

Investigation of Evidentials' use in Research Articles on Applied Linguistics

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Abstract:

This paper is devoted to the analysis of the types and frequency of evidentials used in a corpus of research articles in Applied Linguistics. The corpus of this research consists of 60 research articles, randomly selected from Open Access Journals. In each of these fields: Psycholinguistics, Sociolinguistics, Discourse Studies and Educational Linguistics, fifteen Research Articles are investigated. The data were manually investigated according to Chafe's (1986) taxonomy adapted by Ifantidou (2001). The quantitative method of corpus computer-assisted analysis revealed that evidentials in Research Articles on Applied Linguistics are highly used. Explicitly, reporting, citing and inferencing are specific characteristics of this genre.

Keywords: evidentials; evidentiality; academic writing; research article; genre.

INTRODUCTION

Academic writing is one of the genres that received much interest in Linguistic studies, such as Cultural issues (Fox, 1994), Social interaction (Hyland, 2000), intertextuality (Groom, 2000) and Metadiscourse (Hyland, 1996; 1999; 2004). This genre received such interest because it represents a very important communicative act between the author(s) and the reader(s). The academic written documents have for purpose to originate, suggest, clarify, develop, discuss and share knowledge. However, it would be inappropriate in

* L'expéditeur de l'article.

this genre to share knowledge without referring to the source. The reference to source of knowledge and the mode of knowing in language is the role of the linguistic tools “Evidentials”. Thus, the investigation of evidentials would reveal some interesting results concerning sources of knowledge of Research Articles’ authors.

In this vein, Dehkordi and Allami (2012) examined the use of evidentials in academic writing to assist non-native English language researchers to better their performance in writing in this genre. However, they adapted Hyland and Tse's (2004) combined with Swales' (1990) citations’ classification and Berkenkotter and Huckin's (1995) ‘intertextuality’ as a concept in academic writing. Also, Jafarigohar and Kheiri (2017) studied the differences between Iranian (non-native) and native English researchers in the use of evidentiality in their papers. They concluded that the “adverbial” and “epistemic modality” were the most frequent evidentials. In their research, Jafarigohar and Kheiri focused on the sematic class of evidentials more than the source or mode of knowledge.

This research paper is also about the investigation of evidential markers use in research articles. However, unlike previous studies, this research is based on Chafe’s (1986) taxonomy adapted by Ifantidou (2001) that focuses on mode and source of knowledge. Furthermore, the focus of this paper is the amount of the evidentials used and if they can be identified as characteristics of this genre. This is to say that this research paper aims at responding to two fundamental questions: first, what are the most frequent modes of knowledge used by Research Article’s authors in Applied Linguistics? And, second, could the most frequently used evidentials be identified as characteristics of the Research Articles on Applied Linguistics?

To answer these questions, a corpus of 40 Research Articles on Applied linguistics (specifically in Psycholinguistics, Sociolinguistics, Discourse Studies and Educational Linguistics) are investigated using UMA corpus tool. The research is based on quantitative method, in the sense that the results are the consideration of the most frequent evidential types.

To this end, this research paper is initiated with an Introduction to the topic where the issue and structure are briefed. Then, the second section, entitled Conceptual Framework, reviews the fundamental

notions: evidentiality, evidentials and their classifications. The third section develops on the methodology used to investigate evidentials in the corpus under study. In the fourth section, the results are discussed to come up with the fifth and final section; that is the conclusion, in which the frequently used evidentials research articles must be established as characteristics of this genre.

1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Franz Boas established the term ‘evidentiality’ in 1947. He described a set of suffixes that reflect the speaker's source of knowledge and certainty about the knowledge expressed (1911-1971, as cited in Dendale & Tasmowski, 2001). Furthermore, he referred to these as "Suffixes expressing subjective relation... those expressing subjective knowledge" (**Mushin, 2001, p. 17**). According to Mushin (2001), evidentiality was discovered as a purely morphological feature of language, with evidential markers being morphemes, suffixes, and small grammatical units that reflect personal knowledge.

