộ Giao thông vận tải và chính quyền các tỉnh có dự án mở rộng, nâng cấp QL1A và QL14 ngang qua, đừng để rơi vào tình trạng tương tự. Người dân buộc phải sống và chịu cảnh khổ sở trong chuyện làm đường sá quá nhiều rồi!

(VL 10) Tôi **kiến nghị** [*Inclination - desire*] Sở VH-TT-DL TP.HCM nên xem lại vấn đề cấp phép biểu diễn cho các ban nhạc nước ngoài, ca sĩ hải ngoại và kể cả trong nước. Xin đừng để người **yêu** [*Inclination - desire*] âm nhạc thiệt thòi vì những lý do không rõ ràng, như bài báo đã nêu.

In ELTEs, there are 16 instances out of 83 values of Affect, accounting for 19.3%. In VLTEs, *Dissatisfaction* ranked the second among the values of Affect after *Inclination*, 16 instances of *Dissatisfaction* out of 79 used by the writers. The following extracts are an illustration of the way the writers of ELTEs and VLTEs convey *Dissatisfaction* values.

(EL16) A face-to-face meeting in a classroom imposes accountability, inspires effort and promotes academic responsibility in subtle ways that we **don't fully appreciate**. On a campus, students attend class and stay alert because they **worry** what the teacher will think if they don't.

(VL 11) Tôi thấy **thất buồn cười** khi ngày nay lại mang chuyện cái kết của truyện Tấm Cám ra bàn cãi, sửa đổi... Có nhà viết kịch còn sửa cả cốt truyện, chêm biếm việc Tấm giết Cám, làm mất Cám để gửi cho bà mẹ kế ăn là quá sức tàn độc...

Although the number of Affect items is rather equal in both languages, the specific number of each subtype is unevenly distributed. Exemplified for this finding is the distribution of *Insecurity* in the two languages. Expressing feelings of anxiety in relation to the negative states of affair is marked in VLTEs. This finding implies that Vietnamese readers tend to show their anxiety, and disquiet when negative problems come about. For a problem concerned, English and Vietnamese writers have different ways in expressing anxiety as illustrated:

(EL24) “Concern for Minorities as Catholic Schools Close” (news article, June 21) misses the mark in one important regard. Many of us who work in Catholic schools have **more hope than despair**, and we have reason **to believe** that the future of Catholic schools in urban communities looks less like hospice or retrenchment and more like transformation and urban renewal. These children and their teachers are completely changing the narrative for Catholic education. Despite constraints, the Catholic school community is **filled with zeal, not cynicism**. Catholic-school champions continue to fight for their children's future.

(VL 28) “Dù đã trải qua nhiều lần chỉnh sửa nhưng SGK cũng như các loại SGK hiện nay vẫn không hết được những sai sót và không có sự đồng nhất. Giải pháp an toàn và để các học sinh không bị mất điểm oan uổng là dạy cho học sinh bám sát kiến thức trong SGK. Tuy nhiên, bản thân lịch sử đã

*đòi hỏi tính chính xác nên dạy thì vẫn phải dạy nhưng đôi khi **thấy bản khoăn và áy náy** với chính bản thân mình”.*

The two extracts have clarified different ways in exposing the attitude towards an important problem concerned. In the English letter, the writer tends to show his opinions with giving specific analysis of reality of the problem, and tries to persuade the audience to be hopeful for improving the problem. Meanwhile, the Vietnamese writer seems to express her personal thinking in which she shows more disappointment than desire to improve the problem.

Positive and negative affect values in ELTEs and VLTEs

The distribution of positive and negative affect values in ELTEs and VLTEs is shown in Figure 2. In most of the letters, the writers construe the feelings by the culture by employing both good and bad vibes. The distinct feature of the two kinds of data is that the use of positive Affects in ELTEs is higher (60.24%) than that of negative ones (39.76%). On the contrary, in VLTEs, as shown in chart 4.2, up to 67.09% of the opinions are through negative Affects, only 26 instances out of 79 conveying positive ones.

