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TEACHING APPRAISAL MODEL AS AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC WRITING COMPETENCE

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Abstract: This study aims to find out whether teaching appraisal model improves students' competence in academic writing and describe the effect size for pair sample test. It was realized that students still had difficulties in using variety of appraisal features in their academic writing, including thesis writing. Therefore, this study was important to be studied in order to know whether appraisal model improved students' competence in academic writing text. This study applied pre-experimental design to treat the students in writing academic focusing on appraisal features. The subjects of this study were 30 seventh semester students who were taking research method course or those who were in process of writing thesis as their final project. Students were treated by teaching appraisal features and asked them to identify appraisal features in text and then they were asked to use appraisal features in their own writing. Data were analyzed quantitatively by applying the paired sample t-test and omega squared. The result showed that appraisal model improved students' competence. It was proved that the calculated value was 13.23. It was higher than the critical value table 1.70 based on the critical value table for t at $\alpha = .05$. Referring to this fact, H_0 was rejected because the calculated was more than critical value table; whereas H_1 was accepted. The result of the effect for the paired samples t-test was 0,85, it could be interpreted this indicated about 85 % of the variance in writing self-efficacy was explained by the change from pre- test to post test. Therefore, it could only be suggested that 85% of the variance in writing self-efficacy was explained by the change from pre- test to post test. It was suggested the lecturers of academic writing, semantic, discourse analysis and research method courses could include the appraisal language as one of the topics to be discussed.

Keywords: *appraisal model; language evaluation; academic writing competence.*

INTRODUCTION

Academic writing competence plays a central role in higher education because it enables students to construct knowledge, articulate arguments, and participate in disciplinary communities. Despite its importance, many university students continue to struggle with producing analytically rigorous and evaluatively balanced texts (Esperanzate, 2025; Zhang et al., 2025). These challenges extend beyond grammatical accuracy and involve difficulties in managing stance, engagement, and authorial positioning in academic discourse (Khamkhien, 2025; Li & Wang, 2026). The effectiveness of academic texts is strongly influenced by evaluative language choices, particularly in EFL contexts where rhetorical conventions may differ (Valerdi Zárate, 2025). Moreover, strategic awareness alone does not guarantee the sophisticated deployment of evaluative resources (Sagredo-Ortiz & Kloss, 2025). Taken together, these issues suggest the need for more explicit discourse-oriented instruction in academic writing.

Current scholarship indicates that academic writing instruction often remains fragmented across cognitive, rhetorical, and skills-based approaches (Esperanzate, 2025; Arseven & Bal, 2025). Empirical findings show that while critical thinking correlates with argumentative quality, the linguistic realization of evaluation is frequently underdeveloped (Ekalia et al., 2025). Difficulties in managing citation patterns and authorial stance

are particularly evident among novice writers (Khamkhien, 2025). Structured peer feedback has been shown to enhance voice development; however, improvements in evaluative precision are not automatic (McKinley et al., 2025). Although integrating Appraisal Theory with rhetorical moves has been proposed (Zhao & Li, 2025), systematic pedagogical implementation remains limited.

Beyond linguistic factors, cognitive and metacognitive dimensions significantly shape academic writing development. Writing self-efficacy and metacognitive awareness have been linked to improved performance (Chen & Zhu, 2025; Qian et al., 2025). The interaction between language mindsets and control-value appraisals further mediates strategic learning behaviors (Chou, 2025). Emotional empowerment in EFL writing contexts is also influenced by students' appraisal processes (Wang & Zhang, 2025). Control-value appraisals have been found to predict engagement levels (Xu et al., 2023), while emotional reactions to feedback affect revision quality (Liu & Xin, 2025). Nevertheless, these studies conceptualize appraisal primarily as a psychological construct rather than as a linguistic resource within discourse.

From an affective standpoint, appraisal processes are deeply intertwined with emotional experiences in learning. Primary appraisal mechanisms have been described as fundamentally affective rather than purely cognitive (Steffen & Anderson, 2025). Emotional trajectories in language professionals are shaped by appraisal processes that influence motivation and resilience (Ndruru et al. (2025; Zhang & Yusof, 2025). Engagement in L2 writing tasks is mediated by future self-concepts and belief systems (Gong & Pang, 2025). Achievement motives further shape responses to evaluative feedback (Meyer et al., 2025), while emotion regulation has been shown to directly impact academic writing outcomes (Wang et al., 2025). Despite these insights, the translation of appraisal theory into explicit linguistic instruction remains underdeveloped.

