

**A CORPUS-BASED STUDY ON THE USE OF REPORTING VERBS
IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS JOURNAL ARTICLES
PUBLISHED FROM 2020-2024**

Adrianto Ramadhan¹, Weningtyas Parama Iswari², Aridah³
English Department, Mulawarman University
1) radrianto746@gmail.com; 2) weningtyaspiswari@fkip.unmul.ac.id
3) aridah2707@gmail.com

Abstract

Reporting verbs are essential in academic writing because they help convey the writer's stance, attitude, and relationship with the reader, as highlighted in corpus-based research. This research was a corpus-based study that investigated the use of reporting verbs in applied linguistics journal articles published between 2020 and 2024. The main objectives were to identify the categories of reporting verbs used in the articles and determine the most frequently used categories within this period. This research applied a corpus linguistic technique, which used quantitative methods. The study specifically focuses on the frequency of reporting verbs in journal articles published within the selected time period. A corpus of 316 articles from the *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* was used as a data for the analysis. The data was processed using the software tool AntConc 4.2.0, which allowed for a detailed examination of the reporting verb frequencies and their categorization. The results revealed that Discourse Acts were the most frequently used reporting verbs, followed by Research Acts and Cognition Acts. Within the Discourse Acts category, the "certainty" subcategory emerged as the most prevalent.

Keywords: *Corpus Based, Applied Linguistics, Reporting Verbs*

1. Introduction

Academic writing is a broad category encompassing various forms such as essays, articles, research papers, theses, dissertations, and other scholarly documents. These forms of writing, especially within academic journals and universities, adhere to a formal style recognized as academic writing. An article, as one of the primary types of academic writing, plays a significant role in fostering critical thinking. In academic circles, scholars are encouraged to adopt specific verbal structures and conventions when preparing manuscripts for publication. The language used in these writings must meet a certain standard, as it is not only intended to convey information but also to demonstrate the author's analytical and critical thinking abilities. Silva (2007) emphasizes that authors

need to be particularly mindful of their language, as their work will undergo evaluation by publishers, peer reviewers, or academic committees.

Further research has highlighted that there are particular language features that academic writers should incorporate to enhance the quality and credibility of their work. For instance, Coxhead (2000) discusses the importance of using precise and formal vocabulary in academic writing. This includes the use of specialized words that are essential for expressing complex ideas accurately. Similarly, Alvin (2014) focuses on the role of judgment structures in academic writing, emphasizing how the way authors present their arguments and conclusions can influence their work's reception. Swale (2004) explores rhetorical gestures such as argumentation strategies, tone, and structure that writers employ to persuade and engage readers effectively. Given these requirements, producing a high-quality scientific paper that is deemed suitable for publication is a challenging task. Authors must not only demonstrate thorough knowledge of the subject matter but also carefully craft their language to meet the expectations of the academic community. This process requires a deep understanding of the conventions of academic writing and the ability to navigate the complex landscape of research, argumentation, and presentation.

One of the problems often encountered in academic writing is the use of language that conveys the meaning of reporting in citations from other publications. Reporting verbs are an essential component of citation standards and serve as one of the most valuable tools that authors use to demonstrate the validity and accuracy of statements found in academic writings (Barghamadi, 2021). These verbs allow authors to frame and present information from external sources in a way that reflects its credibility. However, it is important to note that the process of quoting and the reliability of claims can be significantly influenced by the choice of reporting verbs (Hyland, 2005). The wrong verb may lead to misinterpretations or distortions of the source material.

Furthermore, reporting verbs are an important linguistic tool for academic writers to effectively synthesize and incorporate materials into their work. Both Bloch (2010) and Pecorari (2008) in their study indicated that students have difficulties to decide which reporting verbs are suitable in certain context. Then, one of the findings of the study conducted by Charles (2006) and Hyland and Tse (2005) showed that writers from

Applied Linguistics are typically using a lot of reporting verbs. The 2020–2024-time frame is especially pertinent to this research because it is a recent and very little-studied period in applied linguistics. Exploring the categories and the most frequencies of reporting verbs used in the corpus of applied linguistics research articles throughout this time period can reveal information about changing discourse patterns as well as prospective shifts or trends in the discipline. Additionally, in Indonesian context, reporting verb research is rarely carried out by Indonesian academics, and it is challenging to locate reporting verb research in online literature.

