How to be nice with words: Positive Appraisal in online news comments[*]

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Abstract

The goal of this paper is to investigate the linguistic expression of positive evaluation, as well as to describe a preliminary typology of the types of linguistic devices deployed for positive evaluation. Using corpus-assisted analysis, we classify some of the resources that play a role in the expression of positive evaluation into phenomena in the lexicogrammar, and phenomena that belong in discourse semantics. This general classification of evaluative devices overlaps with the planes of expression in Systemic Functional linguistics. Our data comes from a collection of opinion articles and the comments associated with them (Kolhatkar *et al.*, 2018). Using a set of 1,000 comments previously annotated for Appraisal (Martin and White, 2005), including labels of Attitude (Affect, Judgement, Appreciation) and polarity (positive, negative, neutral). The central component of the paper is the analysis of the resources commenters use to express positive evaluation. We explore whether they make use of rhetorical figures, following up on our work with Cliff Goddard on the use of rhetorical figures in the expression of negative evaluation (Taboada *et al.*, 2017). We then analyze the semantics of evaluative adjectives using the NSM approach, and following our previous work on templates that capture different types of adjectives (Goddard *et al.*, in press). Although our corpus analysis is limited, and it includes only a specific type of data (online news comments), the phenomena that we discuss are present across different genres of texts. While our previous work has focused on how to express negative evaluation, this paper tries to honour Cliff Goddard by studying how positivity is realized in language.

Keywords: Appraisal, typology of positive evaluation, opinion in news, Natural Semantic Metalanguage

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1. Positive and negative language

The objective of this paper is to focus on the expression of positive evaluation. The term 'evaluation' in our work refers to assessments of objects, situations and other people, as well as the expression of emotional states, following definitions in the Appraisal framework (Martin and White, 2005). In the past, we have analyzed the language of negativity and negative evaluation (Taboada *et al.*, 2017). Previous research on negativity has shown that humans have an inherent negative bias, because we perceive negative events and emotions as more salient (Jing-Schmidt, 2007; Rozin *et al.*, 2010; Rozin and Royzman, 2001). Schrauf and Sanchez (2004) suggest that the 'working emotion vocabulary' typically shows a preponderance of words for negative emotions (50%) over positive (30%) and neutral (20%) emotions. They propose that negative emotions signal problems or threat in the environment and are accompanied by detailed and systematic cognitive processing, while positive emotions signal a safe or benign environment and are accompanied by heuristic, schema-based cognitive processing. Schrauf & Sanchez in their experiments asked monolingual Spanish-speakers from Mexico and monolingual English-speakers from the USA to make free-lists of as many emotions as they could in two minutes. Data from both languages showed the same proportional distribution, suggesting that words for negative emotions are more salient, and thus accessed more quickly, and that this may be common across cultures.

The presence of a negative bias in humans has been explained in evolutionary terms: It is more beneficial to humans to pay attention to threatening negative events than it is beneficial to attend to positive experiences (see Taboada *et al.*, 2017` for a full discussion). However, there is a possible contradiction to the above research: Languages seem to have more positive than negative words, and seem to use positive words with higher frequency. Boucher and Osgood (1969) sampled 13 languages and cultures, and found that evaluative positive words were used more frequently across those languages. This led them to propose the Pollyanna Hypothesis, a supposedly universal tendency.

A recent study (Dodds *et al.*, 2015) took an in-depth look into this bias within language, taking advantage of some of the internet resources we use everyday—Twitter, Google Books and online newspapers. The researchers started by selecting 10 languages from around the world. They collected datasets of approximately 10,000 words for each language, using computer programs to pull common words from the online resources. Finally, native speakers for each language were paid to rate the words on a scale from 1 to 9 based on how positive or negative each word made them feel. The results of this analysis demonstrated that every language tested showed a positive bias in their word scores, regardless of what source was used to collect the words. This could be because people choose to discuss more positive than negative events online.

The literature, as we can see, is not conclusive on whether we are more positive, whether we use more positive words in public situations only, or whether negative emotions are more salient and then bubble to the surface in free-form contexts. However, as we have pointed out in previous work (Taboada *et al.*, 2017), these phenomena can be viewed as complementary: We discuss positive events and feelings more often, because negative events and feelings are unpleasant and have a contagion effect. But negative events and feelings are more salient.

In our previous work with Cliff Goddard (Taboada *et al.*, 2017), we have found that the expression of negative evaluation is very interesting from a linguistic point of view, as we tend to use complex language and rhetorical figures when painting a negative picture. It is, however, somewhat depressing to analyze language with such negative load. For this joyous occasion celebrating Cliff Goddard's work, we have chosen to focus on how positive evaluation is expressed.