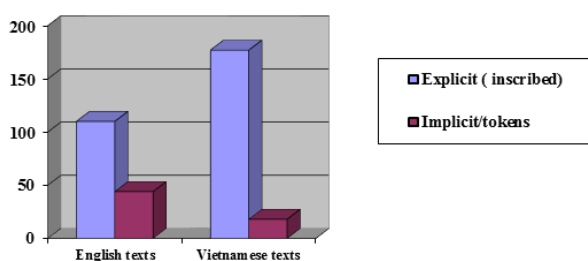


Figure 2: Positive and Negative Affect values in ELTEs and in VLTEs

Across of the Affect values used in VLTEs, emotional responses were most likely to be the ones associated with negative feelings, which is compatible with what Martin (2000) terms

“emotions of ennui, displeasure, curiosity, and respect”, and variable of emotions concerned with ‘ecosocial well-being’ including anxiety, fear, confidence and trust. For example, to reflect the bad image of a cultural festival at the national level, the author of the Vietnamese letter used a set of negative Affect values:

(VL1) *Sau khi Thanh Niên các số ra ngày 28 và 29.1 đăng các bài viết Bất nháo ở chùa Hương, Mạo hiểm hành hương và Lộn xộn trước chùa Hương Tích, nhiều bạn đọc **có ý kiến bức xúc [negative- dissatisfaction]** về những hình ảnh phản cảm, thiếu văn hóa tại các lễ hội và **lo ngại [negative-inclination]** cho sự biến tướng của lễ hội.*

The writer in the excerpt above expresses his negative explicit attitude towards the bad images displayed at festivals where the value of nation’s culture should be honored. Once, the finding confirms that through the variables of negative Affects, the authors bid to set up an interpersonal bond with the readers, to share the sympathies with the audience as what Martin and White (2005) state. As far as polarity of Affect is concerned, the writers’ feelings are popularly construed by the culture as the sharing of both positive and negative emotions in ELTEs. The ratio between two polarities is not remarkable. In every letter, emotions are marked with the use of both positive and negative ones. The following extract is an illustration:

(EL21a) *As I drank my morning coffee, I read that the Encyclopaedia Britannica will no longer publish in print its wonderful set of reference books “Britannica Is Reduced to a Click,” front page, March 14). I felt **stabbed in the heart**, and it took me until midmorning to understand my **sadness**.*

(EL21c) *Living in Montana, I am reminded constantly to be **“green”** but the absence of books will be a cultural loss. Books in print*

represent more than the words and wisdom they contain. My **hope** is that for the next generation, electronic information will come to represent the same.

Authorial and non-authorial affect values in ELTEs and in VLTEs

In terms of Authorial and Non-authorial affect values, as presented in table 3 a noticeable feature is that both English and

Vietnamese texts used more Non-authorial affects than authorial ones. 27 instances out of 83, comprising 32.5% sources of emotional reaction in ELTEs can be traced to the writers themselves. In VLTEs, there is a bit larger proportion of the use of authorial affects with 32 instances among 79, making up 40.5%.

Table 3: Authorial and Non-authorial Affect values in ELTEs and in VLTEs

	AFFECT				Total of affect values
	Authorial		Non-authorial		
	Occurrence	Rate	Occurrence	Rate	
ENGLISH	27	32.5 %	56	67.5 %	83
VIETNAMESE	32	40.5 %	47	59.5 %	79

This finding is remarkable because it is little different from the study of English general hard news report. The balance of using authorial and non-authorial affects in both ELTEs and VLTEs is understandable. For clearer understanding, the texts below are the illustrations:

(EL9) **I** am a Muslim-American and **I** am **outraged**. As an American, **I** am **angry** and **heartbroken** that innocent compatriots were brutally murdered and United States diplomatic missions in Benghazi and Cairo were attacked. As a Muslim, **I** am **shamed** by the heinous acts of those who claim to share my religious beliefs.