At present, much of the existing research on reporting verbs has primarily focused on their grammatical and rhetorical characteristics, with less emphasis on exploring the most frequently used categories of reporting verbs in applied linguistics. This gap presents an opportunity for further investigation, which could be beneficial for enhancing research in applied linguistics. The proposed study aims to contribute to the development of more informed methods for analyzing the use of reporting verbs in academic writing, particularly in applied linguistics journal articles. By focusing on practical applications, this research will provide insights into the specific categories of reporting verbs used in scholarly articles and help improve the understanding of citation practices. The findings could lead to more effective approaches in analyzing reporting verb usage and could shape the way these verbs are taught and employed in academic publications. Therefore, the researcher intends to conduct this study titled, "A Corpus-Based Study on the Use of Reporting Verbs in Applied Linguistics Journal Articles Published from 2020-2024."

2. Literature Review

Corpus is a scientific technique that uses collections of naturally occurring language data, known as corpus (singular: corpus), to research and analyze language use patterns. Corpus can incorporate written texts, transcripts of spoken language, and even multimodal data, giving researchers a rich and contextual dataset for linguistic research (McEnery and Brookes, 2022). In addition, corpus linguistics has seen a growing emphasis on diachronic analysis, which examines language change over time (Th. Gries, 2022). He has developed sophisticated analytical techniques to trace the evolution of linguistic features, collocations, and constructions using longitudinal corpus data. This

approach provides valuable insights into the dynamic nature of language and the social, cultural, and cognitive factors that shape linguistic change.

As corpus-based research has gained significant prominence in linguistic studies, the number of corpora has rapidly increased. Each corpus varies in genre and word count. Ömer et al. (in Flowerdew, 2019) highlighted that, in recent decades, corpora (large electronic collections of authentic and semi-authentic texts) and corpus-based analytical techniques have provided valuable insights into language patterns. Furthermore, a thorough examination of a corpus can reveal information across several categories, including word behavior, multi-word expressions, grammatical structures, semantic and pragmatic features, and the distribution of various patterns across genres and registers. Corpora can be either homogeneous or heterogeneous to varying degrees. Homogeneous corpora consist of texts from a single language or register, while heterogeneous corpora are composed of texts from a variety of sources. Additionally, corpora can be created in different sizes to meet specific objectives. For instance, an exceptionally large corpus may be used to compile a dictionary.

Jiang and Jiang (2020, p. 13) argued that corpus-based analysis offers a significant alternative, grounded in large-scale authentic data from real-life contexts. When analyzing a large volume of words, the involvement of computer-based methods facilitates easier word frequency counts compared to manual calculations. In other words, corpus analysis is a type of language examination that naturally occurs through the use of corpora and computational tools. Consequently, corpus analysis is conducted with the assistance of computer programs, such as specialized software used to generate frequency data.

Corpus linguistics research has identified several major categories and types of reporting verbs that language users employ for different communicative purposes. On the other hand, Hyland (2005) classified the verbs that fall into this section based on Research Acts, Cognition Acts and Discourse acts. Moreover according to Thompson in Praminatih (2023), there are various categories of reporting verbs that can be used to create different stances such as Tentative Stance, Neutral Stance and Strong Stance. Furthermore, according to Swales and Feak (2012), reporting verbs can be classified into the following categories: Neutral Reporting Verbs, Agreement Reporting Verbs,

Disagreement Reporting Verbs, Suggestion Reporting Verbs, and Critique Reporting Verbs.

3. Methods

The purpose of this study is to identify the categories and the most frequently utilized reporting verbs in the Indonesia Journal of Applied Linguistics. The researcher planned this study to be a corpus-based study in order to achieve this goal. A corpus-based study is a research methodology that entails the systematic analysis of a large, curated collection of written or spoken material, known as a corpus. This study used corpus linguistics approach, which applied quantitative research methods. The design was selected due to its widespread application in numerous studies employing corpus-based approaches. According to Creswell (2017), quantitative research involves the collection of numerical data using instruments from a large group of individuals, with predefined questions and responses.

