



STANCE AND EVALUATION IN CHED MEMOS ON CURRICULUM EVALUATION AND INSTRUCTION: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF ATTITUDINAL LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the stance and evaluative meanings embedded in attitudinal language used in Commission on Higher Education (CHED) memoranda on curriculum evaluation and instruction, and to determine how these linguistic resources construct institutional authority and regulatory voice in higher education governance. This research adopted a qualitative corpus-based discourse analysis design. The study was conducted in the Philippines and analyzed publicly available CHED Memorandum Orders and Regional Memoranda issued between 2023 and 2025. A corpus of thirty selected CHED memoranda related to curriculum evaluation and instructional directives was compiled from official CHED publications. The analysis was guided by the Attitude subsystem of Appraisal Theory, focusing on affect, judgment, and appreciation, and was complemented by Stance Theory to examine evaluative, epistemic, and affective stances. Corpus linguistic techniques, including frequency analysis, collocation, and concordance, were employed to systematically identify recurring evaluative patterns and stance markers such as modal verbs and attitudinal lexis. Findings revealed that judgment was the most frequently employed attitudinal resource, primarily used to evaluate institutional compliance, professional standards, and accountability. Appreciation was also prominent, particularly in assessing curriculum quality, program alignment, and policy value. Affect occurred less frequently and was mainly used to express concern for student welfare and public interest. In terms of stance, evaluative stance, and epistemic modality, especially through modal verbs such as shall and must, were consistently used to reinforce authority, certainty, and obligation in policy implementation. The study demonstrates that CHED memoranda strategically employ attitudinal language and stance resources to construct an authoritative and regulatory institutional voice. These findings contribute to the understanding of institutional discourse in higher education and highlight the role of evaluative language in shaping policy interpretation and compliance.

KEYWORDS: *Attitudinal Language; Stance; Evaluation; Corpus-Based Discourse Analysis; Higher Education Policy; CHED Memoranda; Institutional*

INTRODUCTION

Memoranda issued by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) function as central regulatory instruments in Philippine higher education. Through these policy texts, CHED prescribes curriculum standards, instructional frameworks, quality assurance mechanisms, and accountability requirements for higher education institutions. Beyond their administrative function, these memoranda operate as institutional discourse that encodes authority, evaluation, and expectations. The language used in such documents not only transmits directives but also constructs relationships between the regulatory body and the institutions it governs.

Despite the regulatory significance of CHED memoranda, limited attention has been given to the linguistic mechanisms through which institutional authority and evaluation are constructed. Existing studies on higher education governance in the Philippines largely focus on policy implementation, compliance outcomes, and institutional performance. However, the evaluative and interpersonal dimensions embedded in the language of policy documents remain underexplored. This gap is significant because ambiguity, modality, and evaluative tone in

administrative communication may influence policy interpretation, institutional alignment, and faculty engagement.

International research has demonstrated that institutional and policy documents carry evaluative and stance-related meanings that shape organizational culture and compliance behavior. Studies in institutional discourse highlight how modality, attitudinal language, and evaluative expressions index power relations and regulatory expectations. However, most of these investigations center on academic writing, classroom discourse, or corporate communication. Corpus-based analyses of higher education policy texts, particularly within the Philippine context, remain scarce.

To address this gap, the present study examines stance and evaluative meanings in CHED memoranda on curriculum evaluation and instruction using a corpus-based discourse analytic approach. Guided by Appraisal Theory and Stance Theory, and supported by corpus linguistic techniques, this research systematically identifies patterns of affect, judgment, appreciation, and modality in thirty memoranda issued between 2023 and 2025. By integrating qualitative discourse analysis



with empirical corpus methods, the study provides evidence of how evaluative resources and stance markers contribute to the construction of CHED's authoritative and regulatory voice.

The study is justified on both theoretical and practical grounds. Theoretically, it extends the application of appraisal and stance frameworks to administrative policy discourse in higher education. Methodologically, it demonstrates the value of corpus-based analysis in examining institutional texts. Practically, it offers insights into how evaluative language may shape policy interpretation and institutional response within higher education governance. Through this investigation, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how language functions as a mechanism of institutional authority and policy legitimation.

