



## An Appraisal Analysis of Attitude in Joko Widodo's ASEAN Summit Speeches

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### Abstract

This study employs Martin and White's (2005) Appraisal Framework to analyze the attitude subsystem within President Joko Widodo's speeches at the 2023 ASEAN Summit in Jakarta. The research focuses on uncovering the speaker's expressed attitudes by closely examining his language choices. Data was drawn from English translation scripts of speeches delivered on September 5-7, 2023, and selected using purposive sampling. Analysis of the 43rd ASEAN Summit reveals a significant emphasis on Affect, particularly Inclination, and expressions of Happiness and Satisfaction. Judgments of Veracity, Normality, and Capacity, though less frequent, were also present. The Appreciation category showcased a greater frequency of Reaction and Valuation, indicating the speaker's responsiveness to current challenges and articulation of long-term goals. Interestingly, the 26th ASEAN-Japan Summit speech exhibited a shift in emphasis. While the effect was still prominent, Judgment (precisely Capacity) and Appreciation became more pronounced. This suggests a heightened focus on highlighting expertise and shared values within the ASEAN-Japan context. Overall, this study offers insights into President Widodo's strategic use of language to convey attitudes, build consensus, and address regional issues. These findings have potential educational applications, demonstrating how language can reflect a speaker's beliefs and intentions.

**Keywords:** Appraisal framework, appraisal subsystem, attitude, opening speech

### INTRODUCTION

Speech is a pivotal way to express intentions through oral communication, allowing us to share thoughts, feelings, ideas, and information with others. It's the complex process of using the tongue, lips, and vocal cords to produce sounds that form words and sentences. As Birner (2013) observes, speaking is often equivalent to taking action – our words carry weight and influence. Speech can take many forms, from everyday dialogue to formal public speaking, each with unique communicative purposes and stylistic features (Bakhtin, 2014).

Furthermore, as [Sapir \(1921\)](#) and [Fearon \(2003\)](#) noted, speech is remarkably diverse, reflecting different groups' distinct social and cultural histories.

Understanding a speaker's intent, the potential impact on the audience, and the essential message conveyed requires careful evaluation. Appraisal language theory offers a robust framework for this task. As defined by [Martin and White \(2005\)](#) and [Cavasso and Taboada \(2021\)](#), appraisal is how we use language to express evaluations, attitudes, and emotions. [Martin and White \(2005\)](#) detail how appraisal is used to manage interpersonal relationships, with its essential components being engagement, attitude, and Graduation. [Lee \(2015\)](#) and [McKinley \(2018\)](#) further emphasize that appraisal theory has become crucial for understanding interpersonal meaning within the broader framework of systemic functional linguistics (SFL).

Furthermore, appraisal theory provides a robust framework for analyzing how language expresses emotions, opinions, and the complex interplay of voices within a text. [Marpaung \(2022\)](#) and [Szczyrbak \(2023\)](#) highlight this focus on the author's persona and their intentional manipulation of language to convey varying degrees of conviction. [Martin and Rose \(2003\)](#) further elaborate on the theory, emphasizing how appraisal delves into negotiated attitudes, emotional intensity, and how values are constructed and aligned with the reader's. Ultimately, appraisal offers a critical lens for assessing the multifaceted nuances of language.

[Martin and White's \(2005\)](#) influential framework dissects appraisal theory into three core subtypes: Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation. Attitude encompasses the expressed feelings, aligning with [Sarnoff's \(1970\)](#) and [Lalljee et. al \(1984\)](#) definition of attitudes as predispositions to react favourably or unfavourably to specific objects. Engagement delves into how language constructs relationships, strategically including or excluding the speaker, listener, and other entities within the discourse ([Bamberg, 2005](#)). Finally, Graduation addresses how language scales expressions' intensity or forcefulness ([Hommerberg & Don, 2015](#)). These three components provide essential tools for unpacking the complexities of evaluative language.