The corpus data used in this study based on Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics in terms 2020-2024, by the criteria's such as Published in Indonesia, Directory of Open Access Journal (DOAJ) with green tick, EBSCO, Google Scholar, and based on reputable journal in Q2 with H Index 17 with the total 313 articles. In addition, the researcher uses a tool namely AntConc 4.2.0 to find out the frequencies and categories of reporting verb in articles of Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics. Documentation technique is used by collecting the articles of Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics. By using this software, the researcher can generate the frequency lists of the whole words of the applied linguistic articles corpus and what categories are most occurred. After the words were tagged using the tagging tools, the researcher sorted and analyzed the categories of reporting verbs and the most frequently used categories used in applied linguistics journal articles published from 2020-2024 by using Hyland framework (2002) as the main framework, and Thompson (1991) and Swales (2004) as supports framework.

4. Result

This section addresses the answer to the research question regarding the categories of reporting verbs and the most frequently used categories of reporting verbs used in applied linguistics journal articles published from 2020-2024 by using AntConc 4.2.0 tools.

4.1 The most frequently used categories of reporting verbs in applied linguistic journal-based Hyland's Framework

The categories of reporting verbs used in applied linguistics journal articles published from 2020-2024 are displayed in the table below. According to Hyland's (2002) framework, the reporting verbs are classified in the Research act, Cognitive act and Discourse Act.

Tabel 4.1. Frequency of reporting verbs in applied linguistics journal papers during 2020–2024 based on Hyland's Framework

Category	Verb	Total Words	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Research Acts	Observe	550	4.32%	27%.
	Discover	208	0.72%	
	Notice	98	0.66%	
	Show	2007	13.00%	
	Analyse	254	2.02%	
	Calculate	113	0.93%	
	Assay	2	0.06%	
	Explore	668	4.32%	
	Plot	126	0.50%	
	Recover	16	0.19%	
Cognition Acts	Believe	536	5.20%	18.1%.
	Conceptualize	80	1.04%	
	Suspect	135	0.56%	
	Assume	196	0.88%	
	View	822	10.42%	
Discourse Acts	Postulate	12	0.25%	54.90%
	State	677	10.44%	
	Deny	31	0.16%	
	Hypothesize	11	0.24%	
	Describe	483	9.91%	
	Critique	21	0.88%	
	Indicate	442	8.85%	
	Report	297	3.80%	
	Challenge	100	2.42%	
	Intimate	14	0.16%	
	Answer	21	0.88%	
	Attack	10	0.24%	
	Suggest	287	4.27%	
	Define	302	4.30%	

Question	368	4.89%
Exaggerate	3	0.12%
Argue	121	2.97%
Affirm	3	0.12%

The data presented reflects the frequency and distribution of verbs used in various academic or research contexts, categorized into three main act categories: Research Acts, Cognition Acts, and Discourse Acts. In the Research Acts category, the verb Show has the highest frequency, with 2,007 occurrences, accounting for 13.00% of the total verbs in this category. It is followed by Explore (668 occurrences, 4.32%) and Observe (550 occurrences, 4.32%). The verb Analyse appears the least in this category, with 254 occurrences, representing 2.02% of the total. The cumulative percentage for this category is 27%, suggesting that Research Acts are relatively significant in the overall dataset.

Moving to the Cognition Acts category, the verb View is the most frequent, with 822 occurrences, making up 10.42% of this category. It is followed by Believe (536 occurrences, 5.20%), Assume (196 occurrences, 0.88%), and Conceptualize (80 occurrences, 1.04%). These verbs indicate mental processes and cognitive engagement with the subject matter. The cumulative percentage for this category is 18.1%, indicating a moderate presence in the overall data. Finally, in the Discourse Acts category, State is the most frequent verb, appearing 677 times (10.44%), followed by Indicate (442 occurrences, 8.85%), Suggest (287 occurrences, 4.27%), and Report (297 occurrences, 3.80%). These verbs are commonly used to convey ideas, propositions, or assertions in academic discourse. The cumulative percentage for this category is 54.90%, making Discourse Acts the most prominent category in the dataset.

