

Adjectives & Sentence Patterns for Expressing Evaluation & Stance in Academic Writing

Student Activity Sheet

Activity 1. Lead-in: Individual Gap-filling Task

Instructions: read the abstract from an undergraduate research article (abridged & slightly edited). Complete the two sentences by filling the blanks provided (Hint: there should be two words if two lines are given).

During the last nine years, more and more young people join in the carnival on November 11 affectionately known as “Double 11 Shopping Festival”. Although Chinese millennials are often asked in marketing research studies as to why they shop online on this day, their views have never been considered seriously – many of our peers have been left out of the dialogue. In light of this, we (1) _____ necessary that the reported data needs to take immediate peer groups. In addition, one subject that emerges is why millennial choose to participate in this festival in the age of such fabulous in-store experiences. (2) _____ interesting to see what attracts this student group to the online venue from a list of motivational factors including social satisfaction and financial savings.

Reference

Zhao, X., Chen, X., Song, X., Zhang, W., Gao, L., & De Ciel, R. (2019). A look at Alibaba Double 11 Shopping Festival. *Journal of Student Research*, 8(1), 88-91.

Activity 2: Studying Concordance Lines for the Correct Sentence Structure of Evaluation

Instructions: In pairs, study the concordance lines in the following figures. Check whether your answers in Activity 1 are correct. And then, answer the following questions and discuss the answers with your partner.

Corpus of Contemporary American English

SEARCH FREQUENCY CONTEXT HELP

SECTION: ACADEMIC (4) (SHUFFLE)

CLICK FOR MORE CONTEXT [?] SAVE LIST CHOOSE LIST It is important CREATE NEW LIST [?] SHOW DUPLICATES

1	2016	ACAD	J History Philosophy	A	B	C	also constituted so that M is deducible from them. if in doing this we find it necessary to have recourse to concepts not contained in M, we must seek
2	2011	ACAD	AmerScholar	A	B	C	mirror. But now those pleasures are, of course, denied us. We find it necessary to cover up, the better to obscure evidence of decay and fallen
3	2009	ACAD	Education	A	B	C	definitely play an important role in achieving success if enough attention is paid. We find it necessary to keep up-to-date with what has been done for the last two d
4	1995	ACAD	AgricResrch	A	B	C	, " says John Biele, a fruit grower in northern Washington. " We find it necessary to spray more and more, because the moths keep building up their

Figure 1. Sentence pattern for (1)

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SEARCH FREQUENCY CONTEXT HELP

SECTION: ACADEMIC (1,168)
FIND SAMPLE: 100 200 500 1000
PAGE: << < 1 / 12 > >>

CLICK FOR MORE CONTEXT [?] SAVE LIST CHOOSE LIST It is important CREATE NEW LIST [?] SHOW DUPLICATES

1	2019	ACAD	...ter Science & Technology	A	B	C	using a very recent work employed a deep learning model (Bi-GRU). It is interesting also to clarify that the proposed semi-supervised learning
2	2019	ACAD	eLife	A	B	C	the ability of nucleotide binding or hydrolysis to communicate with the microtubule-binding domain. It is interesting to note that the small frag
3	2019	ACAD	Zoological Letters	A	B	C	these structures might have been affected by a single regulatory genetic system. # It is interesting to note that fossil larval representatives of f
4	2019	ACAD	J Neuroinflammation	A	B	C	a memory impairment effect of SR9009 is due to an activation of REV-ERB. # It is interesting to speculate that OAbeta enhances the effects of s
5	2019	ACAD	PLoS Computational Biology	A	B	C	coefficients 43, which requires less than one second of CPU time here. It is interesting to note that u g, max and u o mainly contribute to the
6	2019	ACAD	BMC Bioinformatics	A	B	C	of premature entry into mitosis through Cdk1 phosphorylation by Wee1 and Pkmyt1 129-132. It is interesting that Cdk1 phosphorylation not o
7	2019	ACAD	PeerJ	A	B	C) and spinal (Young, Spence & Behm, 2018) excitabilities, it is interesting and important to examine if there are any central-mediated changes c
8	2019	ACAD	Neural Development	A	B	C	for ipRGC subtypes would be different from what has been reported in adulthood, it is interesting that the physiological differences between s
9	2019	ACAD	Cato Journal	A	B	C	is not tied to the value of a commodity, such as gold. It is interesting to notice that Schumpeter (1954: 288) spelled the term as "
10	2019	ACAD	Studies in the Novel	A	B	C	whether in a primitive society or at the Court of St. James. (It is interesting that a little later in the novel all Mr. Collins's pomposity and stupidity

Figure 2. Sentence pattern for (2)

- a. Read the highlighted words in the concordance lines of Figure 1 & 2. What word is in the Subject position in each figure?

Figure 1: _____

Figure 2: _____

- b. Observe the positions of "It" in the two sets of concordance lines. How does the pronoun "it" function in the sentences?

The "it" in Figure 1 is in the _____ position, while that in Figure 2 is in the _____ position.

