WORLD CONFERENCE ON STUDENT - CENTERED LEARNING APPROACHES

METHODOLOGY FOR ANALYZING REPORTING VERBS AND AUTHORIAL STANCE IN EAP ACADEMIC WRITING

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Abstract. This article examines how reporting verbs function as key linguistic tools in academic writing for constructing authorial stance and managing readers' perceptions. Drawing on foundational work by Hyland (2008, 2014) and related studies on stance and metadiscourse, the paper argues that reporting verbs not only report information but also signal attitudes such as support, challenge, and neutrality, thereby shaping credibility and persuasiveness. The discussion further highlights that different academic disciplines prefer distinct reporting verbs to reflect disciplinary norms and establish writer identity. Building on perspectives from Yoon and Tabari (2023) and Hyland and Jiang (2022), the study positions stance as a strategic and contextual feature of academic discourse, linked to reader guidance through metadiscourse resources. This paper translates these theoretical insights into EAP teaching implications by outlining how learners can be supported to develop reporting-verb choices, effective stance construction, and academic skill integration across reading, writing, speaking, and assessment practices.

Key Words: Reporting verbs; authorial stance; metadiscourse; academic writing; EAP; genre analysis; disciplinary variation; hedging; boosters; credibility

Introduction. Academic writing requires more than the accurate presentation of information; it also demands that writers construct a persuasive scholarly identity

through language choices. Central to this process are reporting verbs, which operate as rhetorical signals that communicate an author's position toward cited research. Hyland describes reporting verbs as pivotal in academic writing because they help convey the writer's stance toward the information being presented. Similarly, Bloch (2010) emphasizes that reporting verbs frame the writer's attitude to cited sources, representing both the act of reporting and the evaluation embedded in the cited material. As a result, the selection of reporting verbs can influence perceived reliability and credibility, since writers use these choices to guide how readers interpret the significance of research within an argument. In addition, he) explains that reporting verbs play syntactic and rhetorical roles by functioning as textual signposts that guide readers through the developing argument and indicate stance—whether through support, challenge, or neutral presentation. For example, the verb argue typically signals stronger authorial commitment and positioning, while state tends to present information in a more neutral, less evaluative manner. Beyond general rhetorical functions, It is also highlights disciplinary variation, suggesting that different disciplines prefer different reporting verbs because these preferences reflect disciplinary norms, values, and identity. Therefore, reporting verbs should be understood not merely as conduits of information, but as tools that shape persuasion and establish academic identity. Alongside the role of reporting verbs, this paper situates authorial stance within broader theories of how academic writers manage reader interpretation. Stance is presented as a nuanced and multifaceted phenomenon that includes positioning, attitudes, and engagement with content. Stance involves strategic language use that signals authority, credibility, and the writer's relationship to the subject matter.

According to Hyland (2008), reporting verbs play a pivotal role in academic writing due to their significance in serving as linguistic tools to convey the author's

stance towards the information presented. Similarly, Bloch (2010) highlights the significance of reporting verbs in framing the author's attitude towards cited sources to indicate the act of reporting and to carry a nuanced portrayal of the author's evaluation of the cited material. Therefore, the choice of reporting verbs can influence the perceived reliability and credibility of the information as this decision can display their crucial role in constructing a persuasive scholarly narrative. Moreover, as Hyland (2014) delves into the syntactic and rhetorical functions of reporting verbs, these verbs act as signposts to emphasize their role in guiding readers through the author's argument and indicate the author's stance including support, challenge, or neutral presentation. Therefore, this nuanced use of reporting verbs contributes to the development of a coherent and persuasive academic text, and helps to manage the flow of information by expressing the stance towards the literature. For instance, the verb "argue" shows a stronger positioning while "state" indicate neutrality to the statement. Moreover, Hyland (2008) extends the exploration of reporting verbs to the realm of disciplinary variation since different academic disciplines exhibit distinct preferences for reporting verbs to reflect their disciplinary norms and values. In this context, reporting verbs become more than functional tools due to their nature of indicating disciplinary identity. The following table taken from Hyland (2008, p. 553) can clearly demonstrate these differences: Obviously, scholars of various disciplines employ different reporting verbs. In this sense, reporting verbs in academic writing are not mere conduits of information since they are powerful instruments to shape the author's stance by guiding the reader through the argument and establishing disciplinary identity. To be more specific, the revised EAP Program will focus on enhancing language proficiency, developing academic skills and promoting the growth of cultural integration. Hamp-Lyons (2011) argued that EAP Program is necessarily essential to improve student's reading, writing, listening, speaking skills to ensure the ability of effective comprehending in academic setting, and to offer academic skills such as

critical thinking, research methodologies, note-taking, essay writing and presentation skills as well. While in the integrated skill approach, students will engage in activities and assignments that require them to use multiple language skills simultaneously, content-based instruction program will offer contents from various academic disciplines which is intended to develop vocabulary skills. As defined by Richard and Rodgers (2001), content-based Instruction refers to a strategy to second language teaching in which teaching is organized around the content or facts that students will learn. At the end of the term, students will be required to take a proficiency test including the IELTS examination to demonstrate their acquired knowledge and obtain permission to move to the next course. As Hughes (202) asserts that proficiency tests are principal to measure one's linguistic abilities as they can ensure to monitor students' progress regularly. Apart from that, providing regular constructive feedback is an efficient way to monitor students' progress and demonstrate them weak areas to improve.

