

# A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Attitudinal Resources in Modern English Poetry: The Appraisal System

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## Abstract

Languages are means by which speakers and writers communicate their common beliefs and personal attitudes. This study thus sought to analyze the attitudinal resources in four modern English poems written by the international poetess Lang Leav. The main aim was to find out the kind of worldview the poetess attempted to share with her readers from the perspective of the attitudinal system. This system is divided into three sub-systems: Affect, judgment, and appreciation. After the attitudinal resources were collected and classified, the results indicated that both affect and appreciation resources were frequently used in the comprised corpus, followed by judgment resources. Moreover, the study found that Leav mostly shared a pessimistic view of love and romantic relationships. Therefore, the poetess utilized negative attributes more than positive ones throughout her compositions. Finally, this study may give useful implications about how modern English poetry is constructed based on a reliable perspective.

**Keywords:** Attitudinal resources, Appraisal system, Modern English poetry, CDA, Worldview

## 1. Introduction

Critically analyzing discourse, whether it be written or spoken, has gained too much attention since the 1980s. Scholars from different fields then contributed to the body of knowledge by analyzing different types of texts such as reports, stories, spoken speech, newspaper articles, and translated products (e.g., Chen, 2022; Alsaahafi, 2020; Viljanen, 2019; Afzal et al., 2020). Some scholars went a step further and used different methods or systems for the analysis. For

example, the appraisal system is notably effective in analyzing how attitudes and values are negotiated in texts (Martin & Rose, 2007). Hence, several studies attempted to analyze different texts based on the appraisal system such as political reports (e.g., Jin, 2019), curricular's textbooks (e.g., Kawamitsu, 2012), online debate texts (e.g., Almutairi, 2019), and novels (e.g., Yiying & Jia, 2020; Coffin & O'Halloran, 2012).

However, this study aimed to analyze a different kind of texts that, to the researcher's knowledge, seems unexamined from the perspective of the appraisal system. In other words, four modern English poems written by the international New Zealand novelist and poetess Lang Leav were analyzed. Leav is a notoriously famous poetess whose work *Lullabies* won the Goodreads Choice Award for Poetry 2014 (Goodreads, n.d.). Besides, these poems were retrieved from a single book of hers, namely, *Memories*. The analysis was based on Hart's (2014) explanation of the appraisal system. This system is divided into three more systems (i.e., attitude, engagement, and graduation) which are further divided into several sub-systems and categories. Nonetheless, this study explored the attitudinal resources of the poems exclusively.

The English word 'poem' is descended from the Greek word '*poēma*' that means a "thing made or created" by a poet or a writer (Online Etymology dictionary, n.d., para. 1). What does a poem then mean in English? Yakich (2013) aesthetically clarified it as a piece of art that "helps the mind play with its well-trod patterns of thought, and can even help reroute those patterns by making us see the familiar anew" (para. 14). Poems can be written on various and different topics that can indicate many different events. However, there is more than one way to examine how poems are constructed; for example, researchers can investigate how the characters are identified, how readers are positioned, how feelings are expressed and so forth. To do so, researchers can use different methods such as critical discourse analysis (e.g., Makamani, 2010; Lee & Man, 2019; Ohito & Nyachae, 2018), or examine different features such as stylistic ones (e.g., Dong, 2016; Ahmed, 2020).

Furthermore, analyzing English poetry may lead to new areas of knowledge and discoveries. We can find out how poets tend to represent their ideas and feelings through words. We can also identify how English poems are written to the intended readers. However, some poets may seek to convey a particular picture or a depiction of their reality or thoughts to their readers. That is, they wish to give their audience a glimpse of their worldview. A worldview is a "way of seeing the world, or how reality is structured" (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 421). Therefore, this study sought to determine what kind of worldview Leav held toward her reality by analyzing the attitudinal resources across four of her compositions from the perspective of the appraisal system. Finally, the analysis of the attitudinal resources of modern and original English poems seems underexplored; thus, the current study may hopefully compensate and fill this gap in the poetic discourse literature.

### *1.1 Previous Research on Poems Analysis*

Gómez's (2020) study, although it did not explicitly use the appraisal system, sought to examine the aesthetic norms in old English poetry. The researcher investigated how beauty was represented via 23 different words. Gómez found that things were aesthetically described

in an objective manner. In contrast, some words targeted the subjects' feelings and emotions. In other words, these representations of beauty were subjective. More relatedly, Hongyan (2020) embarked on a comparative study in which a classical Chinese poem (i.e., Guan Ju) and five of its English versions were analyzed from the perspective of the appraisal system. The study aimed to describe how the three systems of the appraisal system (i.e., attitude, graduation, and engagement) facilitated the translation process. Hongyan maintained that translators can benefit from the appraisal resources of a poem to compose a quite close version of the original one in the target language. Moreover, the findings indicated that the appraisal system can be efficiently employed for translation studies and that the system seems as a solid base on which a "systemic theory of translation" can be shaped (Hongyan, 2020, p. 38).