Appraising speech involves carefully evaluating language to uncover the speaker's intentions and the underlying message ([Adams, 2002](#)). Within the framework of appraisal theory, attitude is a precious tool ([Oteíza, 2017](#)). It allows for the examination of human emotion (Affect), the assessment of behaviour against social norms (judgment), and the evaluation of objects, events, or ideas (appreciation). As [Liu and Yan \(2022\)](#) explain, affect reveals emotional states, judgment considers actions against standards, and appreciation focuses on the value of things or concepts. Crucially, attitude can be expressed positively or negatively, with specific subcategories like happiness, satisfaction, normality, and integrity.

Furthermore, this study aligns with several prior investigations into appraisal theory. [Fitriana et al. \(2020\)](#) applied the framework to analyze public figures' tweets about Indonesia's capital relocation plan. They found a predominance of negative appreciation alongside expressions of effect and judgment. Similarly, [Lestari et al. \(2023\)](#) dissected the appraisal elements in news articles about deforestation, using [Martin and White's \(2005\)](#) framework to reveal the journalists' ideological positions. They observed using all three appraisal systems: attitude, engagement, and Graduation. [Ross and Caldwell \(2020\)](#) analyzed Donald Trump's tweets, finding strategic use of negativity within the appraisal system to implement a 'going negative' political strategy with targeted character attacks.

Furthermore, [Fajri et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Poucke \(2023\)](#) conducted a study on appraisal analysis, revealing 37 evaluative items in Biden's speech, encompassing effect, judgment, and appreciation. [Magfiroh et al. \(2021\)](#) investigated appraisal analysis in a related study, explicitly focusing on attitude types. Their findings unveiled 65 attitude systems: effect, judgment, and appreciation.

While appraisal analysis has been applied to diverse text types, studies explicitly focusing on presidential speeches at major international events are expected. Previous research has explored appraisal in sources such as Twitter ([Fitriana et al., 2020](#)), news articles ([Lestari et al., 2023](#); [Jin, 2019](#)), political tweets ([Ross & Caldwell, 2020](#)) & presidential speeches ([Fajri et al., 2022](#); [Rohmawati, 2016](#)), the analysis of presidential speech within the specific context of high-profile international summits represents a distinct and potentially valuable area of investigation ([Munday, 2018](#)). This study seeks to address this gap by focusing on the attitude subsystem within the appraisal framework, as it manifests within two speeches by President Joko Widodo at the 2023 ASEAN Summit. Through in-depth analysis, the study aims to illuminate how President Widodo strategically employs appraisal to express emotions, judgments, and appreciation within the specific setting of a significant international event.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a descriptive-qualitative approach to analyze the strategic use of appraisal language within presidential speeches. The primary data sources were two speeches delivered by President Joko Widodo at the 2023 ASEAN Summit in Jakarta, Indonesia: the opening speech of the 43rd ASEAN Summit and the 26th ASEAN-Japan Summit. Purposive sampling was used to select these speeches based on the following criteria: speaker (President Joko Widodo), scope (ASEAN Summit), data format (official translation scripts), speech type (opening speeches), and political context (President Widodo's second term).

Data analysis utilized [Martin and White's \(2005\)](#) Appraisal Framework, explicitly emphasising the attitude subsystem. The analysis process involved (1) identifying sentences expressing effect, judgment, and appreciation, (2) implementing a coding system to categorize sentences according to the relevant attitude subsystem, and (3) interpreting coded sentences to uncover speaker intentions, underlying meanings, and the potential impact of his chosen language. This descriptive-qualitative approach aligned with the study's focus on understanding how appraisal shapes meaning and intent within the context of high-stakes presidential speeches. The purposive sampling strategy ensured that the selected data directly supported the research objectives ([Campbell et al., 2020](#)), while [Martin and White's \(2005\)](#) framework provided a robust structure for analyzing the nuanced use of attitude.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Understanding the speaker's intent often requires a nuanced analysis of expressed attitudes. Attitudes can vary in intensity, ranging from mild to intense ([Moore & Harris, 1996](#)). When expressing feelings, judging character, or appreciating something, an expressed attitude can reflect the speaker's viewpoint or be attributed to an external source ([Rohmawati, 2016](#)). Moreover, affect reveals raw emotions like happiness, dissatisfaction,

security, or inclination. The judgment indicates how the speaker views behaviours (Mahrholz et al., 2018), classifying them in terms of social esteem (normality, capacity, tenacity) or social sanction (propriety, veracity). Lastly, appreciation allows us to infer how the speaker values things or ideas through their reactions, sense of balance, and overall valuation (Zhou, 2023). Focusing on the attitude system within appraisal theory is essential to decoding the complexities of speech.

