

Stance, persona and audience awareness in student writing

- applying the Appraisal framework

Dr Peter R. R. White, School of Arts and Media,
UNSW (prwhite@verboesity.org)



Storytelling genre

Fight Story (1)

One day I was walking through the school and a kid came up to me and he said, "Do you want a fight?" and I said "Yes".

Then I took my coat off. Then he chucked the first punch. I chucked a punch back at him and I got him right in the mouth and I broke his jaw. Then I walked back and ran and he pulled me to the ground. Then I got up. Then I grabbed him and chucked him against a steel pole. He turned and ran off. I didn't bother to chase him.

Fight Story (2)

It all happened when I was walking home from school.

Two twits from my class decided to pick on me. They started yelling stupid names like spazzo, pigface etc. I didn't mind this. I also didn't mind Kelly punching me in the shoulder. What I did mind was that Kelly kept me occupied while Matthew rode my bike around the cul de sac of the street. This was harmless. But, still riding, he kicked off my bag and jumped off the bike leaving it to fall. This made me sore. I gave in to my temper. When Matthew saw this he took off.

So it was me and David Kelly to battle it out. I chased him around and around the street. When I finally caught up to him I threw punches galore. Most of them missed. Kelly managed to escape and run home.

I think I was the victor, but if I was, I don't think it was worth it.

Persuasive writing (Exposition)**Unicorns are the best pets** [*Year 1 student, age 6*]

Lots of people have pets. Unicorn are the best pets

I think Unicorn is the best pet because they help us to fly. They fly high so we can see the clouds and sun.

Secondly they are beautiful an you can brush there hair and put ribbons in there hair. There fore Unicorns are cool too keep pets.

Soccer is better than football [*Year 4 student, age 8*]

I think soccer is better than football and here is some reasons why.

Firstly, I believe that in football when you are tackled it is more likely you will get hurt even break a bone.

Secondly, I think it's a lot easier to understand soccer rules than football rules because there is lot less rules.

Thirdly I believe that soccer is more challenging than football because you run to the ball, dribble and there is a goaly and it harder to score.

I Also think that there is awsome tricks and lots of new tricks to learn. I like that because you can always learn or improve on different tricks.

That clearly shows that soccer is better than football and I hope you will join me.

Fight Story (1)

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Fight Story (2)

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It all happened when I was walking home from school.

[possible Complication]

Two twits from my class decided to pick on me. They started yelling stupid names like spazzo, pigface etc.

[Evaluation – not a genuine Complication]

I didn't mind this. I also didn't mind Kelly punching me in the shoulder.

[Complication]

What I did mind was that Kelly kept me occupied while Matthew rode my bike around the cul de sac of the street.

[Evaluation]

This was harmless.

[Complication]

But, still riding, he kicked off my bag and jumped off the bike leaving it to fall. This made me sore. I gave in to my temper. When Matthew saw this he took off.

So it was me and David Kelly to battle it out. I chased him around and around the street.

[Resolution]

When I finally caught up to him I threw punches galore. Most of them missed. Kelly managed to escape and run home.

[Coda]

I think I was the victor, but if I was, I don't think it was worth it.

Tracking development in the interpersonal aspects of student storytelling

Using the Appraisal framework (Martin & White 2005) to systematically explain how choices as to evaluative meanings contribute to the storytelling by creating a particular authorial identity/persona and positioning the reader attitudinally vis-à-vis the people, happenings and situations being depicted

The Appraisal framework meanings by which...

- speakers/writers indicate negative and positive viewpoints with respect to people, objects, happenings and propositions or indirectly position others to subscribe to such viewpoints (**Attitude**)
- intensify or down-tone the force of what they are asserting, or blur or sharpen the boundaries of the semantic categories they are using (**Graduation**)
- position themselves dialogically vis-à-vis propositions – i.e. what others have said or might have said previously, or might say in response to the current communication (**Engagement**)

Types of Attitude

Positive or negative assessments by reference to emotion or systems of social norms and values. (evaluative wordings underlined)

Emotion (Affect)

Mobile phones in class really **annoy** me

I do **like** being able to take calls in class

I **love** the new Samsung S III

Opinion (Judgement and Appreciation)

Mobile phones in class can be **harmful** for students' concentration.