In this paper, we present an overview of the resources for positive evaluation from the two planes proposed in Systemic Functional Linguistics—the lexicogrammar and discourse semantics. We present a corpus-based analysis of some of those resources, noting that they make less use of rhetorical figures and figurative language in general than negative expressions. We then study what types of adjectives are used in positive Appraisal, and how those adjectives fit into templates that we have previously defined (Goddard *et al.*, 2016, in press), contributing explications for some of them following the methodology of the Natural Semantic Metalanguage approach that Cliff Goddard has so successfully developed, together with a number of collaborators (Wierzbicka 1972; Goddard 2011; Goddard & Wierzbicka 2014, among others).

2. A taxonomy of linguistic devices expressing positive evaluation

We have previously suggested that speakers and writers draw from different levels of language to express negative evaluation. In Taboada *et al.* (2017) we propose that the linguistic resources used in negative evaluation can be classified as belonging to the two planes of expression in Systemic Functional Linguistics, SFL (Halliday, 1985; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014): lexicogrammar and discourse semantics. The lexicogrammar comprises grammatical and lexical resources in the language, as well as phraseology. At the discourse semantic level we find meanings created through text (whether spoken or written). Our view is that, because negative evaluation often uses linguistic resources that are deployed for effect, such as rhetorical figures and tropes or phraseology, we need to study it taking into account these two planes of expression. Figure 1 is taken from Taboada *et al.* (2017), and it shows the interaction between discourse semantics and lexicogrammar. A clear-cut separation between the two categories is not possible; discourse semantics and rhetorical figures are necessarily encoded in the lexicogrammar.
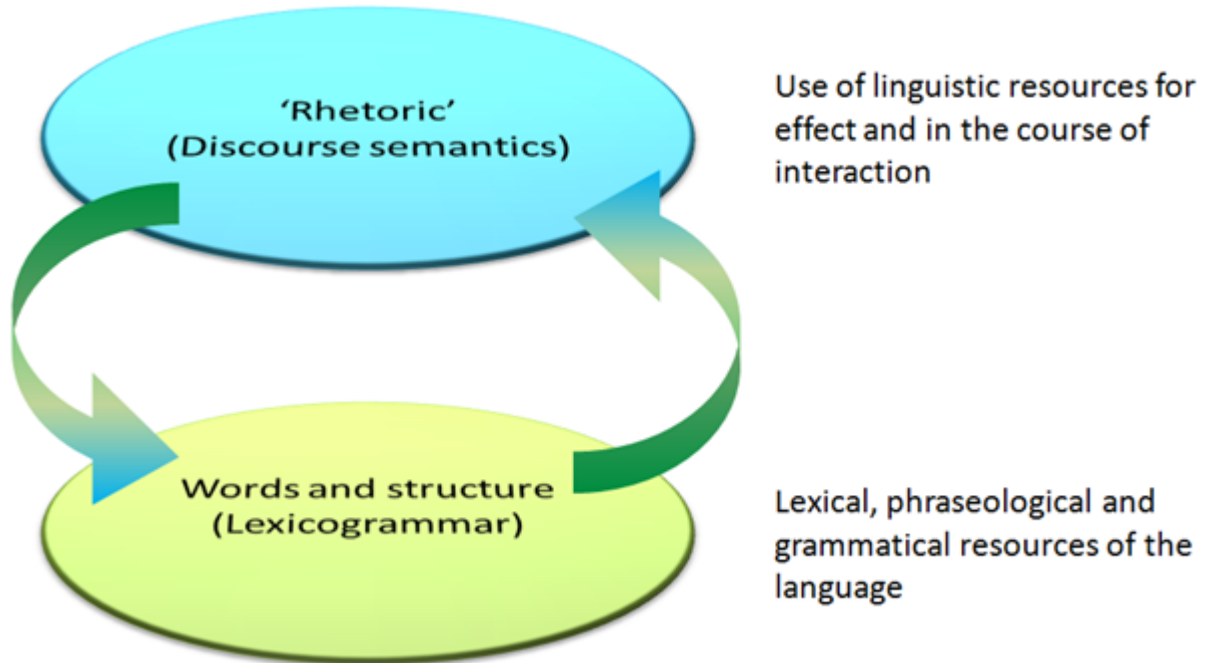
Figure 1. High-level taxonomy of resources involved in negative evaluation

In the study of negative evaluation, we found the usual suspects: negative words (*awful, hate, horribly*), some lexicalized phrases (*muddy the waters*), and some syntactic patterns (*It's hard to believe that...*), all of them within the realm of the lexicogrammar. What we found particularly interesting was that many negative expressions were conveyed by rhetorical devices, such as figures of speech (simile, metaphor, hyperbole, euphemism), indirect and direct speech or rhetorical questions. Our hypothesis is that, because negative evaluation is less socially desirable, it tends to be couched in more complex figurative language.

