ADVERBIAL STANCE MARKING IN THE INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION SECTIONS OF LEGAL RESEARCH ARTICLES[1]

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Abstract: *Although scientific research articles have traditionally been taken as examples of an objective style of writing that aims to minimise researchers' voices in their texts (Gilbert and Mulkay, 1984:42), authors inevitably adopt stances towards the information presented and the target audience when writing their papers. This article explores authorial stance as expressed by adverbial markers in the introduction and conclusion sections of legal research papers. Following Biber et al. (1999), and Conrad and Biber (1999), our aim is to identify the most frequent adverbial markers of stance present in each section as indicators of (i) epistemicity, (ii) attitude, and (iii) style. We will try to show whether or not there are functional differences in the use of adverbial stance markers, and whether or not these are derived from the different communicative purposes of these sections.*

Keywords*: adverbial stance markers, attitude, epistemic, style, introduction, conclusion, research article.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The research article (hereinafter RA) is considered to be one of the most popular forms of academic writing. It has traditionally been taken as an example of an objective discursive style which aims to minimise researchers' voices in their texts (Gilbert and Mulkay, 1984:42). However, the conceptualisation of academic writing as "simply report[ing] or describ[ing] natural facts with almost no human intervention" where the "scientific text is regarded as a neutral descriptive medium" (Hyland, 1998:14) seems to be untenable in the case of the RA.

Authorial projection onto texts of this type has been recognised as playing a central role in the construction of scientific discourse (Hunston, 1994; Hyland, 1998; 2004; Hyland and Tse, 2004; 2005). The RA does not constitute an objective report of a piece of investigation any longer, but rather "a very complex persuasive text in which the writer needs to convince other members of the scientific community [...] of the importance of his/her work" (Rezzano, 2004:102). RAs reveal the authors' opinion about a particular subject and so reflect their value system as well as that of the community they belong to; they also serve the purpose of establishing and maintaining relationships between the authors and their audience. When writing their papers, authors inevitably adopt a position, i.e. *stance*, both towards the information presented and the target audience.

This paper seeks to explore the use of adverbial stance markers in a corpus of introductions and conclusions to RAs in the field of law written between 1998 and 2008. They belong to the *Corpus of Specialized Papers in English* compiled at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria as part of the research project *Evidentiality in a Multidisciplinary Corpus of Research Papers in English*. Our working definition of *stance* corresponds to that of Biber *et al.* (1999:966), and Conrad and Biber (1999) who take *stance* as the expression of "personal feelings, attitudes, and value judgments, or assessments". We also take the theoretical framework adopted in these works regarding the semantic categorisation of adverbial stance markers into (i) epistemic, (ii) attitude and (iii) style.

The paper is structured as follows: section 2 describes the corpus of study in some detail. Section 3 concentrates on the theoretical framework as presented in Biber *et al.* (1999), and Conrad and Biber (1999). Section 4 presents the findings and analyses them. Section 5 contains the conclusions drawn from the present study.

2. CORPUS DESCRIPTION

The findings have been compiled from a subcorpus of RAs in the field of law written by native speakers of English between 1998 and 2008. They have been excerpted from the *Corpus of Specialized Papers in English* (CoSPE), compiled at the Institute for Technological Development and Innovation in Communications at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. CoSPE is a multidisciplinary corpus containing computing, legal and medical RAs. Specifically, the texts used for the present paper have been taken from *Cambridge Law Journal*, *Common Market Law Review*, *European Business Law Review*, *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, and *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, among others.

This study focuses on two rhetorical sections of the RAs, namely, introductions and conclusions. Due to the different rhetorical functions fulfilled by each section in the overall structure of the papers, introductions and conclusions can be considered as constituting the sections where the expression of authorial stance seems to be most clearly visible. While introductions aim to establish the significance of the study, conclusions provide generalisations about the major findings, evaluating their validity. In this sense, both sections are characterised by a strong interpersonal component.

The introduction is, perhaps, the section most often studied in the structural organisation of the RA. Strictly speaking, it is a part of the RA together with others such as the abstract, methodology, results, discussion and conclusion. Thus, the introduction is a part-genre (Dudley-Evans, 1997). However, Swales (1990) has shown that RA introductions have a very well-defined purpose and a recurrent structural organisation and so Bhatia (1997) refers to RA introductions as genres in their own right.