Mobile phones in class can be **beneficial**.

The new Samsung S III is **elegant and easy-to-use**.

It's **impolite** of you to be using your mobile phone in class.

Opinion: Judgement and Appreciation

Judgement

Assessments of people's behaviour or character by reference to social norms (ethics, social acceptability, potential to be raised or lowered in the esteem of one's community)

It's **impolite** of you to be using your mobile phone in class.

Appreciation

Assessments of entities, artefacts, happenings, state-of-affair by reference to systems of social valuation – aesthetic assessments; assessments of harm and benefit etc.

Mobile phones are **harmful** for students' concentration.

Realisation of attitude

- Implicit (invoked/tokens of Attitude)
 - That secret service agent took a bullet for the President.
- Explicit (inscribed)
 - How **brave** that secret service agent was – he took a bullet for the President.
 - That secret service agent took a bullet for the President. What an **idiot!** Who would be so **stupid** as to risk their life for a politician?

Implicit Attitude

“Just the facts”

(1) George W. Bush delivered his inaugural speech as the United States President who collected 537,000 fewer votes than his opponent.

(2) The secret service agent stepped into the line of fire and took a bullet for the President.

Some evaluative element (but nothing explicitly positive or negative)

The national telephone company has withdrawn sponsorship of a suicide prevention phone service - **just days after** announcing a \$2.34 billion half-yearly profit.

He only visits his mother once a year, even though she is more than 90 years old.

In soccer it's harder to score.

*Thirdly I believe that soccer is more challenging than football because you run to the ball, dribble and there is a goal and **it harder to score.***

Graduation

Values by which (1) speakers graduate (raise or lower) the interpersonal impact, force or volume of their utterances, and (2) by which they graduate (blur or sharpen) the focus of their semantic categorisations.

Mobile phones are somewhat harmful;

Mobile phones are just terrible.

why appraisal

- Appraisal provides an methodology for identifying and classifying the particular positive and/or negative value positions put into play by the text and the linguistic mechanisms by which these are conveyed
 - a speaker/writer's identity/persona is very much tied up with the nature of the attitudes they express
 - when speakers express a positive or negative viewpoint they are not simply being self expressive; they invite the addressee to share this viewpoint or at least to regard it as plausible
 - it is via the expression of attitudinal assessments that speakers align or dis-align with particular communities of shared values

Exploring the activation of attitudinal positions (positioning the reader to regard people, happenings, situations positively or negatively)

Fight Story (1)

One day I was walking through the school and a kid came up to me and he said, "Do you want a fight?" and I said "Yes".

Then I took my coat off. Then he chucked the first punch. I chucked a punch back at him and I got him right in the mouth and I broke his jaw. Then I walked back and ran and he pulled me to the ground. Then I got up. Then I grabbed him and chucked him against a steel pole. He turned and ran off. I didn't bother to chase him.

Fight Story (2)

It all happened when I was walking home from school.

Two twits from my class decided to pick on me. They started yelling stupid names like spazzo, pigface etc. I didn't mind this. I also didn't mind Kelly punching me in the shoulder. What I did mind was that Kelly kept me occupied while Matthew rode my bike around the cul de sac of the street. This was harmless. But, still riding, he kicked off my bag and jumped off the bike leaving it to fall. This made me sore. I gave in to my temper. When Matthew saw this he took off.

So it was me and David Kelly to battle it out. I chased him around and around the street. When I finally caught up to him I threw punches galore. Most of them missed. Kelly managed to escape and run home.

I think I was the victor, but if I was, I don't think it was worth it.

It all happened when I was walking home from school.

Two **twits** from my class decided to **pick on** me. They started yelling **stupid** names like **spazzo**, **pigface** etc. I **didn't mind** this. I also **didn't mind** Kelly punching me in the shoulder. What I **did mind** was that Kelly kept me occupied while Matthew rode my bike around the cul de sac of the street. This was **harmless**. But, still riding, he kicked off my bag and jumped off the bike leaving it to fall. This made me **sore**. I **gave in to my temper**. When Matthew saw this he took off. So it was me and David Kelly to battle it out. I chased him around and around the street. When I finally caught up to him I threw punches galore. Most of them missed. Kelly managed to escape and run home.

