



Affective Expression of Language in the Novel *Infinitum* by Ahyar Anwar (Stylistic Study)

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: 06 June 2026	This study examines the affective expression of language in Ahyar Anwar's novel <i>Infinitum</i> through a stylistic approach. The aim of the study is to identify and analyze the forms of affective expression in the form of emotive interjections, emotional particles, and expressive metaphors used by the author as stylistic strategies in building emotional intensity, characterization, and the aesthetics of work. The study used a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach with a listening and note-taking technique through intensive reading of the novel text. Data analysis is carried out in stages through identification of linguistic forms, analysis of affective functions, and interpretation of stylistic meaning. The results of the study show that affective expressions in the novel <i>Infinitum</i> are manifested in three main forms. First, emotive interjections found in ten linguistic forms; <i>Oh, Aduh, Owwh, Hai, Ihh, Hmmm, Hayo, Nah, and Lho</i> , with affective functions including surprise, understanding, complaint, admiration, emotional greeting, displeasure, doubt, invitation, affirmation, and astonishment. Second, emotional particles found in ten forms; <i>-sih, -ya, -aja, -deh, -dong, -lah, -kok, -nih, and -ah</i> , which function to modify the speaker's tone and attitude without changing the propositional content of the sentence. Third, expressive metaphors found in eleven forms with conceptual mapping patterns such as <i>Emotion=Nature, Emotion=Sea, Emotion=Space, Time=Space, Mind=Movement, Love=Plants, Relationship=Machine, and Emotion=Burden</i> . This finding confirms that affective expression is an integral part of Ahyar Anwar's language style which stylistically systematically builds aesthetic value, emotional strength, and depth of meaning in the novel <i>Infinitum</i> .
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1. Introduction

Language in literary works functions not merely as a medium for conveying stories but also as an aesthetic and expressive resource through which writers construct characters, interpersonal relationships, atmosphere, evaluation, and emotional experience. In stylistics, literary meaning is examined through patterned linguistic choices involving diction, syntax, figurative language, repetition, foregrounding, and other textual features (Leech & Short, 2007; Simpson, 2004). These choices are closely related to the emotional dimension of literary discourse because writers employ language to represent psychological states, interpersonal attitudes, emotional reactions, and affective experiences. Affective expression is therefore an important dimension of stylistic analysis because literary language does not simply represent events but also constructs emotional and evaluative meanings.

The relationship between language, literature, and emotion has become increasingly important in contemporary literary studies. Ahern (2024) explains that the growing interest in affect has influenced literary criticism by encouraging greater attention to the relationship between emotion, style, form, content, and aesthetic experience. Emotional effects in literary texts cannot always be explained through explicit emotion words; they may emerge from the interaction of linguistic forms, narrative structures, figurative expressions, and contextual interpretation. Thus, affective analysis can explain how particular linguistic choices contribute to the emotional and aesthetic construction of literary works.

Affective meaning concerns the emotional, attitudinal, or evaluative associations communicated through language in addition to its conceptual or referential meaning. Halliday (1994) demonstrates that linguistic choices simultaneously perform ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions, while Martin and White (2005) provide a systematic framework for evaluation through Appraisal Theory. Within the *Attitude* system, *Affect* refers specifically to the linguistic representation of emotional states and reactions. This framework is relevant to literary analysis because emotions can be examined as linguistic choices that construct interpersonal positioning and evaluation rather than simply as psychological states represented by characters.

Affective expression is not limited to explicit emotion words such as *happy*, *sad*, *angry*, or *afraid*. Emotional meanings may also be constructed through grammatical patterns, evaluative vocabulary, intensification, repetition, figurative language, and interactional expressions. Semino (2008) demonstrates how metaphor and cognitive approaches reveal the ways abstract experiences are conceptualized through linguistic forms, while Stockwell (2002) emphasizes the role of cognitive and stylistic processes in producing interpretive and affective effects. Therefore, the study of affective expression should move beyond identifying emotion vocabulary and examine how different linguistic resources operate within literary discourse.

Interjections represent one important resource for expressing affect. Rather than being merely peripheral linguistic elements or spontaneous emotional outbursts, interjections can function as meaningful resources for interaction and communication. Dingemanse (2024) shows that interjections perform various interactional functions, including signaling reactions, changes in knowledge, and interactional management. Their use in literary dialogue can consequently represent characters' immediate emotional reactions while contributing to characterization and interpersonal relationships. Cross-linguistic research by Ponsonnet, Coupé, and Pellegrino (2024), examining expressive interjections associated with pain, disgust, and joy across numerous languages, further demonstrates systematic relationships between interjectional forms and emotional vocal expression. These findings support the

treatment of interjections as significant linguistic and stylistic resources for affective expression.

Figurative language, particularly metaphor, is another important resource for constructing affect. Metaphor enables writers to represent abstract emotional experiences through concrete physical, spatial, sensory, natural, or experiential domains. Leech and Short (2007) identify figurative choices as an important component of literary style because they influence how readers construct textual meaning. Recent research by Zhao and Castaneda Abdullah (2024) likewise demonstrates that color symbolism can function metaphorically to communicate emotions and construct literary meaning. Metaphorical expressions therefore allow emotional states to be represented indirectly while simultaneously producing aesthetic and interpretive effects.

The relationship between stylistic form and emotional response has also received attention in recent international research. Igl (2023) emphasizes that stylistic features such as rhythm, sound, accentuation, and tone can contribute to emotive responses in literary reading. Jaxa (2025), through a stylistic analysis of the isiXhosa novel *Ukhozi Olumaphiko*, demonstrates that sentence patterns contribute to textual meaning, thematic development, narrative effects, and emotional engagement. These studies reinforce the importance of examining linguistic form when investigating affective expression rather than treating emotion as independent from literary style.

Recent research has also employed computational approaches to examine emotion in literary texts. Castano et al. (2025) found a relationship between fiction reading and emotion-recognition processes and highlighted the significance of implicit and explicit emotionality in fictional language. Feng (2025) demonstrates the complexity of emotion analysis in literary texts by applying a BERT-based model to identify emotional patterns in Chinese literary works. Elkins (2025) further shows that sentiment analysis can reveal emotional trajectories underlying narrative organization and provide additional perspectives on plot and characterization. These studies confirm the continuing importance of emotion in literary research while also demonstrating methodological developments in its analysis.