Swales' (1990:141) *Create a Research Space* (CARS) model has been widely used for the assessment of this section in RAs belonging to varied disciplines such as computer engineering (Posteguillo, 1999), electronic engineering (Cooper, 1985), environmental science (Samraj, 2002), medicine (Ngozi-Nwogu, 1997), social science (Crookes, 1986) and software engineering (Anthony, 1999). The research conducted in these works shows that there is disciplinary variation in terms of the constituent moves that can be found in introductions. Anthony (1999), for instance, has identified a new move in the introduction of software engineering RAs that consists of defining and exemplifying those terms which pose some difficulty for the readers.

Despite these variations by discipline, the pattern identified by Swales is nonetheless "frequently found in more or less its pure form in many disciplines" (Dudley-Evans, 2000). The legal RAs analysed for the present paper do indeed show a uniform structural organisation following the CARS model.

Conclusions, by contrast, do not always stand as independent sections in the RA macro-organisation, where they may be included in the discussion section occupying a closing position (Dudley-Evans 1986; 1994). We have observed that their treatment as independent sections seems to be related to the discipline the RA belongs to: while most RAs in humanities and social sciences tend to present conclusions or concluding remarks independently, the same does not apply to RAs in computing and natural sciences.

Conclusions in all the RAs considered for this research are presented independently from the discussion section. They tend to have a three-move structure: (i) summary of the study, (ii) evaluation of the study, including indications of its significance and limitations, and (iii) recommendations for future research. This pattern has been also identified in RAs in applied linguistics, as shown in Ruiying and Allison (2003:379).

We have restricted our search for adverbial stance markers to the introductory and concluding sections of forty research articles. We have analysed a total of 50000 words approximately. Since adverbial stance markers are highly context-sensitive items, the frequency count and their classification as attitudinal, epistemic or stylistic following Biber *et al.* (1999), and Conrad and Biber (1999) has been carried out manually.

3. STANCE

Stance is a linguistic construct which refers to the complex relations that can be established between the literal, the figurative and the functional meanings of discourse (Precht, 2003:239). Conceptually, it remains somewhat elusive because of the multiple linguistic and paralinguistic resources, i.e. lexis, grammar and prosody, that can be taken as stance indicators. As a matter of fact, the use of this term in research remains as problematic: definitions and, consequently, categorisations are not necessarily equivalent across scholarly works leading to a wide array of disparate linguistic elements that fall under the label of *stance*. On the other hand, there are works dealing with the same type of resources, but labelled differently. Some of the labels used in the literature include *evaluation* (Hunston and Thompson, 1999), *evidentiality* (Chafe and Nichols, 1986; Nuyts, 2001), *hedging* (Salager-Meyer, 1994; 1995; Hyland, 1996; 2000), *modality* (Palmer, 1979; Hoye, 1997) and *metadiscourse* (Hyland, 2005).

Evaluation, *metadiscourse* and *stance* appear to be broadly equivalent concepts; they are all theoretically generous terms which cover a wide range of resources, be they linguistic or otherwise. Hunston and Thompson (1999:5) take *evaluation* as a "broad cover term for the expression of the speaker or writer's attitude or stance towards, or viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about". According to this definition, and strictly speaking, authorial stance together with attitude, viewpoint and feelings are to be included under the general superordinate term *evaluation*. However, it seems to us that the terms *evaluation* and *stance* could be easily used interchangeably in this definition since they both imply the qualification of propositional information from the author's point of view.

Hyland (2005:16) points out that "*metadiscourse* has always been something of a fuzzy term, often characterized as simply 'discourse about discourse' or 'talk about talk'". He further notes that the term overlaps with others such as *evaluation*, *stance* and *engagement*, and provides the following definition: "metadiscourse is the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community" (Hyland, 2005:37).

As already stated, *evaluation*, *metadiscourse* and *stance* could be all used to analyse the interactional dimension of language use. Nevertheless, narrowing down alternatives seems to be in order when there is so much terminological variation. We have opted for the *stance* framework developed in Biber *et al.* (1999), and Conrad and Biber (1999) since it offers a semantic taxonomy of stance markers that facilitates the identification of resources used by writers to express their stances.

