# Discourse Analysis of the 2022 Australian Tennis Open: A Multimodal Appraisal Perspective

#### **Abstract**

This article presents a preliminary analysis of a corpus of texts relating to the 2022 Australian Tennis Open using a multimodal appraisal framework. The study utilises quantitative and qualitative content analysis to examine media reports, official statements, and public reactions to the incident, which centred around Novak Djokovic's vaccination status. The analysis focusses on assessing how evaluative language contributes to community-building and identifies the underlying values, beliefs, and evaluations that shape stakeholders' emotional, cognitive, and behavioural responses.

The appraisal framework, encompassing attitude, engagement, and graduation, serves as a comprehensive tool for categorising resources that express evaluation. Furthermore, the article delves into the application of appraisal analysis within the context of multimodal and online discourse, encompassing various platforms such as newspapers, television, radio, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, official political statements, and court rulings. By examining these diverse media, the study seeks to investigate the dynamic discourse interplay surrounding the 2022 Australian Open, highlighting the pivotal role of evaluative communication in fostering alignment among readers through shared values and attitudes. The preliminary findings suggest that access to greater semiotic recourses increases consensus. The gains from using this interpretative framework are an asset, facilitating the coding of a large data set and attending the different manifestations of discourses around the player's participation. As discourse continues to shape societal narratives, this multimodal appraisal investigation contributes to our understanding of the complex dynamics inherent in discourse construction and the influence of evaluative language in shaping collective perception.

# **Keywords**

Appraisal, Discourse Analysis, Multimodality, Visual Attitude, Paralanguage, Multimodal Corpus

#### 1. Introduction

There are many linguistic analyses regarding online communication, few have dealt with meaning in online language through the Appraisal framework. Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) was chosen as a method of analysis as the associated annotation lends great potential for corpus-based discourse approaches, leading to interesting understandings also with small corpora. Appraisal Theory deals with how evaluative language aligns readers according to common values and attitudes. Since 2005, Appraisal has been used to: analyse static multimodal texts (Economou 2009, Swain 2012, Mills & Stone et al. 2020); it has also been applied to online discourse (language) and combined with corpus techniques (Cavasso & Taboada 2021, Drasovean & Tagg 2015); recently a model has also been proposed for paralanguage that incorporates Appraisal (Martin & Zappavigna 2019; Ngo, Hood et al. 2021). To the best knowledge of this researcher, no studies have dealt with a multimodal discourse Appraisal analysis of a corpus of online texts. In this article Appraisal Theory is used to investigate how evaluative communication conveys readers' alignment to common values and attitudes (Zappavigna 2011) in a small corpus of texts dealing with the 2022 Australian Open. This article presents the methods and preliminary results of a multimodal appraisal analysis on a small corpus of texts relating to the 2022 Australian Tennis Open, which was dominated by a vaccination issue that centred on the tournament favourite, Novak Djokovic.

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The analysis is based on a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of media reports, official statements, and public reactions to the incident. The texts come from a variety of online sources, and employ various semiotic resources, including synchronous and asynchronous communication and static, dynamic and interactive texts. Appraisal Theory is used to: enquire how evaluative language contributes to community-building and to identify the underlying values, beliefs, and evaluations that shape the emotional, cognitive, and behavioural responses of the various stakeholders involved.

# 2. The 2022 Australian Tennis Open

The 2022 Australian Tennis Open was controversial as it occurred during the Covid-19 era. The favourite, Novak Djokovic, did not set foot on a tennis court, but was in and out of the law courts and was finally deported. In the context of Australia's pandemic experience, few Australians had any sympathy for Novak Djokovic's 11 days in Melbourne's courts.

In the previous months, Djokovic had never clearly voiced his vaccination opinions. In April 2020, before the availability of Covid-19 vaccinations, Djokovic had mentioned his vaccination opposition, subsequently stating that not being an expert he would keep an open mind, but that as a high-level sportsman he wanted to keep his right to choose what was entered his body. Some interpreted his vaccine hesitancy as being associated with the 'anti-vax' movement.

In October 2021 Alex Hawke, Minister for Immigration, had declared that Djokovic could not come to the Australian Open if he did not satisfy the vaccination mandate to the full. In November 2021, Djokovic stated: "When official condition requirements to travel to Australia and play in Australia are out, then obviously I'll see what I personally do with that, and also the bigger group of the players, you know, because the situation is obviously different in Australia than most parts of the world".

On the 4th January 2022, Djokovic declared via Instagram that he was heading to Australia. This announcement triggered anxiety in Australia and especially in Melbourne (the location of the tournament) which had endured an extremely strict lockdown. The conditions of his exemption were unknown.

Djokovic flew to Australia to play in the Australian Open. The tournament organisers had provided him with a medical exemption from the requirement to be vaccinated against Covid-19, following a State Government authority process. He had a Federal Government visa to enter Australia. On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022, Australian PM Scott Morrison had said to reporters on the Djokovic issue: "Well, that is a matter for the Victorian government. They have provided him with an exemption to come to Australia, and so we then act in accordance with that decision".

While Djokovic was mid-flight, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced, in conflict with his previous statement some hours beforehand, that it was a Federal Government matter and activated his public servants (Australian Border Force) who cancelled Djokovic's visa on his arrival. The premise was that the Minister may cancel a visa if he or she is satisfied that:. . . the presence of its holder in Australia is or may be, or would or might be, a risk to: the health, safety or good order of the Australian community or a segment of the Australian community.

Djokovic challenged the decision before the Federal Circuit Court, a judge reversed Djokovic's deportation decision on 10th January 2022 as being unreasonable. The Government conceded that the visa cancellation was unlawful. The Federal Circuit Court ordered Djokovic's immediate release from detention amid much demonstration from various groups that had formed around this incident: the anti-vax movement, tennis enthusiasts, Djokovic supporters, Serbians in Australia that felt affronted by the treatment of their sporting ambassador against pro-vax supporters, indignant Australians that felt motivated to demonstrate their anger.