Some studies, however, attempted to analyze poems that were written in both English and some foreign languages based on one or two systems of the appraisal system. For instance, Chen (2022) examined the attitudinal and engagement resources of a Chinese poem (i.e., Qiang Jin Jiu) and three of its English versions. This was driven by the urge to explore possible discrepancies in the appraisal resources in addition to assessing the quality of the translation. Chen found a flourishing application of the attitudinal resources in the original poem and its English versions. More precisely, the affect resources were intensely distributed across the poems. In terms of engagement, none of the translated poems were close enough to the original one. Chen attributed these discrepancies to the poet's and the translators' different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Furthermore, Jing and Xiongyong (2018) sought to analyze eight Chinese poems by Li Bai and their English versions by Xu and Lowell to find out the differences in terms of their applications of the attitudinal resources. The researchers also aimed to examine the translation quality. Thus, Jing and Xiongyong carried out a contrastive, statistic, and quantitative study. Generally speaking, the translated versions exhibited a greater number of the attitudinal resources in comparison to the source texts. The attitudinal system is knowingly divided into three sub-systems: Affect, appreciation, and judgment. Appreciation resources thus were largely and frequently used in the source texts and their translated versions. However, Xu's versions demonstrated a wide breadth of affect and appreciation resources, whereas Lowell's versions appeared to embrace more judgment and appreciation resources.

In the same vein, Dong and Lin (2018) aimed to comparatively analyze the attitudinal resources in a Chinese poem (i.e., Changgan Xing) and two of its English versions. One version was rendered by Pound (1915), and the other was translated by Xu Yuanchong (1987). In addition, the researchers sought to justify the differences between the translated poems. Hence, Dong and Lin used Martin's (2005) explanation of the attitudinal system throughout their analysis. The study found that all of the three sub-systems of the attitudinal system (i.e., affect, judgment, appreciation) existed in the translated versions of the Chinese poem. However, Xu Yuanchong's version applied more affect and judgment resources than Pound's. Dong and Lin also examined the polarization and explicitness/implicitness of the English versions. They found that each poem was on a par with the other. Finally, these

differences were attributed to the translators' different cultural backgrounds in addition to their distinct multicolored translation methods.

In sum, poems in English are fruitful resources for analysts, researchers, teachers, and even students to go beyond the regular limits of the language. They highlight prominent linguistic features, indicate hidden ideologies, and aesthetically describe living and nonliving aspects of everyday life. Unlike Gómez's (2020) study, Hongyan's (2020), Chen's (2022), Jing and Xiongyong's (2018), and Dong and Lin's (2018) studies used the appraisal system as a main tool for the analysis, although they differed in their utilization of it. Interestingly, all these studies revolved around some classical Chinese poems and their English versions. In other words, they sought to examine how the appraisal system can be beneficial for translation studies. These studies also aimed to identify the differences in the appraisal resources between the source and target texts. Generally speaking, the translated versions—which were in English—exhibited a greater tendency to apply more attitudinal resources than the original texts. Nevertheless, and to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no one attempted to analyze an original and modern English poem—not a translated product but an avant-garde one—from the perspective of a single aspect of the appraisal system, namely, the attitudinal system. Therefore, this present study aimed to fill this gap by analyzing the attitudinal resources of four modern English poems crafted by a widely known English poetess, Lang Leav. Finally, the following sections show a theoretical framework of the main concepts of the study.

## *1.2 Theoretical Framework*

### *1.2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis*

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a mechanism by which a researcher can reveal hidden meanings or ideologies in written or spoken discourse using the models of grammar or typology (Hart, 2014). Moreover, CDA attempts to connect any given language with its social functions so as to be analyzed efficiently (Fan, 2019). More precisely, the analysis process starts with a certain social setting which consists of three different dimensions: Events, participants, and modes (i.e., channels through which discourse is permeated) (Santosa, 2016). The social setting is structured with three linguistic levels: Phonology/graphology, lexico-grammar, and discourse semantic (Almurashi, 2016). In addition, languages indicate three types of meanings: Ideational, interpersonal, and textual (Martin & Rose, 2007). These dimensions, linguistic levels, and types of meanings are interconnected. In other words, meanings are realized through three levels of language that are exchanged in a specific social setting, and thus, CDA is considered efficient to be utilized in such an environment (Santosa, 2016).

Moreover, systemic functional grammar (SFG) is known to be a beneficial analytical tool for CDA because SFG (as the name indicates) is divided into two areas of focus: (a) Systemic grammar, which “aims to explain the internal relations in language as a system network, or meaning potential,” and (b) functional grammar, which seeks to interpret languages as tools for social communications (Hart, 2014; Lihan, 2020, p. 12). The second area of focus shows how convenient is SFG for CDA.

### 1.2.2 Systemic Functional Grammar

In the 1960s, a British linguist (i.e., Halliday) proposed a new theory of grammar that overrode the formal and traditional theory in texts analysis studies, namely, systemic functional grammar (SFG) (Nordquist, 2021). According to SFG, “language is a resource for making meanings and hence grammar is a resource for creating meaning by means of wording” (Sadighi & Bavali, 2008, p. 14). Those meanings are classified into three types: (a) Interpersonal meanings, which establish the different roles of speakers in their daily interactions with other individuals; (b) ideational meanings, which construct speakers’ reality and experience through some linguistic choices; and (c) textual meanings, which seek to create cohesive and coherent texts of interpersonal and ideational meanings (Almurashi, 2016; Lihan, 2020; Martin & Rose, 2007; Sadighi & Bavali, 2008).