In our corpus of negative evaluation there were two salient categories of rhetorical figures—tropes and schemes. Tropes represent an "artful deviation" from the ordinary or principal signification of a word, while schemes present an artful deviation from the ordinary arrangement of words (Taboada *et al.*, 2017). Among the most prominent tropes we find the use of metaphors, in most cases comparing a person, a group or an idea to an undesirable source, such in example (1[1]):

(1) *Under the trickled down upon theory, a rising tide lifts all yachts. We are all the guinea pigs of medical science.*

Another salient category is hyperbole:

(2) *Here's yet another leftist bleeding-heart that would rather we go back to the years of giving money equally to 64th place losers for whom getting a "personal best" is seen as an accomplishment.*

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[1] All the examples regarding the negative evaluation are cited from Taboada *et al*. (2017: 9-17).

Negative evaluations to a considerable level are expressed with indirect figures of speech. Among those are figures that substitute a more favourable expression for a pejorative or socially delicate term. These are referred to as euphemisms and litotes, that is, deliberate understatements, as in (3) illustrating litotes:

(3) *Bernard-Henri Lévy has influence in most democracies of Europe. He helped French government during Libya revolution anti Kadafy. <u>Now he would be more fairplay if he recognized right to live to Palestinians of Gaza strip and Cisjordania.</u>*

Sarcasm and irony, tropes that involve changes in meaning, by extending, turning or alluding to a meaning that needs to be re-interpreted in the new context, also were frequent in our corpus of negative evaluation:

(4) *Christians don't silence their nutbar extremists either. It would serve our own best interests - trust me. <u>Like always, trees are not the problem, the people are.</u>*

Indirect speech and rhetorical questions were found as well, as in (5) and (6):

(5) *Can you believe a computer company is still installing 250W power supplies in their computers?*
(6) *"we have seen an outpouring of public support." Not sure where the author is from but I live in Canada and I certainly haven't seen much support for more refugees.*

We explore, in this paper, whether the same applies to positive evaluation. We extracted positive expressions from a corpus, and categorized them in terms of whether they were mostly grounded in the lexicogrammar or in the discourse semantics. We then describe in detail a select few adjectives in terms of what type of adjective they are, also providing explications for them.

3. Data: Online news comments

For our analysis, we used data from the SFU Opinion and Comments Corpus (SOCC) (Kolhatkar *et al.*, 2018), a collection of opinion articles and the comments posted in response to the articles.[2] The full corpus contains 10,339 opinion articles (editorials, columns, and op-eds) together with their 663,173 comments from 303,665 comment threads, from the main Canadian daily newspaper in English, *The Globe and Mail*, for a five-year period (from January 2012 to December 2016). In addition to this raw text, the corpus also contains annotations for several linguistic phenomena: negation, Appraisal, constructiveness and toxicity. We used the Appraisal annotations.

The corpus was annotated following the Appraisal framework (Martin and White, 2005), a system for characterizing and classifying different types of evaluative language. It captures

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[2] Available from: https://github.com/sfu-discourse-lab/SOCC

how we use language to express our feelings, evaluate others, and the world around us. One of the most important contributions of Appraisal is its classification of different types of Appraisal. The first level of classification breaks evaluation into Attitude, Graduation and Engagement. Attitude constitutes the core of the classification, distinguishing whether the evaluation is about feelings and emotions (Affect), evaluation of people's character and behaviour (Judgement) or evaluation of objects and situations (Appreciation). Attitude can be modulated through Graduation, the intensification or downtoning of that Attitude, and it can also be modified by devices characterized as Engagement, referring to whether the opinion is presented as negotiable, open to discussion or not. Figure 2 summarizes the Appraisal system, with some example realizations for Attitude and Graduation. Engagement was not annotated in the SOCC corpus.
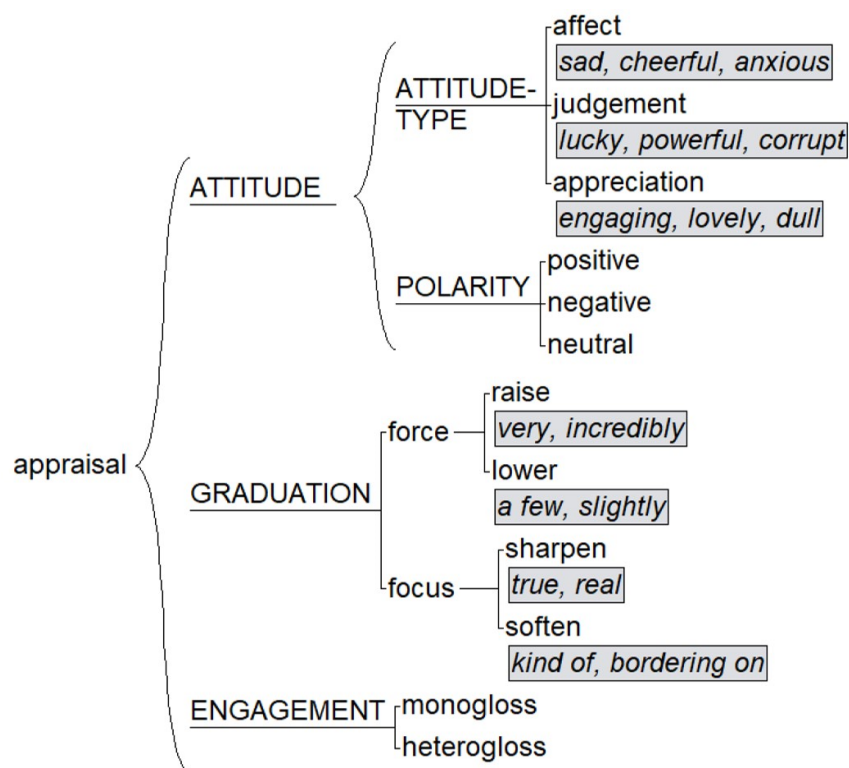