Evidentiality is adopted as “marking one’s information source indicates how one learnt something” (**Aikhenvald, 2004, p. 1**), it “...is the grammatical and/or lexical codification of source of knowledge” (**Yıldız, 2018, p. 9**), as argued by Dendale and Tasmowski (2001). An example of this phenomenon is provided by Lee (1959) from Wintu language:

"The Wintu never say it is bread. They say, 'It looks-to-me bread' or 'It feels-to-me bread' or 'I-have-heard-it-to-be bread' or 'I-infer-from-evidence-that-it-is-bread' or 'I-think-it-to-be bread', or, vaguely and timelessly, 'according-to-my-experience-be bread'" (**Dendale & Tasmowski, 2001, p. 339**)

This example clarifies the concept of evidentiality and demonstrates how the source of information is stated in Wintu. These markers of evidentiality in a statement are called ‘Evidentials’.

Evidentials are morphemes, words, phrases, and expressions that are employed in speech to identify the mode of knowing as well as the source of the knowledge (**Mushin, 2001**). Jakobson (1986) used the term ‘evidential’ for the first time in 1957, and it became widely accepted by the middle of the 1960s (as cited in Aikhenvald, 2004). It is important to note that French linguist Lazard (1957) was one of the first linguists to explore evidential meanings known as

‘l’inférenciel’ (as cited in Aikhenvald, 2007).

In accordance with linguistic requirements, Fetzer and Oishi (2014) divide evidentials into two categories: Languages that must have evidentiality are called E1 (evidentiality 1) languages. In this category, Evidentials are a set of over-coded morpho-syntactic markers to mark visual, auditory, audiovisual, sensory, reported or referred evidence (**Boas, 1911, as cited in Fetzer & Oishi, 2014**); these markers are mostly "closed class, generally unmodifiable, often obligatory, frequently bound morphemes" state Davis, Potts, and Speas (2007) as cited in (**Aikhenvald, Information source and evidentiality: what can we conclude., 2007, p. 2**). This idea is supported by an understanding of evidentiality in grammar, add Fetzer and Oishi (**2014, p. 322**). Some of the languages that belong to this category are “Tariana (Arawak), Matses (Panoan), Makah (Wakashan), Hup (Makú), Quechua and Aymara” (**Aikhenvald, Information source and evidentiality: what can we conclude., 2007, p. 2**). In this category, as stated by Aikhenvald (2007) the absence of evidential markers in the clauses is a grammatical mistake.

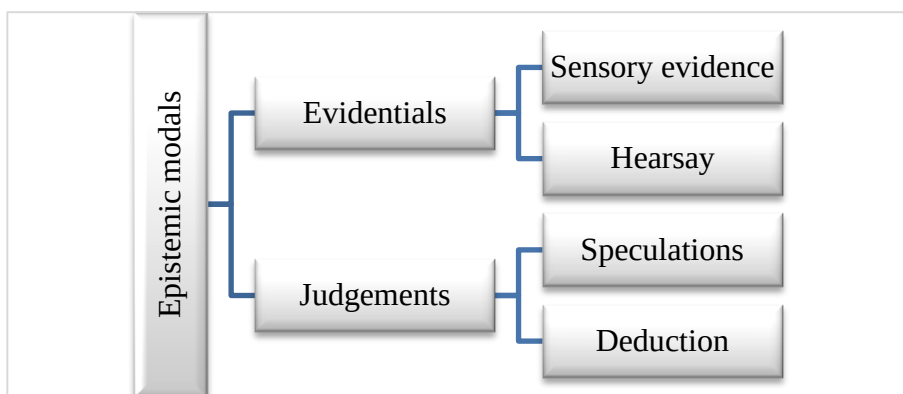
Differently from E1 languages, the E2 languages category stands for Evidentiality as an option. In this category of languages, evidential use relies on the interlocutor. When the markers are a variety of linguistic devices (nouns, verbs, modal auxiliaries/verbs), quotations, expressions, or even non-verbal indicators like facial expressions or air quotes, argue Fetzer and Oishi (2014). Similar to this, Aikhenvald (2007) defines lexical evidentials as the representation of evidential meaning by means of a variety of lexical components, primarily "adverbial, parenthetical, and particle constructions" (**Aikhenvald, Information source and evidentiality: what can we conclude., 2007, p. 2**)