Furthermore, SFG and the appraisal system are both used to analyze the interpersonal meanings in discourse in different social settings (Hart, 2014). On the one hand, the latter is a system that is divided into three major systems: Attitude, graduation, and engagement which are divided into more sub-systems, each of which is going to be discussed later (Martin & White, 2005; Martin & Rose, 2007). The former, on the other hand, analyzes the interpersonal meanings “through the system of modality which allows for the expression of opinions relating to probability/usuality (modalization) [*sic*] and obligation/inclination (modulation)” (Hart, 2014, p. 44). The subsequent section provides further explanations of the appraisal system.

### 1.2.3 The Appraisal System

The appraisal system is widely used to analyze interpersonal meanings in social settings based on three systems: Attitude, engagement, and graduation (Martin & Rose, 2007). Martin and Rose (2007) clarified that attitude evaluates our emotional responses toward things and people which can be graded (i.e., graduation) and related to other voices in addition to the author’s (i.e., engagement), if necessary. Each one of these systems has its own categories and divisions. In the following sections, attitude, engagement, and graduation will be extensively clarified.

First, the attitudinal system is known to evaluate feelings, moral or personal judgments, and the worth of exterior objects or events (Hart, 2014; Martin & Rose, 2007). Furthermore, attitude is broken down into three sub-systems: (a) Affect, which gages the different feelings in discourse; (b) judgment, which evaluates the behavioral reactions of people in discourse in addition to measuring their characteristics; and (c) appreciation, which attempts to ascribe a value to intangible and tangible objects, procedures, and other phenomenal events (Butt et al., 2000; Hart, 2014; Martin & White, 2005; Martin & Rose, 2007). Affect, judgment, and appreciation will be discussed next.

Affect evaluates the emotional responses of individuals in discourse which can be either positive or negative. However, affect is further divided into three categories: “Happiness, security, and satisfaction” (Hart, 2014, p. 47). Each lexical item of these three categories explains its essence: (a) Happiness deals with delightful and sorrowful emotions; (b) security

deals with calming and troubling emotions; and (c) satisfaction deals with emotions of “achievement and frustration” (Hart, 2014, p. 48).

The aforementioned explanation of judgment, however, indicates that it examines both the positive and negative actions and personal features of individuals in discourse, while taking into account two additional and salient categories: Social esteem and social sanction (Butt et al., 2000). According to Hart (2014), social esteem and social sanction are further divided into many sub-categories. The former is divided into three sub-categories: (a) Capacity, which evaluates the ability of others to execute whatever was assigned to them; (b) tenacity, which assesses the degree of determination of others; and (c) normality, which examines “how special someone is” (Hart, 2014, p. 49). On the other hand, the latter is divided into two sub-categories: (a) Veracity, which examines the degree of honesty that individuals exhibit in discourse; and (b) propriety, which seeks to highlight the goodness and evilness of others (Hart, 2014).

In terms of appreciation, it involves the speakers’ or the writers’ efforts to evaluate the worth of concrete or abstract things (Martin & Rose, 2007). Appreciation is also divided into three categories: “Reaction, valuation, and composition” (Hart, 2014, p. 51).

Second, the engagement system denotes the authors’ right to involve other voices in their discourse beside theirs. The system is manifested in two forms: (a) Contraction, which seeks to prevent the appearance of any alternative options in discourse; and (b) expansion, which aims to imply the existence of alternative options in discourse (Hart, 2014). On the one hand, Hart (2014) defined contraction as a method by which “the speaker leaves no space in the dialogic colloquy for the possibility of alternative, past or potential, positions” (p. 54). He also elucidated that contraction is achieved through either (a) disclaiming, which is a denial enactment of possibility that happens explicitly in discourse, or (b) proclaiming, which is an implicit indication of the absence of alternative options in discourse. Furthermore, proclaiming takes three discrete shapes: (a) Concur, which is an indication of a fact or a common belief; (b) endorse, which is an indication of a scientifically proven fact; and (c) pronounce, which is an indication of a trustworthy and reliable fact. On the other hand, expansion can be expressed in discourse via entertaining or attributing a postulation. (Hart, 2014). Besides, Hart explained that both entertaining and attributing a postulation in discourse are done explicitly in both cases. However, the former represents the speaker’s and writer’s voice, while the latter represents “an external voice” (Hart, 2014, p. 54).

Finally, the attitudinal and engagement systems can be either increased or decreased with a set of lexical items—that is, they can be graded. This thus can be achieved by the graduation system which includes two discrete scales: Force and focus (Hart, 2014). According to Hart (2014), force involves a set of lexical items that can modify the “intensity or quantity” of an evaluation (p. 57). These items can be either isolated (i.e., independent words that aim to modify other words), or infused in nature which means that the “degree of force is an inherent meaningful component of a single lexical item” (Hart, 2014, p. 57). However, focus is concerned with lexical items that seek to either soften or sharpen a certain evaluation that cannot be graded either way with phrases such as kind of and sort of (Martin & Rose, 2007).