Taken together, recent studies indicates that affect has become an important dimension of literary criticism (Ahern, 2024), while interjections, figurative language, stylistic structures, and computational approaches offer different ways of examining emotional meaning (Dingemanse, 2024; Ponsonnet et al., 2024; Zhao & Castaneda Abdullah, 2024; Jaxa, 2025; Feng, 2025; Elkins, 2025). Nevertheless, much of this research concentrates on particular dimensions, such as readers' emotional responses, interjectional semantics, metaphorical representation, sentiment detection, or general stylistic structures. Relatively limited attention has been given to the simultaneous analysis of different linguistic forms that function as affective resources within a single literary work. In particular, interjections, emotional particles, and expressive metaphors may provide complementary pathways for representing emotional experience and therefore warrant integrated stylistic analysis.

This gap is particularly relevant to Ahyar Anwar's novel *Infinitum*. Preliminary textual observation indicates the presence of distinctive linguistic features, including formal and informal expressions and expressive forms associated with characters' psychological and emotional conditions. Interjections, emotional particles, and expressive metaphors appear to provide important pathways for constructing affective meaning. Interjections may represent immediate emotional reactions, emotional particles may modify tone, stance, or interpersonal attitude, and expressive metaphors may conceptualize emotional experiences through

concrete images and experiential domains. These forms therefore offer different linguistic mechanisms for representing affect within narrative discourse.

The significance of examining these three forms lies in their potential stylistic functions. Affective expressions may contribute not only to the representation of characters' emotional states but also to characterization, interpersonal relationships, narrative atmosphere, emotional intensity, and aesthetic effects. Their meanings depend on the interaction between linguistic form and narrative context. Although previous research on *Infinitum* has addressed aspects of its vocabulary, figurative language, and narrative structure, the research reviewed for this study has not identified a systematic investigation that places affective expression at the center of stylistic analysis. This provides an opportunity to extend research on the novel by examining the relationship between linguistic form, affective meaning, and literary effect.

Accordingly, this research aims to identify and analyze affective expressions in Ahyar Anwar's novel *Infinitum*. Specifically, it examines how interjections, emotional particles, and expressive metaphors are realized and how they function stylistically in constructing emotional and aesthetic meaning. By integrating literary stylistics with the study of affective and emotive language, this research seeks to contribute to a more systematic understanding of how linguistic choices represent emotional experience in Indonesian literary narratives and construct characterization, interpersonal relationships, emotional intensity, atmosphere, and aesthetic meaning.

2. Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach within a stylistic framework to examine affective expressions in Ahyar Anwar's *Infinitum: Sebuah Novel*. The qualitative approach was selected to identify and interpret linguistic forms, meanings, and functions within their textual and contextual environments (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moleong, 2017). The primary data source was the novel published by Penerbit Ombak, Yogyakarta. The data consisted of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences containing affective expressions, particularly emotive interjections, emotional particles, and expressive metaphors.

Data were collected through intensive reading and note-taking. Relevant linguistic expressions were identified, recorded with their textual contexts, and classified according to their forms and characteristics. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The analysis focused on three stages: identifying linguistic forms, examining their affective functions, and interpreting their stylistic meanings. Each expression was analyzed in relation to its pragmatic and textual context, emotional effects, characterization, interpersonal relationships, narrative atmosphere, and aesthetic contribution.

Data trustworthiness was maintained through persistent observation and theoretical triangulation. Repeated reading was conducted to ensure consistency in identifying and interpreting the data, while theoretical triangulation involved comparing the findings with relevant concepts in stylistics, affective language, and qualitative research methodology. These procedures strengthened the credibility and interpretive consistency of the findings (Moleong, 2017).

3. Result and Discussion

The analysis demonstrates that Ahyar Anwar's *Infinitum* employs affective language as an integral component of its stylistic construction. Affective meaning is realized through three

principal linguistic strategies: emotive interjections, emotional particles, and expressive metaphors. These three forms operate at different linguistic levels but perform a related function, namely externalizing the emotional, psychological, and interpersonal dimensions of the characters.

Contemporary stylistics views literary style not merely as a collection of formal linguistic features but as a systematic relationship between linguistic choices, meaning, cognition, discourse, and interpretation (Burke, 2023). Similarly, Simpson (2025) explains that stylistic analysis examines how particular linguistic choices produce distinctive meanings and effects within literary discourse. From a cognitive perspective, Lugea and Walker (2023) further emphasize that stylistic choices may influence how readers construct mental representations and interpret textual experience.

In *Infinitum*, affective language therefore cannot be regarded as a collection of isolated emotional expressions. Rather, affect is distributed across different linguistic levels and contributes to characterization, interpersonal relations, narrative atmosphere, and the representation of psychological experience. The distribution of the three principal affective strategies identified in the analysis is presented in Tables 1–3, which summarize the forms, contextual examples, and affective functions of emotive interjections, emotional particles, and expressive metaphors, respectively. This finding is consistent with the development of contemporary stylistics, which increasingly incorporates cognitive stylistics, pragmatics, metaphor studies, discourse analysis, and the study of emotion in literary texts (Burke, 2023; Simpson, 2025).

3.1 The Use of Emotive Interjections

The first prominent form of affective language identified in *Infinitum* is the use of emotive interjections. As summarized in Table 1, the analysis identified nine principal interjection forms: *Oh*, *Aduh*, *Owwh*, *Hai*, *Ihh*, *Hmmm*, *Hayo*, *Nah*, and *Lho*. These forms perform a range of affective functions, including surprise, realization, complaint, admiration, greeting, displeasure, hesitation, invitation, affirmation, and astonishment. The variety of functions identified in *Infinitum* indicates that interjections constitute an important stylistic resource for representing emotional and interpersonal experience.