In the English language, as an optional evidential language, a wide range of evidentials exist. The evidentials are represented as lexical elements, adverbs, and numerous statements used. According to Lazard (2001), English and French serve as models for lexical evidential languages whose verb systems lack morphological evidential signals. Similar to Mushin (2001), who concurs that the English language is plagued by an absence of morphological evidentials. The evidential system in the English language is more

typological (lexical) than morphological, although this does not imply that there are no grammatical evidentials.

The evidentials' classification in the English language is differently perceived by scholars. For instance, Palmer's (1986) perception determines evidentials as epistemic modals. He distinguishes evidentials to hearsay and sensory evidence. However, both speculation and deduction are considered judgement markers rather than evidentials. Consider Palmer's schema beneath:

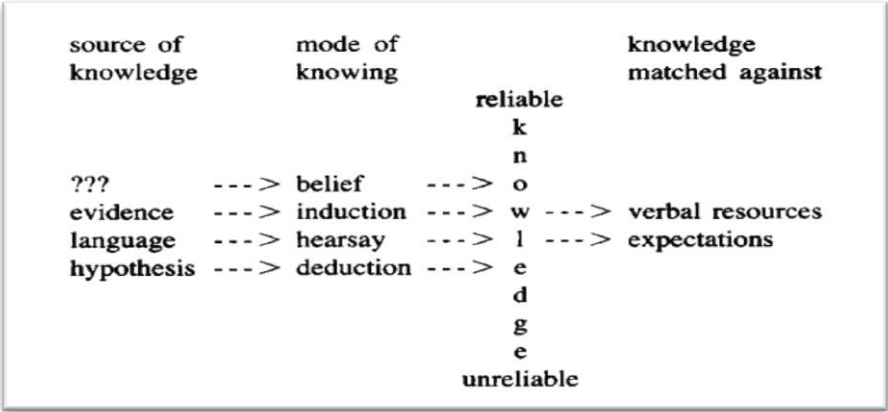
Fig.1. Palmer's model of Epistemic Modality



Source: Palmer (1986) as cited in (Mushin, 2001, p. 25)

Alongside with Palmer (1986), Chafe's (1986) perception is one of the earliest categorizations of evidentials. Chafe's classification essentially depends on the mode of knowing. Consider the following schema:

Fig.2. Chafe’s (1986) schema of evidentiality



Source: Chafe, 1986, p. 263

This significant schema is utilized by many researchers, including Biber and Finegan (1989), Mushin (2001), Ifantidou (2001) and many others. Evidentials classification in this research is fundamentally indebted to Chafe’s categorisation, which is based on the mode of knowing. Each mode represents an evidential category. This is to say that the evidentials investigated in the corpus of this research paper are Belief Evidentials (BE), Induction Evidentials (IE), Hearsay Evidentials (HE) and Deduction Evidentials (DE), in addition to Sensory Evidentials (SE) that are adapted by Ifantidou (2001). In the following, each of these evidentials modes is developed:

First, *Belief Evidentials* are used to express knowledge of which people are truly convinced (**Chafe, 1986**). It is conveyed in a speech through the following markers: ‘to think’, ‘to guess’, ‘to suppose’, ‘to know’, ‘to suspect’ and ‘in my opinion’...

Second, *Induction evidentials*: according to Chafe (1986), the English language frequently relies on conclusions without citing the source of the information. The author/speaker chooses to convey the inferences s/he derives from an unidentified source of knowledge. The modal verb ‘must’, the verb ‘to seem’, the adverb ‘evidently’ or the adjective ‘obvious’ are frequently used in conversation to express induction (Chafe, 1986).

Third, *Sensory evidentials* are the expressions used to converse statements indicating specific perceptual events that lead to such information. Whitt (2010, p. 3) declares that perception types of evidence are visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory and gustatory.