Stance in academic writing is a nuanced and multifaceted concept as it encompasses an author's positioning, attitudes and engagement with the presented content. According to Yoon and Tabari (2023), it extends beyond a mere expression of personal opinion due to its strategic use of language to convey authority, credibility and the author's relationship to the subject matter. Therefore, it is a dynamic interplay between the writer and the discourse community to highlight the importance of context and audience awareness. Similarly, Hyland and Jiang (2022) further gives a more elaborate explanation of stance by linking it to the concept of meta-discourse. As meta-discourse refers to the language used to guide readers through a text by indicating the writer's stance towards their own ideas and the readers, it includes devices such as hedges, boosters and attitude markers to shape the author's voice and persuasiveness. Therefore, it is also highlighted in the work that effective communication in academic writing involves both giving information and managing

the reader's perception of the author's stance by fostering clarity and coherence. Besides these authors, Chang and Schleppegrell (2011) examine its role in academic genres and highlight its scope in negotiating the expectations of a particular academic community and adopting an appropriate voice. In other words, students must learn to navigate the conventions and expectations of their disciplines by adapting their stance to align with the discourse norms in academic studies. Therefore, understanding and mastering stance is crucial for scholars and students alike because of its role in shaping the author's voice by affecting the reception and persuasiveness of academic discourse. At the end of the term, students will be required to take a proficiency test including the IELTS examination to demonstrate their acquired knowledge and obtain permission to move to the next course. As Hughes (202) asserts that proficiency tests are principal to measure one's linguistic abilities as they can ensure to monitor students' progress regularly. Apart from that, providing regular constructive feedback is an efficient way to monitor students' progress and demonstrate them weak areas to improve.

To commence with, Charles and Pecorari (2015) have been instrumental in shaping my understanding of the EAP framework as the book explains the core principles and purposes of EAP and gives insights about the use of language in academic contexts. Understanding the nuances of academic language such as nominalization and hedging has enhanced my ability to engage effectively in scholarly conversations by deciphering academic texts, and crafting my own contributions in the alignment with disciplinary expectations. As an EAP instructor, these takeaways help me to guide students through the maze of academic discourse by illuminating the intricacies of genre analysis and discourse community expectations to empower learners to navigate various academic domains successfully. . Apart from being a boon for my own academic presentations, this newfound proficiency can also position me as a resourceful EAP instructor who is capable of imparting crucial presentation skills to students. For instance, by explicitly teaching strategies for organizing content,

employing visual aids and managing time during presentations, I can empower my future EAP learners to navigate the expectations of academic discourse confidently. Besides that, enhancing my academic reading strategies including skimming, scanning, critical reading and note-taking has been the transformative process for me since I can explore any academic text without further challenges. To achieve this, McGrath et al.'s (2016) suggestions on navigating dense academic texts by identifying key arguments and synthesizing information effectively have been essential, and I intend to equip my EAP learners with these skills necessary for their success in academic endeavors. Furthermore, having learned about the conventions of academic writing including proper structuring, clarity and adherence to academic style with the help of Alley (1996), I could significantly refine my own writing, especially my editing skills to improve clarity and coherence in my written papers. I believe this enhanced understanding of academic writing can serve as a foundation for my role as an EAP instructor since I now realize the significance of facilitating my students in developing their academic writing skills by emphasizing the principles of clarity, coherence, and adherence to disciplinary conventions. Additionally, based on the principles proposed by Schmitt and Hamp-Lyons (2015), I can hone my assessing approach in a strategic way by ensuring alignment with course objectives. As assessments serve as tools for growth rather than mere evaluations, I now recognize that authentically measuring students' language proficiency and academic skills aligns with the broader goal of fostering a fair and supportive learning environment for language learners.

Conclusion. Reporting verbs are essential in academic writing because they operate as strategic linguistic tools that express authorial stance, manage reader interpretation, and contribute to credibility. Grounded in Hyland's work on reporting verbs, the analysis shows that these verbs function as rhetorical signposts that guide readers through arguments and signal whether the writer is supporting, challenging, or

presenting information neutrally. Moreover, disciplinary variation influences reporting-verb preferences, meaning that reporting practices contribute to disciplinary identity and help writers align with the conventions of their academic community. The discussion of stance further reinforces that academic persuasion is not only achieved through what writers say, but also through how they position themselves relative to cited knowledge. Drawing on perspectives that connect stance with metadiscourse and voice construction in academic writing, the paper emphasizes that effective academic communication involves both information delivery and reader-oriented guidance. From a pedagogical standpoint, these insights support EAP teaching by highlighting the value of explicitly helping learners develop reporting-verb choices and stance-making strategies. When integrated into teaching of academic skills—such as reading, writing, presentations, and assessment—stance and reporting-verb competence can strengthen learners' ability to write persuasively and participate confidently in academic discourse.

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