Table 1. Emotive Interjections in *Infinitum*

No	Linguistic Forms	Quote	Affective Function
1	<i>Oh</i>	" <i>Oh, berarti tugasnya di Makassar ya.</i> " (h. 3) " <i>Oh, so you work in Makassar, then.</i> " (p. 3)	Shock/awareness
2	<i>Oh</i>	" <i>Oh, pantas, suka baca novel ya.</i> " (h. 3) " <i>Oh, no wonder you like reading novels.</i> " (p. 3)	Understanding
3	<i>Aduh</i>	" <i>Haaai, aduh dari tadi aku cari...</i> " (h. 96) " <i>Hii, oh dear, I've been looking for you all this time...</i> " (p. 96)	Complaint
4	<i>Owwh</i>	" <i>Owwh,... Bandung, kota yang indah...</i> " (h. 6) " <i>Owwh... Bandung, what a beautiful city...</i> " (p. 6)	Admiration
5	<i>Hai</i>	" <i>Hai, kok diam.</i> " (h. 17) " <i>Hi, why are you so quiet?</i> " (p. 17)	Emotional greeting
6	<i>Ihh</i>	" <i>Ihh, malah balik nanya!</i> " (h. 28)	Displeasure

		"Ugh, you're asking me back instead!" (p. 28)	
7	<i>Hmmm</i>	"Kenapa, sih! Hmmm..." (h. 22) "What is it, anyway? Hmmm..." (p. 22)	Doubt
8	<i>Hayo</i>	"Hayo dong, ke mana..." (h. 97) "Come on, where are you going..." (p. 97)	Invitation
9	<i>Nah</i>	"Nah, kenapa ragu sih..." (h. 72) "There, why are you hesitating..." (p. 72)	Affirmation
10	<i>Lho</i>	"Lho, kamu belum ganti pakaian?" (h. 51) "Hey, you haven't changed your clothes yet?" (p. 51)	Astonishment

Interjections have traditionally been understood as linguistic forms that express the speaker's emotional reaction. However, contemporary research demonstrates that their functions extend beyond the direct expression of emotion. Unuabonah and Daniel (2020), for example, show that emotive interjections may perform different pragmatic functions depending on their interactional environment. Similarly, Jing (2021), from a Systemic Functional perspective, demonstrates that interjections can perform interpersonal functions and may operate either independently as minor speech functions or together with clauses as optional clausal elements. Thus, interjections can simultaneously contribute to emotional expression and the organization of interpersonal exchange.

This perspective is particularly relevant to *Infinitum*, because the same interjection can carry different affective meanings depending on its discourse context. The examples presented in Table 1 demonstrate this contextual variability, particularly in the case of *Oh*, which occurs in two different contexts and consequently produces slightly different affective effects. The first occurrence of *Oh* appears in the utterance "Oh, berarti tugasnya di Makassar ya" (p. 3). In this context, *Oh* marks sudden realization or awareness. The speaker receives new information and immediately responds through an emotionally marked expression. The interjection therefore represents the transition from an unknown state to a newly recognized understanding.

The second occurrence, "Oh, pantas, suka baca novel ya" (p. 3), demonstrates a slightly different function. Here, *Oh* indicates recognition or understanding rather than simple surprise. The speaker connects previously unrelated information and arrives at an explanation. This difference demonstrates that the affective meaning of an interjection is context-dependent rather than lexically fixed. This finding is consistent with Widiatmoko and Waslam (2017), who, in their pragmatic analysis of Indonesian interjections, argue that the interpretation of Indonesian interjections is strongly determined by the linguistic meaning of the expression and the speech situation. Krzempek (2021) similarly demonstrates that the meaning of interjections may be modified and intensified by prosody, grammatical processes, and contextual conditions. Consequently, the meaning of *Oh* in *Infinitum* cannot be determined solely from its lexical form; it must be interpreted in relation to the situation and the preceding discourse.

The interjection *Aduh* in "Haaai, aduh dari tadi aku cari..." (p. 96) expresses complaint and mild frustration. Its combination with *Haaai* produces a layered emotional response. *Haaai* establishes interpersonal contact, while *Aduh* reveals the speaker's emotional reaction to having searched for someone for a considerable period. The expression therefore combines interpersonal engagement with emotional discomfort. This finding is compatible with Yasin

et al. (2022), who demonstrate that emotive interjections in Indonesian can express several affective states, including annoyance, confusion, distress, pleasure, and admiration. Their study further shows that interjections can be used to confirm a speech partner's expression, protest against an interlocutor, demonstrate approval, and indicate realization. Therefore, the function of *Aduh* in *Infinitum* should be understood not merely as an expression of frustration but also as a device for managing the interpersonal relationship between the characters.

The form *Owwh* in "Owwh,... Bandung, kota yang indah..." (p. 6) is particularly significant from a stylistic perspective. Unlike the conventional spelling *Oh*, the graphological form *Owwh* visually represents prolongation and emotional intensity. The unusual orthographic form attracts the reader's attention and foregrounds the emotional reaction. This phenomenon can be interpreted through the concept of foregrounding, in which an unusual linguistic form becomes prominent because it deviates from ordinary linguistic expectations (Simpson, 2025). Therefore, *Owwh* should not simply be classified as a variant of *Oh*, but as a graphological strategy through which the author visually intensifies the character's admiration.

The stylistic significance of modified interjectional forms is also supported by Mahfuddin (2024), whose analysis of interjections in post-Reformasi Indonesian novels identifies not only basic interjectional forms but also modified forms that are shortened, altered, or extended to produce particular psychological and stylistic effects. The study identifies interjections expressing admiration, surprise, astonishment, invitation, calling, irritation, and other emotional states. This finding closely corresponds with the use of *Owwh* in *Infinitum*, where orthographic modification appears to intensify the character's emotional response. Thus, the novelist's manipulation of the written form of an interjection can be interpreted as part of a broader stylistic strategy for representing speech-like emotional intensity in written narrative.

The forms *Hai* and *Ihh* illustrate contrasting interpersonal emotions. In "Hai, kok diam" (p. 17), *Hai* functions as an emotionally charged greeting accompanied by mild concern or rebuke. Meanwhile, "Ihh, malah balik nanya!" (p. 28) conveys displeasure or irritation. The contrast demonstrates that interjections can contribute directly to characterization by revealing how characters position themselves toward their interlocutors. This observation is supported by Aryanti (2018), whose analysis of interjections in novels demonstrates that interjections may function as utterance-initial markers, attention markers, and response signals while simultaneously expressing attitudes, feelings, or both. Importantly, Aryanti also finds that a single interjection may perform more than one function. Therefore, the functions of *Hai* and *Ihh* in *Infinitum* are not restricted to greeting and irritation respectively; they also participate in the construction of interpersonal relations and character positioning.

