



## **An Analysis of Appraisal in Selected Beauty Vloggers' YouTube Videos**

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### **Abstract**

*This research aims to describe and analyze the use of appraisal in selected beauty vloggers' YouTube videos. It particularly focuses on revealing the types and frequencies of attitudinal appraisal applied in the videos. This study is a descriptive qualitative research which tries to give an in-depth description and analysis of the subject. The data in this study were sentences taken from four beauty vloggers' videos which are Jeffree Star, Nikkie Tutorials, James Charles and Tati. The researcher gathered the data by first watching the videos, making a transcript of the videos, and watching it more to ensure the accuracy of the transcript. To analyze the data, the researcher applies appraisal theory by Martin and White especially their classification of attitude in appraisal which are appreciation, judgement and affect. This research reveals that there are 416 utterances which applied attitudinal appraisal in the beauty vloggers' videos. From those utterances, the most dominant type is appreciation with 288 utterances, the second most frequent is affect with 104 utterances and the least applied is judgement with only 24 utterances. The beauty vlogger who most frequently applied attitude is Nikkie Tutorials with a total of 124 utterances, followed by James Charles in the second place with 112 utterances, Tati 95 utterances and Jeffree star in the last position with 85 utterances.*

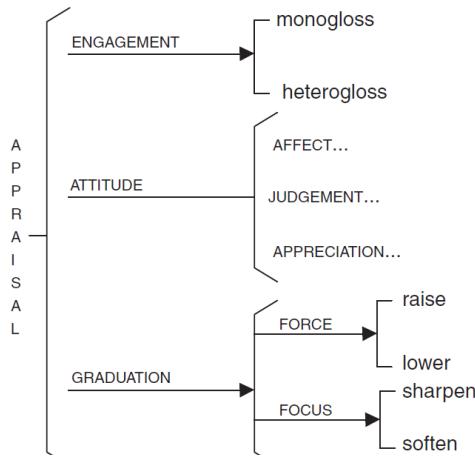
**Keywords:** Appraisal, Beauty Vlogger, Youtube Videos.

## **INTRODUCTION**

With the rapid development of internet and new technology, people's lives are getting easier day by day. One of many aspects that is greatly affected by the growing use of internet is the distribution of information. In the past, people need to watch TV or read newspapers to access information. Now, they only need to open their smartphone and click on applications or websites to gain information that they want (Pasaribu et al., 2022). The emergence of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tiktok and YouTube has made the exchange of information even faster and easier. People can share any information to their virtual friends on social media, and others can have access to the information they share (Fauziah & Suryani, 2022).

One of the emerging topics on social media nowadays is makeup (Karjo & Wijaya, 2020). Before buying a certain cosmetic product, people usually will do some research on which product is good and worth their money. In the past, they will need to go to the makeup store and test it themselves to know. Now, they can just sit at home and watch other people do it for them. This is where the role of beauty vloggers is needed. Beauty vloggers are people who record and share video related to makeup on social media such as YouTube (Indra & Marnita, 2018). They share their tips and know-how related to make up for their audience. Moreover, they also provide reviews of make-up products where they try and give evaluation towards the product so that their viewers can decide whether to buy the product or not. Because of this, they have a lot of impact on their viewers' decision to buy a certain product (Achmad & Hidayat, 2018), and it also make them influential and powerful.

As many of their videos are related to reviews and evaluation, it will be interesting to analyse the beauty vloggers' videos using Appraisal theory. This theory was first proposed by Martin and White in 2005. The idea of appraisal stemmed from the framework of systemic functional linguistics by Halliday. Specifically, it is situated in the discussion of interpersonal meta function where it is used to 'negotiate' people's stance and relationship with others (Wei et al., 2015). Appraisal theory is a system that was developed to analyse evaluative language (Martin & White, 2005). This system is used to investigate how people exchange the evaluation of their feelings and people in their surroundings as well as their behavior and things around them (Sodiq et al., 2022). The following figure represents an overview of the appraisal system proposed by Martin and White (2005).