Another example extracted from Vietnamese data is a further illustration for this aspect.

(VL 6) *Phí tham quan, thực chất đã nằm trong giá thành của tour du lịch mà chúng tôi đã trả. Song không hiểu sao **tôi** vẫn thấy rất thú vị, có một cảm giác như mình không*

*phải trả tiền vậy. Lúc đó **tôi** chợt nghĩ ngay tới vịnh Hạ Long quê nhà và **thâm** mong ước chúng ta cũng sẽ làm như họ.*

From the analyses presented, it is important to conclude that English and Vietnamese texts operate in the same voice in terms of authorial and non-authorial Affect. Due to the nature and style of LTEs, the freedom to contribute opinions to issues published in the public, the emotional reactions can come from both the writers themselves and from the other individuals, groups, or social groups.

Judgment in ELTEs and VLTEs

Social esteem and social sanction in ELTEs and VLTEs

The table 4 shows English and Vietnamese letters in terms of overall usage of Social Esteem and Social Sanction Judgment resources.

Table 4: The distribution of Social Esteem and Social Sanction

Social esteem	English		Vietnamese	
	Occurrence	Rate	Occurrence	Rate
Normality	27	17.5%	25	12.8%
Capacity	48	31.2%	50	25.6%
Tenacity	26	16.9%	27	13.8%
Total	101	65.6%	102	52.2%

Social sanction	English		Vietnamese	
Veracity	14	9.1%	21`	10.8%
Propriety	39	25.3%	72	37%
Total	53	34.4%	93	47.8%

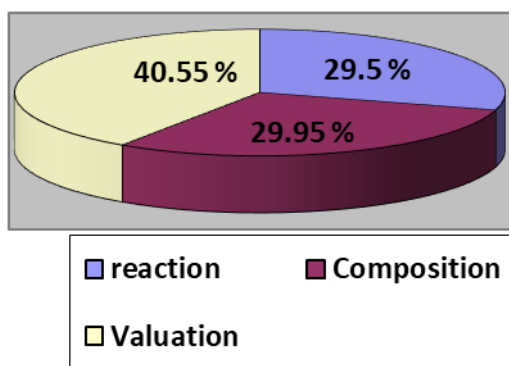
In ELTEs, *capacity* values account for the highest percentage with 31.2% compared with *normality* (17.5%), and *tenacity* (16.9%). Below is the illustration for the instances of Social Esteem with respect to the more frequent use of *capacity* than *tenacity* and *normality* in both languages.

(EL22) Despite the attention paid to hospitals, they aren't equipped to influence attitudes [implicit capacity jud], foster prevention or handle millions of newly insured patients. Primary care doctors are. Without solutions [normality jud] from policy makers and innovators, however, they could disappear, and health care reform along with them.

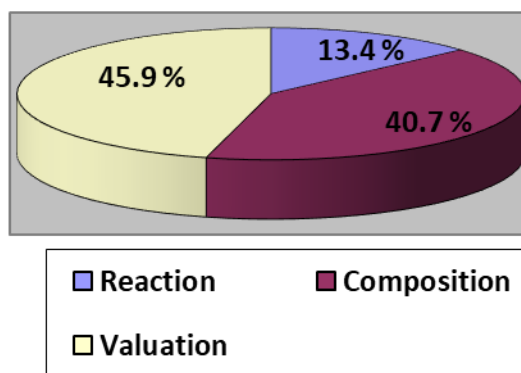
(VL 37) Chẳng biết đến khi nào SV Việt Nam mới có khả năng làm việc độc lập, tư học, tư nghiên cứu [capacity - Jud] như các SV ở các nước phát triển. Ở các nước có nền giáo dục phát triển, SV chọn đề tài để tốt nghiệp từ lúc mới vào trường và họ phải hoàn thiện đề tài mình chọn [capacity - Jud] trong cả quá trình học... Và luận văn, đồ án tốt nghiệp của họ thể hiện rõ nhất kết quả của một quá trình học tập dài lâu [tenacity - Jud] mà họ trải qua.