Purpose of the Study

The objective of this qualitative research, using corpus-based discourse analysis, was to identify the stance and evaluation revealed in the attitudinal language of Commission on Higher Education (CHED) memorandums regarding curriculum evaluation and instruction, and to analyze how linguistic resources such as affect, judgment, and appreciation were used to convey the values, authority, and educational agenda of the institution.

At this stage in the research, attitudinal language was predominantly understood as evaluative commentary characteristic of CHED memorandums concerning the institution's stance, emotive tone, and evaluative position to curriculum development and instructional practices.

Research Questions

1. What types of attitudinal language (affect, judgement, appreciation) are found in CHED memos on curriculum evaluation and instruction according to the Appraisal Theory of Martin and White (2005)?
2. How do stance and evaluation contribute to CHED's authoritative and regulatory voice in educational discourse?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Constructing Stance and Evaluation in Institutional Communication

Stance is a key feature of institutional discourse, reflecting how writers position themselves in relation to authority, obligation, and audience alignment. According to Hyland and Zhang (2022), stance is expressed through hedges, boosters, modal verbs, and evaluative markers that signal certainty and institutional expectation. Administrative texts commonly employ deontic modality such as *must* and *should* to balance authority and professionalism (Taboada & Das, 2021). Evaluative language in institutional writing reinforces norms, compliance, and accountability while managing relational tone (Park & Kim, 2021; Han, 2020). Corpus-based studies further demonstrate that regulatory language strategically combines

authority with mitigation to maintain legitimacy (Lee & Park, 2023; Gomez & Ruiz, 2024).

CHED Memorandums as Institutional Discourse

Policy memorandums function as powerful discursive tools that shape institutional culture, priorities, and compliance. Research shows that policy texts do not merely communicate directives but actively construct authority and interpretive frameworks (Steiner et al., 2024; Wiyanti et al., 2025). Institutional communication influences how stakeholders understand and implement governance structures (Ticona-Huanca et al., 2023). Language choices in policy documents reflect broader institutional norms and mediate the translation of national standards into institutional practices (Dorta-González et al., 2024; Quirino et al., 2025).

Interpersonal Meaning in Institutional Communication

Administrative discourse encodes interpersonal positioning and leadership style. Evaluative and engagement markers help regulate alignment between institutions and stakeholders (Nguyen, 2021; Smith et al., 2025). Metadiscourse features such as hedges and boosters negotiate authority and solidarity in professional communication (Liu & Gablasova, 2023; Hyland & Jiang, 2020). These linguistic strategies function not merely stylistically but as mechanisms for managing power relations, institutional identity, and reader engagement (Dontcheva Navratilova, 2021).

Corpus Linguistics in Educational Research

Corpus linguistics provides systematic tools for examining authentic language use through frequency counts, collocation, and concordance analysis (Hashimoto & Nelson, 2025). In educational research, corpus methods enhance methodological transparency and empirical rigor (Boulton & Cobb, 2022; Pérez Paredes, 2021). Studies show that corpus-based approaches reveal recurring evaluative patterns in institutional discourse and policy texts, enabling researchers to move beyond intuition toward data-driven analysis (Gillings et al., 2023). These methods are particularly valuable in analyzing regulatory language and identifying stance-taking patterns in governance communication.

Appraisal Theory and Attitudinal Language

Appraisal Theory provides a framework for analyzing evaluation in discourse through its Attitude subsystem: affect, judgment, and appreciation (White, 2021). Affect encodes emotional positioning, judgment evaluates behavior and ethics, and appreciation assesses the value or quality of processes and objects. Research indicates that evaluative language shapes institutional culture, reinforces professional norms, and negotiates solidarity (Thompson, 2022; Liu & Xu, 2023; Chen, 2022). In policy discourse, appreciation and judgment often function rhetorically to foreground institutional priorities and standards (Umeda & Tsuda, 2023).