Subsequently, it emerged that Djokovic had contracted Covid-19 on the 16th December 2021. This had been the reason for his medical exemption for entry, which had been approved (anonymously) by two panels of independent medical experts set up by both Tennis Australia and the Government of Victorian. The Federal Government of Australia approves non-national entry into Australia (Australian

Department of Health 2022)<sup>1</sup> and Djokovic's exemption to travel to Victoria had been issued by the state of Victorian. It also emerged that Djokovic had met a group of children for a PR tennis event after he had contracted Covid-19.

After days of significant private and public debate, Alex Hawke Minister for Immigration, used his discretionary "God Powers" (Kampark 2022), under section 133C(3) of the Migration Act 1958, to revoke Djokovic's visa again as he could be a risk to Australia. These discretional "God Powers" are not subject to any appeal process, or principles of natural justice (Higgins 2022). Importantly, the Minister conceded that Djokovic posed a negligible risk via disease transmission but that Djokovic's presence in Australia may pose a risk to the Australian community, and good order, because his presence in the country may foster anti-vaccination sentiment (Federal Court of Australia 2022g P.2-3).

The Minister's motivation for Djokovic's visa cancellation was how the Australian people 'may perceive his views on vaccinations', even if Djokovic's views differed from what had been publicly attributed to him. Djokovic was not deported for what he had done, or said, or even thought, but instead because of what others might think he thinks, based on what he had not done, namely, his failure to get vaccinated.

A federal court made up of three judges dismissed Djokovic's appeal to revoke the cancelation of his visa on 16th January 2022. The grounds for their ruling was that his being in Australia might cause "civil unrest" due to him being a "talisman of anti-vaccination sentiment" (Federal Court of Australia 2022d). Djokovic was deported and had to withdraw from the tournament.

This saga and final federal court decision split Australian as well as global opinion, with many questioning the fairness to oblige Djokovic, or anyone else, to receive a vaccine to have entry to a country in order to work. Many Australians had the opinion that after everything they had been through, why should Djokovic not go through it too. Critics believed vaccine mandates as a condition of entry breached human rights and an individual's freedom to decide what enters their body. Also deporting Djokovic restricted his right to earn an income. Many believed Djokovic had found a loophole and would earn significant sums of money from participating in the Australian Open due to this. Many believed his presence made a mockery of their lockdown suffering and collective effort to reduce the impact of Covid-19.

The issue stimulated much debate, not only on Covid-19 policy but also how sacrifice for the perception of a common good can generate conflict for individuals and personal freedoms. These debates were fed by statements and opinions from various sources: court rulings, heads of state (Australian and Serbian), ministers (Australian and Serbian), sports personalities (tennis and other), public figures and media celebrities (TV, radio and Internet personalities). Because of the ongoing Covid-19 lockdowns, everyday people, especially Australians, felt involved and took positions and expressed opinions.

These exchanges of opinions and debates were carried out in all contexts and on various media, newspaper, TV, radio, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, official political statements (live video statements, published transcripts and press releases), court rulings (video statements and published rulings) and so on. Some of these media channels were monologic statement monogloss (court rulings, written statements), others allowed various degrees of dialogic interaction, heterogloss: through real-time questions in interviews (restricted attendance), and asynchronous comments (Newspaper, YouTube, Twitter, blogs) and synchronous unrestricted exchanges. These interactions were all multimodal, but there was also a hierarchy of access allocated to semiotic recourses, not all users had the same access to communicative resources. Table 1 details a timeline of events and documentation of those events.

 $<sup>{}^{1.}\,\</sup>underline{https://www.health.vic.gov.au/medical-exemption-to-covid-19-vaccination-guidance-word}$ 

DATE	EVENT	LINK				
2/01/22	Victorian State Government issues Djokovic a Border Travel Permit for travel between Dubai, UAE and Melbourne, AUS					
4/01/22	Djokovic announces medical exemption on social media	https://www.instagram.com/p/CYTe9fer_1K/				
5/01/22	Tennis Australia and the Victorian Government holds press conference to explain the medical exemption process	https://twitter.com/9NewsAUS/status/14785039 98051160065				
	Prime Minister Scott Morrison answers question about Djokovic exemption	https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-43738				
	Home Minister Karen Andrews releases statement that "border rules apply to everyone"	https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/KarenAndre ws/Pages/australias-border-rules-apply-to- everyone.aspx				
	Djokovic arrives at Melbourne Airport and is escorted to passport control	https://www.fedcourt.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0019/95050/Affidavit-of-Novak-Djokovic- sworn-on-10-January-2022.pdf				
6/01/22	Australian Border Force officer questions Djokovic overnight at airport; Djokovic transferred to immigration detention hotel	https://www.fedcourt.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0004/95053/Parties-jointly-agreed- Transcript-of-Interviews-conducted-by-the- ABF.pdf				
	Djokovic's lawyers apply for remedy from Federal Circuit and Family Court	https://www.fcfcoa.gov.au/sites/default/files/20 22-01/MLG35-of-2022-Application.pdf				
7/01/22	Renata Voráčová and Filip Serdarušić detained by ABF & visa cancelled , (both had entered AUS with the same medical exemption as Djokovic);	https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2022/jan/07/czech-doubles-specialist-voracova-joins-djokovic-in-detention-amid-vaccine-row-tennis-australian-open				
		https://www.iol.co.za/sport/tennis/australian- open/croatian-tennis-coach-leaves-australia- over-visa-016f7e75-2ec0-431b-8f8b- 3854bd18fcfb				
8/01/22	Government lawyers apply for hearing to be pushed back two days (refused by judge)	https://www.fcfcoa.gov.au/sites/default/files/20 22- 01/20220108%20Application%20in%20a%20p roceeding%2022000117%20- %20NW%20CT.pdf				
	An official voluntarily left the country because they did not meet Australian government visa requirements	https://www.theage.com.au/sport/tennis/we- need-them-tennis-australia-pleaded-for- vaccine-exemption-for-players-20220108- p59mqu.html				
10/01/22	Hearing: Djokovic vs Minister for Home Affairs Judge Kelly of FCFC quashes visa cancellation	https://www.fcfcoa.gov.au/migration-law/online-file/djokovic https://youtu.be/zs3yTm-ZTz4 https://youtu.be/MmCwOEBDonc https://youtu.be/3pn5jlF3Uyg https://youtu.be/Ok3iL2KGcog https://youtu.be/FfYEp1PUSt4				
	Djokovic released from detention, ATP issues a statement on the case	https://www.atptour.com/en/news/djokovic-atp-statement-2022				
12/01/22	Djokovic posts statement with details about his mid- December activities	https://www.instagram.com/p/CYnO7cDqbdj/?utm_medium=copy_link				
13/01/22	Australian Open draw ceremony					
14/01/22	5:30pm, Immigration Minister Alex Hawke announces decision to use personal powers to cancel Djokovic visa	https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/AlexHawke/Pages/statement-regarding-mr-novak-djokovic.aspx				
	Djokovic applies for judicial review of the Minister's decision, granted interim relief pending resolution	https://www.fedcourt.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0006/95235/Originating-Application- sealed.pdf				
15/01/22	Judge Kelly orders transfer of the case to Federal Court	https://www.fedcourt.gov.au/services/access-to-files-and-transcripts/fcfcoa/djokovic/Judgment-2022-FedCFamC2G-7.pdf				