Our working definition for the concept of *stance* corresponds to that of the *Longman grammar of spoken and written English* (LGSWE) (Biber *et al.*, 1999:966) where it is defined, referring to non-propositional content, as the expression of "personal feelings, attitudes and value judgments, or assessments". Here the authors make a distinction between three main groups of adverbs (Biber *et al.*, 1999:763), that is, (i) circumstance adverbs, (ii) stance adverbs and (iii) linking adverbs. While circumstance adverbs pertain to the propositional content of a sentence, stance and linking adverbs do not essentially contribute to it: the former constitute a comment on that content and the latter signal the relationships that hold between the propositional content of the sentence in which they occur and that of other sentences in a given piece of discourse.

We will focus our attention on stance adverbs, which Biber *et al.* (1999), and Conrad and Biber (1999) divide into three semantic categories, namely, epistemic, attitude and style. According to the definition provided in LGSWE,

> Epistemic stance adverbials and attitude stance adverbials both comment on the content of a proposition. Epistemic markers express the speaker's judgment about the certainty, reliability, and limitations of the proposition; they can also comment on the source of the information. Attitude stance adverbials convey the speaker's attitude or value judgment about the proposition's content. Style adverbials, in contrast, describe the manner of speaking (Biber *et al.* 1999:854)

4. ANALYSIS

We have manually identified the adverbial stance markers in the introductions and conclusions of the RAs of our corpus after careful reading. The total number of words analysed is approximately 50000, but data have been normalised to 10000 words because of the varying lengths of texts. The results have been tagged as epistemic, attitude and style. Figure 1 shows the distribution of the different semantic domains in our corpus for both introductions and conclusions:
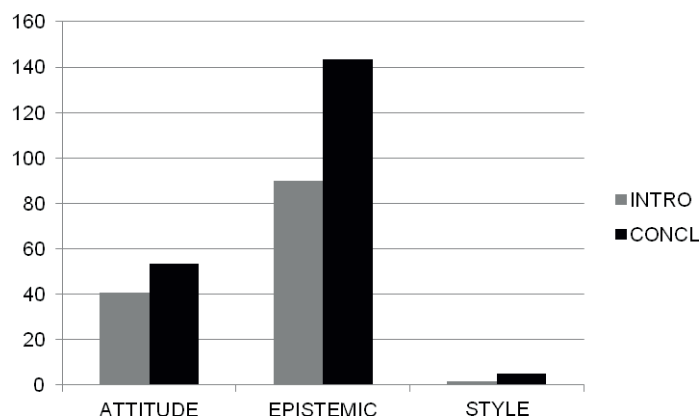

Figure 1. Distribution of semantic domains of adverbial stance markers.

The results shown here reveal a significant predominance of epistemic meanings followed by attitudinal and stylistic ones in this order. Occurrences of epistemic stance adverbials double those of the attitude type in introductions and almost triple those of the same type in conclusions. Occurrences of the style type are scant, accounting only for a couple of actual instances. In our corpus, conclusions, in contrast to introductions, seem to be the section where authorial voice as realised by adverbial stance markers can be more easily recognised. This may be so because this section serves the purpose of offering authorial claims as to the extent to which the results derived form their research may be generalised as well as suggestions about future lines of action, all of which is primarily done by evaluating the certainty and reliability of propositions.

4.1 Epistemic adverbial stance markers

Epistemic adverbial stance markers constitute by far the most common semantic category in both introductions and conclusions showing significantly higher occurrences in the latter. They can convey a number of meanings such as (i) doubt and certainty, (ii) actuality and reality, (iii) source of knowledge, (iv) limitation, (v) viewpoint or perspective and (vi) imprecision. Their distribution is shown in figure 2:
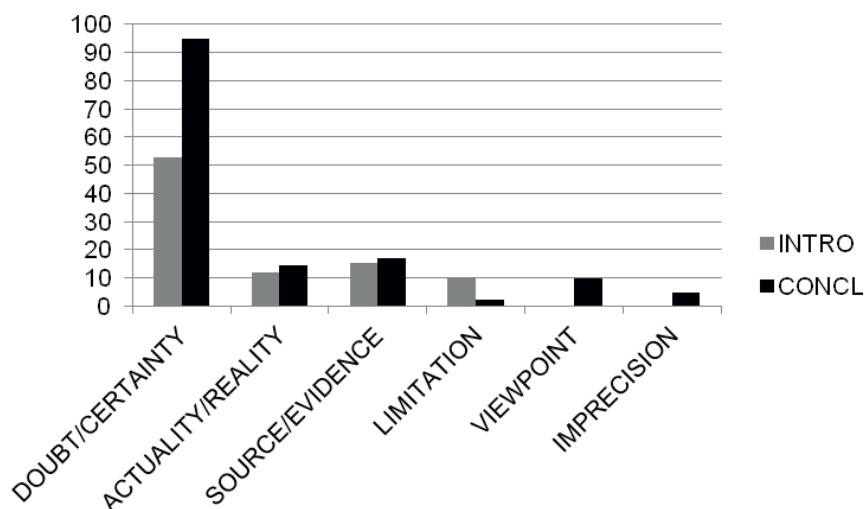

Figure 2. Distribution of epistemic stance adverbials.