Stance Theory in Institutional and Policy Discourse

Stance Theory explains how writers signal evaluation, certainty, and alignment through modality, evidentials, and attitudinal markers (Du Bois, 2007). Institutional texts strategically combine assertive forms such as *must* and *will* with mitigating expressions to balance regulation and collaboration (Carter et al., 2024; Chen & Liu, 2023). Research demonstrates that stance markers construct legitimacy, manage authority, and shape reader interpretation in policy discourse (Hyland & Jiang, 2020; Ochs et al., 2022).

Overall, the literature highlights the central role of evaluative language, stance-taking, and corpus-based analysis in understanding institutional communication. However, limited research has applied corpus-assisted appraisal analysis to CHED memorandums, creating a gap that the present study addresses.

METHODS

Research Design

This study is qualitative in nature, employing a corpus-assisted discourse analytical approach. Qualitative research enables an in-depth examination of language as a social practice, particularly within institutional texts where authority, regulation, and evaluation are embedded in linguistic choices. In particular, corpus-assisted discourse analysis integrates systematic corpus techniques with interpretative discourse analysis in order to identify recurring patterns of language use across authentic texts. This approach assumes that language patterns become more visible when naturally occurring documents are compiled and examined through frequency counts, collocation analysis, and concordance lines. Rather than relying solely on intuitive interpretation, the corpus-based method strengthens analytical claims by grounding them in observable textual evidence.

In this study, the researcher found this method appropriate for analyzing how the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) constructs institutional authority, evaluative positioning, and regulatory stance in its official memorandums. By combining corpus outputs with theoretical frameworks from Appraisal Theory and Stance Theory, the study systematically examined how evaluative and modal resources function to encode obligation, legitimacy, and professional alignment in policy discourse.

Research Material

The research materials for this study consisted of thirty (30) CHED memorandums issued between 2023 and 2025. These included Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Orders (CMOs) and Regional Memorandum Orders (RMOs) publicly accessible through the official CHED website. The memorandums were selected based on the following inclusion criteria: they were formally issued by CHED, written in English, addressed to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and directly related to curriculum standards, instructional policies, program evaluation, or academic implementation guidelines. Memorandums focusing solely on logistical or non-academic administrative matters were excluded from the corpus.

The selected documents were compiled into a unified electronic corpus for systematic analysis. Each memorandum was assigned a code to ensure organized referencing during the analytical process. Basic text preparation procedures were conducted, including standardization of formatting and removal of non-linguistic elements that could interfere with corpus processing. The texts were then converted into analyzable format and uploaded into corpus analysis software to generate frequency lists, concordance outputs, and collocation patterns. These procedures enabled the researcher to detect recurring evaluative and stance-related features within the institutional documents.

Data Analysis

To answer the research questions, the study employed frameworks from Appraisal Theory and Stance Theory within a corpus-assisted analytical procedure. Using the Attitude subsystem of Appraisal Theory, the researcher identified instances of affect, judgment, and appreciation across the memorandums. Affect refers to expressions of emotional positioning, judgment evaluates behavior and compliance, and appreciation assesses the value or quality of processes, programs, and institutional standards. These attitudinal resources were examined to determine how CHED evaluates institutional practices and frames expectations for higher education institutions.

Further, Stance Theory was applied to analyze epistemic, evaluative, and affective positioning in the memorandums. Particular attention was given to modal verbs such as *must*, *shall*, *should*, and *may*, as well as reporting verbs and evidential markers that signal degrees of certainty, obligation, and institutional commitment. Through concordance and collocation analysis, the researcher examined how stance markers co-occur with evaluative language to construct regulatory force and institutional legitimacy.

