

Reporting verbs associated with evidentiality in research article abstracts in applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics



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ABSTRACT

The article presents a quantitative corpus-based study that aims to shed light on the frequency and distribution of reporting verbs (for instance, *indicate*, *posit*, etc.) associated with evidentiality that are found in research article abstracts (RAAs) in applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics, respectively. Theoretically and methodologically, the study is informed by the literature (Söderqvist, 2020; Szczygłowska, 2022), which demonstrates that reporting verbs may mark evidentiality in scientific discourse. In order to establish the frequency of the occurrence of reporting verbs associated with evidentiality, a corpus of RAAs in applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics was collected and, subsequently, analysed in software program AntConc version 4.0.11 (Anthony, 2022). The results of the quantitative analysis revealed that *show* and *suggest* were the most frequent reporting verbs associated with evidentiality in the corpus of RAAs in applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics alike.

KEY WORDS

applied linguistics, applied psycholinguistics, evidentiality, reporting verbs, research article abstracts (RAAs)

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1 INTRODUCTION

The article introduces and discusses a quantitative study that explores how reporting verbs associated with evidentiality are distributed in research article abstracts (henceforth — RAAs) in two cognate scientific disciplines, namely applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics, as covered by two journals, *Applied Linguistics* and *Applied Psycholinguistics*, respectively. Given that evidentiality is one of the critical construals in the study, it seems pertinent to consider it early in the article. As noted by Miche (2018, p. 111), there are multiple definitions of evidentiality in linguistics. One of them, which has gained currency in the literature, refers to evidentiality as “a category in its own right, and not a subtype of modality, tense, or mood” (Aikhenvald, 2007, p. 211), and a “closed grammatical system whose use is obligatory” (Aikhenvald, 2007, p. 209) in the languages that contain explicit evidential markers. It is posited that evidentiality is manifested grammatically in languages with explicit evidential markers by means of visual (evidence via seeing), sensory (evidence via hearing, taste, touch), reported (evidence with no particular reference to the source), and quotative (evidence with a particular reference to the source) categories (Aikhenvald, 2007).



From a broader perspective, however, evidentiality in linguistics is described in terms of the information source behind a message (Carretero & Zamorano-Manzillas, 2015, p. 146) and how the source is expressed grammatically, lexically, or, alternatively, implicitly (Ekberg & Paradis, 2009, p. 5). Evidentiality is argued to be manifested by evidential markers, also referred to as “evidentials” (Brugman & Macaulay, 2015), which are defined as “words or phrases that allude to the existence or acquisition of evidence for or against the truth of a proposition” (Söderqvist, 2020, p. 57). In other words, grammatical and/or lexical evidentials mark the source of evidence (Brugman & Macaulay, 2015, p. 202). Seen through the lens of the broader approach, evidentiality is understood “as a conceptual domain, regardless of the grammatical vs. lexical status that the given linguistic device is ascribed to” (Cornillie et al., 2015, p. 3).

In English, evidentiality is considered to be non-obligatory and deemed not to be marked by grammatical means (Clark, 2010, p. 140). Whilst the marking of evidentiality is not grammatical in English (Söderqvist, 2017), there are, however, lexical and pragmatic means that can convey it. In this regard, Aikhenvald (2007, p. 209) indicates that English, just like any other language, possesses a range of means that refer to the information source, in particular, lexical verbs that are associated with claims, opinions, and reports. In English, reporting verbs (further — RVs) may mark evidentiality, especially when they are used in the context of academic discourse (Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2008; Szczygłowska, 2022). In the literature on academic writing, RVs are defined as verbs that refer to the opinion of other authors (Ilchenko & Kramar, 2022), or express the writer’s personal stance by appearing in combination with the first-person pronouns (Kapranov, 2021a, 2021b; Malmström, 2008). In particular, academic writers may employ RVs in the so-called “evidential strategy”, which involves the use of non-evidential lexical and grammatical forms that can develop evidential extensions (Aikhenvald, 2007; Warchał, 2015).

There is a sufficient bulk of prior studies that focus on RVs in academic discourse (Bloch, 2010; Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2018; Hyland, 2014; Shaw, 1992). However, there seems to be a lack of the state-of-the-art research that examines the use of RVs as markers of evidentiality in RAAs (Yang, 2012). Moreover, there is a scarcity of recent publications that investigate their frequency and distribution in applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics from a diachronic perspective. Seeking to generate new knowledge concerning the frequency and distribution of the RVs that are associated with evidentiality in diachrony, the present study aims at collecting and analysing a corpus of RAAs in applied linguistics and psycholinguistics published by the high-ranking journals *Applied Linguistics* and *Applied Psycholinguistics* from 2012 to 2022. In particular, the study addresses the following research questions (RQs):

RQ 1: What are the most frequent RVs associated with evidentiality in RAAs published within the timeframe of ten years from 2012 to 2022 in *Applied Linguistics* and *Applied Psycholinguistics*?