- c. Discuss with your partner: suggest the possible sentence patterns that collocate with the adjectives for evaluation.

Subject	Verb	Object/ Complement

Activity 3: Categorising Adjectives for Evaluation (30 minutes)

Instructions: based on the sentence patterns found in #2, engage the corpus tool (<https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>) and look for top 30 adjectives collocating with such patterns in the sub-corpus of academic writing.

- 1 In “Collocates”, key in “it is” or “find it” in the first search bar.
- 2 Click on the “POS” next to the second search bar, and choose “adj.ALL”.
- 3 Click on the number “2” to identify the adjectives collocates within 2 words on the right of “it is”/ “find it”.
- 4 Click “Sections” and choose “ACADEMIC” in [1].
- 5 Click on “Find Collocates”.

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PDF

SEARCH

FREQUENCY

CONTEXT

DOWNLOAD DATA

List

Chart

Word

Browse

Collocates

Compare KWIC

1

it is

Word/phrase [POS]

2

j*

Collocates [adj] ALL

3

4 3 2 1 0 0 1 2 3 4 +

5

Find collocates

Reset

Sections

Texts/Virtual

Sort/Limit

Options

1 IGNORE

2 IGNORE

4

TV/MOVIES

BLOG

WEB-GENL

SPOKEN

FICTION

MAGAZINE

NEWSPAPER

ACADEMIC

TV/MOVIES

BLOG

WEB-GENL

SPOKEN

FICTION

MAGAZINE

NEWSPAPER

ACADEMIC

(HIDE HELP)

LOGGED IN

SECTIONS

SHOW

Determines whether the frequency is shown for each "section" of the corpus (in the case of COCA, the genre or year). For example, the synonyms of *beautiful* in each section and overall.

Select a section: (sub-)genre or (set of) year(s). [Click here](#) for more examples of change over time.

*ize verbs in ACADEMIC	Past tense verb + up in TV/MOVIES
*ment in ACADEMIC	Nouns near green in 2010-2019
good + NOUN in NEWSPAPERS	Noun near chair in FIC
Hard + NOUN in MAGAZINES	Synonyms of strong in TV/MOVIES
Verbs in MAGAZINES-Sports	Nouns in NEWSPAPERS-Money
Adjectives in ACADEMIC-Medicine	Adverbs in TV/MOVIES

(Optional) Select a second (set of) section(s) against which to compare the sections chosen above

*ize verbs in ACAD vs MAG	Past tense verb + up in TV/M vs ACAD
*ment in ACAD vs FIC	Nouns near green in 2010-2019 vs 1990-1999
good NOUN in NEWS vs TV/M	Nouns near chair in ACAD vs FIC

Figure 3. Instructions for searching the right collocates (adjectives) of “it is” in academic texts

6 Sort the adjectives into seven main categories:

Category	Examples (Students can add more)
Ease	easy, difficult, hard
Importance	important, crucial
Expectedness	obvious, surprising
Possibility	possible, impossible
Necessity	imperative, necessary
Reliability	useful, good
Emotivity	wise, unfortunate

Activity 4: Completing the Sentence Structure

a. In pairs, study the concordance lines (either in the activity sheet or on COCA directly); identify the two common phrase/ clause patterns immediately following the adjectives.

Pattern 1	Noun + <i>find it</i> + adjective	1. _____
Pattern 2	<i>It</i> + linking verb + adjective	2. _____

b. From the concordance lines, copy two examples for each pattern. If necessary, you can click on a particular entry for more context. Then, colour the **Subject** in red, the **verb** in green, **adjective** in blue; underline the infinitive phrase or the that-clause. Examples are given to you in the table.

Grammatical pattern	Examples from the corpus
N + find it + adj + to-inf/ that-clause	E.g. we find it difficult <u>to accept the argument...</u> 1. 2.
It is + adj + to-inf/ that-clause	E.g. it is difficult <u>to deal with gender issues in the church.</u> 1. 2.

Activity 5: Review & Take-home Task

- a. Consult the concordance lines in Figure 3 and 4. With your partner, discuss when each of the two patterns are used, and fill in the blanks below.

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SEARCH

FREQUENCY

CONTEXT

OVERVIEW

FIND SAMPLE: 100 200

PAGE: << < 1 / 3 > >>

CLICK FOR MORE CONTEXT

☐ [?]

SAVE LIST

CHOOSE LIST

It is important

CREATE NEW LIST

[?]