Within assessment research, appraisal has been conceptualized as part of evaluative judgment and quality assurance. Frameworks such as QATTL aim to enhance the appraisal of theory-based and review studies (Cole, 2025; Crawford et al., 2025). Reflective assessment practices have also been emphasized in curriculum transformation (David, 2025). Student-centered assessment innovations highlight participatory evaluation models (Tariq & Sergio, 2025). Concerns about scoring consistency continue to emerge in formative contexts (Seyri & Ghiasvand, 2025; Sreedhar et al., 2025), and appraisal-based question design has been explored in professional education (Mehta et al., 2025). Methodological rigor in quality appraisal has likewise been discussed in broader research synthesis (Jowsey et al., 2025). However, appraisal as a discourse-semantic instructional framework remains insufficiently examined.

Technological mediation has become a dominant theme in contemporary writing research. Engagement strategies in academic essays have been analyzed in digitally mediated contexts (Alghazo et al., 2025). Automated writing assessment tools are increasingly examined for their pedagogical implications (Bucol & Sangkawong, 2025). Factors influencing scholars' use of generative writing tools have also been identified (Garcia, 2025). Interactions between self-regulated learning and assisted writing environments have been modeled empirically (Jin et al., 2025; Pawlak et al., 2025). Collaborative revision processes in digital settings demonstrate complex learning dynamics (Michel et al., 2025), while hybrid intelligence environments highlight the role of formative feedback (Weber et al., 2025). Nevertheless, technological affordances alone do not ensure mastery of evaluative discourse resources.

Attention has also been directed toward learner perceptions of digital writing environments (Nugroho et al., 2025; Khan et al., 2025). Systematic reviews outline pedagogical implications for EFL writing contexts (Pham, 2025). Bibliometric analyses map evolving research trends in academic writing technologies (Lendvai, 2025). Broader overviews of second language writing research identify shifts in theoretical paradigms (Yang et al., 2025). Academic literacy development in report writing contexts has likewise been investigated (Tseng et al., 2025), alongside emotional and literacy dimensions among educators (Xie et al., 2025). However, the growing emphasis on technological environments may overshadow deeper linguistic considerations of evaluative meaning-making.

At the discourse level, stance and engagement remain central to effective academic communication (Mo & Crosthwaite, 2025). The strategic expression of attitude significantly enhances persuasiveness (Valerdi Zárate, 2025). Variation in authorial positioning has been observed across expertise levels (Khamkhien, 2025). Although explicit instruction of Appraisal Theory has been advocated (Alam et al., 2025;

Zhao & Li, 2025), empirical validation remains limited. Beyond educational contexts, evaluative language also shapes professional guideline construction (Boyle et al., 2025; Wang, 2025). These findings confirm the theoretical robustness of appraisal, yet instructional efficacy testing remains scarce.

Despite extensive research on evaluation, metacognition, assessment practices, and technological mediation, no study has systematically tested the Appraisal Model as a structured pedagogical intervention to enhance overall academic writing competence. Existing scholarship either treats appraisal as a psychological construct (Chou, 2025; Xu et al., 2023), descriptively analyzes evaluative language (Valerdi Zárate, 2025; Mo & Crosthwaite, 2025), or focuses on technological mediation (Alghazo et al., 2025; Garcia, 2025). Consequently, empirical evidence measuring the effect size of explicit Appraisal Model instruction remains absent. This study therefore addresses the following questions: (1) Does teaching the Appraisal Model significantly improve students' academic writing competence?
(2) What is the magnitude of the effect size based on paired-samples statistical testing?

The innovation of this study lies in repositioning the Appraisal Model as a structured instructional framework rather than solely as a discourse-analytic tool. While prior proposals have integrated appraisal with rhetorical instruction (Zhao & Li, 2025), quantitative validation through effect-size analysis has not been conducted. By combining explicit teaching of attitude, engagement, and graduation with statistical measurement of learning gains, this research bridges discourse semantics and experimental pedagogy (Chen & Zhu, 2025; Ekalia et al., 2025). Such integration extends beyond descriptive and correlational designs.