Implicit and explicit judgments in ELTEs and VLTEs

As can be seen from Figure 3, a common tendency shared by the two languages is the percentage of explicit judgments, which is much higher than that of implicit ones.



English Texts



Vietnamese Texts

Figure 3: Frequency of implicit and explicit Judgment in ELTEs and VLTEs

These figures show a general picture taken from the two corpora is that the writers of in both languages are likely to evaluate the happenings explicitly on the facts or events presented. The examples below illustrate some of the *explicit and implicit* judgments taken from the collected data:

(EL6a) Bravo, Warren E. Buffett, for expressing my feelings exactly about tax increases for the rich. Although not among the 400 wealthiest, my family is willing and able to pay more taxes [explicit Jud] to help our country emerge from its financial nightmare [implicit Jud]

(EL6b) *Although Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. was ridiculed during the 2008 campaign when he declared that **it was patriotic to pay taxes** [explicit Jud], I agree with him 100 percent and am ready to do my part if the legislators in Congress will stop placating.*

Most values of Judgment in the Vietnamese data are inscribed, which means that the way the Vietnamese people evaluate human behavior is explicitly direct to the reality of the problems, the shortcomings of the happenings.

	Positive	Negative	Total values of Judgment
English texts	60	94	154
Vietnamese texts	45	150	195

In the English texts, Judgment values are encoded more in a negative (61.03%) way than a positive (38.97%) way. This pattern of using more negative judgments than positive ones also appears in the Vietnamese data. This reveals that both sources of data exploit criticism rather than admiration.

Extract 1:

(EL20) *In our diverse, complicated country, some people are **unfairly neglected or unaware of** [Negative - Jud] the services or rights that are due them. People **fall between the cracks**. [Negative Jud] Our ingenious representative government is intended **to deal with** [Positive Jud] that problem.*

Extract 2:

(EL27) *David L. Kirp “Making Schools Work,” Sunday Review, May 2 is **right** [Positive Jud] that school integration has done more to improve the life chances of poor and minority children than other known interventions. He is **wrong** [Negative Jud] to suggest that there’s no longer any way to achieve integration and to pit it*

Positive and negative judgments in ELTEs and VLTEs

As with Affect, Judgment can be positive (admiring) or negative (criticizing). Analyzed from the corpora of two languages, values of negative or positive Judgments in ELTEs and VLTEs are tabulated in Table 5.

Table 5: Positive and negative Judgments in ELTEs and in VLTEs

against recent school reforms that also improve life chances.

Extract 3:

(VL 1) *Năm nào cũng vậy, tại các dịp lễ hội đều có những hình ảnh phản cảm mà nguyên nhân chính là do ý thức của nhiều người quá kém [Negative Jud]. Chuyện **xả rác bừa bãi, giẫm đạp lên cỏ, bẻ hoa lá, chen chúc nhau giành lối đi** [Negative Jud]... lại xảy ra. Đây là những hình ảnh đáng xấu hổ mà năm nào cũng nói, năm nào báo chí cũng phản ánh nhưng chẳng ăn thua gì.*

Extract 4:

(VL 4) *Các cơ quan chức năng địa phương **làm gì** [Negative Jud], **có xử lý hay làm ngơ** [Negative Jud] cho bến xe dù hoạt động? **Trách nhiệm** [Negative Jud] trước hết của tình trạng này thuộc cơ quan chức năng địa phương và lực lượng CSGT.*