Research on literary dialogue further indicates that interjections can be used as stylistic devices for representing speech and constructing character identity. Taavitsainen (2020), in her study of interjections in popular literature, demonstrates that interjections may represent genuine emotional reactions as well as conventionalized or stereotypical reactions to particular situations. Their use contributes to audience involvement and may generate distinctive stylistic effects. This perspective is particularly applicable to *Infinitum*, where interjections are embedded within conversational exchanges and contribute to the impression of spontaneous spoken interaction. Consequently, the interjections in *Infinitum* contribute not only to emotional expression but also to the construction of character voice and conversational realism.

The expression *Hmmm* in "Kenapa, sih! Hmmm..." (p. 22) conveys hesitation or doubt. The affective effect is reinforced by the ellipsis following the interjection. The combination of

Hmmm and the ellipsis creates an impression of unfinished thought and psychological uncertainty. From a pragmatic perspective, this interpretation is consistent with the view that interjections can signal changes in cognitive and interactional states. Norrick (2009) explains that interjections frequently function as pragmatic markers and that their interpretation is influenced by their position in discourse and by intonation. Although *Hmmm* in *Infinitum* occurs in written form, the combination of the interjection and ellipsis reproduces features associated with spoken interaction, enabling the reader to infer hesitation and incompleteness.

This finding is also relevant to Poggi's (2022) account of interjections as emotional communicative acts. Poggi emphasizes that an interjection can communicate a complete communicative act while leaving part of its propositional content to be recovered from contextual information. In the case of "Kenapa, sih! Hmmm...", the emotional and cognitive state of the speaker is not fully verbalized. Instead, the reader reconstructs the speaker's uncertainty from the interjection, the ellipsis, and the preceding utterance. The affective meaning therefore emerges from the interaction between linguistic form and contextual inference rather than from an explicit emotion word.

The interjection *Hayo* in "Hayo dong, ke mana..." (p. 97) conveys invitation accompanied by interpersonal urgency. The following particle *dong* further strengthens the speaker's involvement. Meanwhile, *Nah* in "Nah, kenapa ragu sih..." (p. 72) functions as a discourse-transition and affirmation marker. *Lho* in "Lho, kamu belum ganti pakaian?" (p. 51) expresses astonishment caused by an unexpected situation. These findings correspond with Yasin et al. (2022), who show that Indonesian emotive interjections may serve interactional purposes such as confirmation, protest, approval, and realization in addition to expressing emotional states. They also correspond with Mahfuddin's (2024) finding that Indonesian novelists use interjections for functions such as invitation, calling, surprise, and astonishment.

The multifunctionality of these forms is further supported by Jing (2021), who demonstrates that interjections are capable of realizing interpersonal meanings at different linguistic levels. An interjection may constitute an independent communicative move or operate together with a clause, allowing it to participate directly in the exchange structure. This theoretical perspective helps explain why expressions such as *Hayo*, *Nah*, and *Lho* in *Infinitum* cannot be interpreted simply as isolated emotional reactions. Their meanings emerge from the relationship between the interjection, the proposition that follows, the interlocutor, and the communicative situation.

As demonstrated by the examples in Table 1, the interjections do not perform a single uniform emotional function. Instead, their affective meanings range from realization and admiration to irritation, hesitation, invitation, affirmation, and astonishment. The findings therefore reinforce the view that interjections are multifunctional pragmatic resources whose interpretation depends substantially on context, discourse position, and interactional purpose (Norrick, 2009; Krzempek, 2021; Jing, 2021). In the Indonesian context, the findings are particularly consistent with Widiatmoko and Waslam (2017) and Yasin et al. (2022), who demonstrate that Indonesian interjections derive their meanings from the interaction between linguistic form and speech situation.

Overall, the interjections demonstrate that affective expression in *Infinitum* operates through the interaction of emotion, context, and interpersonal meaning. The findings also indicate that interjections function as an important stylistic mechanism for translating features of spoken interaction into written literary discourse. Their contribution is therefore threefold: they represent characters' emotional and cognitive states, regulate interpersonal relationships, and contribute to the construction of conversational and stylistic realism. In this respect,

Infinitum illustrates how seemingly small linguistic units can carry substantial affective and pragmatic meaning when they are strategically positioned within literary dialogue.

3.2 The Use of Emotional Particles

The second major category of affective expression consists of emotional particles. Table 2 presents the nine principal particle forms or combinations identified in the novel: *-sih*, *-ya*, *-aja/-ya*, *-deh/-ya*, *-dong*, *-lah*, *-kok*, *-nih*, and *-ah*. Unlike interjections, which frequently occur at the periphery of an utterance, these particles are integrated into the utterance and modify its interpersonal and affective force. In Indonesian, discourse particles are generally short, optional elements whose meanings are highly dependent on their position and the context of the utterance (Sneddon, 2006; Karàj, 2021). Their contribution is therefore not primarily propositional but pragmatic and interpersonal.

Table 2. Emotional Particles in *Infinitum*

No	Linguistic Forms	Quote	Affective Function
1	<i>-sih</i>	"Kamu di mana sih?" (h. 18) "Where are you, anyway?" (p. 18)	Astonishment
2	<i>-sih</i>	"Kenapa, sih!" (h. 22) "Why, anyway!" (p. 22)	Emotional suppression
3	<i>-ya</i>	"Bandung... ya?" (h. 6) "Bandung... right?" (p. 6)	Confirmation
4	<i>-aja/-ya</i>	"Seperti mimpi aja ya." (h. 25) "It's just like a dream, isn't it?" (p. 25)	Weakening
5	<i>-deh/-ya</i>	"Gini aja deh..." (h. 30) "Let's just do it this way..." (p. 30)	Invitation
6	<i>-dong</i>	"Aku turut senang dong." (h. 142) "I'm happy for you, of course." (p. 142)	Affirmation
7	<i>-lah</i>	"Nggaklah..." (h. 35) "No, of course not..." (p. 35)	Soft rejection
8	<i>-kok</i>	"Kok bisa..." (h. 23) "How could that be...?" (p. 23)	Keheranan
9	<i>-nih</i>	"Dingin nih." (h. 97) "It's cold, you know." (p. 97)	Proximity
10	<i>-ah</i>	"Udah ah..." (h. 50) "Enough already..." (p. 50)	Final affirmation

The distribution presented in Table 2 indicates that emotional particles operate primarily through subtle modification of utterance force rather than through the explicit naming of emotions. Contemporary pragmatic and stylistic research emphasizes that emotional meaning is not necessarily encoded through explicit emotion words. Instead, speakers can communicate stance, involvement, certainty, hesitation, politeness, emphasis, and interpersonal attitude through small grammatical and discourse elements (Burke, 2023; Simpson, 2025). This observation is consistent with Karàj's (2021) analysis of Indonesian discourse particles, which demonstrates that particles such as *lho*, *kok*, *sih*, and *dong* have context-sensitive meanings and can perform different discourse functions in spoken and written interaction.