Theoretically, this study contributes to academic writing scholarship by linking discourse-semantic appraisal resources with measurable learning outcomes. It advances prior discussions of stance and evaluative language (Khamkhien, 2025; Valerdi Zárate, 2025) by demonstrating pedagogical applicability. Practically, the findings provide lecturers with an evidence-based framework suitable for academic writing and discourse analysis courses. Strengthening evaluative competence is expected to enhance thesis writing quality and scholarly communication performance (Li & Wang, 2026; Zhang et al., 2025). Ultimately, this research responds to calls for more theory-driven and empirically validated writing instruction models in higher education.

METHOD

This study was classified as quantitative method that can be classified as pre-experimental design. The subjects of study were 30 seventh semester students of English study program of Artha Wacana Christian University who were taking Research Method course/ Seminar on ELT course in English language teaching or those who were writing theses writing. This study was conducted from October 12, 2021 to October 26,2021 in a form of research method course, how to use appraisal in writing (background, literature review and discussion). The procedures of this study were (1) conducting pre-test, then scored it, (2) treated the students with appraisal model in writing in three meetings of two hours sessions each (3) conducting post text, and scored it (4) analyzed the result of pre-test and post-test (5) interpreted the results and (6) reported the study on a national or international seminar/ conference. Then it could be posted in an ISSN journal.

At the process of treatment, researcher applied lesson plan in which the steps were , introduction (lecturer introduced the concept of appraisal features and their importance in academic writing, then provided examples of appraisal features); analysis (lecturer distributed a text about The important of vaccination in combating Covid19, and asked the students to work in groups to identify and analyze appraisal features; lecturer observed the students to give guidance and feedback); practice (lecturer provided students with a writing prompt, and asked students to write a text around 200 word using appraisal features, and then encourage student to use a range of appraisal features to convey their attitude and engage the reader); feedback (lecturer asked students to exchange their texts with other groups and provided feedback on the use of appraisal features, and then she provided whole-class feedback on common strengths and weaknesses); assessment (lecturer observed students' participation and activities, collected and reviewed students' written texts for use of appraisal features, provided feedback on students' use of appraisal features and suggested areas for improvement); extension (lecturer encouraged students to use appraisal features in their own writing).

On the post test, the students were requested to write an essay using appraisal features that consisted of at least 250 words within 60 minutes. The title was "Online teaching and learning during

Covid-19 do not support your understanding of English courses. Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons and examples to support your argument or opinion." In this case students were expected to provide some reasons for their claims and support their argumentation.

The students' essay was assessed by considering mechanics (spelling, grammar usage, punctuation, orthography, paragraphing) and content (organization, relevance to topic, creativity/interest, range and sophistication of syntax, and richness of vocabulary/expression) as suggested by Henning (1987). Besides that, the assessment more focused on the use of appraisal features (attitude, graduation and engagement). To score the essay there were five criteria, namely, attitude, graduation, engagement, relevance and effectiveness. The score rubric of each criterium was 20 score for attitude, 20 for graduation, 15 for engagement, 20 for relevance, and 25 for effectiveness. Thus, the total score was 100.

The design was classified as Pre-test – Post Test Design (O1 X O2).

Table 1. *One-group pretest-posttest design*

Pretest	Independent	Posttest
O_1	X	O_2

In which:

O_1 : first observation (pretest)

X : treatment

O_2 : second observation (posttest)

The pre-test was used to measure the students' competence in academic writing using appraisal model. before treatment, and post-test was used to measure the students' competence after the treatment. The data was analyzed statistically in order to know the significant difference of the students' competence in pre-test and post-test. Data were analyzed quantitatively by applying paired samples t-test formula (Strunk and Mwavita, 2020:197) in which matched t-test compare two means obtained from the same students.

Formula:

$$t = \frac{D}{SED}$$

t = students' test

D = the difference between two points from each subject

SE_D = standard error of the difference

Formula for calculating the effect size for the paired sample t-test.

For the paired sample t-test, formula of omega squared as the effect size estimate was applied (Strunk and Mwavita, 2020:198).

Formula:

$$w^2 = \frac{t^2 - 1}{t^2 + n - 1}$$

Thus, the hypotheses were formulated as follows:

H1: Teaching Appraisal Model improves students' academic writing competence.

Ho: Teaching Appraisal Model does not improve students' writing competence

Referring to the research questions, data were obtained through a pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design. Prior to the instructional treatment, students completed a pre-test to measure their initial competence in applying appraisal features (attitude, engagement, and graduation) in academic writing. The instructional treatment was conducted in three meetings using the Appraisal Model as a structured teaching framework. After the treatment, a post-test was administered to measure learning gains.