In extract 1, judgement items ‘**unfairly neglected or unaware of**’, ‘**fall between the cracks**’ are negative values, and only one positive item ‘**to deal with**’ is employed. Two sides of polarity interplay to reflect the reality of incapacity and the way Congress did to solve

that problem. A mix of negative and positive assessment passed on the Congress to persuade the readers to place their positions at a certain stage to give solution to the situation. Similar to extract 1, extract 2 conveys an interpersonal position between the readers and the writer through a positive judgment *'right'* and a negative one *'wrong'* to evaluate the act of David L. Kirp. In the same way, VLTEs' authors show their assessments in a combination of negative and positive judgment. However, Vietnamese letters' writers would rather express the weak points than give the praises. Most of the Judgment values in letters are negative ones. In extract 3, *'ý thức của nhiều người quá kém', 'xả rác bừa bãi', 'giảm đập lên cổ', 'bể hoa lá, chen chúc nhau giành lối đi'* are expressions conveying negative judgments criticizing the unconscious behavior of visitors to Huong Pagoda. Additionally, a lot of negative judgments used in extract 4 are aimed at evaluating the irresponsibility of officials related, and influencing public opinions directly.

Appreciation in ELTEs and VLTEs

Frequency of appreciation values in ELTEs and VLTEs

The overall distribution of Appreciation and its subtypes found in the two corpora. In ELTEs, there are 88 instances of valuation, accounting for 40.55% of the total Appreciation values; the second highest is *composition* with 65 instances, which constitute 29.95%; *reaction* with 64 instances, making up 29.5%. The Vietnamese counterparts show the same pattern of valuation use that is, the *valuation* (45.9%) with 106 instances, *composition* (40.7%) with 94 instances, and *reaction* (13.4%). Both sets of data are coded with *valuation* which reflects the worth, significance of things appraised. This similarity in the two languages shows a

common interest in the evaluation of their social significance in relation to culturally or ideologically established conventions. The examples below are evident for the dominance of values of Appreciation performed in the two languages:

(EL17) *While online shopping may not always offer the precise level of personalization Ms. Ephron requires, it is a growing [valuation] part of retailing - and for good [valuation] reason. It offers convenience, saves time, adds value and provides access to goods and services [valuation] that might otherwise be difficult to obtain.*

(VL 7) *Tôi tự hỏi, với bộ máy nhà nước dày đắ [composition] từ Trung ương đến địa phương như thế tại sao lại để "lọt" được những hàng hóa "rác" [valuation] như thế? Mà có phải lọt ít đầu [composition] hàng loạt container chứ không phải một hay vài ký. Với sự kiểm soát lỏng lẻo, thiếu chuyên nghiệp, vô trách nhiệm [composition] như thế thì ai biết liệu còn những hàng hóa nguy hiểm [valuation] nào sẽ lọt vào Việt Nam, khi ấy hậu quả là khôn lường [valuation].*

As with *valuation*, *reaction* appreciations have to do with the degree to which an entity, process, or phenomenon capture our attention and the emotional impact it has on us. In terms of this *reaction* values, VLTEs contain fewer items than ELTEs.

(EL5) *If only it were simply a fear of forgetting [Reaction - impact]. Alzheimer's is so much more [Reaction- impact]. It is, in our case, a comatose [Reaction - impact] state with eyes wide open and the experience of watching a kind and funny man become an agitated, angry and afraid person with no connection to the world in which he sits (because he cannot stand or walk anymore).*

In the English example, many *reaction* values of Appreciation are displayed by the writer. Here, the author uses evaluative resources to describe the emotional impact of *Alzheimer's* (a serious disease) on the readers. In VLTEs, the amount of the *reaction* appreciation is too small, only 31 instances per 50 texts.

(VL 12) Việc VNPT, Vinaphone ban hành quyết định **kỳ quặc** này không những xâm phạm quyền lợi của đại lý mà còn xâm phạm nghiêm trọng quyền lợi khách hàng, là những người đã mua sim/kit của Vinaphone nhưng chưa sử dụng. Khi mua sim/kit trả trước, khách hàng không hề được thông báo thời hạn bắt buộc phải kích hoạt cũng như việc nếu không kích hoạt sim sẽ **bị hủy**. Sẽ có hàng ngàn khách hàng **bị ảnh hưởng** [Reaction - impact], nếu quyết định này đi vào thực tế. Hiện nay, không chỉ Vinaphone, VNPT có cách làm lạ đời như thế, một số nhà mạng khác cũng **chẳng vừa**, khách đã mua sim và đã dùng, nhưng vì lý do riêng, vài tháng khách không sử dụng sim thì **bỗng nhiên số bị cắt**, bán cho người khác, **kiểu nại** [Reaction-quality].