4.2 The most frequently used categories of reporting verbs in applied linguistic journal-based Thompson's Framework

The categories of reporting verbs used in applied linguistics journal articles published from 2020-2024 are displayed in the table below. According to Thompson's framework, the reporting verbs are classified as: Strong Stance, Neutral Stance, and Tentative Stance.

Tabel 4.2 Frequency of reporting verbs in applied linguistics journal papers during 2020–2024 based on Thompson’s Framework

Act Category	Verbs	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Tentative Stance	Suggest	287	11.94%	33.62%
	Imply	79	3.29%	
	Indicate	442	18.39%	
Neutral Stance	State	677	19.93%	45.52%
	Report	297	14.02%	
	Note	278	11.57%	
Strong Stance	Argue	121	5.05%	20.86%
	Claim	204	8.49%	
	Demonstrate	176	7.32%	

The table presents a breakdown of verb frequencies and percentages categorized under Tentative Stance, Neutral Stance, and Strong Stance. These categories reflect the different types of language used in academic writing, ranging from tentative expressions of uncertainty to strong assertions of viewpoint. In the Tentative Stance category, verbs such as Suggest with 287 occurrences. This reflects the use of verbs to propose ideas or express uncertainty in academic research. Imply with 79 occurrences, and Indicate 442 occurrences, further contributing to the overall tentative tone commonly found in scholarly writing, where authors explore possibilities without making definitive statements.

The Neutral Stance category is focused on verbs used to present facts or report information objectively, without strong emotion or bias. State is the most frequent verb in this category, appearing 677 times. This highlights the importance of stating facts clearly and objectively in academic discourse. Report with 337 occurrences, and Note 278 occurrences. Finally, in the Strong Stance category, verbs like Argue 121 occurrences are used to assert strong positions or defend specific arguments. Claim 204 occurrences and Demonstrate 176 occurrences, representing the more assertive, confident language typically used when making definitive statements or presenting well-supported conclusions.

4.3 The most frequently used categories of reporting verbs in applied linguistic journal-based Swales and Feak Framework

The categories of reporting verbs used in applied linguistics journal articles published from 2020-2024 are displayed in the table below. According to Swales and Feak framework, the reporting verbs are classified Neutral Reporting, Agreement, Disagreement, Critique, and Suggestion.

Tabel 3. Frequency of reporting verbs in applied linguistics journal papers during 2020–2024 based on Swales and Feak Framework

Act Category	Verb	Total Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Neutral Reporting	State	677	28.2%	54.1%
	Report	297	12.5%	
	Note	318	13.4%	
Agreement	Indicate	442	19.5%	1.5%
Disagreement	Challenge	174	7.3%	7.3%
Critique	Argue	121	5.6%	7.5%
	Critique	21	1.9%	
Suggestion	Suggest	287	11.8%	12.6%
	Hypothesize	11	0.8%	

The table presents a breakdown of verb frequencies categorized according to Swales' framework. The verbs are grouped into five categories: Neutral Reporting, Agreement, Disagreement, Critique, and Suggestion, reflecting their respective roles in academic or formal writing. The Neutral Reporting category has the highest total frequency, with State being the most common verb, appearing 677 times. This is followed by Note (318 occurrences). The Agreement category is dominated by the verb Indicate, with 443 occurrences, this verb is often used to show alignment or confirmation of ideas in academic texts. The Disagreement category is represented by Challenge, which occurs 174 times reflecting the more oppositional or contrasting language typically used when disputing or questioning a claim. In the Critique category, Argue is the most frequent verb, appearing 128 times, followed by Critique (21 occurrences). These verbs are used to evaluate, analyze, or defend a point of view, reflecting the evaluative stance in scholarly discourse. Finally, the Suggestion category

is primarily represented by Suggest, which appears 287 times, indicating the frequent use of this verb to propose ideas or make recommendations. Hypothesize is less common, appearing 11 times, often used in research contexts to introduce theoretical possibilities or explanations.

5. Discussion

In applied linguistics journal articles published between 2020 and 2024, reporting verbs play a crucial role in framing and contextualizing research findings, acknowledging existing literature, and expressing the relationship between the writer and the cited material. The reporting verbs used in these articles can generally be categorized into three main types: Discourse Acts, Research Acts, and Cognition Acts.

