

An Analysis of Linguistic Features of Evaluative Stance Found in Research Articles' Introduction

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Abstract: This study aims to identify the use of linguistic feature of evaluative stance found in research articles' introduction. There are certain linguistic features that indicate evaluative stance. That is how writers position themselves in their writing. By knowing those items, it can be known how the authors provide words usage to produce effective meaning. This study focuses on the use of epistemic modality, extraposed 'it', communication verb, and personal pronoun. The method of this study applied both quantitative and qualitative research method. The data were gained from research article written in English limited in introduction section that taken from international journal of Journal of Development Research. The result showed that all of type of linguistic feature of evaluative stance found in introduction of articles. The most frequent used is personal pronoun. Then followed by epistemic modality, extraposed 'it' and the lowest is communication verb. This study is expected to provide more insightful reference in the field of linguistics study.

INTRODUCTION

English as international language becomes crucial to be taught in every country. For completing thesis, students are required to write it in English even though only for its abstract. Moreover, for lecturers, they are required to publish journal research article for their qualification and those lecturer may be required to write their research in English. The purpose of publishing research article is to share the knowledge or the result of their research in similar disciplines. Therefore, the writers have to be aware of using linguistic features or rhetorical structures in order to provide and facilitate an understandable and good research article in their certain field of interest.

Besides, every genre of text has certain linguistic feature to ease the reader to find the type of the text such as in expressing stance. In introduction section, to present writers' position, they may use some linguistic feature of evaluative stance. For analyzing linguistic features of evaluative stance, the researcher uses theory of Hunston and Thomson (1999). Previous researchers have contributed to discover the significant linguistic features of evaluative stance that are mostly used in introductions section, they are epistemic modality, communication verb, extraposed 'it', and personal pronoun. It is the essential ways to express their

stance and shared knowledge into their discourse community. Besides, by knowing the use of component stances, it supports the readers or writers in understanding how to create scientific journal well. For some novice learners it may be quite difficult to convey their opinion in their academic writing. Hence, understanding the function of linguistic feature of evaluative stance is important to make their writing flow well.

Evaluation is “the expression of speaker or writer’s attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, feelings about the entities or proposition that he/she is talking about” (Hunston and Thomson, 2000 p.5 cited in Chang, 2010). Evaluation in a text is important to express speaker or writer’s opinion and maintain the relations including to manipulate or persuade the reader, or to hedge by adjusting the truth-value or certainty attributed to a statement. To produce interactional text, it can be achieved by giving a convincing argument, so that there will be fine balance between author’s subjective analysis and objective observation.

According to Hunston and Thomson (1999), there are certain linguistic features that indicate evaluative stance. That is how writers position themselves in their writing. It also shows how the writers communicate with their reader throughout language they write in their writing. Moreover, linguistic features of evaluative stance aim to know how the writers express their opinion through linguistic feature they choose. The common linguistics feature that deals with evaluative stance such as epistemic modality, communication verb, extraposed it, and personal pronoun.

The findings carried by Chang (2010) suggested that novice/ novice L2 writer consistently shows weakness in spreading of the interpersonal meaning of knowledge claims in negotiating the relationship with the readers. These include 1. Presenting an inappropriately and monotonously subjective persona, 2. Inability to carry on consistent evaluation to strengthen an argument, 3. Presenting descriptive narrative more than critical evaluation.

According to Chang (2010) L2 writers face multiple challenges in writing professional academic research articles. These challenges cover word usage to produce effective meaning. A general problem for L2 writers to produce a text that is less successfully is related to their poor management or lack of linguistic and discursive resources

The aim of this article is to identify linguistic features of evaluative stance used in research articles’ introduction and to elaborate how the writers use linguistic features of evaluative stance used in research articles’ introduction.

METHOD

The study uses quantitative and qualitative research method. Quantitative is used to investigate the frequency and the occurrence of type of linguistic feature whereas qualitative method is used to elaborate the reason and the function of using linguistic feature of evaluative stance found in research article. Besides, the data are in the form of text since they were obtained from academic research article. It is also descriptive because the researcher elaborates the discussion through words based on the table (Creswell, 1994). Moreover, the key instrument of the study is the researcher itself since she conducts all the process from

collecting to analyzing the data. For linguistic feature focused on evaluative stance, it applies a theory proposed by Hunston and Thompson (1999).

The data of the study deals with English academic research article. It is limited in linguistics field written in English. The data were taken from international journal of Journal of Development Research published by LPPM Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Blitar. The data were limited only at articles that were published in Volume 3, Number 2, November 2019. There were ten articles on that edition.