Descriptive statistics

The mean score of the pre-test was 52.3, whereas the mean score of the post-test increased to 65.9. The average gain score (mean difference) was therefore 13.6 points, indicating a substantial improvement in students' writing performance after the instructional intervention.

A detailed distribution of pre-test scores, post-test scores, difference scores (D), and squared difference scores (D^2) for 30 students is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Data of pre- test, post test scores, mean difference and sum squares of difference*

Student	Pre-Test Score	Post-Test Score	Difference (D)	D^2
S1	50	64	14	196
S2	45	65	20	400
S3	52	66	14	196
S4	50	68	18	324
S5	52	70	18	324
S6	50	60	10	100
S7	54	68	14	196
S8	56	60	4	16
S9	54	64	10	100
S10	54	74	20	400
S11	56	74	18	324
S12	56	70	14	196
S13	45	67	22	484
S14	40	61	21	441

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Volume 14, Issue 1, February 2026

S15	48	65	17	289
S16	57	70	13	169
S17	56	80	24	576
S18	57	74	17	289
S19	52	60	8	64
S20	50	60	10	100
S21	45	60	15	225
S22	57	73	16	256
S23	54	62	8	64
S24	54	64	10	100
S25	50	60	10	100
S26	56	60	4	16
S27	50	71	21	441
S28	56	61	5	25
S29	56	63	7	49
S30	57	64	7	49

Total:
∑ Pre-Test Scores = 1569
∑ Post-Test Scores = 1977
∑ Difference (D) = 409
∑ D^2 = 6,509

Table one pictures the scores of pre- test, post- test, Mean difference and the sum of square difference scores. The total mean difference was 409 and the sum square difference was 6.509.

$$D = \frac{\Sigma D}{N} = \frac{409}{30} = 13{,}63$$

Mean difference was 13,63.

The standard error then was calculated. Before calculating the standard error of the difference for denominator, it is needed to calculate the sum of squares for the differences score. By looking at the data on table one, especially the squares of difference scores are as follows:

$$SS_D = \Sigma (D^2) - \frac{(\Sigma D)^2}{N}$$

$$= 6.509 - \frac{409^2}{30}$$

$$= 6.509 - \frac{167.281}{30}$$

$$= 6.509 - 5.576{,}3 = 932.97$$

By using that formula, it can be seen that squares difference scores was 932.97. Then by using the sum squares, standard error was calculated as follows.

$$SE_D = \sqrt{\frac{SSD}{N(N-1)}} = \sqrt{\frac{932{,}97}{30(30-1)}} = \sqrt{\frac{932{,}97}{870)}} = \sqrt{1{,}07}$$

$$= 1{,}03$$

The result of standard error was 1.03. Thus, all this result of calculation could be put in t- formula as follows

$$t = \frac{D}{SED} = \frac{D13{,}63}{1.03} = 13{,}23$$

The calculated value was 13.23 was more than critical value table for t α > =.05 of 1.70. It can be concluded that because p < .05, there was a significant difference between pre- test and post-test scores. With a pre-experimental design and a significant t-value (13.23, df=29), it's likely indicating a significant difference or effect.

Effect size for the paired samples t-Test

Based on the formula mentioned in chapter three, the effect size for the paired samples t-test is as follows

$$W^2 = \frac{t^2 - 1}{t^2 + n - 1} = \frac{13.23^2 - 1}{13.23^2 + 30 - 1} = \frac{175 - 1}{175 + 29} = \frac{174}{204} = 0{,}85$$

The result of calculating the effect for the paired samples t-test was 0,85.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of the Appraisal Model significantly improved students' academic writing competence. The paired-samples t-test yielded a statistically significant result, t(29) = 13.23, p < .05, indicating that the post-test scores were substantially higher than the pre-test scores. This statistical evidence confirms that the observed improvement was unlikely due to chance. The large mean gain (13.63 points) further suggests that the intervention produced meaningful learning progress.

Beyond statistical significance, the magnitude of the treatment effect was also substantial. The calculated effect size (W^2 = 0.85) indicates a large effect, meaning that a considerable proportion of variance in students' writing performance was associated with the instructional treatment. However, consistent with methodological cautions in quasi-experimental research, this proportion should not be interpreted as exclusively caused by the intervention. Although the instructional treatment appears to be a strong contributing factor, other variables, such as increased familiarity with writing tasks, maturation, or external learning exposure, may also have influenced the improvement. Nevertheless, the consistency of positive gain scores across nearly all participants strengthens the argument that structured appraisal instruction played a central role in enhancing performance.