## 2. Methodology

The current study used a qualitative research design in order to scrutinize the attitudinal resources in a comprised corpus of four modern English poems. Thus, the researcher utilized a single analytical system as a tool for the analysis, namely, the appraisal system. This system is divided into three major systems: Attitude, engagement, and graduation (Hart, 2014). For this study, attitude was the main focus.

### 2.1 Data Collection

The researcher assembled a corpus of four modern English poems written by the international New Zealand novelist and poetess Lang Leav (see Appendix). These poems were retrieved from a single book, namely, *Memories*. The book was published in 2015. Moreover, it includes a collection of poetry and prose. In this book, Leav (2015) compressed some of her old writings in addition to some of her latest accomplishments in order to represent a new project of melancholic and whimsical feelings in the shape of words.

### 2.2 Data Analysis

Since the present study sought to analyze the attitudinal resources of four English poems, it needed a proper tool for the analysis. Thus, the researcher adopted the appraisal system as an analytical tool based on Hart's (2014) explanation of it. This system is divided into three systems (i.e., attitude, engagement, and graduation) which are further divided into many sub-systems. However, the study focused on the attitude system alone.

The attitudinal system is divided into three sub-systems (i.e., affect, judgment, and appreciation). In addition, these sub-systems are broken down into several categories. According to Hart (2014), affect is divided into three categories (i.e., happiness, security, and satisfaction), judgment is classified into two categories (i.e., social esteem and social sanction), and appreciation is divided into three categories (i.e., reaction, valuation, and composition). Noteworthy, social esteem and social sanction are further divided into five more sub-categories: Normality, capacity, tenacity, veracity, and propriety.

However, the analysis process was undertaken in a separate Word file in which the four poems were inserted. Noteworthy, every poem was analyzed individually since each one was independent of the other. The researcher then read the poems carefully and repetitively to capture the sense of each section so as to familiarize herself with the attitudinal resources of each piece of writing. Positive and negative attitudes of these poems were also investigated. Next, each sub-system of the attitudinal system (i.e., affect, judgment, and appreciation) was detected using a set of indicators retrieved from Hart's (2014) book *Discourse, grammar and ideology: Functional and cognitive perspectives*. This was driven by the urge to make the process as tidier and easier as possible for both the researcher and the intended audience. Hence, each one of the aforementioned sub-systems of the attitudinal system was referred to as follows:

Single underlining = AFFECT

Double underlining = JUDGMENT

Dashed underlining = APPRECIATION

+/-ve = positive/negative ATTITUDE

### 3. Results and Discussion

Generally speaking, poems are good resources to investigate how authors and even readers who share such poems think and perceive their reality. This study thus sought to analyze four modern English poems to find out what kind of worldview the poetess wished to share with her readers. To this end, the researcher examined the attitudinal resources of these poems based on Hart's (2014) explanations of the attitudinal system. In the following sections, each poem with the analysis of its attitudinal resources accompanied by a discussion of the results will be presented.

The first poem is titled *The Rose* which is a four-stanzas-sixteen-lined poem that describes two typical phases of a romantic relationship. It is worth noting that Leav, in this particular poem, attempted to represent the woman who is in love as a rose and the man is portrayed as the wind. Moreover, the first line of each stanza starts with the same construction 'Have you ever' which indicates a questioning behavior by the poetess toward certain feelings, wondering if there would be someone who had been through them.

In the first two stanzas, an image of a captivated man falling in love with a woman who reciprocates the same feelings is depicted. The woman's heart and soul also are pictured as a rose that, as time passes, opens up more and that they are rejuvenated with new feelings (i.e., love). According to Martin and Rose (2007), authors can express their emotions through explicit adjectives as well as physical behaviors. In Example (1), Leav then used words such as *love*, *bloom*, *unfold*, and *grew drunk* to convey a scene of a reviving phase in the two lovers' life to her readers.

- (1) Have you ever *loved* a rose,  
and watched her slowly *bloom*;  
and as her petals would *unfold*,  
you *grew drunk* on her perfume.

The aforementioned examples are classified as affectional resources which seek to construct positive feelings. In terms of appreciation, and since the poetess portrayed the woman as a blooming rose, she drew a view of wet leaves, as it is depicted in Example (2), which gives the reader a particular image of the woman's condition at the beginning of a new romance. In other words, the woman is being brought back to life. Therefore, these two stanzas give a positive worldview toward love.