Table 1 summarizes the distribution of attitudinal elements within President Joko Widodo's opening speech at the 43rd ASEAN Summit. Employing the Appraisal Framework, this analysis categorizes the speaker's expressions into Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation. Most attitudinal expressions fall into the Affect category, particularly within the Inclination subcategory (5 instances), suggesting a focus on the speaker's desires or intentions. Expressions of Happiness (4) and Satisfaction (2) further reveal a positive emotional stance. Within Judgment, assessments of Veracity, Normality, and Capacity are present (3 total). The Appreciation category, including Reaction (6) and Valuation (10), reveals the speaker's responses and evaluations of events and developments relevant to the summit.

**Table 1.** Distribution of attitudinal elements in Joko Widodo's 43rd ASEAN Summit

Attitude	Category	Freq	Excerpt sample
Affect	Inclination	5	<b>I want to emphasize</b> that the unity of ASEAN is still well maintained.
	Happiness	4	<b>I and all the Indonesian people are</b> thrilled to welcome the presence of the ASEAN big family.
	Satisfaction	2	Equality is <b>the primary value that we respect and uphold</b> together...
Judgement	Veracity	1	I am sure that Indonesia and <b>all ASEAN member countries have the same sense of pride and love</b> for the family we call ASEAN.
	Normality	1	Please don't make our ship ASEAN an arena for rivalry that destroys each other, but <b>make this ship ASEAN a field to foster cooperation...</b>
	Capacity	1	<b>Let us create equal and mutually beneficial cooperation</b> to sail together towards the epicentre of growth.
Appreciation	Reaction	6	<b>Future challenges are increasingly complex and will result in a struggle for influence by major powers...</b>
	Valuation	10	Because differences of opinion foster democracy, it shows that <b>we as a family have an equal position.</b>

The provided data excerpts offer a comprehensive glimpse into the attitudes and perspectives of the speaker towards various facets of ASEAN cooperation, as delineated by Appraisal Theory. The speaker showcases a nuanced range of sentiments regarding effect or inclination. They express a neutral to positive impact in their inclination to emphasize the ongoing unity within ASEAN. This indicates a proactive stance towards highlighting an essential aspect of regional cooperation. Moreover, the speaker's happiness in welcoming the ASEAN community reflects genuine enthusiasm and a positive predisposition towards

fostering camaraderie within the regional bloc. Furthermore, their satisfaction with the value of equality upheld within ASEAN underscores a contented acknowledgement of the organization's foundational principles.

Moving on to judgments, the speaker demonstrates a discerning assessment across various dimensions. Their assertion of confidence in the shared pride and love for ASEAN among member countries reflects a strong belief in the integrity of unity within the region. Additionally, their judgment of normality, urging cooperation over rivalry within ASEAN, portrays a pragmatic outlook and a desire for harmonious relations. Furthermore, the speaker's assertion of capacity illustrates a forward-looking perspective, emphasizing the potential for mutual benefit and growth through collaborative endeavours within ASEAN.

Regarding appreciation, the speaker is keenly aware of the challenges and opportunities inherent in ASEAN cooperation. Their reaction to future challenges indicates a proactive stance towards addressing potential difficulties, reflecting a readiness to navigate complex scenarios. Moreover, their valuation of differences of opinion as conducive to democracy underscores an appreciation for diversity and inclusivity within ASEAN, emphasizing the importance of equitable representation and dialogue.