Figure 2. The Appraisal system used in the annotation

The annotation is more thoroughly described in Kolhatkar *et al.* (2018). Briefly, spans of varying size were annotated, as evaluation occurs at all levels of language (words, phrases, clauses or entire sentences). Example (7) shows some annotations from the corpus, all of them labelled as positive, with the spans annotated underlined.[3]

(7)   **Affect**: We were <u>very pleased</u> to learn that the California Labor Commissioner agrees that Uber is acting as an employer.
        Judgement: Like air b&b or ebay they <u>regulate themselves and do an excellent job</u>.
        Appreciation: Maybe <u>integration is the key if it will improve the standard of living</u>.

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[3] The examples are reproduced as posted. Some of them may contain non-standard spelling or grammar.

The annotation of 1,043 comments yielded 6,623 spans, of which the vast majority were negative, as shown in Table 1. Another interesting result is that Affect makes up a small proportion of the overall spans (less than 3.5%). This is contrary to the popular impression that online comments are emotionally-laden. Although writers express clear emotions and opinions, they are not couched as Affect (*I feel good*), but as either Judgement (*This person is good*) or as Appreciation (*The situation is bad*). In the latter two cases, there may be an implication that because the person or the situation is good, the speaker can feel good. That is, the underlying meaning may be affective, but the expression is either Judgement or Appreciation.

	Affect	**Judgement**	**Appreciation**	**Total**
Negative	175	2,342	2,350	4,867
Positive	46	469	1,173	1,688
Neutral	5	10	53	68
Total	226	2,821	3,576	6,623

Table 1. Distribution of Attitude in the SOCC annotated corpus

This annotated version of the corpus contains 1,043 comments, of which we chose 250 evaluations in order to outline the types of devices that are used for positive evaluation. First, we list the devices that are predominantly found in our data for positive evaluation and then we compare to the devices that express negative evaluation.

4. Data analysis

We are interested in how positive evaluation is expressed, and whether it happens mostly via individual words, or phraseology and figures of speech are involved. We started with segments that had been previously annotated for Attitude, and examined only positive ones. For each of those positive evaluative segments, we considered the following parameters:
- Type of the segment: individual part of speech (adjective, noun, verb, etc,), phrase, clause or sentence.
- Presence of figurative language: phraseology, direct/indirect speech, rhetorical question, other rhetorical figure.
- Specific semantics: quantity, enumeration, temporal adverbials, person reference, modal verbs, imperative forms.
- Lexical or connotative meaning: whether the segment gets evaluative meaning due to the lexical meaning of the word(s) it contains, or whether there connotative meanings such as discourse prosody.

We tested our data against the preliminary established parameters based on our previous work on negative evaluation (Taboada *et al.*, 2017). Below we show our results. First of all, Table 1 contains the distribution of positive evaluations across different parts of speech.

Part of speech	noun	pronoun	verb	adjective	adverb	interjection
	29	2	37	65	17	3

Table 1. Distribution of positive evaluations across different parts of speech

As the table shows, adjectives are frequently used to express positive evaluation, as has been shown in general for evaluation (Benamara *et al.*, 2007; Goddard *et al.*, in press; Taboada *et al.*, 2011; Wiebe, 2000). In the rest of the cases the evaluative core element consists of combinations of adjectives (*good and healing*), verbs and adverbs (*live longer*), verbs and nouns (*give access*), adjectives and nouns (*good discounts*), modals and lexical verbs (*have to lead on this*), modals and nouns (*need a strategy to deal with it*), negated verbs (*did not oppose him*), negated nouns (*no reason to embrace new technology*), or negated adjectives (*aren't wrong*). These combinations belong to the lexicogrammar plane.