Epistemic markers indicating doubt and certainty are the most frequently used with 52 occurrences in introductions and 94 in conclusions. Epistemic markers signalling source of knowledge are the second most frequent group with 15 occurrences in introductions and 17 in conclusions, followed by actuality and reality markers with 11 in introductions and 14 in conclusions. Epistemic markers signifying limitation and viewpoint or perspective present an uneven distribution in the sections analysed: we have registered 10 occurrences in introductions and 2 in conclusions in the case of the former, and 9 occurrences in conclusions in the case of the latter. Epistemic markers conveying meanings of imprecision are the least frequent of all, with 4 occurrences in conclusions. We shall now comment on those that are more frequent, that is, doubt and certainty, source/evidence, and actuality and reality.

4.1.1 Doubt and certainty

The use of epistemic stance adverbials indicating doubt and certainty qualifies the author's position as regards his/her degree of confidence in the truth of the proposition expressed ranging from "absolute judgements of certainty" to "indication[s] of belief in various levels of probability" (Biber *et al.*, 1999:854). Writers tend to favour the expression of certainty or almost certainty rather than uncertainty or doubt. While *of course*, *certainly*, *clearly* and *obviously* are often used to mark the author's highest degree of confidence with regard to the truth of a statement, *perhaps* and *probably* are used to signal some level of doubt as in the examples below:

1. The cases are well known. They are of course *Erich Gasser GmbH v MISAT Srl*, *Turner v Grovit* and *Owusu v Jackson (t/a Villa Holidays Bal Inn Villas)*. (Clarke2007commerciallitigation-INTRO)

2. There have of course been impressive advances, especially in the interpretation of legal change, and it has even become possible to detect weaknesses in some of Maitland's own pioneering essays. (Baker2000historyenglish-CONCL)

3. In order for democracy to be made to work, leaders of each block, Catholics, liberals, socialist working class and Protestants had established good working relationships, necessary in a political context in

which coalition governments were the rule […] Certainly, tolerance to the sensitivities of the various blocks was important in maintaining social equilibrium (Pakes2006ebb-INTRO)

4. Screening for domestic violence clearly must be a part of any such triage effort, as such violence can have a tremendous impact on the victim parent, the children, and on the needs of all family members. (Frederick2008questions-INTRO)

5. What will be said about the application the Brussels Convention to minority shareholders' derivative proceedings in England obviously has implications for such proceedings […]. (Boyle2000shareholder-INTRO)

In these examples, *of course*, *certainly*, *clearly* and *obviously* encode high values of probability or certainty. The primary function of *of course* in the context where it occurs is to express the writer's expectation as regards the likelihood of the event being referred to in the statement. This adverbial seeks to foreground the fact that both author and audience share some knowledge: in the case of (1), the writer seems to take for granted that his audience know about the cases dealt with in the research paper which, as explicitly stated in the immediately preceding utterance, are well known. In the case of (2), by employing this adverbial the author manifests the assumption that his readership is familiar with the way legal studies have evolved since Maitland's works on legal interpretation. The sense of *sharedness* invoked by writers in these excerpts serves to establish a bond with their audience emphasising knowledge which is supposed to be easily recognisable by members of the same discourse community.

As for *certainly*, *clearly* and *obviously*, these adverbials are used to frame the authors' absolute judgements of certainty towards the propositions expressed. They indicate their complete confidence in the certainty of the state of affairs. The authors' confident voices as portrayed here by the use of these adverbials do not seem to be simply the result of their intention to express an assured personal opinion. Contextual information indicates that these adverbs frame propositions which can be taken as conclusions of some logical reasoning where the premises involved are entertained with a high degree of confidence. This is especially the case of *clearly* and *obviously* where an evidential dimension seems to have been added as noted by Simon-Vandenbergen (2008:1531). These epistemic adverbials do ultimately indicate high levels of authorial commitment to text content by presenting information with conviction.