Before interpretation, the corpus was reviewed to ensure accuracy, completeness, and consistency. The analysis integrated quantitative corpus outputs with qualitative interpretation, allowing linguistic patterns to emerge from the data while remaining theoretically grounded. To strengthen credibility and minimize subjectivity, the researcher maintained reflexivity throughout the analysis and relied on textual evidence derived from concordance lines and frequency patterns. Expert debriefing was also conducted to validate the identification and classification of evaluative and stance markers. Since the study analyzed publicly accessible policy documents, no human participants were involved; however, ethical standards were observed by coding the documents and using them solely for academic purposes. Data gathering and analysis were conducted over a four-month period, which allowed sufficient time for corpus compilation, coding, and interpretative examination.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure began with the systematic retrieval of CHED memorandums from the official CHED



website. Only documents published between 2023 and 2025 that met the established inclusion criteria were downloaded and archived electronically. Each memorandum was carefully reviewed to confirm its relevance to curriculum standards, instructional policies, and academic implementation guidelines. After verification, the documents were organized chronologically and assigned identification codes to facilitate

accurate referencing and traceability during analysis. The memorandums were then compiled into a unified electronic corpus, ensuring completeness and avoiding duplication. This structured collection process ensured that the dataset was both relevant and representative of recent institutional policy discourse issued by CHED.

RESULTS

Table 1
Types of Attitudinal Language found in CHED Memos

Corpus Excerpt	Attitudinal Resource	Attitude Type	Polarity	Target	Interpretation
“equitable policies... safe return to physical learning spaces...” (CM_03)	equitable; safe	Affect	Positive	Policies / Stakeholders	Signals institutional concern for fairness and safety.
“...renewed emphasis on student wellness.” (CM_03)	wellness; renewed emphasis	Affect	Positive	Students	Positions CHED as attentive to stakeholder well-being.
“non-compliance with the applicable CHED policies...” (CM_04)	non-compliance	Judgment	Negative	Institutions	Signals failure to meet regulatory standards.
“...consistently shown dismal performance...” (CM_13)	dismal performance	Judgment	Negative	TEIs	Critiques institutional underperformance.
“...exemplary performance...” (CM_10)	exemplary performance	Judgment	Positive	HEIs	Establishes high standards of competence.
“...exceptional academic performance and potential for excellence...” (CM_27)	exceptional; excellence	Judgment	Positive	Students	Recognizes superior merit and capability.
“...fully compliant and aligned with current educational reforms.” (CM_04)	fully compliant; aligned	Appreciation	Positive	Degree programs	Emphasizes conformity to standards and reform alignment.
“The impact... cannot be overemphasized.” (CM_03)	cannot be overemphasized	Appreciation	Positive	Onsite learning	Highlights policy importance and value.
“...deemed necessary...” (CM_03)	necessary	Appreciation	Positive	Institutional measures	Frames policy action as appropriate and justified.

Interpretation

The dominance of Judgment confirms that CHED memoranda function primarily as instruments of normative regulation. Judgment evaluates institutional behavior against codified standards (Martin & White, 2005). Through terms such as non-compliance and dismal performance, CHED positions higher education institutions within a supervisory hierarchy.

From Du Bois’ (2007) stance triangle, these evaluative moves:

1. Evaluate institutional conduct
2. Position CHED as authoritative assessor
3. Align institutions with regulatory expectations

Meanwhile, Appreciation legitimizes reform by framing policies as necessary, aligned, and fully compliant. Rather than merely

imposing rules, CHED discursively constructs reform as quality enhancement.

Although less frequent, Affect performs relational work. References to wellness and safe return project institutional care. In Hyland’s (2005) framework, such stance resources signal alignment with stakeholder values while maintaining authority.

Stance Construction and Institutional Authority

Beyond attitudinal categorization, CHED memoranda construct authority through layered stance positioning—evaluative, epistemic, and affective. These dimensions reflect how institutions enact governance linguistically (Du Bois, 2007; Hyland, 2018).