The particle *-sih* occurs in two contexts: “Kamu di mana sih?” (p. 18) and “Kenapa, sih!” (p. 22). Although the linguistic form is identical, its contextual effect differs. In the first utterance, *-sih* conveys curiosity accompanied by impatience or concern. In the second, it produces stronger emotional emphasis and frustration. This finding is particularly consistent with Sumarni's (2011) analysis of *sih* in colloquial Jakartan Indonesian, which demonstrates that its interpretation is strongly influenced by mood, intonation, and the immediate conversational context. Sumarni further shows that *sih* is not easily reducible to a single lexical equivalent because its pragmatic effect emerges from the interaction between linguistic form and interpersonal context.

This finding reinforces the argument that affective meaning is context-dependent. The semantic contribution of a discourse particle cannot always be determined independently of the utterance in which it occurs. Karàj (2021) similarly argues that Indonesian discourse particles have meanings that vary according to their context and position within an utterance. Thus, the interpretation of *-sih* in *Infinitum* should not be treated as a fixed semantic property but as an interactional resource whose affective value is constructed within the surrounding dialogue.

The particle *-ya* in “Bandung... ya?” (p. 6) functions as a confirmation marker. However, the preceding ellipsis creates an impression of hesitation. The combination of particle and punctuation therefore constructs a psychologically vulnerable moment. The character appears uncertain and seeks confirmation from the interlocutor. This interpretation is compatible with Wouk's (2001) analysis of *ya* as a discourse marker in Indonesian conversation, which demonstrates that *ya* contributes to the management of interaction and interpersonal alignment rather than merely functioning as a lexical item. Karàj (2021) likewise includes *ya* among the forms that participate in the broader system of Indonesian discourse-pragmatic marking.

The combination *-aja/-ya* in “Seperti mimpi aja ya” (p. 25) functions as a weakening or minimizing strategy. The expression reduces the assertive force of the proposition and gives it a more tentative interpersonal quality. This demonstrates how particles can modify not only emotional tone but also the degree of commitment expressed by a character. Such a function is compatible with the broader pragmatic role of particles as devices that guide the interpretation of an utterance without substantially altering its propositional content. Research on discourse particles emphasizes that their primary contribution often concerns interpersonal meaning, stance, and the management of interaction rather than truth-conditional meaning.

The construction “Gini aja deh...” (p. 30) illustrates the interpersonal function of *-deh*. It softens the proposal and makes the utterance less categorical. In literary dialogue, such particles help create a conversational register and establish interpersonal proximity. Burke (2023) emphasizes that stylistic analysis of dialogue should consider pragmatic features because small linguistic elements can reveal relationships between characters. This observation is also supported by Sneddon (2006), who identifies discourse particles as important features of colloquial interaction and notes their role in establishing interpersonal relations and solidarity.

The particle *-dong* in “Aku turut senang dong” (p. 142) strengthens affirmation and emotional involvement. The speaker does not merely state that they are happy; the particle communicates an expectation that the interlocutor should recognize the speaker's emotional position. Sumarni (2011) identifies *dong* as a salient feature of colloquial Jakartan Indonesian and demonstrates that its interpretation is closely related to interpersonal expectations, shared

knowledge, and the speaker's communicative stance. Karàj (2021) likewise shows that *dong* can function differently according to context and interactional position.

Conversely, *-lah* in “Nggaklah...” (p. 35) softens rejection. Although the proposition remains negative, the particle reduces the confrontational force of the response. Thus, the particle contributes to the interpersonal characterization of the speaker. Sneddon (2006) discusses *-lah* within the pragmatic resources of colloquial Indonesian and demonstrates that particles may add interpersonal nuances that are not part of the basic propositional content. The use of *-lah* in *Infinitum* therefore contributes to the representation of a speaker who rejects an assumption while simultaneously managing the interpersonal force of that rejection.

The particle *-kok* in “Kok bisa...” (p. 23) expresses astonishment or disbelief. The particle signals a mismatch between expectation and reality. This interpretation is directly supported by Karàj (2021), whose analysis identifies *kok* as one of the major Indonesian discourse particles and demonstrates its context-sensitive pragmatic function in both spoken and written texts. The particle is therefore not simply an interrogative element but can encode the speaker's reaction to an unexpected state of affairs.

Meanwhile, *-nih* in “Dingin nih” (p. 97) constructs immediacy and interpersonal proximity, as if the speaker invites the interlocutor to share the experience. The particle brings the referent into the immediate interactional space and encourages the interlocutor to attend to the speaker's current experience. Sneddon (2006) includes *nih/tuh* among the discourse particles characteristic of colloquial Indonesian, while research on Indonesian pragmatic particles more broadly indicates that such forms contribute to interactional and interpersonal meaning rather than substantially changing the propositional content of the utterance.

Finally, *-ah* in “Udah ah...” (p. 50) indicates closure or finality. It may communicate emotional fatigue, resignation, or a desire to terminate an interaction. The affective interpretation of this particle is therefore closely connected to the sequential position of the utterance and the interactional context. This supports the broader pragmatic principle that particles can signal the speaker's stance toward an ongoing interaction and help regulate the progression or termination of discourse (Strauss & Xiang, 2009). Although Strauss and Xiang investigate a particle in another language, their findings are relevant at the interactional level because they demonstrate how final particles may simultaneously encode stance and organize interpersonal interaction.

Taken together, the forms listed in Table 2 demonstrate that emotional particles function as micro-level markers of interpersonal stance. They are particularly important because they communicate affect indirectly. Rather than naming an emotion explicitly, the particles allow the characters to express impatience, hesitation, intimacy, affirmation, rejection, surprise, and closure through subtle modifications of utterance meaning. This finding corresponds with the broader description of Indonesian discourse particles as short and context-sensitive elements whose principal contribution lies in commenting on or modifying what has been said rather than changing the core propositional content (Karàj, 2021).