Based on the analysis of the most frequently used reporting verbs from the three theories Hyland (2020-2024), Swales and Feak (2004), and Thompson (2020-2024), it is evident that certain verbs dominate across the categories, reflecting the authors' stance, their engagement with previous literature, and the expression of research findings. The verb "show" appears most frequently in Hyland's framework, particularly within the "research acts" category. This reflects the prevalent use of "show" to present research outcomes or findings to readers. Similarly, in Swales and Feak's work, verbs like "state" and "report" are highly frequent, underlining the authors' tendency to describe or report observed data or outcomes with a neutral stance. The prominence of these reporting verbs highlights the essential role of clear and objective communication in academic writing, particularly in disciplines that rely on empirical research. Additionally, Thompson's framework showcases a significant presence of stronger stance verbs like "argue" and "claim", which suggests a more assertive positioning of the author's research, particularly when forming strong arguments or conclusions.

The use of such verbs is consistent with earlier research on academic discourse. For example, Hyland (2008) emphasized that academic writers often rely on verbs like "show," "state," and "report" to convey their findings and connect them to the existing body of knowledge. These verbs help establish the credibility of the research and the author's authoritative role in reporting results (Hyland, 2008). Moreover, Swales and Feak (2004) introduced the concept of "reporting verbs" to describe how writers navigate between agreement, disagreement, and critique in academic writing. Their analysis illustrated that

verbs such as "agree," "disagree," "argue," and "suggest" play crucial roles in articulating a writer's position relative to prior work. This distinction is essential for building the scholarly conversation and establishing the author's contribution to the field (Swales & Feak, 2004).

Thompson's model (2020) also highlights the importance of stance in academic writing, noting that verbs like "claim" and "argue" are central to articulating strong assertions in academic texts. Such verbs not only demonstrate the writer's critical engagement with the material but also signal their contribution to advancing or challenging existing knowledge (Thompson, 2020). This aligns with the findings of Hyland (2000), who found that stance markers, such as "argue" and "claim," serve to emphasize the author's position in relation to previous research, thus guiding the reader's understanding of the researcher's perspective.

While these theories provide valuable insights, there are some limitations in their frameworks. Hyland's focus on "research acts" and "cognition acts" may emphasize the presentation of findings at the expense of deeper theoretical engagements. Swales and Feak's approach, while detailed, can lead to a rigid classification of reporting verbs that may not fully capture the fluidity of academic discourse. Thompson's model, focusing on strong and tentative stances, might result in overemphasis on the author's position, potentially neglecting the subtleties of academic argumentation. Thus, while these frameworks are foundational, integrating them with more nuanced approaches could enrich our understanding of academic writing practices.

This aligns closely with the findings from Un-udom and Un-udom (2020), when a comparable methodology was used to clarify the role of reporting verbs in academic writing, especially in applied linguistics articles. The categorization of reporting verbs into these categories was done in a similar manner in Un-udom and Un-udom's (2020) study, using Hyland's (2002) framework to categorize reporting verbs used in applied linguistics papers. Through this, both studies lay the ground that reporting verbs have particular uses in communication and argumentation inside academic writing rather than being used indiscriminately. Understanding how these verbs operate rhetorically requires a thorough examination of this categorization.

In the corpus-based study of applied linguistics articles from 2020-2024, the Discourse Acts verbs were the most prevalent, with a strong tendency to emphasize the author's stance or argumentation (e.g., "suggest," "indicate"). This trend reflects the

importance of presenting research as part of a larger dialogue within the academic field. This result aligns with previous studies, where Discourse Acts verbs were found to be the most commonly used, constituting 68.5% of the total reporting verbs, followed by a significantly lower occurrence of Research Acts verbs at 20.8%, and even fewer Cognitive Acts verbs, which accounted for 10.7%. The average occurrence of reporting verbs was 10.21 per 5,358 words, which reflects the average word count per text, with the lowest occurrence being 0 in two texts and the highest reaching 26 in one text. Specifically, Discourse Acts verbs averaged 6.99 occurrences per text, Research Acts verbs appeared 2.12 times per text, and Cognitive Acts verbs were used 1.10 times per text. These findings reinforce the pattern observed in earlier research, emphasizing the dominant role of Discourse Acts verbs in academic writing (Jarkovská and Kučírková, 2020).