Chafe (1986) does not categorize the sensory mode of knowing in his schema of evidentiality. Yet, he classifies ‘sensory evidence’ as a source of inductive mode of knowing. He did, however, cite a number of perceptive verbs as sensory evidence. However, Ifantidou (2001) followed Chafe's (1986) taxonomy, which is referenced in Yildiz (2018), and adopted ‘sensory evidence’ as a form of knowing.

Fourth, *Hearsay evidentials* are expressions based on the hearing action from others (Chafe, 1986). Hearsay is expressed in discourse by a variety of phrases: ‘X says’, ‘I’ve been told’, ‘X told me’, ‘X said’, and ‘I hear’. Chafe (1986, pp. 268-9) adds indirect devices of hearsay like ‘seems’, ‘supposed to’ and ‘apparently’. Also, Ifantidou (2001, p. 6) adopts as ‘X tells me’, ‘he is said’, ‘he is reputed’, ‘allegedly’, and ‘reportedly’ as hearsay evidential markers. In addition, Hyland expands the list of reporting evidentials “X observe, X advocate, X establish, X ignore, X fail” (1999, as cited in Yang, 2013, p. 123).

Reporting, thus, is the process of disseminating information that primarily relies on language as a source of knowledge. This knowledge is acquired through hearing, reading, or decoding any language from sources like books, journals, newspapers, or even on social media, videos, images, gestures.

Fifth, and last, *Deduction evidentials* are expressions based on predicting/known information from some evidence (Chafe, 1986). Some deduction evidentials are: the modal verbs ‘might’ and ‘may’, and also the adjective ‘possible’ and the adverbs ‘perhaps’ and ‘probably’ as cited by Yang (2014, as cited in Yildiz, 2018, p. 1). Also, deduction is expressed using the verbs ‘to seem’ and ‘to look’ sees Whitt (2010). In addition, the verb ‘to appear’ refers to the same linguistic context as ‘seem’ based on Fetzer’s (2014) research paper. Many other inferential evidentials were observed by Ifantidou (2001) and Mithun (1986); ‘I gather’, ‘I deduce’, ‘so’, ‘presumably’, ‘consequently’, and ‘I guess’.

Differently from Chafe (1986), as mentioned above, Palmer (1986, as cited Mushin, 2001) considers deduction as a kind of judgment markers more than expressing a source of knowledge, which means these evidentials transfer the speaker's judgmental stance.

This classification is taken into consideration in this research to analyse Research Articles on Applied Linguistics. Also, Yildiz (2018) used this classification in comparing the use of evidentials in Master dissertations in English Language by non-native (Turkish) and native students.

In a similar vein, a lot of research is conducted to investigate the use of evidentials in academic writing. However, each research is distinguished by the choice of the classification of evidentials respectively to its goals. For instance, Jafarigohar and Kheiri (2017) studied the differences between Iranian (non-native) and native English researchers in the use of evidentiality in their papers. They concluded that the “adverbial” and “epistemic modality” were the most frequent evidentials. In their research, Jafarigohar and Kheiri focused on the semantic class of evidentials more than the source or mode of knowledge. From a similar perspective, Dehkordi and Allami (2012) examined the use of evidentials in academic writing to assist non-native English language researchers to better their performance in writing in Research Articles. However, they adapted Hyland and Tse's (2004) combined with Swales' (1990) citations' classification and Berkenkotter and Huckin's (1995) ‘intertextuality’ as a concept in academic writing. In the following section, the methodology used in this research is presented.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this paper, Ifantidou's (2001) adaption of Chafe's (1989) scheme of evidentials is utilized to distinguish the types of evidentials used in research articles on applied linguistics. This is to say that the research articles are scrutinized with the aim of exploring the main modes of knowing used by authors in writing RA. For this purpose, a corpus of 60 research articles (see Appendix) is analysed. Fifteen articles are randomly chosen from different specialized Journals: Psycholinguistics Journal, Journal of Sociolinguistics, Language in Society International Journal and IAFOR Journal of Education. The

chosen Research Articles on Psycholinguistics, Sociolinguistics, Discourse Studies and Educational Linguistics are abbreviated to RAP, RAD, RAS and RAE, respectively. These articles were recently published (**i.e.: published in the period from 2018 to 2023**).