The findings also indicate that emotional particles contribute to the construction of literary dialogue. Their presence makes the conversations in *Infinitum* resemble naturally occurring interaction by encoding features such as informality, interpersonal alignment, hesitation, emphasis, and emotional involvement. In this respect, the particles serve not only as markers of affect but also as stylistic resources for constructing character voice and conversational authenticity. Sumarni (2011) similarly demonstrates that Indonesian discourse particles are prominent features of colloquial language in novels and that their interpretation is closely associated with cultural and interpersonal meanings.

This interpretation is compatible with contemporary research on emotion and language, which emphasizes that emotional interpretation is produced through the interaction of lexical, contextual, and discourse-level information (Braun et al., 2022). The findings of the present study extend this perspective by demonstrating that in literary dialogue, very small linguistic elements can carry substantial affective and interpersonal information. Thus, the emotional particles in *Infinitum* represent an important stylistic mechanism for constructing subtle affective meanings while simultaneously establishing conversational register, interpersonal relations, and character identity.

3.3 The Use of Expressive Metaphor

The third prominent form of affective language identified in *Infinitum* is the use of expressive metaphor. Expressive metaphor relates to how language conceptualizes emotional and psychological experiences through concrete, sensory, and dialogic representations. In literary texts, metaphor is not merely an aesthetic ornament but a stylistic strategy through which abstract experiences can be represented in more concrete and imaginable forms. Through metaphor, the author maps one conceptual domain onto another, allowing complex emotions, thoughts, memories, relationships, and psychological conditions to be experienced through familiar images. This finding is consistent with recent research demonstrating that emotions are frequently conceptualized through mappings between abstract emotional domains and concrete experiential domains (Neumair et al., 2025). In addition, literary metaphors may extend conventional conceptual mappings and generate particular cognitive and affective responses during literary reading (Porto, 2024). As summarized in Table 3, the analysis identified eleven forms of expressive metaphor in *Infinitum*, which are distributed across several conceptual mapping patterns, including Emotion=Nature, Emotion=Sea, Emotion=Space, Time=Space, Emotion=Cloud, Thought=Movement, Love=Plant, Relationship=Machine, and Emotion=Burden.

Table 3. Expressive Metaphors in *Infinitum*

No	Linguistic Forms	Quote	Affective Function
1	Emotion=Nature	"Hujan... terurai resah." (h. 1) "The rain... unraveling my unease." (p. 1)	Kesedihan
2	Emotion=Nature	"Hujan terus berderai merintih." (h. 6) "The rain keeps pouring, whimpering in sorrow." (p. 6)	Anxiety
3	Emotion=Sea	"Laut yang merisaukanku..." (h. 6) "The sea that troubles me..." (p. 6)	Ambivalence
4	Emotion=Space	"Hidup adalah hamparan fragmen." (h. 1–2) "Life is a vast expanse of fragments." (pp. 1–2)	Complexity
5	Time=Space	"Arus waktu... lipatan kenangan." (h. 8) "The flow of time... folds of memories." (p. 8)	Reflection
6	Emotions=Clouds	"Menggumpal seperti awan hitam." (h. 2) "Gathering like dark clouds." (p. 2)	Mental pressure
7	Thought=Movement	"Pikirannya telah jauh terbang." (h. 4) "His thoughts had flown far away." (p. 4)	Imagination
8	Thought=Movement	"Pikiranku terbang..." (h. 19)	Memory

		"My thoughts flew..." (p. 19)	
9	Love=Plants	"Bunga cinta." (h. 8) "The flower of love." (p. 8)	Emotional Relationships
10	Relationship=Machine	"Lokomotif... berantai." (h. 17) "A chained locomotive..." (p. 17)	Connectedness
11	Emotions=Burden	"Mengganjal pikiranku." (h. 22) "Weighing heavily on my mind." (p. 22)	Inner disturbance

As presented in Table 3, the expressive metaphors identified in *Infinitum* represent a wide range of affective and psychological experiences. The metaphors do not merely describe emotions directly but transform abstract experiences into concrete images derived from nature, space, movement, plants, machines, and physical sensations. This distribution demonstrates that metaphor is an important stylistic mechanism for constructing the affective dimension of the novel. Neumair et al. (2025) similarly demonstrate that emotion metaphors involve systematic relationships between source and target domains and that different frames may contribute to the complexity of emotional conceptualization. Thus, the metaphorical expressions identified in *Infinitum* can be understood not as isolated figurative expressions but as interconnected conceptual strategies for representing psychological experience.

The metaphorical pattern of Emotion=Nature appears in two quotations that use rain as a vehicle for emotional representation. The first expression, "*Hujan... terurai resah*" (p. 1), presents rain as a medium through which sadness and emotional unease are externalized. The word *terurai*, which generally refers to something becoming untied, loosened, or released, is transferred to the abstract condition of *resah*. Through this metaphorical transfer, an internal emotional state becomes something that can be visually and dynamically imagined.

The ellipsis in "*Hujan... terurai resah*" further contributes to the affective effect of the expression. The pause creates a slower rhythm and gives the impression that the emotional experience is gradually unfolding. Thus, the metaphor does not merely communicate sadness but also constructs a particular emotional atmosphere in which sadness appears slow, deep, and contemplative. This observation corresponds to Pager-McClymont's (2022) argument that the projection of emotion onto surroundings can communicate implicit emotions and contribute to the construction of literary ambience and characterization.

The second expression within the same conceptual pattern, "*Hujan terus berderai merintih*" (p. 6), shifts the affective function toward anxiety. The rain is personified as if it were capable of *merintih*, or whimpering. The combination of *berderai* and *merintih* creates a sensory representation of suffering by transferring human emotional qualities to a natural phenomenon. Consequently, the external environment becomes a reflection of the character's internal psychological condition.

The two examples in Table 3 demonstrate that the same conceptual source domain can produce different affective meanings. While the first rain metaphor emphasizes sadness and emotional release, the second emphasizes anxiety and suffering. This variation indicates that metaphorical meaning is strongly dependent on the narrative and emotional context in which the expression occurs. This finding is particularly consistent with Stradling and Pager-McClymont (2023), who show that the affective interpretation of metaphors involving surroundings depends on the underlying conceptual metaphor, textual context, and readers' experiential background.