The data were gained from English research article. To collect the data I used purposive sampling. The research article are purposively selected consist of linguistics feature of evaluative stance that is from Journal of Development Research published by LPPM Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Blitar.

The analysis of the data used some steps. First, collecting English research article. Second, selecting purposively the data that consist of linguistics feature of evaluative stance. Next, analyzing the use of linguistic feature of evaluative stance. After that, elaborating the use of linguistic features of evaluative stance found in the data. The last, concluding the result.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result from this study was displayed in the following table.

Table 1. The result of evaluative stance found in research articles' introduction

Number of Data	Epistemic modality	Communication verb	Extraposd 'it'	Personal pronoun
1	6		1	4
2	14	4	5	20
3	13	8	19	16
4	4	1	6	6
5	15	3	12	19
6	6	1	7	6
7	5	3		4
8	5		1	
9	13	6	9	9
10	3	1	2	4
Total	84	27	62	88

The table above showed that all of linguistic features of evaluative stance found in the data. The type of evaluative stance that was most frequently used is personal pronoun (88). The writers used personal pronoun to indicate subject in their paper, previous researchers, and themselves. To show their stance, the researcher was rarely mention themselves in the paper, only a few data did it. It means their presence in their paper was not too vividly mentioned. The researchers mostly used the word 'the researcher' rather than mention the pronoun 'i', 'me', and 'my'. It may indicate that the researcher are more responsible toward the content of the research they wrote. They were lack of emphasizing their role and responsibility toward their claim of the research and are lack of expressing their presence and contribution in their research (Khamkhien, 2014).

The second type of evaluative stance used is epistemic modality (84). There were many kinds of modality found in the data. The researchers used epistemic modality to show their stance. They prefer using epistemic modality to communication verb and extraposed 'it'. The use of epistemic modality is for showing probability and necessity of authors' statement.

Extraposed 'it' (62) recurs more often than communication verb. It signals that the use of (extraposed 'it', that complement clauses controlled by adjective, predicate adjective, and *to* complement clauses controlled by adjectives) present the authors' personal stance towards the preposition *to/that* in an impersonal way. For personal pronoun, it recurs more often in native data than non-native data. It indicates that research article introduction written by native.

Communication verb (27) in the data is the lowest recurrence used by the researcher. It shows that authors tend to express their stance not more through communication verb. They did not manage their discourse in various ways and signal a clear stance toward the information they present.

Discussion

Personal Pronoun

Personal pronoun refers to person or object being referred. Harman (1931:46) argues that personal pronoun is one which distinguishes the speaker, the person or thing spoken to, and the person or thing spoken of. Personal pronouns are the type of evaluative stance that is most frequently found in research article introduction. But it does not totally reveals that they are more direct to express their position in the text. Most of personal pronoun used is to indicate the subjects in their research by mentioning pronoun 'they', 'them', 'their' and 'themselves'. While other pronoun that mostly found is third person that to indicate the previous researcher. On the other hand, the first person pronoun is lack of used in the data. it showed that the researchers did not show off their presence in their research. They tend to mention their selves by the writer, researcher, or authors.

- a. Among the previous studies from 2006 to 2015 which **I** noted in Chapter II
- b. The low motivation and interests of **my** students, which leads to **their** low achievement may be caused by the lack of students' interest in the textbook **they** use
- c. The checklist was used to help **me** in determining the criteria in question
- d. **He** has done a pretest for homogeneity, and also he facilitated the experimental group with Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) oriented discourse knowledge
- e. **We** can also say that it is the duty of the understanding process

Based on the examples above, the use of personal pronoun *I*, *my*, and *me* in (a), (b), and (C) indicate that the authors confidently state their presence in their writing. They also emphasize their role and responsibility toward their research. According to Hyland (2009) by using first person pronoun, it makes the readers believe in and feel no doubt about what the authors say whereas for personal pronoun *we* in (e) reveals that they refer to the writers and readers. The authors want to involve the audience or reader in their research. They also consider that the audiences have the same background knowledge to follow their argument or claim. Another personal pronoun like third person *he* in (d) means that the writer

involves the other person in their article that is scientist that proposed their theory or previous researcher.