16/01/22	Hearing before 3-member Federal Court panel, Djokovic vs Minister for Immigration	https://www.fedcourt.gov.au/services/access-to-files-and-transcripts/online-files/djokovic				
	ATP releases statement on the visa cancellation	https://www.atptour.com/en/news/atp- statement-on-novak-djokovic-visa-appeal- decision				
	Djokovic deported and 3-year re-entry ban imposed	https://www.atptour.com/en/news/atp- statement-on-novak-djokovic-visa-appeal- decision				
17/01/22	Main draw of the Australian Open begins					
	Federal Court panel releases reasons for Djokovic judgment	https://www.judgments.fedcourt.gov.au/judgments/Judgments/fca/full/2022/2022fcafc0003				
15/02/22	Amol Rajan interiews Djokovic for BBC	https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m0014z dm/amol-rajan-interviews-novak-djokovic				
21/02/22	Australian border opens to all vaccinated foreign travellers	https://www.npr.org/2022/02/21/1082067920/a ustralia-reopens-its-borders-to-international- visitors				
	BBC issues a statement defending its broadcasting its Djokovic interview	https://tennishead.net/bbc-issue-statement-defending-djokovic-interview-amid-heavy-complaints/				
17/11/22	Andrew Giles MP revokes Djokovic's visa cancellation so he can play AO 2023	https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/AndrewGile s/Pages/statement-regarding-mr-djokovic- 15112022.aspx				

Table 1 Timeline of events and documentation

#### 3. Appraisal Framework

Appraisal is a system of classifying the resources deployed to express evaluation. It is situated within the Interpersonal Metafunction of Systemic Function Linguistics (Halliday, 1985). It is also a system of meanings for evaluation and a description of resources for evaluation (Martin, 2017; Martin & White 2005). Appraisal investigates the subjectivity within communication, how we evaluate communication, and express emotions. The three classifications are Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation.

Attitude can be considered as 'ways of feeling', emotion, ethics, and aesthetics (Martin & White, 2005), and is classified into Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation. Affect delineates emotional reactions (unhappy, jolly, nervous). Judgement refers to assessment according to moral and legal values (nice, authoritative, dishonest). Appreciation deals with evaluation from the perspective of aesthetics. Attitude is generally realised adjectivally. All categories have *positive* and *negative* manifestations, which are employed to align readers to writers' opinions.

Engagement deals with the alignment of commitment. There is a distinction between dialogic (heterogloss) and non-dialogic (monogloss) statements. Monogloss have stand-alone statements unrelated to other statements which usually pre-suppose beliefs or facts. Through heterogloss, people play with and engage with ideas through an increase in the dialogic space. A person can either entertain a proposition by acknowledging their own subjectivity or they can attribute it to someone else. These positions have the same effect of acknowledging alternative viewpoints. On the other hand, the dialogic space can be contracted by denying non-aligning viewpoints by disclaiming (negating or countering) or proclaiming (making a strong affirmation). Heterogloss is pertinent in the investigation of how individuals subscribe or do not subscribe to a "community of shared value and belief" (Martin & White, 2005, pp. 95).

Graduation has two classifications, force (the intensity of an evaluation) and focus (the sharpening or strengthening of the typicality of an evaluation). The role of graduation is mostly rhetorical.

Appraisal has been employed to investigate a wide range of texts including political discourse and news stories (White, 2002, 2003, 2016) and casual conversation (Eggins & Slade, 1997). This study draws on Fuoli's (2018) work which presents a detailed method for Appraisal annotation. Appraisal can

be considered as being subjective, because the interpretation is context based (Hommerberg & Don, 2015; Thompson, 2014). Fuoli deals with this issue through developing annotation techniques. Appraisal has already been applied to computer-mediated communication to investigate how users form short-lived communities based on common affinities (Zappavigna, 2011). The present study builds on these aforementioned Appraisal developments to investigate the discourse dynamics that emerged within the public space relating to the 2022 Australian Open.

# 3.1 Visual Appraisal (Static texts)

A classification for visual Appraisal has been proposed by Economou (2009) and White (2014). Their four aspects help identify *inscription* or *invocation*: (a) the author's subjective presence in the text as the agent in attitudinal meaning; (b) the stability of the attitudinal meanings across multiple contexts of use; (c) the reader as giver of interpretations or inferences; (d) the pressure on the negotiating terms of author-reader solidarity created by the expression.

The attitudinal potential of images according to their compositional properties may invoke attitude via different mechanisms (Economou 2008, 2009). According to Economou, they 'afford', 'flag' and 'provoke' attitudinal assessments via inference, implication, association and suggestion. Images also often work together with verbal text. The attitudinal effect is the product of: the context in which the image is placed; a specific transcoding of the image; a specific verbal organisation of what is portrayed.

# 3.2 Paralanguage and Appraisal

In paralanguage, textual meaning corresponds approximately to beats and pointing/deictics; ideational and interpersonal meaning encompasses both iconic and metaphoric gestures. Ideational gestures would be what Kendon (2004) terms representational; interpersonal and textual functions would cover Kendon's pragmatic gestures. This study relies on Martin and Zappavigna's 2019 work which has various consequences for models of paralanguage and Appraisal, and they make useful distinctions between paralanguage and behaviour, separating semiosis and non-semiotic behaviour (somasis),.