Table 2 shows the distribution of positive evaluations in our data across the lexicogrammar and the discourse semantics planes that are relevant for the expression of negative evaluation. What is striking in Table 2 is that few of the expressions we studied make use of resources that can be characterized as belonging to discourse semantics, and, in particular, how none of the expressions analyzed seemed to be rhetorical in nature. We observed in Taboada *et al.* (2017) that rhetorical figures (metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, litotes, sarcasm) seem to be widely used when expressing negative evaluation, perhaps in an attempt to disguise the negative nature of the opinion. Although this is a small sample of positive expressions, it seems to be the case that positive evaluation does not employ rhetorical figures to the same extent as negative evaluation. Below we briefly describe and provide some examples of each of these types.

Phenomena in the lexicogrammar	
Morphology	-
Lexis	193
Enumeration	1
Person reference	4
Temporal adverbial	3

Discourse prosody	-
Phraseology	15
Phenomena in the discourse semantics	
Direct/indirect speech	-
Rhetorical questions	-
Rhetorical figures	-

Table 2. Positive evaluation patterns, by type

Positive evaluation is predominantly represented through lexical items (lexis), which is positive individual evaluative content, such as the words *tolerable, best, free and equal.* This category is easily classified. Sometimes positive evaluations are expressed with entire clauses and sentences:

(8)   *We need a national strategy.*
(9)   *The ones for which the idea came to be, can benefit.*

Phraseology is also present in our data. Certain combinations of words ('lexical bundles') or phrases tend to be used with positive evaluation. Some of the examples are the following: *breathing a sigh of relief, feel good, would be a good start, has to be a change of culture.*

Person reference can emphasize positive evaluation as well. Direct expression of positive feelings is found with the first person reference: *I am glad, We sincerely hope.* In our study of negative evaluation, we found that certain third person expressions, such as *those people* could be used pejoratively, perhaps because of the distance involved in the demonstrative reference.

A single example of enumeration that occurred in our corpus appeared to contribute to positive evaluation:

(10) *But with the latest iPhone or iPad you can check the weather, take pictures, have a FaceTime chat with a loved one in another city (anywhere in the world, really), send and receive email, browse the web, track your BP, play a game while waiting for a bus, look up a word in a dictionary, check a fact pertinent to a discussion you're having, check how your team is doing in the standings, shop, research your next big purchase, read a PDF, look up a recipe, tune an instrument, translate a phrase into a another language. I could literally go on for a couple days to enumerate the hundreds of thousands of things you can do with a smartphone.*

In our data, we did not find examples that reflect discourse or semantic prosody. Discourse prosody refers to the intrinsic positive or negative connotations that a word carries, by virtue of its association with overtly positive or negative items (Hunston, 2011; Louw, 1993). We cannot draw strong conclusive statements on this parameter, since the number of examples that we analyzed is relatively small, but it is significant that, in most of the examples that Louw discusses, the semantic prosody associated with certain expressions (*bent on, symptomatic of*) is often negative.

After we finalized the corpus analysis on positive evaluation, we came to the conclusion that two additional parameters are relevant in positive evaluation—modal and imperative forms. Modals seem to be used to suggest courses of action or potential solutions to problems. In particular, deontic expressions (*you shouldn't do that; you ought to do X*), which can appear in orders, commands or expressions of obligation, take on a more positive tone in our examples, proposing how a problem may be solved, or the writer's desire for a better state of affairs, as we see in Example (11).

(11) *Continuing to live in the past and rightly criticize past treatment by the white man may feel good but is done at great cost to the First Nations people.FN need to look to the future, not the past.*

Imperatives in our examples suggest positive and constructive solutions as well, and have connotation of optimism:

(12) *Let's think about debt re-payment.*
(13) *Let's focus on funding healthcare and re-listing services de-listed by governments.*
(14) *Stop violence against women and children!*

Positive evaluation can be emphasized with expressed quantities of 'something good', such as in the following example:

(15)   *The Apple Watch actually offers quite a bit of utility as far as wrist adornments go, but it is first and foremost something to look good.*

The more drastic difference between positive and negative evaluation is in the sphere of discourse semantics. In 250 examples that we examined, we did not find a single case of a positive evaluation that contains a rhetorical figure, a rhetorical question or direct/indirect speech in our corpus. It seems that cognitive processing of a positive event reflects on language use—as suggested by (Schrauf and Sanchez, 2004)—positive emotions are accompanied by schema-based cognitive processing, while negative emotions are accompanied by detailed and systematic cognitive processing. Language that describes a positive event is 'less complex and less metaphorical'.

Table 1 demonstrates that the vast majority of positive evaluations is conveyed by positive adjectives. The next section in this paper is on the semantics of a few positive adjectives that occurred in our data.