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

The system of appraisal itself consists of three subsystems namely engagement, graduation and attitude (Piscayanti, 2020). Fan (2020) defines engagement as 'a system in which language resources are made up of a discourse or the source of speaker's voice'. It is then further divided into two subtypes which are monogloss and heterogloss. Meanwhile, graduation is to do with the intensification of the evaluative language, therefore it is divided into raise and lower as well as sharpen and soften (Dinamika, 2016). Graduation is used to analyse how the assessment and evaluation are intensified by the speaker. The third subsystem, and the focus of this research, is attitude. Sari (2019) argues that attitude is used to investigate how language is used to share our opinions related to feelings, norms and aesthetics. Hence, this system is then classified into three types namely affect, judgment and appreciation (Chalimah et al., 2018)

**Tabel 1.** Types and Subtypes of Attitude in Appraisal (Martin & White, 2005)

|          |              |                  |
|----------|--------------|------------------|
| Attitude | Affect       | Dis/inclination  |
|          |              | Un/happiness     |
|          |              | Dis/satisfaction |
|          |              | In/security      |
|          | Appreciation | Reaction         |
|          |              | Composition      |
|          |              | Valuation        |
|          | Judgment     | Social esteem    |
|          |              | Social sanction  |

In attitude, affect is used to express emotion. This type of attitude reveals the speaker's positive or negative feelings on whether they are happy or sad, whether they are anxious or relaxed or whether they are satisfied or disappointed (Prastikawati, 2021). Therefore, affect itself are then separated into several subtypes namely

inclination and disinclination, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, happiness and unhappiness as well as security and insecurity. The second type of attitude is appreciation in which it is applied to express evaluation towards objects and its worth (Sari, 2019). As seen in the table above, appreciation is divided into several subtypes which are reaction, composition and valuation. Further, the last type of attitude is judgment which deals with evaluation towards people's behavior on whether it is in line with the social norms and regulations (Badklang & Srinon, 2018). Judgment is divided into two subtypes which are social esteem and social sanction.

Over the last decade, the analysis of appraisal in different media and resources has been conducted by various researchers. One of the examples is a study entitled "*Appraisal System Analysis in Aladdin's Dialogues as the Main Character in Aladdin 2019 Movie*" written by Nafisa et.al (2020). This study focuses on identifying the types of attitudinal appraisal applied in by Aladdin in the movie, as well as analysing the language functions used in each type of attitudes. After analysing the data, the research revealed that the character; Aladdin, applied three different types of attitudes which are appreciation, judgment and affect. Further, the language functions used are interactional, personal, representational, regulatory and heuristic functions.

Besides being analysed in fictional dialogues, appraisal can also be investigated in conversations that happen in real life such as in speeches. One of the studies that analysed this is a study conducted by Ida Rohmawati (2016) entitled "*Appraisal Devices Realizing Attitudes in Barrack Obama's Inaugural Speech*". In this study, Rohmawati (2016) used appraisal theory to analyse Obama's speech with the objectives of revealing the types of attitudes as well as its implications. It revealed that Obama applied three types of attitudes namely affect, judgment and appreciation with judgment being the most dominant type. The result also shows that Obama focuses more on the positive attitude rather than the negative one to show his optimism toward the country's future.

Moreover, the topic on beauty vloggers has also been an interesting and intriguing for researchers lately, mostly because of their increasing power and influence. A study that took this topic was conducted by Chen and Dermawan (2020) with the title; "*The Influence of YouTube Beauty Vloggers on Indonesian Consumer's Purchase Intention of Local Cosmetic Products*". Its objective is to investigate the effect of beauty vloggers review towards the consumer's decision to buy cosmetic products in Indonesia. They interviewed ten consumers who watched YouTube beauty vloggers, and the result revealed that the reviews from those beauty vloggers indeed influenced their judgement towards the cosmetic products. Eventually, it also affects their decisions on whether to buy the product or not.

Furthermore, many researchers have also investigated the language and linguistic features used by beauty vloggers in the video. An example of these is a study entitled "*Code Mixing in Suhay Salim Beauty Vlogger*" conducted by Irhayatul Aini (2019). This study investigated Suhay Salim's videos and analysed the use of code mixing in them. The objectives of the study are to identify the types of code mixing applied and also the reasons behind their usage. After analysing the data, the result showed that Suhay Salim applied three types of code mixing namely alternation, insertion and congruent lexicalization where the most frequently used is insertion. The study also revealed that there are five reasons why she applied those code mixing; some of them are because the alternative words in English are easier to remember, or they are more familiar to the viewers.