Another interesting feature found from the examples in both sets of data is the *Appreciation* valuations and *compositions* embedded within *evoked Judgment* values. Instances of *Appreciations* at one level contribute to the representation of *Judgment* at another. This phenomenon is performed in the English example below.

(EL12) Clearly, this is a **serious** [App/Composition - Jud / capacity] matter that must be handled in a **professional** [App/Valuation - Jud / capacity] manner. There are lives **at stake** [Composition] in addition to TV ratings.

(EL3) We certainly acknowledge that what is warranted in this situation is a **sincere** [App/Reaction - Jud/ veracity] apology - but not a **generalized** [Valuation] defamation of an **efficient and valuable** [Valuation] way of shopping today.

Similarly, this feature is also realized in the Vietnamese data:

(VL 1) Sau khi Thanh Niên các số ra ngày 28 và 29.1 đăng các bài viết **Bát nháo ở chùa Hương, Mạo hiểm hành hương và Lộn xộn trước chùa Hương Tích**, nhiều bạn đọc có ý kiến bức xúc về những **hình ảnh phản cảm, thiếu văn hóa** [Reaction - quality] tại các lễ hội và lo ngại cho **sur biến tướng** [Valuation] của lễ hội.

Appreciation reaction referring to quality demonstrates the bad images happening at festivals where there should have been significant values of culture represented. Additionally, appreciation valuation evaluates the criticism of the bad act done by irresponsible and unconscious people. From this instance, it is noted that different *sub- types* of *Appreciation* (*valuation and reaction in the examples above*) are embedded within *invoked Judgment*. In other words, instances of these *appreciation values* represent of *some kinds of other Judgment*.

Positive and negative appreciation in ELTEs and VLTEs

Vietnamese have significantly higher frequencies of negative *Appreciation* items than positive ones. Only 60 instances out of 231 values of *Appreciation* convey positive assessments on events, process, products or the happenings. English shows a more balanced pattern in appraising entities. There are 110 instances of positive values, making up approximately 50 % like negative ones.

(EL38) In “Honor Code” (column, July 6), David Brooks writes that in the Western world, “the education system has become culturally cohesive, rewarding and encouraging a certain sort of person: one who is nurturing, collaborative, disciplined, neat, studious, industrious and ambitious.” And this is a complaint!

(VL 28) Dù đã trải qua nhiều lần chỉnh sửa nhưng SGK cũng như các loại SGK hiện nay vẫn không hết được những sai sót và không có sự đồng nhất. Giải pháp an toàn và để các học sinh không bị mất điểm oan uổng là dạy cho học sinh bám sát kiến thức trong SGK. Tuy nhiên, bản thân lịch sử đã đòi hỏi tính chính xác nên dạy thì vẫn phải dạy nhưng đôi khi thấy bản thảo và áy náy với chính bản thân mình.

Theoretically, the present study is expected to reaffirm the importance of Systemic Functional Grammar in analyzing and understanding online news, letters to the Editor as a genre, a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. Moreover, it will hopefully provide scholars who are interested in Appraisal with the enrichment of knowledge of evaluation language, by which an Appraisal analysis shed light on the interpersonal meaning. Practically, our findings may offer some advantages and be instructive for writing and teaching letters to the Editor column in an article, a discourse of media genre.