5. The semantics of positive adjectives

We base the classification of positive adjectives from the corpus on our previous work on the semantics of adjectives (Goddard *et al.* 2019). In that paper, we use the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) to describe the semantics of adjectives together with a method of trial-and-error experimentation through which we single out five different templates of adjectives. We label the templates A, B (subtypes B1 and B2),C, and D for different groups of adjectives. The adjectives that are falling under Template A, such as *awesome, awful*, are characterised as "first-person thought-plus-feeling" words. These words are considered overtly subjective. Those that were falling under the two B Templates, e.g. *interesting, boring; stunning*, *disgusting* are termed "experiential" evaluators. They involve both thought and feeling. B2 template is more complex because it includes an additional component that alludes to a potential bodily effect on the experiencer. Template C covers words which imply a lasting impact on the experiencer, e.g. *inspiring*, *depressing.* The final group, falling under Template D, e.g. *original, dismal* are purely cognitive evaluations since they do not encode any feeling.

In this work, we make use of the NSM methodology to analyze a couple of adjectives with positive evaluation. The NSM exercises a paraphrase technique, with the first-person orientation which enables representing nuances of subjective meaning. This technique uses explications that are more articulated than other modes of semantic representation, although the lexicon in them is reduced to a restricted set of semantic primitives. Apart from the SFU Opinion and Comments Corpus (SOCC) (Kolhatkar *et al.*, 2018) in which we found the analyzed adjectives, we also consulted the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA, Davies 2008) to check the collocations in which these adjectives occur. In the following subsection, we illustrate the semantic explications for adjectives that belong to Template A.

5.1 The semantics of positive adjectives that belong to Template A

Template A is modelled predominantly for an attributive use of the adjective. It has the following opening component: 'I think about this X like this: ...', which is succeeded by a model thought that begins with a strong evaluation such as 'this X is very good' or a variant (see Goddard *et al.* 2019). The middle part of an explication is represented by the component which is different for each adjective. The template is completed with an element indicating that on account of thinking as he/she does, the speaker feels 'something very good' (or: 'very bad').

I think about this X like this:	"FIRST-PERSON" THOUGHT
"---------- ----------"	THOUGHT CONTENT
when I think like this, I feel something very good/bad because of it	FEELING

Many of the adjectives in this group can be used as predicative complements of the verb *feel* to characterise one's own feelings, e.g., I feel *terrific*. They can be used by themselves as self-contained expressive utterances as well: e.g. *Great! Wonderful!* (Goddard *et al.* 2019).

In this paper, we present two adjectives from our corpus that belong to Template A. The first explication is for the adjective *pleased* that has the meaning "feeling satisfaction, especially at an event or a situation", as in example (16):

(16) *to reform the Port"s governance, said he was pleased to see that all the candidates have real experience in port management.*

The explication is straightforward with the central part (second row) referring to the content of the thought which triggers the emotion of pleasure.

pleased

I think about X like this:
When X happens I think: 'This is very good for me'. I feel very good because X happened
When I think like this, I feel something very good because of it

The second adjective from Template A is polysemous. We single out two meanings of the adjective *thankful.* The first one is related to the feeling of relief.

thankful 1

I think about X like this:
I know that X is good for me I want X to happen I feel very good when X happens
When I think like this, I feel something very good because of it

We cite the example that illustrates this meaning:

(17) *He is safe, she thought, be thankful for that. But she could not hold on to her relief.*

The next explication has an additional component that includes expressing gratitude for certain situation or act.

thankful 2

I think about it like this:
I know that X is good for me I want X to happen I feel very good when X happens I say something good to someone who made (m) X happen
When I think like this, I feel something very good because of it

5.2 The semantics of positive adjectives that belong to Templates B1 and B2

Semantically, such words differ in the following way from the Template A words. They are less explicitly subjective (Goddard *et al.* 2019). The main idea for these templates is that they invoke a hypothetical 'someone' and the explications attribute certain thoughts and associated feelings to this hypothetical someone. The adjectives that fall under Templates B1 and B2 say something about someone's "experience" of the things being evaluated; hence, the term "experiential evaluators". Experiential evaluation can take place in two aspectual frames: durational and non-durational. Many experiential adjectives, especially present participial adjectives in -ing, e.g. *amazing* are inherently durational (imperfective-like) in that they imply an experience that takes place over some period of time. Other experiential evaluators, such as *funny*, are not inherently durational but may acquire an iterative interpretation when combined with certain kinds of nouns. For example, a *funny act* can take place in a single moment, but when we speak of a *funny movie* we imply that a reader can experience many delightful moments while watching this movie (see Goddard *et al.* 2019). In durational contexts, experiential evaluation can be characterised in terms of a certain kind of thought that can repeatedly occur to someone over the time period in question, linked with a certain kind of accompanying feeling. The semantic explications will therefore include the component: 'during this time, this someone can think like this at many times: "– – "', followed by 'when this someone thinks like this, he/she can feel something good/bad because of it'. In non-durational contexts, experiential evaluation can be characterised in terms of a certain kind of thought occurring at one particular time.