Somasis draws on Halliday's evolutionary classification of systems (Halliday 1996) with four levels of complexity. Physical activity corresponds to material action with some change in the relationship between physical entities (skipping, leaping, chopping, tugging etc.). Biological behaviour is split between changes that reinstate comfort (laughing, sneezing, itching, etc.) and those of discomfort (crying, fiddling, squirming, trembling, etc.). Social communion is split between mutual perception (touch, smell, sharing gaze, pitch, proximity, etc.) and reciprocal attachment (hand holding, cuddling, tickling, caressing, kissing, copulating etc.).

Another important distinction is between sonovergent and semovergent paralanguage. Paralanguage that is sonovergent comes together with the prosodic phonology of spoken language (Halliday and Greaves 2008). Interpersonally, it deals with voice tone and a part of the body (e.g. forehead or hands) moving in tune with pitch movement. From a textual perspective it involves a body part beating in time with speech, maybe beats in unison with a syllable, or a gesture with a tone group.

Semovergent paralanguage is gesture aligning with meaning or the lexicogrammar and language. Textual body language can be considered 'deictic', corresponding to both identification and also to periodicity. Ideational paralanguage can be considered 'mimetic', compatible with both connexion and ideation. Interpersonal paralanguage can be considered 'expressive', associated both with negotiation and also Appraisal.

Paralanguage that is semovergent potentially corresponds with Appraisal resources through hand/arm position, facial expression, muscle tension, bodily stance and motion as well as voice quality (Ngo 2018). Interpersonally, spoken language inscribes attitudes, grades qualities and positions voices other than the speaker's own. Speakers can exchange feelings, greetings, information, goods and services in dialogue. Paralanguage can only enact emotion, spoken language has the potential to make different attitudes explicit (emotional reactions, judgements of character and appreciation of things). As outlined by Martin and White (2005) attitude may not be explicitly inscribed in language, but invoked

by ideational choices a speaker expects a reaction to. The extent of hand shapes and hand/arm motion can support graded language to form Graduation, Hao and Hood (2019) also mention de-centering postures to soften focus. Hand positions also support the expansion and contraction of heteroglossia, supine hands opening up dialogism and prone hands closing it, thus forming Engagement. Ngo et.al. 2021 develop a very useful model for paralanguage focussing on Facial Affect and Voice Affect.

#### 4. Data and methods

A corpus of multimodal texts (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001; Querol-Julián and Fortanet 2012) was compiled consisting of the aforementioned documents and other texts produced during the period of most intense media coverage from 04/01/2021 to 15/02/2021. Texts were collected, sorted and chosen at random from various media and media sites and can be considered representative. Table 2 provides a summary of the corpus which included official statements (written and video), press conferences (live/recorded) and press releases (written) by individuals and institutions involved (including Tweets and Instagram posts); official legal documents; videos of legal proceedings; news reports (written and video); and dedicated forums following the trials in real time (YouTube channels). An expanded view of the corpus is shown in Figure 1 of the Appendix

News articles	no. of texts	4				
	total no. of words	4114				
	no. of photos	8				
News video	No. of texts	4				
	Total duration	14 minutes 46 seconds				
Live video statement /	no. of texts	6				
Interview	iio. of texts					
Press conference						
	total duration	01:41:36				
Written statement / Press release corpus /	no. of texts	8				
Instagram statement						
	no. of words	2940				
	no. of photos	6				
Trial video	no. of texts	1				
	total duration	04:01:59				
Trial documents	no. of texts	9				
	Total no. of words	28116				
Trial commentary	no. of texts	4				
	total duration	21 hours 34 minutes				
	average no. of comments per video	338				

Table 2 Summary of Corpus

This corpus was annotated manually for multimodal Appraisal, as described above, including photos, images and paralanguage. This was done through the development of a carefully designed annotation approach and with the help of trained students. The texts in the corpus can be considered as collections of language and communication in context and can be considered suitable for corpus-based multimodal

discourse analysis (O'Halloran 2011, Norris 2019, Baldry & Kantz 2022). Defining a unit of analysis for multimodal texts within the Appraisal system was a major challenge. To resolve this problem we used a system of sequencing based on the notion of clusters (Baldry & Thibault 2006. pp31). The term cluster refers to the local groupings of items, be they words, sounds, images or video frames. Then emphasis was given to minimality and contextuality, as described by Cavasso and Taboada (2021). 'The principle of minimality means that the item to be annotated (cluster-span) should be as short as possible, while at the same time including all the words that convey Attitude. Context dependence involves using all information available to understand the meaning of the evaluative expression under consideration'

Although Appraisal is a framework, labelling can be subjective as interpretation is necessary, so a system of reliability tests was carried out on annotated texts based on Fuoli's (2018) method but modified for multimodal annotation. A predefined procedure was followed, which ensured consistency and reduced subjectivity, with guidelines on how to identify and classify the different components of the Appraisal system. Explicit criteria for annotation were established, providing a clear framework for evaluative judgments. Specific features were defined that indicate different types of evaluations, making the annotation process more objective and systematic. Annotators went through an induction process to align their understanding of the criteria and achieve consensus in their annotations, not dissimilar to the process of 'rolling-translation' in multi-translator projects (Komninos 2011), with regular feedback and discussion among annotators to address uncertainties or disagreements. This collaborative approach allowed for a shared understanding of the annotation criteria and promotes consistency in the interpretation of evaluative language.

# 5. Analysis

This is presenting findings from a work in progress, it is worth publishing the preliminary results as the framework enables the distinction of discourse dynamics, values, beliefs and evaluations, mapping these discourses that are key in shaping public understanding. Preliminary results demonstrate how evaluative language contributes to community-building and helps to identify the underlying values, beliefs, and evaluations that shape the emotional, cognitive, and behavioural responses of the various stakeholders involved can be reported. It is interesting to focus on: Attitude analysis to see how Affect, Judgement and Appreciation were distributed and their Polarity (positive, negative, neutral); the nature of the multimodal communication to frame or reinforce opinions and values; Engagement, specifically the frequency and distribution of monogloss and heterogloss communication in various texts.