- (2) *her leaves all wet with dew*

In the last two stanzas, a different phase of a romantic relationship is described. In this phase, Leav used multiple attitudinal resources to express negative feelings arising from breakups and leaving. The poetess thus expressed negative emotions of yearning and grieving with few

affectional resources such as *longed* and *bled* (see Example 3 and 4). Furthermore, the quality and vividness of the woman's face and the memory of her presence in her lover's mind are associated with unfavorable meanings. In other words, Leav chose words such as *blur* and *too long* to describe the man's attitudes toward the memory and face of his lover; as Example 5 shows. The poem also issued a judgment on an imaginary behavior of a man who loves his woman so much that he is constantly breaking his promises of conceding her, albeit she hurts him (see Example 6). Through such a depiction, the poetess attempted to draw a wishful view that a woman in love will typically think of and hope for throughout her relationship. Leav thus used affectional and judgmental resources such as *longed*, *bled*, and *swear* to deliver those overwhelming feelings and judgments someone in love may experience.

- (3) Have you ever *longed* for her,  
on nights that go on and on;
- (4) Have you ever loved a rose,  
and *bled* against her thorns;
- (5) for now, her face is all a *blur*,  
like a memory kept *too long*.
- (6) and *swear* each night to let her go,  
then love her more by dawn.

Therefore, the poetess portrayed a dismal and bleak worldview of love in the last two stanzas which indicates that the sensation of love does not last forever and that things will be unclear at a specific point in time. The picture also tells us that it is uncommon for humans to remain in love even when they are injured. In the Appendix, further information as to the analysis of the poem is given. Finally, Table 1 demonstrates the number of occurrences of the attitudinal resources in the first poem.

Table 1. The number of occurrences of the attitudinal resources in The Rose

<b>Affect</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Judgment</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Appreciation</b>	<b>%</b>
11	73.33	1	6.67	3	20

The second poem is titled A Love Story which is also a four-stanzas-sixteen-lined poem that narrates a tragic end of a romantic relationship. In this poem, Leav used different attitudinal resources so as to depict a typical end of a love story. It is worth mentioning that the poetess did not always explicitly distinguish the gender of her subjects. However, since Leav is a woman, the reader will presumably think that the victim of love is a woman and the cause of pain is her man. Similarly, the researcher did that throughout her interpretations. In the first stanza, the poetess chose positive affectional resources whenever feelings that took place during the couple's relationship were described. In Example 7, the line 'there was a time I *held* your hand' contains positive feelings of security depicted as a physical behavior of

holding hands. It is a common belief that humans feel secure and protected when they tightly grip the hands or the arms of their beloved ones.

- (7) Beyond the shores of melancholy,  
there was a time I *held* your hand.

In the same stanza, Leav delivered negative feelings with words such as *bears* and *longs* in addition to utilizing a simile. In Example 8, the poetess expressed negative emotions that arise from old memories as a burden that weighs on the heart of the narrator. This resembles the tremendous weight of a ship's cargo. The ship is personified so as to cause an uptick in the depiction of such burden and yearning for a safe place to return to.

- (8) My heart now *bears* an untold story,  
like a ship at sea, that *longs* for land.

In the second and third stanzas, the poetess used negative judgment and appreciation resources. Example 9 shows words of appreciation as to the complexity and valuation of abstract things (i.e., lies and words). In this part, the poetess also issued a moral judgment (i.e., my lips have *borrowed*), indicating that the narrator is clinging to a huge lie instead of venting to someone. Judgments were issued on the couples' existence as well. Leav chose the word *unwritten*, as in Example 10, to indicate that their ordinary love story will always be forgotten.

- (9) A *great* untruth, my lips have *borrowed*,  
a *boundless* treasure to line my chest;  
the *wealth of words* are *in their sorrow*—  
and words are all I can bequest.

- (10) We will remain *unwritten* through history,  
no X will mark us on the map;

In the last stanza, the poetess expressed positive and negative emotions such as *filled*, *grow thirsty*, and *not a drop...to drink* (see Example 11). Once again, physical behaviors were used to convey different emotions, from satisfaction to dissatisfaction. In other words, the woman in issue still feels deprived and frustrated, albeit she is overflowed with positive emotions. Furthermore, Leav issued a judgment on the lover's cruel departure that left his woman unsettled and unsatisfied (see Example 11).

- (11) And your love had *left* me, on this island,  
it has *filled* my cup up to the brink;  
yet I *grow thirsty* in this silence—  
there is *not a drop* for me *to drink*.

Therefore, the worldview the poetess wished to share was about a love story that did not have a happy closure and the bleak aftermath of it. Table 2 shows the number of occurrences of the attitudinal resources in the second poem. Finally, further information as to the analysis of the poem is given in the Appendix.

Table 2. The number of occurrences of the attitudinal resources in A Love Story

<b>Affect</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Judgment</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Appreciation</b>	<b>%</b>
6	46.15	3	23.08	4	30.77

The third poem is titled Dear Love which is a four-stanzas-sixteen-lined poem that depicts a conversation between a woman and love itself. In the first two stanzas, Leav used several attitudinal resources such as *abandoned*, *left*, and [precious little] he'd *given* by which the immoral behaviors of the woman's lover are judged. However, even though the man deserted his woman, she still holds positive feelings toward him. The woman in issue pleads love to give her an answer as to why she is still in love with him, albeit he left her unannouncedly. Example 12 and 13 represent the judgment and affect resources Leav chose in their main contexts.

- (12) Love, he has *abandoned* me,  
do with me as you will.  
Love, he *left*—unceremoniously,  
Why must I *love* him still?