Moreover, the different types of evidentials (Belief, Induction, Deduction, Sensory and Hearsay) are manually annotated and calculated using the UMA corpus. The quantitative results refer to the frequency of occurrence of each type of the evidentials that reflect the source of information the researcher is based on in his/her article. It may also refer to the research articles' features of the specific domain that are known as genre's characteristics.

The lexical framework investigated in this paper is, as previously stated by Ifantidou's (2001) based on Chafe's (1986) perception, adapted as seen in the following Table:

Table 1. Chafe's (1986) and Ifantidou's (2001) adapted taxonomy

Mode of knowing	Belief	Induction	Sensory	Hearsay	Deduction
Evidential markers	Think thought guess guessed suppose supposed suspect suspected know knew In my opinion remember remembered recall recalled recollect recollected Believe Believed in fact,	Must Obvious Evidently Presumably must have	See saw look looks looked seem seemed seems notice noticed hear heard sounds sounded feel feels felt taste tastes tasted	Tell tells told say says said hear hears heard Supposed to Apparently apparent Reported reportedly Alleged allegedly (reportong verbs) (citation	Should Presumably Can Could Would May Perhaps Might Possible possibly Probably guess

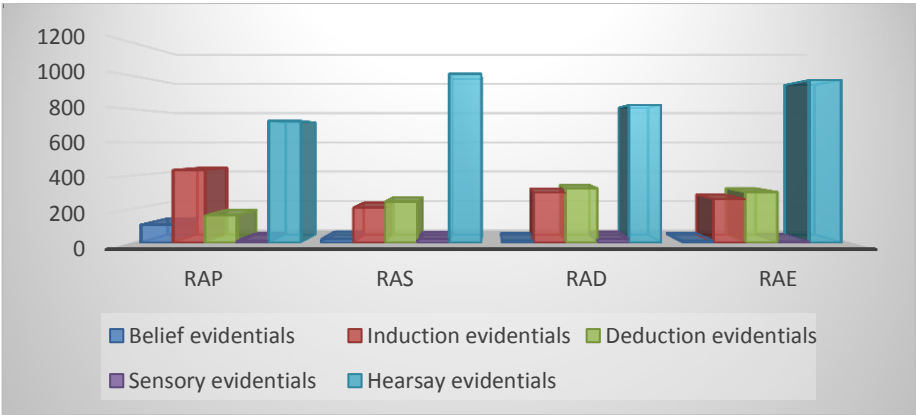
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3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section of the paper is devoted to the presentation and discussion of results. It is the study of evidentials use in research articles as quantitative results. The results of the investigation of evidentials in research articles are exposed in graphs for a better visualization.

The findings of the investigation of evidentials in research articles are exposed in Figure (3) below. The investigation generally indicates a high frequency of Hearsay markers, which sounds reasonable because of the importance of the theoretical background to the research. Furthermore, the minimal use (or absence) of Sensory evidentials must also seem plausible in this genre (Research Articles on Applied Linguistics).

Fig.3. Frequency of Evidentials in Applied Linguistics Research Articles



The investigation of evidentials in Sociolinguistics, Discourse Studies and Educational Linguistics Research Articles reveals approximate graphs. It demonstrates that Hearsay evidentials are shown as highly used, whereas both Induction and Deduction evidentials reflect a kind of moderate amount. Also, Sensory evidentials are minimally present (if not absent), whereas, Belief evidentials are modestly present in one subgenre and almost absent in others. This quantitative investigation