I think I was the **victor**, but if I was, I don't think **it was worth it**.

Possible attitudinal targets: entities/happenings/situations towards which the reader might be positioned or assumed to be positively or negatively disposed

1. the narrator's assailant
2. the narrator
3. the fight which ensued

One day I was walking through the school and a kid came up to me and he said, "Do you want a fight?"

and I said "Yes".

Then I took my coat off. Then he chucked the first punch. I chucked a punch back at him and I got him right in the mouth and I broke his jaw.

Then I walked back and ran and he pulled me to the ground. Then I got up. Then I grabbed him and chucked him against a steel pole.

He turned and ran off.

I **didn't bother** to chase him.

Possible attitudinal targets

1. the narrator's assailants
2. the narrator
3. the fight which ensued

Attitudinal orientation towards the assailants

they decided to **pick on** me

-ve inscription Judgement

yelling **stupid** names like **spazzo** and **pigface**

-ve invocation Judgement)– use of offensive terms

Kelly punching me in the shoulder

-ve invocation Judgement

Attitudinal orientation towards the narrator

two "**twits**"

-ve potential invocation (Judgement) – use of derogatory terms

I **didn't mind** them [calling me names], punching me in the shoulder

+ve Affect as an invocations of what value? equanimity? self control?

What I **did mind** was that Kelly kept me occupied while Matthew rode my bike around the cul de sac of the street.

+ve Affect invoking what? reasonable anger; an appropriate psychological response?

[him dropping narrator's bike] This **made me sore**. I **gave in to my temper**.

-ve Affect invoking Judgement

I chased him around and around the street. When I finally caught up to him I threw punches galore. Most of them missed

-ve Judgement (capacity)

I think I was the **victor**, [*+ve Judgement*] but if I was, I don't think it was **worth it**.

+ve invoked Judgement – wise, appropriate attitude towards fighting

Tracking management of stance and audience positioning in student persuasive writing

- Some of the questions which we might want to address
- How developed are the students in their use of the language by which
 - **[expertise]** they present as being adequately informed on the current subject matter
 - **[attitudinal/epistemic orientation]** they are likely to be regarded as having responded appropriately in terms of their beliefs about, and attitudes towards, the people, events and issues being dealt with - i.e. are their beliefs and attitudes presented so as to come across as suitably developed, reasonable and well founded?
 - **[personal stance]** by which they adopt an “appropriate” stance towards their material – i.e. appropriately “personal” or “impersonal” according to the conventions of the current text type (discourse domain); an appropriate degree of personal investment in, or detachment from, the propositions being advanced
 - **[dialogic engagement]** they present as engaged appropriately with the view points of others, particularly those who might be doubtful about the position being advanced or hold a counter view
 - **[audience awareness]** by which they present as constructing an appropriate imagined reader for the text – i.e. present as making appropriate assumptions about their reader’s beliefs, understandings, values, feelings, tastes and expectations?

Audience awareness

- To whom is the persuasive writing directed?
- To what type of reader?
- In what relationship with the writer?
- With what level of knowledge on the current subject?
- With which views towards issues being raised?

- Analysis which attends to degree of familiarity/social distance between writer and reader and to assertions or assumptions the writer makes about the reader’s beliefs, understandings, values, feelings, tastes and expectations?

Persuasive writing (Exposition)

Unicorns are the best pets

Lots of people have pets. Unicorn are the best pets

I think Unicorn is the best pet because they help us to fly. They fly high so we can see the clouds and sun.

Secondly they are beautiful an you can brush there hair and put ribbons in there hair.

There fore Unicorns are cool too keep pets.

Soccer is better than football

I think soccer is better than football and here is some reasons why.

Firstly, I believe that in football when you are tackled it is more likely you will get hurt even break a bone.

Secondly, I think it's a lot easier to understand soccer rules than football rules because there is lot less rules.

Thirdly I believe that soccer is more challenging than football because you run to the ball, dribble and there is a goaly and it harder to score.