The adverbials used in (1) to (5) above can be taken, in general, as unmodalised expressions of the writers' perspective. Their use in a thematic position within the clause leads to the reinforcement of the assertive stance adopted by the authors. The metadiscursive model proposed by Hyland (2005) includes these resources under the label *booster*. This category encompasses those linguistic items aimed to "express certainty and emphasise the force of propositions" (Hyland, 2004:139). They have been shown to be one of the most frequently employed metadiscursive markers in texts written by experts (Hyland, 2005:133).

On the other hand, *perhaps* and *probably* in (6) and (7), respectively, signal lower levels of authorial commitment, leaving the information presented open to possible discussion:

6. And perhaps it is permissible, now that a century has passed, to begin by putting Maitland himself in a historical context. (Baker2000historyenglish-INTRO)

7. But there is probably no other contractual relation in which the law intervenes so extensively, and in most countries so consistently to aid the weaker party. (Summers2001employmentcontract-CONCL)

In (6), *perhaps* is used in the introductory section to the RA at a point where the writer states the aim of the paper which is precisely to analyse Maitland's contribution to legal interpretation. The use of *perhaps* seeks to protect the author's image by hedging a proposition in which he tries to justify investigating Maitland's works. Its use allows him to gain the benevolence of the audience trying to predispose them towards a positive reading of the paper. In (7), *probably* appears in the closing paragraph of the paper's conclusion section. It hedges the proposition which summarises the point he has been pursuing in his comparison between employment contracts and civil or commercial contracts. It is his view the one presented here and, being aware of that, he does not present it as a fact, but rather leaves readers with the possibility of choosing, according to their knowledge of the matter, if an employment contract is actually a type of contract in which the law intervenes to a significant extent to help the weaker party.

The use of *perhaps* and *probably* contrasts with that of *of course*, *certainly*, *clearly* and *obviously*. *Perhaps* and *probably* are hedging devices that mitigate the authors' evaluation of the likelihood of the event described in the proposition. Hedges are defined as devices which "indicate either a) a lack of complete commitment to the truth value of an accompanying proposition, or b) a desire not to express the commitment categorically" (Hyland,

1998:1). In the contexts above and in terms of pragmatic effects, both *perhaps* and *probably* serve the purpose of minimising the risk of criticism against the authorial persona.

4.1.2 Source and/or evidence

Epistemic stance adverbials indicating source and/or evidence constitute the second group in the frequency of occurrence. They are used to make comments on the source of knowledge and/or the type of evidence authors have for the information presented. It should be noted here that scholars hold very different positions as for the relationship between epistemicity and evidentiality; for instance, the inclusive view adopted by Biber *et al.* (1999) and followed in this paper is supported by Chafe (1986) and Palmer (1979), and more recently by Kranich (2009) and Ortega-Barrera and Torres-Ramírez (2010). Other authors opt for a disjunctive approach, notably De Haan (1999), Cornillie (2009) and Alonso-Almeida and Cruz-García (forthcoming), among others. There is still another perspective from which this issue can be approached, i.e. intersective or overlapping (Van der Auwera and Plungian 1998; Carretero 2004).

Adverbials identifying the specific source of information rather than those which leave it unspecified are preferred in the texts analysed. *According to* is very often used to this end as well as others like the ones shown in the instances below:

8. The bush war 1981-1986 was, according to an NRA political commissar, no mere elite power struggle; it was a revolution aimed at replacing the old regime, "with structures moulded during the course of the struggle by the masses in accordance with their interests and the demands of the times" (Ondoga ori Amaza, 1998, p. 28). (Baker2004popular-INTRO)

9. According to the United Kingdom report: "The general picture is one of refusal to acknowledge the need for special principles to respond to the many feature of the employment relation which may be described compendiously as inequality of bargaining power". (Summers2001employmentcontract-CONCL)

10. Finally, as Carlem (2002, p. 120) so incisively points out, "the struggle for justice is always worthwhile" and one can never give up hope for more far-reaching reforms in the use of custody particularly as research has alerted as to the dangers of "carceral clawback". (Gray 2006women-CONCL)