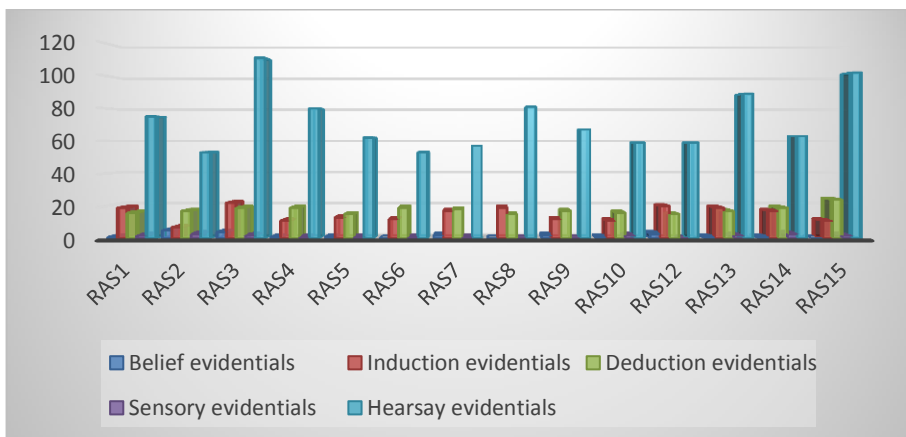
indicates that these specific genres are based on previous research (hearsay) and inference (induction and deduction).

The investigation of evidentials in Psycholinguistics Research Articles, however, shows that Hearsay and Deduction evidentials are moderately used in comparison to other RAs. However, unlike other RAs, both Belief and Induction evidentials are highly used. This quantitative investigation reveals that this specific genre of research writing is based on previous research (hearsay), induction and belief.

It must be noted that some research articles within the previously mentioned subgenres (RAP, RAS, RAD and RAE) reflect different use of evidentials. Therefore, the study of evidentials in each subgenre is presented in the following.

In Research Articles on Sociolinguistics, it is obvious that both Hearsay and inferential evidentials are the most used evidentials. Furthermore, the annotation reveals the use of some belief and/or sensory evidentials in some articles such as RAS2, RAS3 and RAS14 as shown in Figure 4 below.

Fig.3. Frequency of Evidentials in Applied Linguistics Research Articles



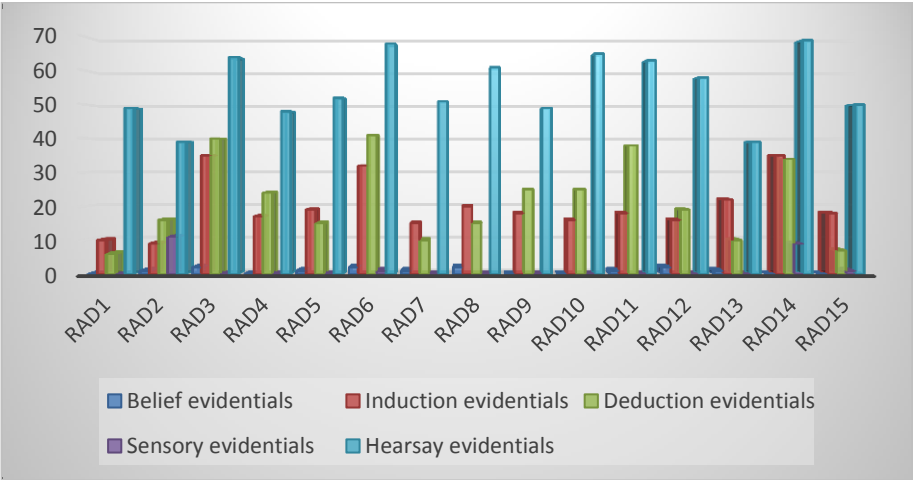
Thus, in this subgenre, the frequency of use of Hearsay evidentials is so huge that it exceeds 50 expressions and reaches 110 expressions in some RAs, whereas Induction and Deduction evidentials are modestly used. They are counted between 10 and 20 expressions. This is to say that one of the characteristics of Research Articles on Sociolinguistics

Investigation of Evidentials use in Research Articles on Applied Linguistics

as a subgenre is the high use of Hearsay evidentials and the modest use of inferential evidentials. In other words, the authors of RAS strongly depend on citing and reporting others’ work and occasionally use inferences.