- (13) Precious little, in turn he'd *given*

Moreover, the poetess portrayed the woman as a generous giver, whereas her man is depicted as a greedy lover whose deeds are referred to in strength as that of dew to a floppy flower. Those are appreciation instances (i.e., *the best* of me, *precious little*, *like dew*, a *wilting* flower) that describe the quality and value of the lovers' actions toward each other. Example 14 clarifies how Leav utilized different appreciation resources to carry a vivid image of the two lovers' sacrifices and accomplishments throughout their relationship.

- (14) *The best* of me I gave to him—  
the years, the days, the hours.  
*Precious little*, in turn he'd given,  
*Like dew* to a *wilting* flower.

In the third stanza, the woman again criticizes her lover's sinful behaviors. In Example 15, the line 'Love, he *sheared* away tenderly, my beauty, my strength, my mind' indicates a moral judgment as to the man's abusive behavior (i.e., shearing away her best possessions). In this example, the man is associated with negative attributes that emerge from his despicable actions; and thus, his morals as a lover are judged. After that, it can be seen that the woman's best gifts are consumed unnoticedly by her man. In other words, the line 'the

gifts that were bestowed to me—were *swallowed* in his pride’ shows that the man took her for advantage and that he thought of himself as something special, whereas she was seen to be inadequate and unworthy of love and appreciation. In the last stanza, Leav expressed negative emotions that the woman in issue feels. As it is illustrated in Example 16, these emotions are conveyed by action verbs such as *forgotten* and *guard*. Besides, the woman considers herself worthy whenever she is by her lover’s side which shows that she is not satisfied by her own company. These instances (i.e., *forgotten*, *guard*, and *with him...my worth*) are all considered as affect resources. Example 15 and 16 thus represent negative judgment and affect resources that are attributed to the man in issue.

(15) Love, he *sheared* away tenderly,  
       my beauty, my strength, my mind,  
       the gifts that were bestowed to me—  
       were *swallowed* in his pride.

(16) Love, has he *forgotten* me?  
       Please tell me what you have heard,  
       I *guard* his memory jealously—  
       *with him* I’d placed *my worth*.

Therefore, the reality that is structured in this poem reflects the magnitude of a woman’s love for her man even under such harsh circumstances. Furthermore, a picture of the woman constantly being the giver and the man being the receiver is painted throughout the poem, making readers lean toward and sympathize with the woman more than her lover. Table 3 represents the number of occurrences of the attitudinal resources in the third poem. Finally, the Appendix contains further information as to the analysis of the poem.

Table 3. The number of occurrences of the attitudinal resources in Dear Love

<b>Affect</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Judgment</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Appreciation</b>	<b>%</b>
4	30.77	5	38.46	4	30.77

The fourth poem is titled The Night which is a four-stanzas-sixteen-lined poem that narrates the quality and feelings of lonely nights. In the first two stanzas, Leav drew a positive worldview of being involved in a romantic relationship. It is worth noting that the gender of the subjects in this poem is not identified. Thus, the feelings that the poem contains were assigned to a woman, especially since the author is in fact a woman. In the first phase, the woman tried to convey positive feelings that arose from being in a relationship. Example 17 indicates that the woman was happy, delighted, and filled with joy during her relationship which eventually made her forgot about her issues and problems. Leav used affect resources such as *love* and *been a stranger* to express the woman’s happiness and peace of mind which gives her a sense of security.

(17) I'd *grown to love* the sun around me,

I've *been a stranger to my woe*.

Moreover, the lover's voice was given positive attributes. In other words, the woman resembled her lover's voice to a bird's chirping which is known to signal new beginnings, and thus, the man's voice gave the woman hope for new days and opportunities (see Example 18). In terms of appreciation, the woman expressed the high quality of time during her relationship by indicating that 'It's been *a while*' and 'It's been *so long*' since she felt sad and lonely, as in Example 19 and 20.

(18) It's been so long since there was silence,

all around me, your voice had rung;

like *a bird who sings* to greet the morning,

to tell you that *the day has come*.

(19) It's been *a while* since words have found me

(20) It's been *so long* since there was silence

Nevertheless, Leav shifted the direction from a positive worldview to a negative one as to the woman's love story in the last two stanzas. Throughout these two stanzas, the woman in issue seems to hold negative emotions that arise from facing the night alone. For instance, she portrays her loneliness as a deserted book that no one is reading anymore (i.e., *I've felt lonely*, like a book that is no longer read). Consequently, her loneliness gave the darkness (i.e., sadness and depression) a chance to roam around which filled her 'empty heart with *dread*.' The woman thus expresses negative emotions and that she feels insecure after her lover left her. Example 21 shows how the dismal feelings are expressed in context. It also contains a resource of appreciation that signals the quality of an abstract object. This resource is 'empty' which gives a clear sign as to the woman's current condition. That is, her heart is empty because she lives in a colorless void that makes her afraid and anxious.

(21) It's been some time since I've *felt lonely*,

like a book that is no longer read;

the darkness *lingers* on without you,

it fills my *empty* heart with *dread*.