**Table 2.** Distribution of attitudinal elements in Joko Widodo's 26th ASEAN-Japan Summit

Attitude	Category	Freq	Excerpt sample
Affect	Inclination	4	<b>Your Excellencies</b> ASEAN Leaders.
Judgement	Capacity	2	<b>And I declare</b> that the 26 <sup>th</sup> ASEAN and Japan Summit is <b>open</b> .
Appreciation	Reaction	2	<b>As one of ASEAN's most active partners and the leading supporter of AOIP</b> , Japan can significantly contribute to concrete cooperation that directly benefits the people.
	Valuation	6	<b>This is our home</b> ; this is <b>where we grow and take shelter</b> .

Table 2 briefly overviews the distribution of attitudinal elements observed in Joko Widodo's discourse during the 26th ASEAN-Japan Summit. The table categorizes these elements into effect (inclination), judgment (capacity), appreciation (reaction), and valuation, with each category accompanied by the number of occurrences. Throughout the summit, Widodo's discourse featured 14 instances of attitudinal expressions. Among these, affect (inclination) was the most prevalent category, with four occurrences noted. These instances likely reflected Widodo's emotional orientations towards various subjects or audience members, ranging from respect and deference to enthusiasm and positivity.

Regarding judgment (capacity), the data indicated two occurrences, suggesting instances where Widodo asserted his authority or capacity to perform an action or make a decision within the summit's context. These assertions may have encompassed declarations, directives, or expressions of authority in guiding the proceedings. Appreciation (reaction) was observed twice in Widodo's discourse, indicating instances where he reacted or responded to external stimuli or contributions. These reactions could have included acknowledgements, gratitude, or recognition of the efforts, contributions, or significance of particular parties or initiatives within the ASEAN-Japan context. Finally, valuation was the most frequent category, with six occurrences noted in Widodo's discourse. These instances

likely involved attributions of importance, significance, or worth to various aspects of ASEAN-Japan cooperation, regional dynamics, or shared values, reflecting Widodo's value assessments within the summit's discussions.

Furthermore, table 2 presents the distribution of attitudinal elements observed in Joko Widodo's discourse during the 26th ASEAN-Japan Summit. In terms of effect or inclination, the data reveals four instances where the speaker expresses a cheerful disposition towards the addressed audience, as seen in the phrase "Your Excellencies ASEAN Leaders." This expression of respect and deference signifies a positive inclination towards the ASEAN Leaders. Moving on to judgment, the data indicates two instances where the speaker asserts their authority or capacity. The excerpt "And I at this moment declare that the 26th ASEAN and Japan Summit is open" demonstrates the speaker's capacity to initiate and regulate the summit proceedings, signifying their role as an authoritative figure.

Regarding appreciation and valuation, the data provides insights into the speaker's reactions and assessments of value. The excerpt "Japan, as one of ASEAN's most active partners and the main supporter of AOIP, can be a major contributor in realizing concrete cooperation that has direct benefits for the people" showcases appreciation for Japan's significant role in fostering cooperation within ASEAN. Additionally, "This is our home; this is where we grow and take shelter" reflects a valuation of belonging and identity within the region, emphasizing the region's importance as a place of growth and shelter.

## CONCLUSION

Appraisal analysis of President Joko Widodo's speeches at the 26th ASEAN-Japan Summit and the 43rd ASEAN Summit illuminates his communicative strategies and attitudes towards regional cooperation. Across both events, his discourse reveals a diverse range of attitudinal elements, falling into the categories of Affect, Judgment, Appreciation, and Valuation. These elements are markers of his intentional language choices and communicative goals within the ASEAN and ASEAN-Japan settings.

Judgments of capacity are particularly notable in Widodo's speeches, demonstrating his assertion of leadership and authority within the summits. Through confident declarations and expressions of expertise, Widodo positions himself as an influential figure capable of guiding discussions and driving outcomes. Expressions of appreciation and valuation are also evident, underscoring his recognition of contributions made by others and his considered assessments of the importance of specific topics addressed during the summits. This signals Widodo's awareness of the complex dynamics at play within regional cooperation.

Overall, Appraisal analysis provides a valuable lens for understanding Widodo's communicative strategies and attitudes within regional cooperation. By meticulously examining his speeches' affective, judgmental, appreciative, and evaluative components, we gain a deeper understanding of his approach to addressing challenges, navigating relationships, and building consensus within the ASEAN and ASEAN-Japan frameworks.

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