Looking at the language (not multimodal) corpus as a whole, the number of cluster-spans of each Attitude label and their polarity is shown in Table 3. Negative cluster-spans are very frequent, making up 82.3% of Attitude. Positive cluster-spans make up 15%, a majority of the remainder of the cluster-spans with only 1% of labelled spans being Neutral. Regarding Attitude labels, there was higher rate of Judgment at 67%, with Appreciation being favoured at 22% over Affect at 11%. Judgement refers to assessment according to moral and legal values (nice, authoritative, dishonest).

	Affect	Judgement	Appreciation	Total		
Total Spans	11%	67%	22%	100%		
Negative	79%	91%	77%	82%		
Positive	19%	8%	17%	15%		
Neutral	2%	1%	6%	3%		

Table 3 Attitude spans as percentages

The overwhelmingly high level of the use of Judgement, 67%, suggests that rather than employing Appreciation, and even less so Affect, the subjects in this corpus conveyed opinion through Judgement. It would suggest that opinion, that would normally be associated with Affect (*I think Djokovic should be punished*, *I am outraged by Djokovic*) is being communicated through Judgement (*Djokovic is a criminal*, *Djokovic gets what he deserves*) or to a lesser extent through Appreciation (*This state of affairs is madness*). This can be considered a significant finding and suggests that there needs to be some reorganisation in labelling as Appreciation is essentially being communicated through Judgement. The data shows an overall consistency in Polarity over the corpus with Positivity being slightly favoured by Affect and Appreciation, and Negativity being overwhelmingly associated with Judgement.

It is interesting to report what text-types employed which semiotic resources to which participants. Analysis took place according to (in the case of static images) *inscription* or *invocation*: (a) the author's subjective presence in the text as the agent in attitudinal meaning; (b) the stability of the attitudinal meanings across multiple contexts of use; (c) the reader as giver of interpretations or inferences; (d) the pressure on the negotiating terms of author-reader solidarity created by the expression. Also the attitudinal properties of 'afford', 'flag' and 'provoke' were analysed.

Where video material was present, Paralanguage Affect was analysed according to Attitude, Graduation and Engagement through Facial Affect, Voice Affect and body movement (Ngo et al. 2021). Facial Affect, hand shapes and hand/arm motion support graded language to form Graduation. Engagement in body movement and gesture can be de-centering postures to soften focus, hand positions supporting the expansion and contraction of heterogloss, supine hands opening up dialogism and prone hands closing it. Voice Affect especially voice quality, can support Attitude, Graduation and Engagement.

To carry out this analysis, the spans of the different semiotic resources were separated and analysed to see if they reinforced, contradicted or were neutral with each other. So far, the data shows that the institutional communications coming from the Australian Government, Victoria Officials and Tennis Australia used little to no heterogloss, neither in the choices of text types (statements, press releases etc.) nor in their utterances. The data also suggests that in news articles there is more heterogloss than the institutional communication but less heterogloss than the other communication types in this corpus. Moreover, in the news articles sub-corpus, the images invoked emotion and opinion essentially acting as an intensifier of the accompanying text, and an intensifier of emotion or opinion. For example, all the news articles, even when the headline was not about Djokovic, carried pictures of Djokovic, usually shown in a mid-shot grimace. In paralanguage analysis, the Facial Affect and implied Voice Affect of this image is very aggressive, conflictual and monogloss. In 83% of the cases where images were used in news articles, the pictures invoked emotion and opinion. This interpretation of the pictures could be subjective, but is less of an issue, as this is an integral part of this framework. Indeed, the large corpus investigated through this mixed methods approach offers a reliable and valid method for interpretation. Tennis is not dissimilar to a combat sport but without the physical contact. The world knows Djokovic for his tennis. However, 83% of use of Djokovic's image in news articles used images with the intense emotions, effort and competition of the tennis match, at the most extreme moment of energy exertion and transferred that to the vaccine saga context, even when incoherent with the subject of the headline. They did not show images of Djokovic receiving trophies, nor shaking hands with opponents and umpires and so on. By implication the extension of the tennis match context (win-lose, beat with strength and skill) was transferred to the relationship between Australian officials and Djokovic. It could be said to have increased the sense of conflict between these participants and the tension amongst the followers that were forming around them. This sense of tension and conflict had never been reported in Djokovic's more than ten previous trips to the Australian Open, and also did not seem present when he walked on the plane with the official exemption allowing him to play. In all these situations, there is a context of cooperation with the Australian and tennis authorities and not conflict nor tension.

This stands in contrast to the video material where Paralanguage Affect was employed to both mitigate and increase intensity of emotion or opinion. In the material analysed, it emerges that Facial

Affect and Voice Quality as well as body movement are far more contradictory to or neutral with the accompanying speech, whereas static images enhance the opinions and emotions of conflict in the accompanying text. The discourse surrounding the Australian Open saga exhibited a range of emotional tones, including anger, frustration, sympathy, and support. These emotions were expressed through language, paralanguage (including sonovergent and semovergent semiosis), and visuals, influencing the interpretation of the events. Anger and frustration were often expressed through the use of strong and negative adjectives, such as "outrageous," "unfair," or "ridiculous". Verbs associated with these emotions, such as "condemn," "protest," or "demand," were employed. Anger and frustration was expressed through vocal cues such as raised voices, harsh tones, or passionate speech (sonovergent paralanguage). This conveyed a sense of intensity (Graduation) and frustration. Gestures, body language, and facial expressions displayed signs of anger, such as clenched fists, aggressive postures, or furrowed brows. Images or videos captured tense or confrontational moments, protests, or passionate expressions of dissent. Infographics or cartoons employed symbolism or exaggerated visuals to amplify emotions. Anger and frustration contributed to the perception of injustice or mistreatment. They galvanised support for Djokovic, fuelling criticism of the Australian government. However, the preliminary results suggest that, the greater the heterogloss of the text the more the Paralanguage Affect mitigated rather than intensified this emotion and opinion.

Sympathy and support were expressed through positive adjectives, such as "brave," "courageous," or "determined." Expressions of empathy and understanding were common. Verbs related to support, like "defend," "stand by," or "rally," were employed. Quotes from Djokovic's supporters or personal anecdotes were included to elicit emotional connection. Sympathy and support was conveyed through compassionate and empathetic vocal cues, such as gentle tones or comforting speech (sonovergent paralanguage). Non-verbal cues, such as nodding, smiling, or gestures of solidarity, indicated sympathy and support. Visuals depicted Djokovic in a positive light, showcasing his achievements, philanthropic work, or interactions with fans. Images of his emotional state, such as disappointment or distress, evoked sympathy. Sympathy and support evoked a sense of solidarity and loyalty among fans and contributed to the perception of Djokovic as a victim. This emotional tone strengthened the narrative of unfair treatment towards Djokovic and challenged the actions of the Australian government.