These findings align with contemporary research emphasizing the importance of evaluative language, stance, and engagement in academic

discourse. For instance, Mo and Crosthwaite (2025) highlight that effective academic writing depends heavily on the strategic management of stance and engagement resources. Similarly, Valerdi Zárate (2025) confirms that the use of attitudinal expressions enhances textual persuasiveness and rhetorical clarity. The improvement observed in this study supports these claims, as students demonstrated greater control over evaluative expressions after explicit instruction. Rather than merely stating agreement (e.g., "The writer agrees"), students began to intensify and qualify their stance (e.g., "The writer strongly agrees" or "online learning can greatly enhance…"), indicating a more nuanced deployment of graduation resources.

Furthermore, the results corroborate Khamkhien's (2025) findings that novice writers often struggle with authorial positioning and evaluative precision. Prior to the intervention, students' writing reflected limited use of appraisal features and minimal variation in evaluative intensity. After treatment, students incorporated more diversified appraisal resources, particularly in expressing attitude and strengthening claims. This suggests that explicit instruction in appraisal features can operationalize what Zhao and Li (2025) describe as the integration of Appraisal Theory into rhetorical teaching. Unlike prior exploratory work, the present study provides quantitative evidence of instructional effectiveness.

From a cognitive perspective, the findings may also be interpreted through the lens of engagement and appraisal processes in learning. Xu et al. (2023) argue that appraisal processes influence student engagement, while Wang and Zhang (2025) demonstrate the interaction between appraisals and emotional empowerment in writing contexts. The structured exposure to evaluative language may have increased students' awareness of how meaning is constructed, thereby strengthening their confidence and strategic control in writing tasks. Although this study did not directly measure self-efficacy, the substantial performance gains suggest that linguistic awareness and evaluative competence were enhanced.

Importantly, the findings extend beyond technological mediation research, which often emphasizes writing environments rather than discourse-semantic resources (Alghazo et al., 2025; Garcia, 2025). While digital tools may facilitate drafting and revision, they do not automatically develop students' understanding of evaluative meaning-making. The present study demonstrates that systematic instruction in appraisal resources provides a discourse-based pathway to improving writing competence, complementing broader pedagogical innovations.

In theoretical terms, this study reinforces the conceptualization of appraisal as a multidimensional system encompassing attitude, engagement, and graduation. As discussed in contemporary discourse scholarship (Mo & Crosthwaite, 2025; Valerdi Zárate, 2025), evaluation functions as a central mechanism through which writers position themselves in relation to ideas and readers. The significant improvement found in this study suggests that when students are explicitly taught how to manipulate these resources, their academic writing becomes more rhetorically effective and evaluatively sophisticated.

Nevertheless, the pre-experimental design constitutes a limitation. Without a control group, causal inference remains tentative. Future research employing experimental or quasi-experimental designs with control and treatment groups would provide stronger evidence regarding the causal impact of the Appraisal Model. Additionally, longitudinal studies could examine whether gains in evaluative competence are sustained over time.

In sum, the findings indicate that structured instruction of the Appraisal Model significantly enhances students' academic writing competence. The large effect size and statistically significant improvement suggest both practical and theoretical contributions. By bridging discourse semantics and measurable learning outcomes, this study provides empirical support for the pedagogical application of appraisal resources in higher education writing instruction.

CONCLUSION

In response to the research questions, the findings indicate that the implementation of the Appraisal Model as an alternative instructional framework significantly improved students' writing competence. The paired-samples t-test revealed a mean difference of 13.23 (SE = 1.03), demonstrating statistically meaningful progress from pretest to posttest. Furthermore, the large effect size (0.85) suggests substantial practical significance, indicating that approximately 85% of the variance in writing self-efficacy was associated with changes following the intervention. These results led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, confirming the effectiveness of appraisal-based

instruction in enhancing students' academic writing performance.

However, the study was limited in terms of participants, context, and research design, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. The use of a pre-experimental design without a control group warrants cautious interpretation of causal claims. Future research employing true experimental or comparative designs with larger and more diverse samples across different educational contexts is therefore recommended. Pedagogically, integrating appraisal resources into university-level courses, particularly writing, semantics, discourse analysis, and research methodology, may help students strengthen evaluative awareness and rhetorical control. Such instruction can support not only academic essays but also research reports and other scholarly projects.

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