SHOW DUPLICATES

1	2012	WEB	...uickanddirtytips.com	A	B	C	# The problem is is that he wasn't home. Why do <u>we</u> suddenly <u>find it necessary</u> to repeat the verb? # Both of these usages have become commonplace
2	2012	WEB	ietf.org	A	B	C	of a line. On the other hand, <u>a user or process</u> may sometimes <u>find it necessary</u> or desirable to provide data which does not terminate at the end of
3	2012	WEB	...sitivitypositive.com	A	B	C	explain to me what the president has to do with this article Why do you <u>find it necessary</u> to politicize this excellent article? # Ettoh # a life, Jason
4	2012	WEB	state.nj.us	A	B	C	# Although stage information is useful for some purposes, <u>most users of streamflow data</u> <u>find it necessary</u> to have discharge information about a stream. D
5	2012	WEB	...riting2.richmond.edu	A	B	C	the text from sources without properly indicating that you have done so. If you <u>find it necessary</u> to directly quote an author, clearly indicate what has been
6	2012	WEB	esr.ibiblio.org	A	B	C	build systems. # However, to avoid a rather brutal old ag, I <u>find it necessary</u> to spend the vast majority of my life creating things that make other
7	2012	WEB	gnu.org	A	B	C	different system. If you call the whole system "Linux", <u>you will find it necessary</u> to say things like, "Android contains Linux, but it is
8	2012	WEB	mediaite.com	A	B	C	way my husband does with me, no pretense or coldness. Why do people <u>find it necessary</u> to turn Gov. Romney into a cartoon character? This is a
9	2012	WEB	amazon.com	A	B	C	London, writes in British English, it is rather odd that <u>he</u> seems to <u>find it necessary</u> to translate the *names* of American transit companies into British Engl
10	2012	WEB	newcastle-news.com	A	B	C	# It also used to make me crazy when Mother would tell a story and <u>find it necessary</u> to verbally scroll through the name of every acquaintance she'd had si

Figure 3. "Evaluators" (nouns in Subject position, circled) as do-ers of the thinking action (*find it + adjective*)

1	the image of father has been gradually changed. <u>It is necessary</u> to use female images to describe God. # Professor Wang Weifan wrote
2	weakness of the theological heritage and theoretical foundation, <u>it is difficult</u> to deal with gender issues in the church. (58) #
3	the cultural biography of the complex, however, <u>it is possible</u> to offer some alternative reconstructions. # The ashlar walls of the underground capture
4	as younger subjects due to difficulties in recruitment. <u>It is possible</u> that the use of animacy cues might increase for the older adults with
5	33 other studies did not use this classification. <u>It is important</u> to consider that symptomatic pancreatic fistula is associated with high morbidity. In
6	between surgery and the drainage procedure; however, <u>it is important</u> to note that bleeding risk is likely more <u>important</u> in cases of early
7	it is used to improve fertility ^{10, 11} . <u>It is possible</u> that A. digitata (L.) possesses secondary metabolites that act differently based
8	shown in Fig 3E. In this plot, <u>it is possible</u> to observe that all curves converge towards the same rate level, which
9	concentration, ranging from 1% to 100% metofluthrin. <u>It is possible</u> to observe that knockdown increases with metofluthrin concentration while bites are reduced,
10	, increasing opportunities of exploring new movement patterns. <u>It is important</u> for practitioners to learn about each unique student through collaboration with the family

Figure 4. Concordance lines (*it is + adjective*) for highlighting the evaluation

When using the "*find it*" pattern, the writer emphasises _____, who does the action of commenting (*we find it necessary*); when using the "*it is*" pattern, the writer chooses to foreground the _____, so that readers can be more aware of the writer's own attitude towards the topic.

- b. Take-home writing task: Rewrite the underlined parts having less English-like evaluative expressions. Present the results in the next class.

Text A

The majority of customers in Hong Kong are used to the traditional display space in a store. In light of this, the retailing team noticed that they are important to adopt a new approach for product assortment. For instance, they placed the new arrivals facing the door and the shoes, accessories or cosmetics next to the garments. As a result, the consumers are easy to know the possible ways to match them. This new product assortment method had great success, which encouraged the customers to buy multiple items simultaneously.

Text B

SMEs play an important role in the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs), promotion of inclusive and sustainable economic growth, creation of employment and decent jobs, promotion of sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation and the reduction of inequality. However, manufacturing SMEs are challenging to include low innovation and product development. Other challenges would be inability to access both domestic and international markets, inability to access affordable credit, tedious and lengthy process in quality standards and certification. In addition, they face limited access to markets which is a severe constraint to its growth and competitiveness. Further, as a result of their small sizes, it usually finds difficult to compete in the domestic economy with established enterprises, face competition from imported goods, and lack requisite productive capacity and technologies to meet demand in the international markets. It is argued that some affirmative action and selective interventions and preference schemes by the government can enhance their market penetration. SMEs are difficult to access public procurement opportunities compared to large firms.

Extracted and edited from

Osano, H. M. (2019). Global expansion of SMEs: role of global market strategy for Kenyan SMEs. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 8(1), 13.

Bonus Stage: Where to evaluate in the paragraph?

Revisit Text B, a text extract from a journal article. With your teacher and peers, discuss where in the paragraph the author put the evaluation with the target sentence patterns. Also, explain why these sentences are placed in those positions.

- a. Possible positions of evaluative sentences in a paragraph

- b. Reasons for putting the evaluative sentences in the identified positions

- c. Comparing “*it is* + adjective” and “human subjects + *find it* + adjective”, which is more common in academic writing? Discuss in the class, use the “Compare” function in COCA, and take notes in the space below.

***** END *****