As has already been stated, heterogloss is pertinent in the investigation of how individuals subscribe or do not subscribe to a "community of shared value and belief" (Martin & White, 2005). The protocols for this type of analysis considered the texts as units and assigned participants (participant 1, participant 2 and possible other participants), and then considered monogloss, heterogloss and the extent of heterogloss i.e. open synchronous, open asynchronous, restricted synchronous, restricted asynchronous. Here 'restricted' can indicate that either the participants allowed into the discussion were chosen/restricted (i.e. not open), or there was a hierarchy within the multimodality of discussion, i.e. one participant(s) had a greater-range of multimodal recourses available for communication, whereas the other participant had a restricted use of multimodal recourses.

Interesting to note is that out of the 36 texts analysed, three text-types (23/36 texts) can be identified as being monogloss: video statements, written statements and trial documents. These all come from authoritative participants (ministers of parliament, tennis authorities and courts of justice) and can be seen as informing the public on decisions made by authorities. Out of the four heterogloss texts, there are varying levels of heterogloss, also depending on the participant. For example, the trial video has many participants and the different participants have different levels of heterogloss: the judge and lawyers, Djokovic and the wider public (Melbourne citizens, tennis enthusiasts, global community inflicted by Covid-19 and the subsequent restrictions). The judge and lawyers can be considered participants that have synchronous interaction using the full range of semiotic resources within the parameters of Melbourne court proceedings. However, on account of a highly institutionalised context of courtroom interaction, Djokovic could participate to a much lesser extent than the judge and the lawyers. He is not a legal expert, nor was he familiar with Melbourne court practices and he is not a native English speaker. His participation is effectively reduced to little more than the object of

discussion rather than a participant of the discussion and is akin to the wider public, who also have a vested interested in the debate (Goffman 1981). Neither the wider public nor Djokovic can participate in the trial discussion, they can only observe it. Therefore, this text is heteroloss for restricted participants but monogloss for the Djokovic and the wider-public. Out of the 36 texts analysed, there was no instance of open synchronous discussion with symmetrical multimodal resources. The trial had restricted participation, the trial video commentaries had open synchronous discussion but with a significant asymmetric distribution of semiotic resources between the commentary organisers, who had the full range of semiotic resources and other participants who could only send typed comments and emojis/images/gifs. 23 texts were monogloss (24 if you include the trial video), the remaining were restricted heterogloss. In terms of symmetry of multimodal recourses, only the trial had a symmetry between participants, but only for the highly restricted participants of the judge and lawyers.

#### 6. Discussion

Different actors have employed various linguistic, paralinguistic and visual discursive strategies to shape the meaning and interpretation of the events. Multimodal Appraisal Analysis of discourse helps understand how evaluative language and communication strategies contribute to community-building and to identify the underlying values, beliefs, and evaluations that shape the emotional, cognitive, and behavioural responses of the various stakeholders in a specific event. Multimodal Appraisal analysis can help identify specific strategies and its application to a corpora can detect layered patterns that emerge. Looking at the same corpus of texts, in this manner, can also form a discourse analysis that informs on how the discourse evolved and developed.

As has already been stated, the Australian authorities employed legal and bureaucratic systems and language to emphasise the strict application of visa rules and Covid-19 protocols. The use of monogloss ways of communication, informing the public on decisions, reinforced their authority by framing their opinion as not being subject to discussion. This framing also projected the government as upholding the law and protecting public health. The use of monogloss communication through official statements, mostly written and some press conferences (restricted heterogloss), scaffolds the asymmetrical power and communicative relationship between authority and public. This discourse strategy employed monological strategies that also incorporated nationalistic rhetoric, highlighting Australia's sovereignty and the need to protect its borders and citizens. This framing appealed to patriotic sentiments and a sense of unity among the public, but did little to democratise opinion building and bottom-up communication. The presence of government officials in official settings, such as press conferences or briefings, further reinforced this sense of authority. This was supported by the use of other semiotic resources which included ministers or healthcare officials in suits, delivering official statements and few other forms of communication.

Fewer texts in the corpus focussed on Djokovic's individual rights. These focussed on the argument that he should be allowed to participate in the tournament based on his vaccination exemption status. These texts framed the issue as a matter of personal freedom and choice. In these texts he was portrayed as a victim of unfair treatment and persecution, highlighting the perceived inconsistencies in the application of Covid-19 protocols. Language that evokes emotions such as empathy, sympathy, or admiration for Djokovic was employed with far greater use of semiotic resources and with less asymmetry in the power and communicative hierarchy. Often these texts included personal anecdotes, emotional narratives, or passionate expressions connecting with the audience on an emotional level. Hashtags, viral posts, and social media campaigns were employed to mobilise and rally support. These strategies tapped the power of online communities and networks to amplify their message and garner attention. These strategies were not employed by the authorities, but their supporters did. Slogans, images, gifs, and symbols representing solidarity or support were prolific. Videos and photos of fans, banners, or demonstrations of support were often present.

A sensationalist approach marked a number of the texts, emphasising controversy, drama, and personal narratives. This strategy attracted attention and generated public interest, often leading to

polarised interpretations. Different aspects of the story, such as Djokovic's alleged rule-breaking or the government's handling of the situation were focussed on with accompanying use of static images or generally mitigating use of paralanguage. The narrative was shaped by selectively highlighting specific aspects of the events. Images were selected that aligned with the stance or that evoked specific emotions. Ultimately, these discursive strategies employed by the different actors played a significant role in shaping the public discourse, framing the narrative, and influencing public opinion regarding this issue.