Similarly, the investigation of evidentials use in Research Articles on Discourse Studies shows an interesting amount of Hearsay evidentials. However, the use of inferential evidentials varies from one article to another. Also, few Sensory expressions are used, as in RAS2 as shown in Figure 5 below.

Fig.5. Frequency of Evidentials in Discourse Studies Research Articles

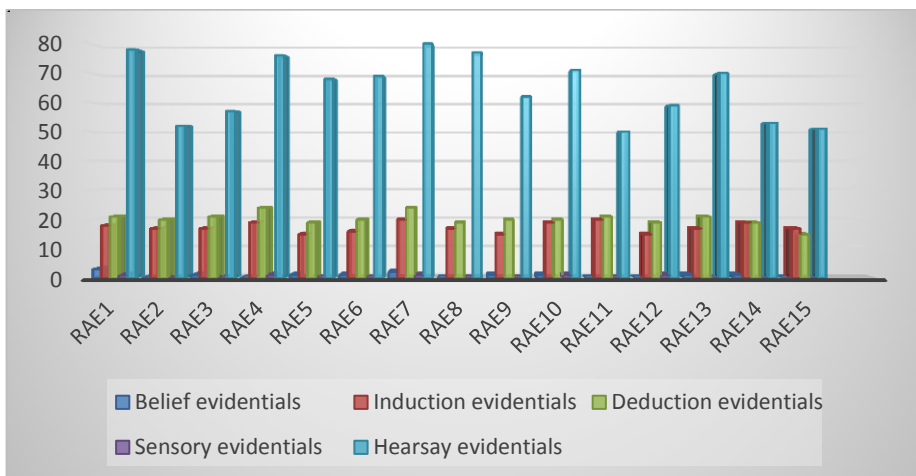


Generally, one of the characteristics of Research Articles on Discourse Studies as a subgenre is the high use of Hearsay evidentials, at least 48 expressions are used in each RA. Also, the use of inferential evidentials is deemed to be important depending on the research goals. In other words, the authors of RAD depend on citing and reporting others’ work and inferences. However, other sources of knowledge like sense and belief may sometimes be used in regard to the studied discourse (corpus).

Interestingly, Research Articles on Educational Linguistics’ graphs are kind of similar. All the articles contain approximately the same quantity of Hearsay and inferential evidentials. Still, Belief and

Sensory evidentials are rarely utilized in some articles, such as RAE1, RAE4 and RAS7 as shown in Figure 6 underneath.

Fig.6. Frequency of Evidentials in Educational Linguistics Research Articles

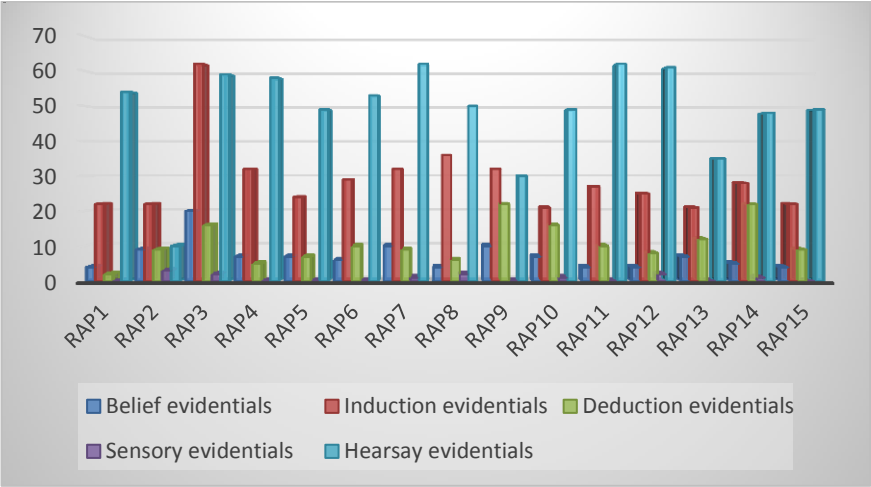


Hence, same as Sociolinguistics Research Articles, one of the characteristics of Research Articles on Educational Linguistics is the high use of Hearsay evidentials and a modest use of inferential evidentials. Differently saying, the authors of RAE highly depend on reporting and citing others' work and inferencing.