11. However, since none of the "new speech regulators" she mentions is known as a postmodern theorist—in fact, one of them, Catharine MacKinnon, has published an article attacking postmodernism—and none advocates censorship (although they do, as Sullivan rightly notes, advocate other forms of speech regulation), it would be a mistake to trace the origin of the phrase "postmodern censorship theory" to Sullivan. (Brison2004speech-INTRO)

12. Trade mark registration of these same cultural symbols among other signs was, he said, "how our industry can cope with international competition". (Davis2004europeanconstitution-INTRO)

13. With changes to copyright law aimed at strengthening copyright protection in order to regulate the internet in the interests of right holders, investment in new company seeking to exploit for example, peer to peer technology, has apparently fallen. (Davis2004europeanconstitution-INTRO)

14. In such circumstances local initiatives by volunteers are welcome and have evidently reduced levels of mob justice to well below the African norm. (Baker2000popular-CONCL)

The attribution of information to a source constitutes an important feature of academic writing since it helps "writers to establish a persuasive epistemological and social framework for the acceptance of their arguments" (Hyland, 2004:22). Whether this framework is realised directly, as in examples (8) to (12) where quotations and explicit references to the sources are provided, or in a less direct way, as in (13) and (14), the fact is it is indicative of the author's position vis-à-vis the source of information.

The identification of the source of information in (8) and (9) is carried out in a somewhat neutral way by using the adverbial *according to* + the specification of the source of information followed by a quotation. Minimising the manipulation/interpretation of the information since no paraphrase is offered, writers intend to sound as objective as possible. Although in instances (10) and (11) the authors also specify the explicit identification of the source and a quotation, the effect is completely different because of the use of attitudinal adverbial markers like *incisively* and *rightly* that qualify the propositions in which they are embedded. In these fragments, the authors do not only acknowledge the contribution of other colleagues, but also and most importantly, side and coincide with them in their arguments and use these to support their own. Similarly, (12) contains an epistemic adverbial stance marker in the form of a finite clause where the source of information is identified and a direct quotation follows. In this

case, the writer makes use of a reporting verb, i.e. *said*, which enables her to detach herself from the proposition expressed.

Apparently and *evidently* in (13) and (14) are, in principle, perceptual evidential adverbs and so they indicate that the type of evidence the writer has for the information expressed has been acquired through the senses. This acquisition may have taken place through the senses in the first place, or inferentially, on the basis of the writer's knowledge as to the relationship holding between some events, for instance, in the case of (13), between a state of affairs A, i.e. the modifications of copyright law aimed at regulating the internet in the interests of right holders, and a state of affairs B, i.e. a decrease in the investment for the exploitation of peer to peer technology. This relationship does not necessarily hold, and so the writer uses *apparently*, thus reducing authorial commitment and hedging the proposition. In (14), the effects of the reduction of levels of mob justice thanks to the participation of volunteers are supposed to be much more than easily noticeable and so the author chooses to strengthen propositional content by employing the booster *evidently*.

4.1.3 Actuality and reality

Other epistemic adverbial stance markers present in our corpus are those indicating actuality and reality, such as the ones shown in the examples below:

15. Until the late twentieth century, there were few legal provisions for addressing biological parenthood outside of marriage. In fact, prior to 1972, there was no legal recognition of parental rights of nonmarital fathers. (Leite2007participants-INTRO)

16. Similarly, rigid occupancy guidelines and ban lists may actually prevent single mothers who wish to involve fathers in their lives from doing so. (Howard2007subsidizedhousing-CONCL)

In fact in (15) and *actually* in (16) provide a comment on the status of the proposition as a real-life fact. In (16) the use of *actually* as an indicator of reality is toned down because of the use of the *may*, whose function is that of hedging the propositional content presented. In this example, it would be difficult to determine the exact degree of authorial commitment attached to the utterance. However, under no circumstance can we say that it is high since the employment of *may* sets the upper limit.