The same feelings are described in different lines, as in Example 22. In these lines, it is clear how insecure the woman feels because of the sadness that permeates through her soul; and thus, she is '*left to face* the night ahead' all by herself which implements sad and miserable feelings in her lonely heart. In terms of appreciation, the woman describes the complexity of her thoughts and how difficult it is for her to unbundle what she silently absorbed throughout the years (see Example 23). In Example 24, Leav issued a judgment which is dedicated to the man, condemning him for leaving.

(22) as the sadness *seeps* into me slowly,  
and I am *left to face* the night ahead.

(23) time has filled me, with words *unsaid*

(24) It seems an age ago, since you have *left* me

Therefore, the poetess shared two contrastive worldviews of being involved in a romantic relationship. The first one is positive which conveys fluttering attitudes, whereas the second one is negative which portrays consuming and depressing attitudes about love, breakups, and loneliness. Table 4 exhibits the number of occurrences of the attitudinal resources in the fourth poem. For further information as to the analysis of this poem, please consult the Appendix.

Table 4. The number of occurrences of the attitudinal resources in The Night

<b>Affect</b>	%	<b>Judgment</b>	%	<b>Appreciation</b>	%
8	61.54	1	7.69	4	30.77

As it has been demonstrated in this section, all the attitudinal resources were used across the poems. This result is in harmony with Chen's (2022), Jing and Xiongyong's (2018), and Dong and Lin's (2018) studies in which it was found that all the English versions of many classical Chinese poems exhibited an intensive use of the attitudinal resources. In this study, however, the degree of the attitudinal resources' frequency differed. In terms of affect, the four poems contained different emotions from happiness to sadness, security to insecurity, and satisfaction to dissatisfaction. Collectively, the number of occurrences of the affect resources was 29.

Furthermore, the sample of this study exhibited a fair number of appreciation resources. These resources are known to be used to ascribe a quality, value, or a certain pattern to abstract objects and concepts. Thus, the number of occurrences of the appreciation resources was 15. However, judgment resources were the least used resources compared to the other attitudinal resources. The number of occurrences of the judgment resources was 10. Therefore, the results of this study go hand in hand with Jing and Xiongyong's (2018) study in which it was found that the English versions of Li Bai's poems by Xu mainly exhibited a considerable amount of affect and appreciation resources. The total number of occurrences of the attitudinal resources in all the poems is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. The total number of occurrences of the attitudinal resources in the comprised corpus

<b>Affect</b>	%	<b>Judgment</b>	%	<b>Appreciation</b>	%
29	53.70	10	18.52	15	27.78

All in all, the four poems tackled similar issues and matters; in other words, Leav expressed different feelings and attitudes toward love, relationships, breakups, and loneliness. Consequently, these poems seemed to depict multiple kinds of worldviews in relation to these issues. One of these worldviews is concerned with love itself. The poetess attempted to convey a message that love does not last forever no matter how much individuals sacrifice

themselves. Sometimes it is not enough, or it is not adequately appreciated. This thus portrays the dire reality of love. Moreover, the poetess sought to share a certain worldview that paints the wonderfulness of a new romance and the awfulness of breakups. She achieved that by depicting the mixed emotions someone in love may feel. For example, in the third poem (i.e., Dear Love), it is obvious that the woman in issue is fighting contrasting feelings. The woman blames her lover for leaving and then she blatantly expresses her love and passion toward him. This then conveys the tremendous price of falling in love and that love is indeed equal to pain.

Furthermore, the poetess attempted to deliver a particular image about men and women in romantic relationships. In other words, women were given positive attributes, whereas men were negatively depicted. Even though two poems out of four (i.e., A Love Story and The Night) did not explicitly identify the gender of their subjects and rather the second person pronoun was used (i.e., you), readers would probably associate the negative attributes with men just because the author is a woman. Therefore, women were pictured as those who give, sacrifice, cherish, forever love, and always remember their lovers. Conversely, men were seen as ungrateful lovers who always forget, ignore, show less love and initiate leavings. On the whole, Leav depicted a pessimistic worldview as to falling in love and engaging oneself in a romantic relationship. Finally, the extensive use of negative attributes can justify these gloomy depictions.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Our speech, whether it be written or spoken, is a multilayered phenomenon in which speakers and writers seek to involve their attitudes, feelings, and ideologies. In fact, several attempts were made so as to investigate how this phenomenon is constructed in addition to finding out its ultimate functions in social settings (e.g., Al Kohlani, 2010; Ferrante, 2021). This study thus aimed at analyzing the use of the attitudinal resources in written discourse. More precisely, four modern English poems were analyzed from the perspective of the attitudinal system which is divided into three sub-systems: Affect, judgment, and appreciation. Each sub-system is further divided into more classifications and categories. These sub-systems are used to express feelings, issue judgments, and assign a certain value or a particular quality to abstract things or concepts, respectively.