5. Conclusion and Implications

Our comparative analysis of Attitudinal meanings, especially of the three systems (Affect, Judgment and Appreciation), shows that there are similarities and differences in the ways the writers of ELTEs and VLTEs express their attitude to convey interpersonal meanings. *Appreciation* is predominant in the attitudinal

coding. The second highest is *Judgement* found in the two languages. *Affect* is found to occur at the lowest rate in the two corpora. These findings indicate that there is a common tendency of the normative assessment of human behavior and assessment of forms, aesthetics, and system of social values rather than evaluations by means of disclosure of personal emotions to the phenomena mentioned by the writers of both languages. However, our analysis shows a difference in the rate of distribution of subcategories in each language. The English writers pay attention to both negative and positive sides of the problem to invite the audience to have an argument. On the contrary, Vietnamese writers put emphasis on the effect of what is going on, what is right, what is wrong, and trace to the responsibility of individual and group involved. The finding is very meaningful for both teachers and students in teaching and learning reading, academic writing and journalism. For the language teaching, this study may emphasize the need of teaching students to exploit the evaluative linguistic resources in writing skill, especially skill of writing academic texts, articles, and LTEs in an effective way. Further, language and culture are two important elements in making a successfully interactive relation in cross – cultural interactions. Thus, the findings will help students express their attitudinal meanings in public with a polite strategy and focus them on choosing the linguistic resources to express assessments with argumentative and informative attitude. For journalism students, understanding and mastering language used in writing genre is very necessary and challenging. The way the students employ evaluative language to express objective viewpoints embedded in their pieces of writing based on various cultural aspects is very important. Specifically, the ability to do

judgments and associate emotional responses with participants and processes deployed in either spoken or written form is of great importance. LTEs genre is a type of opinion news in public where language resources are evaluated with high criteria involving objectiveness, depth, accuracy, completeness, source reliability, newsworthiness, interactivity, and trustworthiness. Therefore, values of attitudinal meanings play an important role in helping the writers choose the effective resources of persuasion exposed in the public news texts. For scholars, especially linguistic scholars, this small study contributes a humble part to knowledge of evaluative language. Moreover, the present study is expected to reaffirm the importance of Systemic Functional Grammar in analyzing and understanding online news and letters to the Editor as a genre, a class of communicative events. The study was limited to LTEs in English and in Vietnamese in terms of interpersonal meanings based on Appraisal analysis. One of the restrictions of this thesis is the limited number of letters (100 in total). The future research should employ a wider range of selected LTEs. In addition, Attitude is the only one system investigated among the three ones in relation to Appraisal Theory. It is of great relevance and importance for future research to employ Engagement and Graduation as a tool to explore interpersonal meaning. Finally, as far as interpersonal

meaning is concerned, it is more adequate for a research to employ Mood and Modality analysis as well.

References

- [1].Beckett, C. (2008). *Supermedia: Saving Journalism So It Can Save the World*. Malden MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- [2].Bhatia, V. K. (1993). *Analysing genre: language use in professional settings*. London: Longman
- [3].Bloor, T. & Bloor, M. (1995). *The Functional Analysis of English. A Hallidayan Approach*. London: Edward Arnold.
- [4].Butt, B., R. Fahey, S. Feez and C. Yallop. (2000). *Using Functional Grammar: An Explorer's Guide*. Macquarie University: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research.
- [5].Eggins, S. (1994). *An introduction to systemic functional linguistics*. London: Continuum Wellington House.
- [6].Eggins, S. 2004. *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics (2nd Edition)*. London: Continuum.
- [7].Halliday, M.A.K (1995). *An introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- [8].Halliday, M. A. K. (2007). *Language and Education*. London: Continuum.
- [9].Hynds, E. C. (1994). Editors at most U.S. dailies see vital role for editorial page. *Journalism Quarterly*, 71, 573-582.
- [10]. Hyland, K. (Ed.). (2004). *Genre and second language writing*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- [11]. Iedema, R., Feez, S., and White, P.R.R. (1994). *Media Literacy. (Write it Right' Literacy in Industry Research Project – stage 3)*. Sydney: Metropolitan East Disadvantaged Schools Program, NSW Department of School Education.
- [12]. Martin, J. R., & White, P. R. R. (2005). *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.