4.2 Attitude adverbial stance markers

Attitudinal adverbial stance markers convey the speaker's attitudes, feelings, or value judgements towards the propositional content as in the examples below:

17. Unfortunately, as the women enacted their choices by engaging with their arsenal of material and discursive resources, they activated powerful 'strategic' elements which perpetuated their inability to realise their dreams of meaningful participation in the socio-economic mainstream. (Gray2006women-CONCL)

18. Surprisingly, little academic attention has been paid to one of the root *causes* of witness unavailability in domestic violence cases—state spousal privilege statutes. (Cassidy2006spousalprivileges-INTRO)

19. A third common assumption is that for international free markets to function to their potential, ideally there should be an equivalent level of intellectual property protection for all those operating in the same market. (Davis2004europeanconstitution-INTRO)

20. Curiously, though, Sullivan nowhere uses the phrase "postmodern censorship theory" in the article cited, although she does discuss a group of leftist legal theorists she dubs "the new speech regulators", arguing that they "demand a response […]" (Brison2004speech-INTRO)

21. Such separate protection is what was intended by the majority of jurisdictions in adopting peremptory challenges, and their interests should be respected and facilitated by allowing for reversal of cases involving the impairment of those interests. Hopefully, the Supreme Court will do so in Martínez-Salazar. (Childs1999peremptorychallenges-CONCL)

22. Though technological and traffic management improvements over the ensuing decades have eliminated much of the original justification for such regulations at many airports, and despite the fact that they effectively thwart efforts to achieve airline entry and pricing deregulation, they stubbornly linger on. (Dempsey2001airport-INTRO)

In contrast to epistemic stance adverbials, attitude markers cannot be so easily categorised into major areas of meaning; however, Biber at al. (1999, 856) have identified at least three main fields, namely, accordance with

expectation, evaluation and judgement of importance. *Unfortunately* in (17), *ideally* in (19), *curiously* in (20), and *effectively* and *stubbornly* in (22) are those included within the field of evaluation, while *surprisingly* in (18) and *hopefully* in (21) fall into the field of accordance with expectation. They all reveal the writer's affective attitude towards a given subject matter. By deploying them, they offer their readership with a personal evaluation of the issue being discussed, for instance, their wish that a state of affairs were not the case as in (17), their desire that a state of affairs be obtained in a certain, specific way as in (19), their hope that a state of affairs will obtain in the future as in (21), or that a state of affairs is not expected by them as in (18).

Attitudinal stance markers seem to play a prominent role in the rhetorical machinery of the RAs analysed here: they are not simply aimed at qualifying the information presented from the authors' point of view in various ways; most importantly, they aim to create affective appeals or, in other words, appeals to readers' emotions, inviting them to accept their discourse in the same way the authors entertain it. Writers use these adverbials so as to guide their audience to intended interpretations.

4.3 Style adverbial stance markers

Style stance adverbials are the least frequent in our corpus; in fact, there are only a few instances. They are used to describe the manner of speaking, as in *put simply* in example (23) where the writer restates the aim of a specific section within the paper in different words:

23. […] this Part provides the argument for why that may not be so, and in doing so endorses the approach of the majority of circuit courts to address the issue. Put simply, the Part examines the specific situation, and the specific feature of Oklahoma law, that led to Ross. (Childs1999peremptorychallenges-INTRO)

In this case, no new propositional material is added and the writer simply tries to make himself clear and understandable by providing a paraphrase which allows the reader to grasp the intended meaning.

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have explored the occurrence of adverbial stance markers in the introduction and conclusion sections of legal RAs. The adverbial marking of stance has been shown to be realised by selections from different semantic categories, be they epistemic, attitudinal or stylistic. Epistemic stance adverbials are clearly predominant in both sections, with significantly higher occurrences in conclusions. The expression of doubt and uncertainty rather than certainty is favoured here since conclusions contain possible explanations for the outcome of the research and recommendations for future lines of action. Epistemic stance adverbials encoding values of certainty as used in conclusions tend to appear in propositions aimed at making restatements of the claims previously justified in the body of the article or when summarising the main points discussed. They normally frame ideas that are well-established and accepted in the community, and so authors can show low levels of uncertainty.

Attitudinal and stylistic stance adverbials are also present in the texts analysed, but frequencies of occurrence are much lower. The former are not only used as comments qualifying the information from the author's perspective, but also as guides for the audience towards specific intended interpretations as envisaged by the authors. As regards stylistic stance adverbials, there are very few actual instances that are aimed at describing the manner of speaking. They can be taken as indicative of the author's a priori assumptions about the reader's knowledge on a given subject.

Quantitative results reveal that adverbial stance markers are particularly frequent in the concluding sections of legal RAs. They are used in this section for a variety of purposes such as stating possible study implications, probable outcomes of situations, evaluation of results and suggestions for future lines of action. In introductions, however, they are used to evaluate earlier contributions to the field and to claim a research space for their own contributions.

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