We present here Template B1, as is shown in Goddard *et al.* (2019):

during this time (e.g. when someone watches this film, reads this book; when certain things are happening to someone),	DURATIONAL FRAME
this someone can think like this at many times:	POTENTIAL THOUGHT
"---------- -----------"	
when this someone thinks like this, he/she can feel something ((very)	FEELING

good/bad) because of it	

In the following text, we provide explications for the adjectives *funny, hilarious* and *amazing.* Template B1 is given below in its durational version.

We single out two meanings for the word *funny.* The first one is the meaning that refers to "laughing" and "amusement". We used the semantic molecule *to laugh* within our explication. Semantic molecules are nearly universal but their meaning is still decomposable. The abovementioned meaning of the adjective *funny* is exemplified in the following sentence:

(18) *This comment was <u>not funny</u> in any context so it can't be characterized as a joke.*

Funny 1

During this time (when certain things are happening to someone)
this someone can think like this at many times:
"some things are happening now I feel something good because of it like people often feel when they want to laugh [m]"
when this someone thinks like this, he/she can feel something good because of it

The last component in the "thought" part of the explication includes the element of people feeling as they often do when they want to laugh. The same kind of component we used for the explication of the adjective *hilarious* below and for the adjective *entertaining* in Goddard *et al.* (2019).

Since the word *funny* is polysemous, we decided to explicate as well the meaning "strange or odd", as in the following example:

(19) "*God has a funny way of working things out."*

Funny 2

During this time (when certain things are happening to someone)
this someone can think like this at many times:
"something is happening now This is not the same as before I don't know whether it is bad or not"
when this someone thinks like this, he/she can feel something bad because of it

This meaning contains the component of unexpectedness that cannot be immediately characterized as being good or bad and this is expressed with the lines "This is not the same as before, I don't know whether it it is bad or not".

The explication for *hilarious* differs from the meaning *funny* 1 with component "I feel very good because of it". The example for this meaning is illustrated in (20).

(20) *Kauffman says that no matter how many hilarious bits of business they added to the Ross/Rachel argument, it didn't play.*

hilarious

During this time (when certain things are happening to someone)
this someone can think like this at many times:
"some things are happening now I feel very good because of it like people often feel when they want to laugh [m] a lot"
when this someone thinks like this, he/she can feel something very good because of it

The component of something "unexpected" yet "very good" is found in the explication for the adjective *amazing* as well:

amazing

During this time (when certain things are happening to someone)
this someone can think like this at many times:
"Something is happening now It is very good People can think about it like this: it can't be like this'
when this someone thinks like this, he/she can feel something good because of it

There is a quite frequent tendency for *amazing* to occur modified by an adverb *pretty as* in sentence:

(21) *The Joe is <u>pretty amazing.</u> You think about all the players that have gone through here.*

The group of adjectives that belong to Template B2 follows a similar structure like adjectives that belong to Template B1 but with an extra component suggesting some kind of potential bodily reaction (Goddard *et al.* 2019).

during this time (e.g. when someone watches this film, reads this	DURATIONAL FRAME

book; when certain things happen to someone),	
this someone can think like this at many times:	POTENTIAL THOUGHT
"---------- ----------"	THOUGHT
when this someone thinks like this, this someone can (or: can't not) feel something (very) good/bad because of it	FEELING
at the same time he/she can feel something in the body because of it and/or: at the same time something can happen in his/her body because of it	BODILY REACTION

We demonstrate here explications for two adjectives: *humorous* and *comfortable*.

The semantics of the adjective *humorous* implies that some "good hormones" are secreted when a person experiences humor: The example and the explication are presented below.

(22) *The children's book illustrates a humorous connection between penguins and humans.*

humorous

During this time (when certain things are happening to someone)
this someone can think like this at many times:
I see/hear this something happening I want to laugh [m].
when this someone thinks like this, he/she can feel something good because of it
at the same time something can happen in his/her body because of it

The adjective *comfortable* as well contains the component of "something happening in the body because someone feels something good". Since the adjective is polysemous, we demonstrated the explication for the semantics of the adjective *comfortable* that implies "providing physical ease and relaxation", as in example (23):

(23) *He was said to be comfortable in the West Highland Hospital.*

Below is the corresponding explication:

comfortable

During this time (when certain things are happening to someone)
this someone can think like this at many times:
Something is good I feel as I would like to feel because of it
when this someone thinks like this, he/she can feel something good because of it
at the same time something can happen in his/her body because of it