Table 2
Functional Mapping of Stance and Evaluative Resources and Their Contribution to CHED’s Authoritative and Regulatory Voice

Corpus Excerpt	Functional Move	Stance Dimension	Linguistic Marker	Contribution to Authority Construction
“protecting the public... ensure safe and proper...” (CM_16)	Protective Framing	Affective	protecting; safe	Projects moral responsibility and public accountability.
“...renewed emphasis on student wellness.” (CM_03)	Care Statement	Affective	wellness	Humanizes regulatory authority.
“The Commission observed...” (CM_10)	Evidence-Based Consideration	Epistemic	observed	Constructs rational, data-driven authority.
“...institutionalized pursuant to Section 4...” (CM_29)	Legal Grounding	Epistemic	pursuant to	Anchors legitimacy in statutory mandate.
“cannot be overemphasized...” (CM_03)	Certainty Assertion	Epistemic	cannot be overemphasized	Signals strong epistemic commitment.
“...were inadequate to develop required competencies...” (CM_02)	Evaluation / Critique	Evaluation	inadequate	Positions CHED as evaluator of institutional effectiveness.
“...highly desirable...” (CM_03)	Policy Justification	Evaluation	highly desirable	Frames policy direction as beneficial.
“...dismal performance...” (CM_13)	Performance Critique	Evaluation	dismal	Reinforces monitoring authority.
“...deep understanding; highly proficient...” (CM_09)	Standard Setting	Evaluation	proficient; expert	Defines competency benchmarks institutions must achieve.

Interpretation

Table 2 demonstrates that CHED’s authoritative voice is constructed through three interlocking stance strategies:

1. Evaluation (Supervisory Authority)

Negative assessment (inadequate, dismal) legitimizes regulatory intervention. Positive benchmarking (highly desirable) reinforces policy direction.

2. Epistemic Positioning (Rational Legitimacy)

Legal grounding and observational framing portray CHED as evidence-based and law-anchored. Authority is presented as reasoned rather than arbitrary.

3. Affective Framing (Protective Legitimacy)

References to public safety and wellness soften regulatory tone, constructing CHED as both regulator and guardian.

In Hyland’s (2018) terms, the memoranda exhibit strong stance with limited engagement, prioritizing directive authority over dialogic negotiation. However, epistemic justification and affective alignment mitigate overt coerciveness, producing calibrated regulatory authority.

Across both tables, the findings show that CHED memoranda construct governance through:

- Dominant Judgment resources (norm enforcement)
- Appreciation for policy legitimation
- Strategic Affect for stakeholder alignment
- Epistemic grounding for rational authority
- Evaluative benchmarking for standard setting

Through coordinated deployment of appraisal and stance resources, CHED discursively performs regulation. Authority is not only administratively assumed but linguistically constructed, stabilized, and normalized through patterned evaluative language.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING PRACTICE

The findings of this study imply that teachers, particularly Physical Education (PE) teachers handling multiple designations, perform multifaceted roles that require heightened awareness of their diverse responsibilities within the institution. This underscores the need for continuous administrative support, structured monitoring, and professional guidance from school leaders to ensure that instructional quality is not compromised despite increasing demands. Multi-designated teachers must cultivate adaptability, resilience, and effective time management skills to balance instructional, administrative, and organizational tasks. Embracing challenges with a positive professional disposition and remaining open to evolving educational trends are essential in navigating unexpected institutional changes. Strengthening collaborative practices and maintaining a humane, reflective approach to work can further enhance teacher well-being and overall performance in complex educational settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings regarding the experiences of PE teachers handling multiple designations, future research may expand the



scope of inquiry by involving larger and more diverse samples across different educational contexts to increase the generalizability of results. Including teachers from various regions, institutional types, and academic levels may provide broader insights into how multiple designations influence workload management, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness. Future studies may also consider employing mixed-method or longitudinal designs to examine the long-term professional and psychological impacts of handling multiple roles. Comparative research between single-designated and multi-designated teachers could further clarify differences in coping mechanisms, productivity, and institutional support systems, thereby contributing to more informed educational policies and administrative strategies.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study underscores the importance of exploring the lived experiences of Physical Education teachers managing multiple designations in educational institutions. By examining their challenges, coping strategies, and professional insights, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how teachers navigate complex and overlapping responsibilities. The findings highlight the significance of effective time management, positive professional disposition, and strong institutional support in sustaining teacher performance and well-being. Recognizing these realities can guide administrators and policymakers in developing balanced workload structures and supportive environments that promote both teacher satisfaction and instructional quality, ultimately strengthening the overall educational system.

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