The use of legal discourse by the Australian government positioned them as guardians of public health and the rule of law. The nationalistic rhetoric appealed to a sense of patriotism and justified strict border control measures. On the other hand, human rights discourse and victim narratives portrayed Djokovic as an individual fighting for his rights and freedom. They highlighted his achievements, talent, and perseverance. Language included positive adjectives, such as "great," "resilient," and "heroic." Paralanguage involved passionate speeches or emotional statements. Visuals showcased Djokovic's successes, his humanitarian work, or his interactions with fans. The implication was that Djokovic was a victim of unjust treatment and worthy of sympathy and support.

These evaluative stances are conveyed through language choices, paralinguistic choices, as well as through visual representations in the media. The use of positive or negative language and imagery evoked specific emotions, shaped public perception, and influenced public opinion. The implications of these stances was significant. Supportive stances towards Djokovic rallied public support and sympathy, shaping public opinion in his favour. On the other hand, critical stances undermined Djokovic's reputation and credibility, impacting public perception of him. Supportive stances towards the Australian government bolstered confidence in their decision-making and justified strict measures. However, critical stances eroded trust, fuelled public dissent, and lead to calls for accountability or policy changes. Ultimately, the evaluative stances expressed by different actors played a crucial role in shaping the public discourse, determining the level of support or opposition, and influencing the overall narrative surrounding Djokovic and the Australian government.

Actors with different ideological positions were involved (Djokovic, Australian authorities, lawyers, journalists, wider public), and their perspectives were expressed through language, paralanguage and visuals. It is important to note that individuals' ideological positions can vary within different groups. The Australian government emphasised the importance of public health and safety as its primary ideological position. Djokovic's supporters often advocated for individual freedom and personal rights. Media outlets generally position themselves within the framework of journalism ethics and the public interest. Language used emphasised objective reporting, balance, and transparency scaffolded with visuals including press conferences, newsrooms, or journalists in action. The implication was that the media's ideological position is to provide accurate information, facilitate public discourse, and hold power to account. The implications of these ideological positions within the wider social and political context were significant. Although not covered in the findings section, the clash between the government's focus on public health versus the individual rights advocated by Djokovic's supporters reflected broader debates around the balance between public safety and personal freedoms. These ideological positions intersected with political ideologies such as liberalism, conservatism, or libertarianism, which shape public opinion and influence policy-making. The discourse surrounding the Australian Open saga also highlighted broader societal divisions and ideological polarisation. It revealed the tension between collective responsibility and individual rights, highlighting ongoing debates about the appropriate limits of state power and individual autonomy.

Additionally, the media's adherence to journalism ethics and the pursuit of the public interest has implications for media credibility, trust, and its role in shaping public opinion. The way media outlets represent different ideological positions can influence public discourse and perceptions of the events. Overall, the ideological positions expressed, reflect broader social and political contexts, sparking discussions about the relationship between public health, individual rights, media ethics, and the balance of power in society.

In the more than ten years previous to the 2022 Australian Open, Djokovic had gone to Melbourne with a sense of cooperation with the authorities to participate in the tennis competition. The Minister's motivation for cancelling his visa was not because of what Djokovic had done but how the Australian people may perceive his views on vaccination. Whether his views aligned with how his views were perceived by Australian people or not, was not important. Perception of Djokovic's views seems to be more influenced by the discourse and the multimodal organisation of that discourse, rather than based on Djokovic's statements and actions. The analysis of this corpus showed that the conflictual relationship between Djokovic and the Australian authorities, during the period under investigation, was fed by the use of images of Djokovic in news articles transferring the dynamics of the tennis match to this context. In reality, Djokovic had approached this issue with the same collaborative approach as his more than ten previous visits to the Australia Open and his subsequent appearance in 2023.

#### 7. Conclusion

The multimodal appraisal discourse analysis of the 2022 Australian Open sheds light on the intricate interplay of language, paralanguage, and visual communication. This verbal and non-verbal communication contributes to shaping public understanding and sentiment. The current study holds significant implications for the comprehension of how discursive dynamics, values, beliefs, and evaluations influence collective perception and engagement. The Appraisal Theory framework presented in section 3 and the analysis methods in section 4 offer a valuable lens through which to distinguish and map these intricate discourses. This facilitates a deeper exploration of the multifaceted dimensions that shape public discourse and these frameworks and methods can be replicated by other researchers in other contexts.

The preliminary results underscore the pivotal role of evaluative language in community-building. It also highlights its capacity to reveal underlying values, beliefs, and evaluations that influence the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural responses. Attitude analysis revealed a predominant use of Judgement, this suggests that opinions (typically associated with Affect or Appreciation) are conveyed through the prism of moral and legal assessment. This key finding highlights the need for nuanced labelling and demonstrates the intricate interplay of emotions and opinions within the discourse.

The study investigates the nature of multimodal communication, demonstrating the distribution and role of semiotic resources within different text types. Notably, the institutional communications from the Australian Government and other authoritative bodies primarily employ monogloss strategies, reinforcing their position through authoritative language and official contexts. Whereas news articles, a significant source of public information, display varying degrees of heterogloss, suggesting a more diverse range of voices and perspectives. Heterogloss discussions are restricted, and their levels of symmetry vary, indicating the differential participation of stakeholders. The absence of fully symmetrical multimodal discussions suggests a complex negotiation of power, identity, and voice within the discourse.

Paralanguage, a crucial element of communication, is pivotal in influencing emotional tones and perceptions. The analysis of paralanguage, including Facial Affect, Voice Quality, and body movement, highlights how emotions are both amplified and mitigated through different channels. Static images tend to intensify emotions, whereas video materials often convey a contradictory or neutral emotional stance, indicating the complex relationship between spoken and non-verbal cues.

In the broader context, this analysis provides valuable insights into the communication strategies employed by different actors, within societal divisions and ideological polarisation. The clash between collective responsibility and individual rights reflects broader debates about the balance between public safety and personal freedoms. This echoes the political ideologies framing the discourse and shapes public opinion. Furthermore, the media's role in representing different ideological positions influences public discourse, credibility, and trust, underscoring the importance of responsible journalism and its impact on societal perceptions.

The multimodal appraisal analysis of the discourse around the 2022 Australian Tennis Open offers a rich tapestry of language, paralanguage, and visual communication, revealing the complex interplay of emotions, opinions, and values. The preliminary findings of this study provide a foundation for deeper exploration, inviting further research into the intricate dynamics that shape public understanding, sentiment, and the broader societal implications that underpin such narratives. As discourse continues to be a powerful force in shaping collective consciousness, this analysis reinforces the significance of understanding the intricate layers that contribute to the formation of public perception and identity.