Research Acts verbs followed in frequency, reflecting the importance of detailing the methods and investigations in applied linguistics. These verbs emphasize how the studies were carried out and what specific elements were analyzed or tested. Lee and Tan (2023) also indicated that although the students used reporting verbs from all three categories, they predominantly employed more Research Acts reporting verbs compared to Discourse Acts reporting verbs. Reporting verbs from the Cognition Acts category were the least frequently used. In terms of specific verb forms, the most commonly used under Research Acts were conducted and identified, while the most frequent verbs under Discourse Acts included expressed, concluded, and advised. For Cognition Acts, the primary verbs were agreed and felt. The study highlighted the importance of educating novice writers about the three key categories of reporting verbs, as understanding and effectively utilizing these verbs can enhance academic writing, particularly in the context of integral citations.

Cognition Acts verbs appeared less frequently, indicating that the personal viewpoint of the researcher, although still relevant, plays a smaller role compared to the need to present research findings and theoretical discussions objectively. This aligns with finding by Banini, et al., (2023) stated the students employed cognition acts verbs to express different attitudes toward the material being given. By the use of reporting verbs (RVs) such agree, hold, support, and understand, a positive attitude was conveyed, affirmation and alignment with the concepts or results given. These verbs show that the pupils are supporting the statements made and confident in the material presented. Conversely, RVs such as picture, conceive, and

anticipate which point to a more speculative or theoretical approach suggest a neutral stance.. Fayyaz and Abdulaziz (2022) also shown cognitive acts-based reporting verbs were used by various authors in the introduction and literature review sections of research articles published in different Pakistani journals.

In other hand, the selection of reporting verbs, as underlined by Hunston (2000), is quite important in indicating the writer's stance or opinion on the facts being referenced, so affecting how the reader interprets the arguments. Hunston's argument underlines that the correct employment of reporting verbs helps authors to preserve the objectivity of their work and guarantee that the sources are fairly portrayed. This in turn helps to improve the general dependability and integrity of the academic writing.

Charles (2006) adds on this by pointing out that reported verbs are also a means through which the author's personal involvement with the concept or work is communicated in addition to being instruments to attribute statements to others. Chosen carefully, reporting verbs can expose the writer's stance on the veracity, strength, or perspective of the stated claim. Verbs like "argue," "claim," or "assert," for instance, impart a different degree of certainty or authority than verbs like "suggest," "believe," or "question." Writers can thus show their own personality, position, and attitude toward the referenced work or concept by the deliberate use of reporting verbs, therefore presenting a sophisticated perspective on the academic debate.

The perceived strength of the academic argument can also be influenced by the interaction between the writer's credibility and the tone of the reporting verb. By picking suitable verbs, writers can show respect for various points of view and show critical interaction with their sources. This movement improves the clarity and persuasiveness of their writing therefore building more trust between the reader and the author. In academic contexts where objectivity and intellectual honesty are top priorities, the right use of reporting verbs therefore becomes an indispensable tool for guaranteeing the writer's authority and preserving the credibility of the scholarly conversation.

In recent years, studies on the use of reporting verbs in academic writing have expanded and provided new insights that correlate well with earlier frameworks, particularly those developed by Hyland (2002), Swales and Feak (2004), and Thompson (2020). The role of reporting verbs in academic discourse is critical as they help authors convey their stance,

engage with existing literature, and build their argument. The more recent studies between 20139 and 2023 offer empirical evidence that not only confirms these earlier theoretical frameworks but also deepens our understanding of how these verbs function across various academic genres and disciplines.

A study by Zeng (2025), which analyzed the use of reporting verbs in upper-level student papers, found that "suggest" was more frequently used than "argue," and the verb "suggest" was predominantly paired with inanimate subjects, such as research findings or data, while "argue" was used more frequently with animate subjects, such as authors or researchers. This aligns with Hyland's framework and confirms that the use of "suggest" reflects a more tentative stance, while "argue" signifies a more assertive one. Zeng's findings support the idea that academic writers are keenly aware of the strength of their statements and use reporting verbs to control the tone of their writing, which is crucial for accurately representing their contributions to the field.

