

Evaluation everywhere!

An attempt to identify and classify evaluative language in a corpus of book reviews

Ute Römer
University of Hanover
ute.roemer@anglistik.uni-hannover.de

University of Hanover
English Department
Königsworther Platz 1
D-30167 Hannover
Germany

Evaluation can be described as a pervasive element of language and as a, or maybe *the* key function of verbal interaction. This is particularly true of a number of text types which belong to the genre of academic discourse, e.g. research articles, academic lectures, review articles or book reviews.

The present paper offers a corpus-driven approach to expressions of evaluation in the language of English linguistic book reviews. Starting from the assumption that the data should ideally precede the system in language analysis and description, I will not impose an existing model of evaluation on the data (such as Martin's APPRAISAL system or Bednarek's parameter-based framework), but put the corpus in pole position and try to work towards a model in the presence of large amounts of linguistic evidence.

I shall report on the process of identifying items with evaluative meaning in BRILC (the Book Reviews In Linguistics Corpus), a monitor corpus of reviews published in *Linguist List* issues (between 2001 and 2005), currently at a size of about 2.3 million words and covering 1,000 reviews. Different analytic strategies and their results will be presented and a first model of classifying evaluation will be sketched on the basis of the corpus findings.