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# Appendix

	Date of	Type	Duration	Total	Analysed	Pictures	Comments	Origin	monologic/	link
	publication			length	words				dialogic	
Scott Morrison addresses Novak Djokovic visa cancellation		videovideovideo	00:02:20	)				Live press conference		https://youtu.be/5SOpeET1
Serbian President says Djokovic was the focus of a witch hunt		videovideovideo	00:11:32	!			0	Live press conference	dialogic restricted	
Tennis Australia holds press conference		video with quest	00:34:04			1	. 0	live press conference		https://twitter.com/i/broad
TA statement before AO		videovideovideo	00:08:23				0	ABC News	monologic	https://www.abc.net.au/ne
Tennis Australia Craig Tiley Press conference		video and questi	00:16:17			1	. 0	live press conferences		https://www.facebook.com
Amol Rajan Interviews Novak Djokovic	15/02/2022	video interview	00:29:00				0	BBC production	dialogic restricted	https://youtu.be/CcfjchKqm
			01:41:36	i						
Djokovic statement instagram december activities	12/01/2022	writtenwritten			217		2000+	Instagram	dialogic	https://www.instagram.com
ATP Statement On Novak Djokovic Australian Visa Cancellation		writtenwritten			144	1		Press release on website	monologic	https://www.instagram.com/e
Djokovic medical exemption Instagram		written and phot			54	1	2000+		dialogic	https://www.instagram.com
Karen Andrews releases statement that "border rules apply to everyone"		written press rele			179	1		instagram Press release on website	monologic	https://minister.homeaffair
ATP Statement On Novak Djokovic Entry Into Australia		written press rele	_		716			Press release on website	monologic	https://www.atptour.com/e
MP Alex Hawke Statement					138	1	-	Press release on website		
		written press rele			288	1			monologic	https://minister.homeaffair
Statement regarding Mr Djokovic Andrew Giles MP revokes Djokovic's visa cancell		written press rele				1	0	Press release on website	monologic	https://minister.homeaffair
Prime Minister Scott Morrison answers question about Djokovic exemption	05/01/2022	written with que			1204	1	. 0	official transcript	monologic	https://pmtranscripts.pmc.g
Hearing Djokovic vs Minister for Home Affairs	10/01/2022	video and court d	04:01:59				0	court doc archive and YouTub	monologic	https://www.fcfcoa.gov.au/
Djokovic v Minister for Immigration, judgement	20/01/2022	wordwordword		31 pages	4382	0	0	court doc archive	monologic	https://www.judgments.fed
Hall & Wilcox apply for remedy from Federal Circuit and Family Court (FCFC)		written pdf		10 pages	2653	0		court doc archive	Monologic	https://www.fcfcoa.gov.au/
government lawyers apply for hearing to be pushed back two days	08/01/2022	written pdf		5 pages	584	0	0	court doc archive	Monologic	https://www.fcfcoa.gov.au/
government lawyers apply for hearing to be pushed back two days (refused by judg	08/01/2022	written pdf		2 pages	385	0	0	court doc archive	Monologic	https://www.fcfcoa.gov.au/
judicial review of Minister's decision	14/01/2022	written pdf		10 pages	2697	0	0	court doc archive	Monologic	https://www.fedcourt.gov.a
Judge Kelly orders transfer of the case to Federal Court	15/01/2022	written pdf		27 pages	3628	0	0	court doc archive	Monologic	https://www.fedcourt.gov.a
Judge kelly Hearing before 3-member Federal Court panel	16/01/2022	written pdf		38 pages	4230	0	0	court doc archive	Monologic	https://www.fedcourt.gov.a
Parties-jointly-agreed-Transcript-of-Interviews-conducted-by-the-ABF	06/01/2022	written pdf		30 pages	4560	0	0	court doc archive	Monologic	https://www.fedcourt.gov.a
Affidavit-of-Novak-Djokovic-sworn-on		written pdf multi		41 pages	4997	0	0	court doc archive	Monologic	https://www.fedcourt.gov.a
Sky News Australia Serbian PM condemns Novak Djokovic: 'The laws equally apply	12/01/2022	News video	00:05:00	)	862		0		Monologic (comm	https://www.skynews.com.
Sky News Australia Hawke 'did everything he was supposed to' with Djokovic	14/01/2022	News video	00:05:00	)	524		2000+	Youtube	dialogic	https://www.youtube.com/
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ABC news Ana Brnabic, Vukic Serbians blast Australian government over Djokovic o	17/01/2022	News video	00:01:46	5			0	video	Monologic (comm	https://www.abc.net.au/ne
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The Age reports that "an official voluntarily [left] the country because they did not		Newsarticle with		-			-			https://www.theage.com.au
Novak Djokovic saga 'makes us look like corrupt colony', Australia's former Prime N		Newsarticle with		-	865	2	_	newsarticle		https://inews.co.uk/news/v
Croatian tennis coach leaves Australia over visa	15/01/2022	Newsarticle with			434	1	0	newsarticle	Monologic (comm	https://www.iol.co.za/sport
DJOKOVIC vs AUSTRALIA   LIVE TRIAL   Australian Open 2022 GTL Tennis Watchalon	09/01/2022	Youtube	08:06:00	)	353		439	Youtube	dialogic	https://youtu.be/HwMoEH3
DJOKOVIC vs AUSTRALIA   LIVE TRIAL 2   Judgment Day Confirmed   GTL Tennis Wa	14/01/2022	Youtube	01:17:00	)	259		267	Youtube	dialogic	https://youtu.be/U5HmbQo
Djokovic vs Australia   Live Hearing Verdict   Australian Open 2022 Tennis News	14/01/2022	Youtube	06:09:00	)	150		185	Youtube	dialogic	https://www.youtube.com/
DJOKOVIC vs AUSTRALIA   LIVE TRIAL FINAL VERDICT   Australian Open 2022   GTL T	15/01/2022	Youtube	06:00:00	)	380		459	Youtube	dialogic	https://youtu.be/nJ1QSGgM

Figure 1: An expanded view of the corpus