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Authorial presence in academic discourse: A marker of discipline

Keywords: *Metadiscourse, self-mentions, first person plural pronouns, discipline.*

Written academic discourses, including research articles, have often materialized via objective interpersonal strategies, namely abstract rhetors, passive constructions, and nominalizations. However, intrusive or subjective strategies, i.e., self-mentions, which deal with the explicit portrayal of authorial selves, appear to integrate the impersonal structures. As a rhetorical strategy, self-mentions help writers intrude into the discourse so as to present their authorial persona and credentials, market themselves, and demarcate their original contribution to the field. Here, an interdisciplinary approach is taken to examine explicit authorial presence in a comparable corpus of forty research articles in applied linguistics, psychology, environmental engineering, and chemistry considering: i) the extent to which the exclusive first person plural pronouns (*we, our, us, ours*) appear, and ii) the writers' rhetorical purposes in pronoun uses. The results show interdisciplinary variations in the frequency and the use of self-reference pronouns, particularly once the soft disciplines are set against the hard ones. The differing results across the corpus reflect the susceptibility of authorial presence to preset rhetorical cultures in the discipline which the writers are from. The results of the present study are expected to extend our understanding of disciplinary orientation to the use of self-mentions in written academic discourses in the four communities in question, particularly in the unexplored disciplines of environmental engineering and chemistry.