From the discussion above, it can be seen that a study on appraisal theory is still relevant and interesting. It also can be used to analyse language features in many different settings. Further, the discussion also shows that beauty vloggers are one of the emerging subjects to be studied especially in linguistics. The linguistic features applied in their videos are impactful and important to understand as it might affect other people's opinion and beliefs. Moreover, the discussion also reveals that no study has been conducted about the use of appraisal in beauty vloggers videos. Therefore, it also justifies the novelty and importance of this study. The objective of this research is to reveals the types and frequency of attitudinal appraisal applied in four selected beauty vloggers videos. It attempts at providing a thorough explanation of the types of attitudes applied by each of the beauty vloggers in their videos.

## METHOD

This research is descriptive qualitative research which goals are to provide a deeper investigation and a thorough explanation of the data (Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2011). The result and discussion are presented qualitatively with the help of tables to make it easier for the reader to understand the whole data.

The data in this research were taken from utterances spoken by four beauty vloggers in their YouTube Videos. The beauty vloggers are James Charles, Nikkie Tutorials, Tati and Jeffree Star. These are four of the most subscribed beauty vloggers with millions of subscribers. The researcher selected one video from each of the beauty vlogger. James Charles' video is selected is titled "*Anastasia Beverly Hills Foundation...Finally A Match?!*", Nikkie Tutorials' video is entitled "*The New World's Most Full Coverage Foundation??*", Tati's video with the title "*100 SHADES offoundation*", and Jeffree Star's video is entitled "*Can This \$20.00 Foundation Cover My Sadness? Let's Find Out*". Each of these videos was downloaded from their YouTube channels. Then, to gather the data, the researcher watched the videos and made a transcript with the help of automatic transcription from YouTube. Next, the researcher watched the videos again several times to make sure that the transcript is accurate.

The data analysis was conducted through several steps. First, the researcher identified the utterances which applied appraisal especially attitude in each of the videos. Then, she classifies the data into three different types of attitudes using the classification from Martin and White (2005). After classifying the data, the researcher calculated the frequency of each type of attitudes. Then, she interpreted the data, draw conclusion and provide suggestions for future researchers.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After analysing the data, the researcher found that all types of attitude namely affect, appreciation and judgement were applied by the beauty vloggers in their videos. However, the frequency of each type is different as can be seen in the following table.

**Tabel 2.** Types of Attitudes Applied by The Beauty Vloggers in the YouTube Videos and The Frequencies of Each Type

| Type of Attitude in Appraisal Theory | Nikkie Tutorials (N) | James Charles (JA) | Tati (T)  | Jeffree Star (JE) | Total      |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|
| Appreciation (AP)                    | 96                   | 74                 | 62        | 56                | 288        |
| Affect (AF)                          | 26                   | 25                 | 27        | 26                | 104        |
| Judgment (JU)                        | 2                    | 13                 | 6         | 3                 | 24         |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>124</b>           | <b>112</b>         | <b>95</b> | <b>85</b>         | <b>416</b> |

The data analysis found that there are 416 utterances which are classified as evaluative language in the videos. In these utterances, the beauty vloggers applied all types of attitudinal appraisal which are affect, judgment and appreciation. From the table above, it can be seen that appreciation is the most dominant type of attitude as it constitutes more than half of the data. Then, it is followed by affect in the second place with 104 utterances and in the last place is judgment with only 24 utterances.

When seen from the beauty vloggers, all of them use a fairly similar numbers of evaluative language. Here, Nikkie tutorials applied the greatest number of attitudinal appraisals with 124 utterances, and followed by James Charles no far behind. Meanwhile, Tati is in third place with 95 utterances and Jeffree Star in the last place with only 85 utterances. As can be seen in the table 2, the frequency of each type of attitude in each of the beauty vloggers only has a slight difference, and are similar to the overall result.