I Also think that there is awsome tricks and lots of new tricks to learn. I like that because you can always learn or improve on different tricks.

That clearly shows that soccer is better than football and I hope you will join me.

Lots of people have pets

Unicorn are the **best** pets

I think Unicorn is the **best** pet because **they help us to fly.** **They fly high so we can see the clouds and sun.**

Secondly they are **beautiful** **an you can brush there hair and put ribbons in there hair.**

There fore Unicorns are **cool** too keep pets.

[inscribed attitudinal assertion]

Unicorns are **best**

[justified by attitudinal invocation]

They help us to fly so we can see the clouds and sun

[inscribed attitudinal assertion]

Unicorns are **best**

[justified by attitudinal invocation]

You can put brush their hair and put ribbons in their hair

Assumed shared value positions

Positive = flying up on the back of a creature to see the clouds

Positive = being able to brush and put ribbons in a pet's hair

Soccer is better than football [Year 4 student, age 8]

I think soccer is better than football and here is some reasons why.

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That clearly shows that soccer is **better** than football and I **hope** you will join me.

[inscribed attitudinal assertion]

Soccer is **better** than football

[justified by attitudinal assertion, and invocation]

In football you are more likely to **get hurt**; break a bone

[inscribed attitudinal assertion]

Soccer is **easier to understand** than football

[justified by invocation]

In soccer there are fewer rules

I think soccer is **better** than football and here is some reasons why.
 Firstly, I believe that in football when you are tackled it is more likely you will **get hurt** even **break a bone**.
 Secondly, I think it's a **lot easier** to understand soccer rules than football rules because there is **lot less rules**.
 Thirdly I believe that soccer is more **challenging** than football because **you run to the ball, dribble and there is a goal and it harder to score**.
 I **Also** think that there is **awsome** tricks and lots of new tricks to learn. I **like** that because you can always learn or **IMPROVE** on different tricks.
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[inscribed attitudinal assertion]

Soccer is more **challenging** than football
 [justified by attitudinal invocation]
 In soccer you can dribble, there is a goalie and it's harder to score

[inscribed attitudinal assertion]

Soccer is **better** than football
 [justified by attitudinal inscription]
 There are **awsome** tricks you can learn and **improve on**

usbooks	bottling plant. He often talks about it when challenging and encouraging young people, especially minority	
times	this varied city: tough, compassionate, challenging and endlessly engaging. The anthology reflects	
times	experts said Creating a culture that was fun, challenging and engendered loyalty was vital for sustaining	
brbooks	struggles between old and new customs, was daily challenging and engrossing. She had anticipated that her	
brmags	three. I thought general practice would be challenging and enjoyable, allowing me more direct involvement	
times	nine new faces arriving. They all have a challenging and enjoyable term ahead. <p/> The author is	
cannews	worried about her reaction. She can be very challenging and enjoys a good fight. How do I convey my	
brregnews	Overall, he has gone his own way. It has been challenging and enlightening. And the series has revealed	
times	out old and new performing styles in this challenging and enriching evening. High on Laughter. Palladium	
usbooks	could be a chess game of the spirit, and a challenging and entertaining one. Now that the railroad	
oznews	along the way explores social values in a challenging and entertaining way for youngsters from kinder	
brmags	properly Breaking bad news is an art. It is a challenging and essential area of medical practice, and	
brbooks	rather than instructing, informing, moving, challenging and even entertaining them, is no longer a	
brbooks	built as it is into our minds, it can be a challenging and even frightening experience to have someone	
usnews	exciting and successful season. It will be challenging and everyone should be up for it." Forsberg	
usnews	doing other things?" he asks." One, it's challenging and exciting, and two, I suppose it's my passion	
indnews	was boring. My current job is a lot more challenging and exciting." Her job: medical transcription	
sunnow	home. <p/> He says: "My new career is more challenging and exciting. Computeach have opened a lot	
usephem	diversity in the Santa Cruz housing marketing challenging and exciting. <p/> Her advice to people thinking	
brephem	It's colourful, vibrant, controversial, challenging and exciting. Offer price: £14.99 -- saving	