Differently from the previously mentioned subgenres, the investigation of evidentials in Psycholinguistics Research Articles shows that Hearsay and Induction evidentials are the most used evidentials with a moderate quantity. However, Belief evidentials are used in all articles. Consider Figure 7 underneath.



Fig.7. Frequency of Evidentials in Psycholinguistics Research Articles



This quantitative investigation reveals that this specific subgenre of research writing is based on previous research (hearsay), Induction and Belief. This means that one of the characteristics of Research Articles on Psycholinguistics is the use of Hearsay, Induction and Belief evidentials.

To sum up, the investigation of evidentials’ use in Research Articles on Applied Linguistics shows that specific evidentials are commonly utilized in this genre. The common use can be admitted as a characteristic of this genre. This is to say that Hearsay and inferential evidentials are inevitably used in Research Articles writing. Furthermore, Belief evidentials are deemed to be an additional characteristic to Psycholinguistics Research Articles. However, this does not mean that other evidentials are completely absent.

It is worth noting that some research articles are equipped with a significant amount of evidentials, such as RAP3 and RAP6, unlike other research articles that contain a small number of evidentials, like in both RAP1 and RAP1. Furthermore, it is observed that the articles with a high number of evidentials mostly belong to Arab authors. Despite the fact that this observation is motivating and worth investigation, it falls out of the interest of this paper.

It is also worth stating that some research articles show equal use of inferential evidentials (Induction and Deduction), where others show unequal use. This point invokes many questions concerning the use, perception and utility of these two specific types of evidentials (Induction and Deduction). In particular, as mentioned above, Palmer (1986, as cited Mushin, 2001) considers Deduction as a kind of judgment marker more than expressing a source of knowledge, which means that this type of evidential transfers the speaker's judgmental stance (hedge responsibility) (cf. Chafe, 1986). Since the main focus of this research is the quantitative use of evidentials, this point, also, falls out of the interest of this research, though, it seems to be an interesting path to investigate.

CONCLUSION

One genre that has drawn a lot of interest in linguistic studies is academic writing. The goal of academic writing is to generate, suggest, clarify, develop, discuss, and exchange knowledge. As known, sharing knowledge without citing the original source would be improper in this genre. Therefore, Research Articles' authors (scholars, researchers, PhD candidates and MA students) indicate the source of knowledge they are based on in their research. The verbal linguistic tools used to refer to sources of knowledge and mode of knowing are "Evidentials".

In this paper, evidentials as tools of indicating authors' sources of knowledge are quantitatively investigated. The aim after such investigation is knowing which evidentials are most frequently used in this genre, and thus, identifying one of the characteristics of this genre concerning evidentials use and authors' used sources of knowledge.

Consequently, the investigation for evidentials' use in Research Articles on Applied Linguistics shows that specific evidentials are commonly utilized in this genre. These evidentials are Hearsay and inferential evidentials. Furthermore, Belief evidentials are deemed to be an additional characteristic to Psycholinguistics Research Articles. However, this does not mean that other evidentials are completely absent.

Moreover, this research came up with important observations that could be considered as future research. On one hand, the first observation consists of the quantity of evidentials; i.e., some research

Investigation of Evidentials use in Research Articles on Applied Linguistics

articles are fortified by a significant amount of evidentials, while other research articles contain a few amount of evidentials. Furthermore, it is observed that the articles with a high quantity of evidentials mostly belong to Arab authors. Differently saying, the cultural backgrounds of Research Articles' authors could be involved with their choice and use of evidentials.

On the second hand, the second observation concerns the choice of the inferential evidentials between Induction and/or Deduction evidentials. The variation in the choice of use of these two types of evidentials must be motivated by reasons. Thus, the investigation of the author's perception of these two types of evidentials and their impact on the readers must lead to interesting results concerning the epistemic value and author's stance (cf. Chafe, 1986; Palmer, 1986; Mushin, 2013).

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Appendices

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