## APPRECIATION

Following Martin and White (2005), appreciation is a type of attitude used to judge and evaluate objects or things. In the videos, all of the beauty vloggers applied appreciation to review and evaluate the cosmetic products. Most of the evaluation are positive, while some are negative. Some of the examples of the positive appreciation can be seen in the following data.

1. *I just need more a little bit more you don't need a ton it is very very full coverage. It could be used as a concealer spot. (T39/AP/+)*
2. *So for primer today, I really want to mix two of my current favourites; first of all the Milk Hydro Grip - this has an amazing stick to it, just anything is just really going to adhere to this and it's like glue. (N13/AP/+)*
3. *Let's try 210 neutral. The undertone looks a little bit better, so it looks a little bit light on my hand, on my face it looks not anywhere close to anything, on my chest the undertone looks definitely better but still no. (JA36/AP/+)*

4. *This foundation you guys has a very massive shade range as well as the concealer which I want to try today as well. (JE27/AP/ +)*

In datum T39, Tati was talking about the quality of the foundation she was trying. Here, she used the phrase ‘very very full coverage’ to evaluate the foundation’s ability to cover imperfections and redness on her face. This is a positive appreciation because a good foundation needs to have a full coverage so that the user can have a good and even complexion. Further, in datum N13, Nikkie discusses about the primer she needed to use in the video. She described the primer as ‘my current favourite’, and through this phrase she provided a positive appreciation toward the primer. She also elaborated her review by saying that the foundation ‘has an amazing stick’. A primer is used to cover pores and make makeup stick together and seen flawless. By saying this, she gives reasons on why the primer is her favourite. In addition, datum JA36 discusses about James evaluation towards the undertone of the foundation. Previously in the video, he was struggling to find the perfect foundation that matches his undertone. In this datum, he used the phrase ‘a little bit better’ to give a positive appreciation to the foundation as it matches his skin undertone better than the previous one. Similarly, Jeffree also gave a positive appreciation to the foundation he was reviewing in datum JE27. Here, he described the foundation as having ‘a very massive shade range’. Having a wide shade range is seen as a positive review as it means that more people can use the foundation, and more skin are going to match with it. It is also an increasingly sensitive topic as more shades means that the brand is providing more options to their consumers and are being inclusive to the skin colour diversity.

Besides applying positive appreciation, the beauty vloggers also give negative evaluation toward the cosmetic products in the videos. Some of the examples are as follow:

5. *I don't think it's necessary, I do think it's overwhelming, but I don't think it's the biggest negative ever. (T88/AP/-)*
6. *....as soon as you go in with the brush and kind of start working in your bronzer and your highlighters and all that, you're kind of like loosening up the base and kind of like poking holes into it, and like it creates redness and like it's not smooth anymore... (N62/AP/-)*
7. *My nose region is getting a little bit oily, this happens all the time literally every foundation that I ever worn, but it's not bad. ( JA99/AP/-)*
8. *There're a few cracks around my nose, that's normal. (JE78/AP/-)*

Datum T88 shows Tati’s evaluation toward the shade range of the foundation. In this datum, Tati talked about the foundation that has 100 shades. Here, she commented on it by saying ‘it’s overwhelming’. This phrase is used to give a negative appreciation towards the product’s variety that although having a wide shade range can be a beneficial strategy, it can also make the consumers overwhelmed and feel like there are too many options. In addition, data N62 also showcases Nikkie’s negative appreciation towards the product she was reviewing. Here, she gave tips to her viewers related to makeup skills where using brush might ‘poke holes into the base, and like it creates redness and like it’s not smooth’. This is an important tip as the viewers mostly want their makeup to be flawless and blend in well. Further, in datum JA99, James also gave a negative appreciation towards the foundation he was reviewing. Here, he has applied the foundation to his face and later found out that his nose is getting ‘a little bit oily’. This is a negative appreciation as when it gets oily, the makeup might not last longer and it can ruin the whole look. Lastly, in datum JE78, Jeffree commented on the foundation he has applied to his face saying that there are ‘a few cracks’ around his nose. This comment is related to the foundation’s durability as the cracks indicate that the makeup is not going to last longer, and it is not flawless anymore.