usnews	keeping a couple of people up there is really challenging and difficult," McCurdy says. "It's a cautionary	
usnews	top-line performance of the company in a still challenging and difficult economy," DuPont's chairman and	
brbooks	success criteria]. <p/> 2. Goals should be challenging and difficult enough that the trainees can	
nznews	eight-week trial had been one of the most challenging and difficult in the Hamilton District Court	
usnews	all these issues, including some of the challenging and difficult issues to do with climate change	
times	international expansion by entering such a challenging and difficult market. There are legal, cultural	
usnews	the events of Sept. 11, a portion of the challenging and difficult play is set in Kabul where an	
times	on his shoulders during some of the most challenging and difficult years for the Church. <p/> Besides	
cannews	and earnings of 15 cents a share." Q2 was challenging and disappointing, as the desktop (graphics	
usbooks	the field of philosophy, culminates in the challenging and disarming response: the Overman. "In the	
times	people who are, in the main, intellectually challenging and diverse and wholly likeable. Together,	
usbooks	branch of the Shari'ah is one of the most challenging and dynamic aspects of it in the present day	
times	It's a safe bet they would be a lot less challenging and easier to contain and manage compared with	
usnews	big role in expanding people by coaching, challenging and educating. If CEOs are going to promote	
oznews	particularly in the economic area, and start challenging and embarrassing the Government. Labor sources	
oznews	in the economic area, and start seriously challenging and embarrassing the Government on key issues	
brmags	content of the songs are regarded as his most challenging and emotionally dark. HUNDRED REASONS have	
usnews	Waksal said the case had been "extremely challenging and emotionally draining for me, my family	
usnews	Jim Wolfcale said the trial was "mentally challenging and emotionally exhausting." Reading from a	
brbooks	survey of Chad has been one of the most challenging and encouraging I have ever taken part in.	

modifier	479	1.5	modifies	2058	3.0	and/or	993	2.8
intellectually	14	7.04	karma	9	6.47	rewarding	24	7.36
academically	5	6.36	assignment	19	5.82	stimulating	6	6.42
immensely	6	5.23	partridge	4	5.74	exciting	62	6.33
mentally	14	4.96	task	78	5.64	forthright	4	5.86
technically	6	4.7	puzzle	11	5.53	enjoyable	10	5.68
extraordinarily	4	4.65	environment	60	5.24	scenic	4	5.68
enormously	5	4.57	walking	5	4.85	inspiring	6	5.63
extremely	31	4.16	curriculum	8	4.84	engaging	4	5.42
hugely	4	3.77	terrain	6	4.7	adventurous	5	5.4
sufficiently	5	3.71	viewpoint	4	4.58	stressful	6	5.27
equally	14	3.61	aspect	25	4.47	varied	5	5.24
physically	7	3.49	proposition	5	4.28	interesting	46	5.12
increasingly	11	2.5	total	10	3.9	innovative	9	5.12
particularly	15	2.36	course	51	3.77	rigorous	5	5.07
very	113	2.15	assumption	6	3.71	unpredictable	5	4.91
truly	4	1.58	target	26	3.71	entertaining	7	4.88
especially	6	1.34	behaviour	15	3.69	complex	25	4.75
highly	5	1.12	interpretation	5	3.62	diverse	5	4.17
slightly	4	1.05	role	43	3.58	lively	4	4.07
pretty	5	0.85	Mrs	8	3.48	difficult	52	3.99
little	6	0.74	reply	4	3.42	complicated	6	3.98
quite	9	0.51	climate	8	3.41	fascinating	4	3.7
			glance	4	3.35	original	13	3.52
			walk	7	3.27	competitive	9	3.46
			peak	4	3.15	creative	6	3.45

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 That clearly shows that soccer is **better** than football and I **hope** you will join me.

[inscribed attitudinal assertion]

Soccer is more **challenging** than football
 [justified by attitudinal invocation]
 In soccer you can dribble, there is a goalie and it's harder to score

[inscribed attitudinal assertion]

Soccer is **better** than football
 [justified by attitudinal inscription]
 There are **awsome** tricks you can learn and **improve on**

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 That clearly shows that soccer is **better** than football and I **hope** you will join me.