The metaphor Emotion=Sea is represented by the expression "*laut yang merisaukanku*" (p. 6). In this expression, the sea becomes a conceptual vehicle for representing ambivalence. The

sea can simultaneously evoke beauty, vastness, mystery, movement, and danger. These contrasting properties allow the metaphor to represent an emotional condition that is not singular but simultaneously attractive and disturbing.

The expression therefore communicates more than a simple state of anxiety. The sea provides a complex affective image in which attraction and fear coexist. The metaphorical representation makes the character's emotional condition more imaginable because the reader can associate the psychological experience with the contradictory qualities of the sea. Such interpretive richness is compatible with Reid et al. (2023), who demonstrate that poetic metaphors can generate multiple interpretations and emergent meanings, particularly when the conceptual relationship between the topic and vehicle is relatively diverse.

The metaphor Emotion=Space occurs in "*Hidup adalah hamparan fragmen*" (pp. 1–2). This expression conceptualizes life as a spatial landscape composed of fragments. The word *hamparan* suggests breadth and spatial extension, while *fragmen* suggests incompleteness, separation, and discontinuity. The combination creates an image of life as an expansive but fragmented space.

From an affective perspective, the metaphor represents complexity. Life is not presented as a simple linear progression but as a collection of fragmented experiences that must be remembered, interpreted, and connected. The metaphor therefore transforms a philosophical understanding of life into a spatial image that can be mentally visualized. The use of a concrete spatial domain to represent an abstract psychological or philosophical experience illustrates the broader cognitive function of metaphor described by Neumair et al. (2025), in which abstract emotional and conceptual experiences may be structured through more concrete frames.

The metaphor Time=Space is represented by "*arus waktu... lipatan kenangan*" (p. 8). This expression combines two related conceptualizations. First, *arus waktu* represents time as something that flows continuously. Second, *lipatan kenangan* conceptualizes memories as something spatial that can be folded, stored, and unfolded.

The combination produces a contrast between temporal movement and psychological return. Time continues to move forward, whereas memory allows the character to return mentally to previous experiences. The metaphor therefore represents reflection by constructing a psychological space in which the present and the past coexist. From a literary-stylistic perspective, such metaphorical construction also illustrates how literary metaphors can develop meanings beyond ordinary conceptual mappings and contribute to the aesthetic experience of reading (Porto, 2024).

The metaphor Emotion=Cloud occurs in "*menggumpal seperti awan hitam*" (p. 2). The expression conceptualizes mental or emotional pressure through the image of a dark cloud. The verb *menggumpal* suggests gradual accumulation, while *awan hitam* evokes darkness, heaviness, and the possibility of an approaching storm.

The metaphor consequently represents emotional pressure as something that does not emerge suddenly but gradually accumulates. The emotional condition becomes progressively heavier, creating an expectation that it may eventually reach a critical point. The image of the dark cloud therefore intensifies the psychological atmosphere and makes internal pressure perceptible through a concrete natural image. This pattern resembles the broader conceptualization of emotion through concrete source domains discussed by Neumair et al. (2025), where the source domain provides experiential structure for understanding otherwise abstract emotional states.

The conceptual mapping Thought=Movement is represented by two related expressions: "*Pikirannya telah jauh terbang*" (p. 4) and "*Pikiranku terbang...*" (p. 19). In both expressions, thought is conceptualized as something capable of movement or flight.

In "*Pikirannya telah jauh terbang*," the metaphor primarily represents imagination. The mind is presented as moving beyond physical boundaries into an imaginative space. The expression therefore conveys psychological freedom and mental exploration.

In contrast, "*Pikiranku terbang...*" represents memory. Here, the movement of thought is associated with a return to previous experiences. The two examples in Table 3 are particularly significant because they demonstrate that the same metaphorical mapping can generate different affective functions according to its narrative context. In one context, mental movement suggests imagination; in another, it suggests recollection. This contextual flexibility supports the argument of Reid et al. (2023) that metaphor interpretation can involve interpretive diversity and emergent meanings rather than a single fixed interpretation.

The metaphor Love=Plant occurs in the expression "*bunga cinta*" (p. 8). Love is conceptualized as a flower, an image associated with beauty, growth, delicacy, and fragility. The metaphor therefore presents love as something organic that develops over time but is also vulnerable to change and disappearance.

The expression does not merely function as a romantic description. From a stylistic perspective, it constructs emotional relationships as dynamic processes. Like a flower, love may bloom, develop, and become beautiful, but it may also wither. The metaphor consequently introduces both positive and vulnerable dimensions into the representation of emotional relationships. The conceptualization of emotion through metaphor can similarly be understood as a way of organizing and interpreting emotionally charged experience through culturally and experientially meaningful source domains (Derakhshan et al., 2025).

The conceptual mapping Relationship=Machine appears in "*lokomotif... berantai*" (p. 17). The locomotive represents movement, power, direction, and interconnectedness, while the chain suggests attachment and restriction. The combination therefore conceptualizes interpersonal relationships as structures that simultaneously connect and constrain individuals.

This metaphor contains an important emotional ambivalence. Relationships provide connection and movement, but the chains may also limit freedom. The metaphor consequently represents connectedness not simply as a positive condition but as an experience that may involve both attachment and constraint. This type of metaphorical framing demonstrates how a source domain can provide multiple properties that interact to construct a complex emotional interpretation. Roberts and Bolognesi (2024), for example, demonstrate experimentally that different metaphorical frames can produce differences in readers' affective responses, indicating that metaphorical framing may influence how situations are emotionally construed.

Finally, the metaphor Emotion=Burden is represented by "*mengganjal pikiranku*" (p. 22). The verb *mengganjal* originates from the physical domain and refers to something that blocks, obstructs, or prevents free movement. In the expression, this physical experience is transferred to the psychological domain.

The metaphor therefore represents inner disturbance as a physical obstruction within the mind. Rather than merely stating that the character is troubled, the expression allows the reader to imagine the emotional problem as something that is lodged in the mind and prevents psychological comfort or clarity. The mapping illustrates how physical experience can provide an experiential structure for abstract emotional states, supporting the view that

emotion metaphors organize complex affective concepts through concrete frames (Neumair et al., 2025).