5.3 The semantics of positive adjectives that belong to Template C

The meaning of adjectives that belong to Template C is focused on the subsequent on-going effect on the viewer after certain activity is produced. The middle section, labelled 'After Effect', contains psychological components, i.e. components hinged around semantic primes such as THINK and FEEL after which the final component of the template implies a broad evaluation as either good or bad. The template for these group of adjectives is given below (see Goddard et al. 2019):

when someone does something like this for some time (e.g. watches this film, reads this book, listens to this music), something happens to this someone because of it	EFFECT
because of this, for some time afterwards it is like this:	AFTER EFFECT
people can think about it like this: "this is good/bad"	SOCIAL EVALUATION

The first adjective that we explicate within this template is *refreshing*:

refreshing

when someone does something like this for some time something happens to this someone because of it
because of this, for some time afterwards it is like this: This someone feels better now because of it This someone can do much more because of it
people can think about it like this: "this is good"

The adjective *refreshing* has one meaning "stimulating because new and different" (whether in physical or mental sense):

(24) *Marcy's voice, as <u>refreshing</u> against his ear as a spring breeze in the twilight, interrupted his thoughts.*

"New" and "stimulating" effect is expressed with the lines: "This someone feels better now because of it, this someone can do much more because of it".

The semantics of the positive adjective *relieved* contains the meaning of "no longer feeling distressed". The agent of this verb feels anxiety while expecting something bad to happen. Instead "something good happens", and the agent starts feeling better. This state of "feeling better" lasts for some time, as illustrated in sentence (25):

(25) *He was relieved to be getting her call, given the outcome of his last case.*

The explication below exemplify the stated:

relieved

when someone does something like this for some time something happens to this someone because of it
because of this, for some time afterwards it is like this: This someone thought that bad things could happen This someone felt bad because of it Something good happened This someone feels better now because good thing happened This someone feels as he/she would like to feel because of it
people can think about it like this: "this is good"

5.4 The semantics of positive adjectives that belong to Template D

The final template includes adjectives that have purely cognitive meaning, i.e.,
they involve the attribution of a certain kind of evaluative thought without attributing any associated feeling (Goddard *et al.* 2019). They imply "a holistic appraisal". The template for all the adjectives in this group is the same:

if someone knows what this X is like,	KNOWLEDGE BASE
he/she can think about it (or: about someone) like this:	POTENTIAL THOUGHT
"---------- ----------"	THOUGHT

We present here the explications for three adjectives: *serious, critical* and *noble.*

The adjective *serious* has several components within the "potential thought" part of the explication. Its meaning includes components that X (something) requires careful consideration.

It is not easily solved and is related to matters of importance. It is not joking in nature. These components of the meaning can be found in the example and the explication below:

(26) *There is the need to provide <u>serious</u> mentoring to the teams.*

serious

if someone knows what this X is like,
he/she can think about it (or: about someone) like this:
This X makes [m] someone think a lot This X is part of what should be done This X makes [m] someone do a lot This X makes [m] someone want to do a lot This X does not make [m] someone laugh [m] After X happens, this can be bad for someone

We created two explications for the adjective *critical.* The first one involves the meaning of "inclined to criticize something", and the other involves "turning point" in some course of action, which is exemplified in the two sentences below:

(27) *The great majority of legal academics and moral philosophers <u>are critical </u>of vengeance for precisely these reasons.*

(28) *Given the importance of regulations, it is <u>critical </u>to understand the process.*

Critical 1

if someone knows what this X is like,
he/she can think about it (or: about someone) like this:
This X thinks about someone/something This X can see bad things in someone/something This X can say to someone about these bad things because X thinks they should not happen

Critical 2

if someone knows what this X is like,
he/she can think about it (or: about someone) like this:
At this moment X should be done If X does not happen Some bad things will happen

The last adjective in this paper that we analyzed using the NSM explications is the adjective *noble.* We considered important the following two components for its meaning: (1) possessing outstanding qualities, and (2) having aristocratic rank, as in sentences (29) and (30):

(29) *The great majority of legal academics and moral philosophers are critical of vengeance for precisely these reasons.*
(30) *The ancient and <u>noble family </u>of House Stark trace their blood to the First Men 12,000 years ago.*

Noble

if someone knows what this X is like,
he/she can think about it (or: about someone) like this:
This X is better than many others Many people can know about X People want to be like this X This X can be one of the people that make other people live and do things as he/she wants

6. Conclusion

The goal of this paper was to investigate the linguistic expression of positive evaluation. We described a preliminary typology of the linguistic devices that are deployed for positive evaluation and compared it with the devices that are used for negative evaluation. The main conclusion is that positive evaluation does not employ rhetorical figures to the same extent as negative evaluation. Using corpus-assisted analysis, we chose to explicate twelve adjectives that carry positive meaning and they completely fit into the classification of adjectives previously described in Goddard *et al.* (2019). As with negative evaluation, the NSM approach once again proved to be a great analytical tool to semantically describe evaluation as a language phenomenon.

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