Assumed shared value positions

- Negative** = injury being more likely
- Positive** = fewer rules
- Positive** = having a goalie and being harder to score
- Positive** = involving awesome tricks

Dialogic engagement

- To what degree does the writer present as engaged appropriately with the view points of others, with those who might have spoken previously on the subject and particularly with those who might be doubtful about the position being advanced or hold a counter view

Mobile phones shouldn't be allowed in school

I strongly believe that mobile phones should not be allowed at school. Having your mobile phone in your classroom is pointless and completely unnecessary. The mere thought of it is crazy and will lead to many problems.

Firstly, having your mobile phone at school will deeply impact on learning. Instead of doing work, students will spend their lessons on the phone texting each other. Also, many phones play music and having music on while working is scientifically proven to decrease performance, which will affect learning and scores.

Secondly, like all valuable devices, there's a huge chance of phones getting stolen especially the expensive ones. Having your phone with you may decrease the chance of theft but it then increases the chance of it getting damaged especially at recess and lunch.

Lastly, one important issue is privacy. Nearly all phones have a built in camera. Students may take photos of other students to later post on sites like Facebook. Firstly before any pictures can be taken permission is needed from parents and I'm sure no parents would agree for their child to be on someone else's social network. In fact this is so serious that that it's a huge offence and can lead to prosecution.

Having your mobile phone at school is just not necessary as it doesn't help your learning at all. All it will do is lead to problems.

Appraisal: Engagement

Resources by which the speaker/writer positions him/herself vis-à-vis what others have previously had to say on the topic (or are presented as having had to say), or vis-à-vis what are presented as possible or likely responses to what is currently being said on the topic.

Engagement: Expanding dialogic space

Presenting the current proposition as just one view among a possible range of views, and hence making allowances for and legitimising alternative view points

For example:

It could be argued that mobile phones are harmful in the classroom

In my view mobile phones are harmful in the classroom.

Some people believe mobile phones are harmful

It's likely mobile phones are harmful

There's evidence to suggest mobile phones are harmful

Certainly mobile phones are harmful

Engagement: contracting dialogic space

Engaging with other speakers and voices while nevertheless fending off, rejecting or ruling out alternative viewpoints

The facts of the matter are that mobile phones are harmful

Of course mobile phones in the classroom are harmful

Child psychologists have demonstrated that mobile phones are harmful in the classroom

Bare assertion

Presenting the current proposition as dialogically unproblematic; one for which it is not necessary to recognise the possibility of alternative or counter positions – i.e. a proposition which has the status accepted knowledge or universally held belief.

Mobile phone are harmful in the classroom

I strongly believe that mobile phones should not be allowed at school. Having your mobile phone in your classroom is **pointless** and **completely unnecessary**. The **MERE THOUGHT OF IT IS CRAZY** and will lead to **many** **problems**.

Firstly, having your mobile phone at school will **deeply impact on** learning. **INSTEAD OF DOING WORK, STUDENTS WILL SPEND THEIR LESSONS ON THE PHONE TEXTING EACH OTHER**. Also, many phones play music and having music on while working is **scientifically proven to decrease performance**, which will affect learning and scores.

Secondly, like all **valuable** devices, **there's a huge chance of** phones getting **STOLEN** especially the **the expensive** ones. Having your phone with you **may decrease the chance of THEFT** but it then **increases the chance of it getting damaged** especially at recess and lunch.

Lastly, one important issue is privacy. Nearly all phones have a built in camera. **STUDENTS MAY TAKE PHOTOS OF OTHER STUDENTS TO LATER POST ON SITES LIKE FACEBOOK**. Firstly before any pictures can be taken permission is needed from parents and I'm sure no parents would agree for their child to be on someone **elses** **social network**. In fact this is so serious that that it's a **huge OFFENCE** and can lead to prosecution.

Having your mobile phone at school is **just not necessary** as it **doesn't help** your learning at all. **All it will do** is **lead to problems**.

References

- www.grammatics.com/appraisal
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- My contact details: Dr Peter R. R. White, School of Arts and Media, UNSW (prwhite@verbosity.org)