Taken together, the eleven metaphorical expressions presented in Table 3 demonstrate that expressive metaphor functions as a systematic mechanism for representing affective and psychological experience in *Infinitum*. The author repeatedly transforms abstract experiences into concrete conceptual domains, including rain, sea, space, time, clouds, movement, plants, machines, and physical obstruction.

The findings further demonstrate that expressive metaphors operate at more than one level of meaning. At the semantic level, they create figurative associations between different conceptual domains. At the psychological level, they make internal experiences more concrete and imaginable. At the stylistic level, they contribute to characterization, atmosphere, and narrative expressiveness. These findings are consistent with Porto's (2024) argument that literary metaphors involve both conceptual processing and an aesthetic dimension. They are also compatible with Reid et al.'s (2023) finding that literary metaphors can encourage diverse and emergent interpretations.

Moreover, the affective function of these metaphors is not limited to the representation of the characters' internal states. Metaphors can also influence how readers construct emotional meaning. Roberts and Bolognesi (2024) demonstrate that metaphorical framing can affect readers' affective states, while Stradling and Pager-McClymont (2023) show that metaphorical representations of surroundings may facilitate narrative empathy. Therefore, the expressive metaphors in *Infinitum* can be interpreted as stylistic devices that simultaneously construct character emotion, organize narrative atmosphere, and potentially guide readers toward particular affective interpretations.

The affective power of expressive metaphor in *Infinitum* lies not simply in the number of metaphorical expressions but in the diversity and systematicity of the conceptual mappings. Through these mappings, Ahyar Anwar transforms sadness, anxiety, ambivalence, complexity, reflection, mental pressure, imagination, memory, love, connectedness, and inner disturbance into concrete and sensory experiences. Expressive metaphor consequently becomes an important stylistic resource through which the novel constructs and communicates its affective world. The finding supports contemporary research of Neumair et al. (2025) and Porto (2024) that views metaphor as a cognitive, stylistic, and affective resource rather than merely an ornamental feature of literary language.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that affective expression constitutes an important stylistic resource in Ahyar Anwar's *Infinitum: Sebuah Novel*. The analysis demonstrates that affective meaning is systematically constructed through three principal linguistic forms: emotive interjections, emotional particles, and expressive metaphors. Although these forms operate at different linguistic levels, they work together to externalize characters' emotional states, cognitive experiences, interpersonal attitudes, and psychological conditions.

First, the study identified ten instances of emotive interjectional forms, including *Oh*, *Aduh*, *Owwh*, *Hai*, *Ihh*, *Hmmm*, *Hayo*, *Nah*, and *Lho*, with *Oh* occurring in two different contexts. The findings demonstrate that interjections are multifunctional rather than semantically fixed. They express realization, understanding, complaint, admiration, greeting, displeasure, doubt, invitation, affirmation, and astonishment. Their affective meanings are strongly determined by discourse context, interactional relationships, and accompanying linguistic features such as ellipsis and orthographic modification. The use of forms such as *Owwh* and *Hmmm* further

demonstrates how graphological and punctuation choices can reproduce features of spoken interaction and intensify emotional meaning. Thus, interjections contribute simultaneously to affective expression, characterization, interpersonal relations, and conversational realism.

Second, the analysis identified ten emotional particle forms or combinations, namely *-sih*, *-ya*, *-aja/-ya*, *-deh/-ya*, *-dong*, *-lah*, *-kok*, *-nih*, and *-ah*. Unlike interjections, these particles are integrated into utterances and primarily modify their interpersonal and pragmatic force. Their functions include astonishment, emotional emphasis or suppression, confirmation, weakening, invitation, affirmation, soft rejection, surprise, proximity, and closure. The findings demonstrate that emotional particles constitute micro-level stylistic resources through which characters communicate subtle affective and interpersonal meanings without explicitly naming emotions. Their context-sensitive use also contributes to colloquiality, character voice, interpersonal proximity, and the authenticity of dialogue in the novel.

Third, the study identified eleven expressive metaphors organized into several conceptual mappings: *Emotion=Nature*, *Emotion=Sea*, *Emotion=Space*, *Time=Space*, *Emotion=Cloud*, *Thought=Movement*, *Love=Plant*, *Relationship=Machine*, and *Emotion=Burden*. These metaphors transform abstract emotional and psychological experiences into concrete domains such as rain, sea, space, clouds, movement, plants, machines, and physical obstruction. Through these mappings, sadness, anxiety, ambivalence, complexity, reflection, mental pressure, imagination, memory, love, connectedness, and inner disturbance become more concrete and imaginatively accessible. The findings demonstrate that metaphor functions simultaneously as a semantic, cognitive, affective, and aesthetic resource.

Overall, the findings indicate that affective meaning in *Infinitum* is not concentrated in explicit emotion vocabulary but is distributed across lexical, pragmatic, graphological, and figurative resources. Interjections primarily externalize immediate emotional and cognitive reactions; emotional particles modulate interpersonal stance and utterance force; and expressive metaphors conceptualize complex psychological experiences through concrete and sensory domains. These three resources therefore form complementary mechanisms of affective construction rather than isolated stylistic features.

The study consequently extends the understanding of literary affect by demonstrating that very small interactional elements and figurative expressions can collectively contribute to the emotional architecture of a novel. In *Infinitum*, affective language functions not only to represent what characters feel but also to construct characterization, interpersonal relationships, narrative atmosphere, conversational realism, psychological depth, and aesthetic meaning. The findings therefore support an integrated stylistic approach in which emotion is examined through the interaction of linguistic form, contextual meaning, and literary function.

This study is limited to the qualitative interpretation of affective expressions in a single Indonesian novel. Future research may therefore examine affective language comparatively across Indonesian literary works, investigate differences in affective expression across authors or genres, or combine qualitative stylistic analysis with corpus-based and computational approaches to identify broader patterns of emotional language in Indonesian literature.

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The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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All authors are contributed to the research and preparation of the manuscript. **Jahara:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, and Writing – Original Draft. **Subianto Basri:** Methodology, Validation, Analysis, Writing – Review & Editing, and Supervision. **Yunus Rumoga:** Investigation, Data Curation, Validation, Writing – Review & Editing, and Project Administration. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Statement of the Use of AI

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