## AFFECT

While appreciation was applied to give evaluation and assessment towards the products’ quality, affect was used by the beauty vloggers to express feeling and emotion related to the products. Similar to appreciation, the feeling and emotion expressed in the videos are not only positive, but also at some points negative. Examples of the positive affect can be seen as follow:

1. *I always love seeing how it performs on a plane because that is just like dehydration station, and it usually ends up looking terrible no matter what. (T35/AF /+)*
2. *I am so so so impressed with what I'm seeing. (N79/AF/+)*
3. *If it stays like this (matte), I'll be super super happy. (JA87/AF/+)*
4. *I love the packaging, and of course it matches everything else. (JE61/AF/+)*

In datum T35, Tati expressed her love towards the product she was trying. Here, she explicitly says ‘always love’ to show her love towards the product’s performance on plane. Meanwhile, on datum N79, Nikkie also applied a positive affect towards the cosmetic product she was reviewing in her video. In this datum, she was applying the foundation and after setting it, she uses the phrase ‘so so so impressed’ to express her satisfaction towards the product. Moreover, in datum JA87, James talked about the foundation’s finish after he had done applying it to his face. The foundation itself has a matte finish, and James applied a positive affect using the phrase ‘super super happy’ to show his feeling after seeing the foundation’s quality. Besides being used to comment on the products quality, affect is also used to evaluate the packaging. In datum JE61, Jeffree used the word ‘love’ to express how he felt after looking at the packaging of the foundation.

Besides applying affect to express their positive feelings, the beauty vloggers also used affect to show their negative emotion that they feel when they reviewed the cosmetic products. Some examples of these negative affects can be seen in the following:

5. *I'm actually **really annoyed** at myself for not packing this. (T84/AF/-)*
6. *I'm **kinda nervous**, because Juvia's Place is so, like SO hardcore my favourite eyeshadow brand that I'm like I'm rooting for you. (N16/AF/-)*
7. *I've honestly **always just been confused and also jealous** of people who are able to use a foundation brush, and like do their foundation. (JA62/AF/-)*
8. *Some people were **not living** that you can't see the foundation in the component like a normal glass or plastic bottle. (JE22/AF/-)*

Datum T84 above shows Tati’s feeling when she was talking about the foundation. Here, she is actually not at home, and she expressed her annoyance because she forgot to pack her favourite product. The negative affect in this datum was expressed using the phrase ‘really annoyed’ to show Tati’s disappointment toward herself. Further, in datum N16, Nikkie said that she was ‘kinda nervous’ to try the foundation as she has been a fan of the brand. Here, she used the negative affect to show her worry and nervousness about trying the foundation as she was afraid that it will not turn out as good as usual, or as good as she expected it to be. Meanwhile, in datum JA62, James was talking about his confusion and jealousy towards himself who has difficulties in finding the right foundation that matches his skin undertone. He used the phrase ‘always just been confused and also jealous’ to explicitly express his frustration before trying the product, and to emphasize that it is not easy to find a foundation that can satisfy his needs. Lastly, datum JE22 shows Jeffree’s negative evaluation to the foundation he was trying, specifically the packaging of the foundation. While the previous data shows the speakers’ feeling, here, Jeffree used negative affect to express how other people feel about the product’s packaging using the phrase ‘not living’. In this datum, he implicitly highlighted that people do not like a packaging made from plastic bottle, hence giving a negative evaluation towards the brand of the foundation.

## JUDGEMENT

The last type of attitude is judgment which is used to assess and evaluate people’s behavior. In the YouTube videos, all of the beauty vloggers applied judgment either to give evaluation towards their own behavior or toward other people related to the cosmetic products. Similar to the previous types of attitude, judgment was also applied in a form of positive and negative evaluation. Some of the positive judgment given by the beauty vloggers can be seen in the following data:

1. *I am such a believer in that and I think it is **so incredible** to see brands really step it up and have adequate ranges in each category from very fair to light, light medium, medium medium deep, deep. (T4/JU/+)*
2. *If I don't like something about this, it is **out in the open**. (N7/JU/+)*
3. *I'm **not afraid** to admit that I'm definitely not a foundation expert in any way shape or form. (JA3/JU/+)*
4. *I **normally** don't say this and this has nothing to do with this being my brush, but usually I just live for a damp sponge like I think it looks really pretty but I love how this is applying. (JE43/JU/+)*