In Swales and Feak's (2004) framework, the use of reporting verbs is categorized into various types, such as neutral reporting verbs (e.g., "state," "report"), verbs of agreement (e.g., "agree," "endorse"), verbs of disagreement (e.g., "disagree," "challenge"), and those used for critique (e.g., "criticize," "question"). Their research highlights how academic writers use reporting verbs not just to present their findings but also to engage critically with previous work. For instance, reporting verbs such as "challenge" and "criticize" indicate that the writer is positioning their work in opposition to or in contrast with other scholars' findings. A more recent study by Owusu and Broohm (2024), which examined MPhil theses from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, found that discourse-act verbs were frequently used in literature review chapters, reflecting the writers' active engagement with the existing body of knowledge. Owusu and Broohm's study underscores the importance of critical evaluation in academic writing, confirming Swales and Feak's assertion that academic discourse is shaped by an ongoing dialogue between authors. This critical interaction is vital for scholarly communication, as it not only advances new knowledge but also helps refine and challenge existing theories.

In addition to reporting verbs used in literature reviews and research findings, contemporary research has also focused on their role in conclusion sections of academic papers. Deng and Ping (2025) conducted a corpus-based study examining reporting verbs

used in the conclusion sections of research articles in applied linguistics and sociology. Their findings revealed that stronger stance verbs, particularly those expressing confidence, were predominant in these sections. Verbs such as "demonstrate," "claim," and "argue" were commonly used to assert the author's findings and conclusions. This usage of strong stance verbs in conclusions reflects the need for authors to assert the validity and significance of their research outcomes.

Moreover, Liu (2024) explored how academic writers use reporting verbs to build and project their scholarly identity. Liu found that verbs like "argue" and "claim" are frequently used by established researchers who wish to demonstrate their authority in the field, while less assertive verbs like "suggest" or "indicate" are more common among novice writers. This reflects the notion that reporting verbs are not just tools for presenting findings but also for signaling the writer's level of expertise and their relationship to existing literature. The findings of Liu (2024) suggest that reporting verbs serve a dual function: they help to present research but also communicate the writer's positioning within the academic community. This aligns with the work of Hyland (2000), who pointed out that the use of stance markers in academic writing is crucial for establishing a writer's role as a contributor to the academic discourse.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, which analyzed the use of reporting verbs in applied linguistics journal articles published between 2020 and 2024, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding the categories and frequency of reporting verbs in academic discourse. First, in terms of the categories of reporting verbs, Research Acts such as "Show", "Explore", and "Observe" were widely used to describe research methods and findings. "Show", being the most frequently used verb, highlights the importance of presenting research results objectively. Cognitive Acts, such as "View", "Believe", and "Assume", reflect the author's stance towards the cited works, indicating a more subjective and interpretive engagement with the literature. Meanwhile, Discourse Acts like "Indicate", "Claim", and "Report" were primarily used to construct arguments and position the author within the academic discourse, reflecting how authors critically interact with existing literature, either agreeing, disagreeing, or evaluating prior claims.

In terms of frequency, Research Acts saw "Show" as the most frequent verb, emphasizing the presentation of research findings. In Cognitive Acts, "View" was the most frequent verb, showing that authors often express their perspective or interpretation of the research. Discourse Acts dominated the dataset, with verbs like "Claim" and "Indicate" frequently used to assert and evaluate the information in the cited works, with "Claim" being the most commonly used verb in this category.

The use of verbs from these three categories demonstrates that authors in applied linguistics not only report their findings but also build arguments and engage critically with existing literature. This highlights the importance of varied linguistic tools in presenting ideas and positioning the author within the scholarly conversation. Furthermore, reporting verbs play a crucial role in constructing academic identity, where the careful selection of verbs can enhance the author's authority and indicate their level of engagement with the literature.

In conclusion, this study underscores the significant role of reporting verbs in structuring academic arguments. It is recommended that academic writers understand the use of these verbs in different contexts to clearly convey their position within the scholarly dialogue. By using reporting verbs effectively, researchers can better communicate their findings, critique existing knowledge, and propose new ideas, thus contributing meaningfully to academic discourse. Overall, the analysis of reporting verbs in applied linguistics journal articles reveals how authors structure their academic narratives and interact with existing knowledge, which is vital for advancing scholarly discussions.

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