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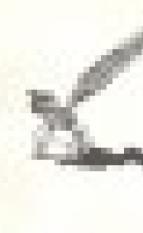


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徐宏亮 著

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1971年生,南京大学外国语言学与应用语言学博士,阜阳师范学院教授。先后在省级以上学术期刊发表专业学术论文20余篇,主持和参与科研、教研项目10余项、参编教材1部。曾获安徽省教学成果三等奖。担任安徽省人事厅引智工作英语翻译、安徽省外国语言文学学会理事等。

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Introduction

This study is to analyze evaluative discourse in the context of English academic writing, with special reference to the use of authorial stance markers by Chinese advanced learners of English at the doctoral level and native or near-native English expert writers. There is a strong underlying pedagogic intention in this study to make the nature of evaluative discourse more apparent, accessible, and available for novice academic writers. The content of this study applies most immediately to English for Academic Purposes (Robinson, 1991), a subdivision of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The objective is to reveal the ways in which academic knowledge is socially constructed in and through interpersonal discourse.

0.1 Motivation for the study

This section explains the factors which motivate the choice of the present research topic and the data upon which this study is based.

0. 1. 1 Inadequate use of authorial stance markers in Chinese EFL writings

The focus of this study is on the use of authorial stance markers by Chinese advanced learners of English. The interest grew out of my own experience of teaching and researching in English academic discourse at tertiary level, and my first-hand recognition of the difficulties many college and university students experienced in academic English writing.

In their process of preparing English academic papers or doing research-related work, Chinese teachers and students in colleges and universities come across the persistently discouraging issue of how to show their evaluative stance toward, or critical opinions on, other researchers' findings. Teachers often find a lack of critical perspective in students' work, which seems to show that students are not equipped with the ability to question or evaluate knowledge. When they do show their stance towards other researchers or their findings, students may more often than not experience some difficulties in using evaluative linguistic resources appropriately and adequately in academic discourse. Some teachers may even find difficulty in assisting students to develop a critical stance in exploring and constructing knowledge. This apparent lack of critique in students' writing is sometimes accounted for in the literature in terms of naivety, unwillingness, or incapability. For instance, Groom (2000) suggests that many L2 student writers do not have a clear understanding of the nature and function of argument as an academic genre. They do not appreciate that they are expected to develop a position and mark their authorial stance in relation to a question, issue or field, or a position in relation to the contributions of other sources within a field. They are unaware of the fact that an adequate and appropriate use of evaluative stance markers is required in academic research texts. Alternatively, L2 writers may fail to attribute a proposition clearly to an author and thus be held to be responsible for a proposition that they actually do not agree with; they may be too dependent on source texts and fail to achieve a distinctive voice in their own text. Chinese EFL writers are sometimes found even unwilling or reluctant to express their

authorial stance and posit a critical view of a published author whom they regard as necessarily having greater insight or they may simply lack confidence that they have in fact understood the crucial aspects of what they have read.

To express authorial stance appropriately in English is a complex task for language learners, which is critical to successful academic writing. To be effective, writers need to make claims and assertions which academic readers judge to be warranted and which reflect appropriate social interactions. Statements must not indicate the extent of the writer's conviction in their truth, but also convey a suitable degree of deference and modesty to the audience (Coates, 1987; Stubbs, 1986).

Researchers have noted that advanced learners, even though they have mastered the basic rules of syntax and morphology, still experience difficulty in the adept use of rhetorical skills, especially the construction of authorial stance in their academic research discourse (Lorenz, 1998; Petch-Tyson, 1998). These skills allow the writers to use language flexibly to adopt positions, express points of view and signal allegiances (Stubbs, 1986). The problems of manipulating epistemic stance in academic discourse, for example, even persist for L2 writers at the postgraduate level where PhD supervisors are often required to counsel the need for appropriate degrees of qualification and confidence in expressing claims (Dudley-Evans, 1992: 47). Therefore, mastering English academic discourse is not restricted to mastering English vocabulary, morphology, and the genre schemata of the discipline in question. It is also crucial to master the rhetorical strategies and genre practices specific to English academic discourse. The ability to manage personal stance in academic discourse is important for researchers who want to express themselves and read academic texts in English.

Few studies so far are specifically directed to the use of authorial stance markers by Chinese EFL writers in their academic research