In datum T4, Tati was talking about brands that try to provide wider shade ranges for their consumers. Here, she used the phrase ‘so incredible’ to give a positive judgment towards the brand’s effort in to provide more options. Tati praised the brand who want to improve their inclusivity by providing more shades to choose from so that their consumers can have a foundation that perfectly matches their skin color. Meanwhile, in datum N7, Nikkie applied judgment to positively evaluate her own behavior. Here, she used the phrase ‘out in the open’ to explicitly describe her personality that she is someone who would not filter any information

from her viewers. This is a positive judgment as it means that she is honest, and she was trying to convince her viewers that her review is complete and comprehensive. Similar to this, James also used judgment to assess his own character. Datum JA3 shows that James is ‘not afraid’ of admitting that he has limitations. He did not claim that he has expertise in evaluating foundation which later will give him positive reaction as he will be seen as honest and open. Moreover, in datum JE43, judgment was applied to also applied to judge the speaker’s own behavior. In this datum, Jeffree used the phrase ‘normally’ to judge his evaluation. Here, he was evaluating his own brush, and through this sentence he wanted to convince his viewers that the positive review is not because it is a product that he owns but because it indeed has a good quality.

As the number judgment used by the beauty vloggers are limited, the negative evaluation was not applied by all of the beauty vloggers. Only two of the four beauty vloggers applied negative judgment in their YouTube videos namely Tati and James. The examples of these negative judgment can be seen in the following data:

5. *...ranges that really aren't necessary if you boil it down just to use it as a marketing tool.* (T15/JU/-)
6. *I struggle quite a lot with it honestly* (JA4/JU/-)

Datum T15 shows Tati’s evaluation towards the brands strategy to make 100 shades for the foundation. Here, she said that this strategy ‘aren’t necessary’ if wide shade range is only used as a gimmick not an actual effort to provide more options for the consumers. She believed that brands should focus more on providing actual shades that can match people with different skin color and undertone rather than just using it as a clickbait and a marketing tool. Meanwhile, in datum JA4, James applied judgment to give a negative evaluation toward his own character and behavior. Here, he used the word ‘struggle’ to tell the viewers that he still has difficulties in choosing the right foundation that matches his skin color and undertone. This is a negative judgment as it can make his viewers question his skill and expertise in makeup. However, it can also bring a positive impact as he can be seen as honest and open, and he can be seen more trustworthy because he can admit his weakness.

## CONCLUSION

This research analyses the use of attitudinal appraisal in YouTube videos of four beauty vloggers namely James Charles, Jeffree Star, Tati and Nikkie Tutorials. After analysing the data, it can be concluded that all types of attitudinal appraisal namely affect, judgment and appreciation were applied in the beauty vloggers’ videos. From those three types of attitudes, the most frequently used is appreciation with more than half of the total utterances. Appreciation was used to assess the quality and quantity of the cosmetic products in the videos. They use it to evaluate the consistency, the packaging, the price and the durability of the face foundations. The second most dominant type is affected where it is used to express their feelings and emotions related to the products that they reviewed. They shared how the products made them feel, their love towards the products as well as their satisfaction and insecurities. Then, the least dominant type is judgment with less than a quarter of the total utterances. This type of attitude is less used mostly because they focused on evaluating the cosmetic products, meanwhile judgment is used to evaluate people’s behavior. In the videos, they used judgment to evaluate the cosmetic brand’s behavior and decision as well as their own behavior. Further, all types of attitudes are also used in positive and negative evaluations, showcasing that their review focuses on both sides and not only highlighting the benefit of the product. They also provide critiques and downside of the product in order to give a complete and thorough information for the viewers.

From this result, it shows that appraisal theory is a versatile theory that can be applied to analyse almost all types of text in different context and settings. For further research, analysing the use of appraisal in different setting such as in mobile games conversation or political speech can be beneficial for the development of this theory. Moreover, appraisal can also be combined with other theories such as critical discourse analysis to reveal the ideology and power behind a text. Future researchers are encouraged to continuously apply appraisal theory to analyse and investigate the use of evaluative language and assessment in different situation and phenomenon.

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