Epistemic Modality

Epistemic modality refers to the use of modality which is based on the speaker's evaluation and judgment in relation to the degree of confidence of the knowledge on the proposition (Suhadi, 2011). Halliday (1994: 88) notes that modality is the intermediate degrees between the positive or the negative poles (Halliday, 1984). Thompson (1996: 57) adds that in an offer, the modality concerns the degree of willingness or inclination of the speaker to fulfill an offer. The use of epistemic modality recurs more frequently in non-native data rather than in native data. As Hunston and Thomson (1999) stated that evaluative stance is the writer's or speaker's sense of the probability or a necessity of a statement, the discourse functions of epistemic modality are considered to express evaluative stance of the writers (i.e., may, would, can, etc).

- a. An evaluation **should** be carried out
- b. Different students from different places **may** not feel and get the same benefits
- c. On the other hand, those students **must** be treated and tested the same way
- d. Therefore, the students' responses **would** be useful as the supplementation and complementary consideration
- e. The optimum use **can** be made of the strong points, whilst the weaker ones **can** be optimized through adoption or by substituting materials from other books.

From the example above, the authors present their evaluative stance in different meaning. The statement in (a) that is *should* is commonly used to make recommendations or give advice. It can also be used to express obligation as well as expectation. The assumption in (a) and (b) is weak argument. The modal *may* means that the author did not absolutely certain in his/her statement. In (e), the author shows their confidence of truth. He/she is totally in no doubt toward his/her statement. They consider that something can be done after the epistemic modality. In (c) *must* conveys deontic meaning in terms of obligation of high degree (Suhadi, 2011).

Extraposed 'it'

It considers to show that the evaluations were attributed to identify the source. The thing evaluated is in the to-clause, whereas evaluative category is showed by adjective group.

- a. **It** is not easy to find a perfect match between the students' needs and the learning requirements on the one side, and what the textbooks contain on the other side
- b. Therefore, **it** challenged me as the teachers to ensure that the text-book is appropriate regarding the students' needs, interests, and sociocultural backgrounds
- c. Teachers find **it** difficult to achieve competencies of the large number of students in a limited time

The use of extraposed *it*, predicative adjective, and *to* clauses controlled by adjective are work together to generate a text that express authors' personal stance toward the proposition in *to/that* clauses in an impersonal way. It means that their personal stance is back grounded and not directly attributed to specific individual. It shows that the researchers tend to create the text back grounded and not directly attributed to specific individual.

Communication Verb

Communication verbs are found more often in native data rather than non-native. There are many kinds of verb found in the data. Commonly they are followed by *that* clause controlled by such a verb. It means that the authors express their attitude toward the proposition in the *that* clause and is typically realized by the controlling predicate.

- a.who **states that** the textbook refers to the content standard provided by The National Education Standard Institution (BSNP)
- b. Most of EFL learners **believe that** learning grammar is not easy and it is a complex, uninteresting, and tiresome task
- c. Nevertheless, most linguists **think that** grammar is a major part of language competency and acquisition

The use of communication verb in the examples above show that the authors present their argument in constructing their introduction. The report verbs such as *states*, *believe*, *think*, etc are mostly found when they present previous studies. That includes the expression of argument to discursively explore issue while carrying a more evaluative elements in reporting other researcher's work.

The use of linguistic features of evaluative stance in discussion section that frequently used are personal pronoun, then followed by epistemic modality, extraposed 'it', and the lowest is communication verb.

CONCLUSION

Linguistic features of evaluative stance found in all articles as the source of data. The most frequent evaluative stance used is personal pronoun (88), then followed by epistemic modality (84), extraposed 'it' (62) and the lowest is communication verb (27). For the use of linguistic features of evaluative stance, they are widely used in articles especially for using personal pronoun. It reveals clearly that authors state their presence directly and confidently. They also involve the readers in the topic they are discussing. While for epistemic modality used by the authors to indicate the degree to which an observation is possible, probable, likely, certain, permitted, or prohibited. Extraposed 'it' is to identify the source that was being mentioned before. Otherwise, authors rarely used communication verbs in their articles. It means that he/she had more variative way to deal with their writing to reduce redundance words. Moreover, it indicates lack of expression of argument to discursively explore issue while carrying a more evaluative elements in reporting other researcher's work. Hopefully, this study has more insight and contribution for one who is interested in this field.

SUGGESTION

For further researchers are suggested to limit the data in order to know the difference well, such as comparing between native and outer or expanding

circle of English. It can also compare English and Indonesian, Indian, etc. for more focus result. Moreover, the present study has only analyzed 10 articles for, for further research who is interested in this topic, it is expected to analyze a larger data in order to get more reliable result. Finally, this study is expected to have some contributions for novice learners especially from linguistic field in order to have more understandable and reference related to linguistic features of evaluative stance.

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