The primary motive of this study then was to explore the kind of worldview the poetess sought to share with her readers. To this end, the researcher read the four poems thoroughly and repetitively, followed by a critical analysis of the use of the attitudinal resources. Consequently, the study found that all the attitudinal resources were used across the poems. However, affect and appreciation resources were used more than judgment resources. Moreover, Leav—the poetess—attempted to deliver multiple kinds of worldviews which mostly and collectively rendered negative attitudes and pessimistic views toward love and romanticism. This current study thus seems significant as it filled a gap in the literature by critically analyzing the attitudinal resources of four modern English poems. It also gave a glimpse as to how poems are written as well as how feelings are constructed and expressed in this modern age. The study seemingly set a base for further research in the field of poetic

discourse analysis, for which other researchers are encouraged to go beyond what has been investigated in this article so as to induce more meaningful conclusions.

Lastly, it is necessary to highlight the fact that the study had a few limitations. First, the study chose a single research design to construct its methodological foundation on, namely, qualitative research. Although a quantitative analysis seems provided, the researcher in fact did not run any statistical analysis on the study's sample and that those numbers of occurrences as well as their percentages were self-calculated. The purpose of this quantitative analysis was merely to exhibit the degree of existence of each sub-system within each poem, on the one hand, and within the comprised corpus, on the other hand. Second, the attitudinal resources were analyzed exclusively. That is, the study did not attempt to examine the engagement and graduation resources of the four poems. Therefore, these limitations should be taken into consideration in future research.

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**Appendix****A Corpus of Four Modern English Poems Written by Lang Leav**

## 1 The Rose

Have you ever loved [+ve HAPPINESS] a rose,  
and watched her slowly bloom [+ve SATISFACTION];  
and as her petals would unfold [+ve SECURITY],  
you grew drunk [+ve HAPPINESS] on her perfume.  
Have you ever seen her dance [+ve HAPPINESS],  
her leaves all wet with dew [+ve REACTION];  
and quivered [+ve HAPPINESS] with a new romance—  
the wind, he loved [+ve HAPPINESS] her too.  
Have you ever longed [-ve HAPPINESS] for her,  
on nights that go on and on;  
for now, her face is all a blur [-ve REACTION],  
like a memory kept too long [-ve REACTION].  
Have you ever loved [+ve HAPPINESS] a rose,  
and bled [-ve HAPPINESS] against her thorns;  
and swear [-ve VERACITY] each night to let her go,  
then love [+ve HAPPINESS] her more by dawn.

## 2 A Love Story

Beyond the shores of melancholy [-ve REACTION],  
there was a time I held [+ve SECURITY] your hand.  
My heart now bears [-ve HAPPINESS] an untold [-ve REACTION] story,  
like a ship at sea, that longs [-ve HAPPINESS] for land.  
A great [-ve COMPOSITION] untruth, my lips have borrowed [-ve VERACITY],  
a boundless [-ve COMPOSITION] treasure to line my chest;  
the wealth of words are in their sorrow [-ve VALUATION]—  
and words are all I can bequest.  
We will remain unwritten [-ve NORMALITY] through history,  
no X will mark us on the map;

but on books of prose and poetry,  
you loved [+ve HAPPINESS] me once, in a paragraph.  
And your love had left [-ve PROPRIETY] me, on this island,  
it has filled [+ve SATISFACTION] my cup up to the brink;  
yet I grow thirsty [-ve HAPPINESS] in this silence—  
there is not a drop for me to drink [-ve SATISFACTION].

### 3 Dear Love

Love, he has abandoned [-ve PROPRIETY] me,  
do with me as you will.  
Love, he left [-ve PROPRIETY]—unceremoniously,  
Why must I love [+ve HAPPINESS] him still?  
The best of me [+ve REACTION] I gave to him—  
the years, the days, the hours.  
Precious little [-ve REACTION], in turn he'd given [-ve TENACITY],  
Like dew [-ve VALUATION] to a wilting [-ve REACTION] flower.  
Love, he sheared [-ve PROPRIETY] away tenderly,  
my beauty, my strength, my mind,  
the gifts that were bestowed to me—  
were swallowed [-ve PROPRIETY] in his pride.  
Love, has he forgotten [-ve SATISFACTION] me?  
Please tell me what you have heard,  
I guard [-ve SECURITY] his memory jealously—  
with him I'd placed my worth [-ve SATISFACTION].

### 4 The Night

It's been a while [+ve REACTION] since words have found me,  
the time between—you'll come and go;  
I'd grown to love [+ve HAPPINESS] the sun around me,  
I've been a stranger to my woe [+ve SECURITY].  
It's been so long [+ve REACTION] since there was silence,  
all around me, your voice had rung;

like a bird who sings to greet the morning,  
to tell you that the day has come [+ve HAPPINESS].  
It's been some time since I've felt lonely [-ve HAPPINESS],  
like a book that is no longer read;  
the darkness lingers [-ve SECURITY] on without you,  
it fills my empty [-ve REACTION] heart with dread [-ve HAPPINESS].  
It seems an age ago, since you have left [-ve PROPRIETY] me,  
time has filled me, with words unsaid [-ve COMPOSITION];  
as the sadness seeps [-ve SECURITY] into me slowly,  
and I am left to face [-ve HAPPINESS] the night ahead.

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