RQ 2: Are there disciplinary differences in the distribution of RVs associated with evidentiality in RAAs published in *Applied Linguistics* and *Applied Psycholinguistics*?

Further, the article is structured as follows. First, an outline of the prior studies on RVs in academic discourse is provided in section 2. Thereafter, the literature on RAAs in applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics is dwelt upon in section 3. Following that, the present study is introduced in section 4. The article concludes with the summary of the findings in section 5.



2 RVs IN ACADEMIC DISCOURSE

As previously mentioned in the introduction, RVs are one of the crucial components in academic writing (Manan & Noor, 2014, p. 140) that are employed in order to refer to (i) the findings that are described in the research article (RA), (ii) external sources that are mentioned in the RA, and (iii) the writer's personal stance (Ilchenko & Kramar, 2022; Malmström, 2008; Shaw, 1992). In academic writing in English, RVs are assumed to involve the so-called "argue" verbs (for instance, *propose*) that indicate communicative functions, "show" verbs (for example, *demonstrate*) that point to the communicative situation, "find" verbs (i.e., *find*) that describe the results, and "think" verbs (e.g., *estimate*) that manifest the process of thinking and/or reasoning (Charles, 2006, p. 501). An alternative classification of RVs associated with evidentiality is found in a fairly recent publication by Szczygłowska (2022), who distinguishes the following types of evidential RVs: (i) quotative (*argue, indicate, note, propose, report, show, suggest*); (ii) sensory (*appear, notice, observe, seem, view*); and (iii) narrative (*attempt, seek*).

RVs in academic discourse, especially in English-medium academic writing, is a well-established area of scientific inquiry that focuses on investigating the distribution, frequency, and pragmatic roles of RVs (Bloch, 2010; Breeze, 2017; Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2008; Doró, 2014a; Hyland, 1999a; Ilchenko & Kramar, 2022; Kapranov, 2023a; Malmström, 2008; Yang, 2012). Judging from the literature, RVs are treated in the prior studies through the lenses of their reference to (i) citation practices, (ii) knowledge-stating, (iii) stance, and (iv) evidentiality (Bloch, 2010; Breeze, 2017; Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2008; Doró, 2014a; Hyland, 1999b, 2014; Ilchenko & Kramar, 2022; Malmström, 2008; Yang, 2012). Let us summarize the aforementioned research dimensions in more detail below.

An evidential dimension of RVs in academic writing is manifested, in particular, by their passive forms, such as *be said to, be believed to, be supposed to, be expected to, be reported to, and be thought to* (Breeze, 2017). The passive forms of RVs (e.g., *be said to*) are argued to assign reported information to an indirect and often, anonymous source that, nevertheless, provides the statement with a certain degree of evidentiality (Breeze, 2017). It is suggested that the pragmatic use of the passive forms of RVs as evidentials facilitates the author's credibility in the eyes of the readership and scientific community (Yang, 2012) by referring to a source without actually naming the source of information (Breeze, 2017).

As far as knowledge-stating is concerned, RVs as knowledge-stating lexical devices are thought to be paramount in academic writing in English (Malmström, 2008). Given that academic discourse involves the communication of knowledge, it



is expected in the scientific community that knowledge dissemination is concomitant with an academic author's accountability (Malmström, 2008). In its turn, the authorial accountability presupposes some form of evidential grounding of information in the academic text (*ibid.*). Supposedly, such RVs as *assume*, *argue*, *believe*, *claim*, *maintain*, *propose*, and *suggest* can acquire an evidential dimension that, however, refers not only to evidence *per se*, but to assertion, as well as knowledge-stating (Malmström, 2008).

As mentioned above, RVs are thought to be associated with the manifestation of the academic authors' stance (Bloch, 2010; Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2008; Doró, 2014a; Hyland, 2014; Ilchenko & Kramar, 2022). In particular, the authorial stance may express an academic author's attitudes to knowledge-stating in their own text as well as in academic texts written by other researchers (Aull & Lancaster, 2014). In this regard, Hyland (2014, p. 128) argues that, for instance, the use of the RVs *demonstrate* and *prove* constitutes a rhetorically important discursive means that allows academic writers to manifest (i) their agreement with the prior studies and (ii) certainty in their own claims and findings. In contrast, however, the use of such RVs as *suggest* and *imply* enables an academic writer to be more cautious in relation to (i) their own research and (ii) the prior studies conducted by other scientists (*ibid.*).

Finally, it should be explained that RVs are amply used in academic discourse in conjunction with the author's citation practices (also known as "citation behaviour"), which often require a paraphrasis of the original stretch of discourse with the help of an RV (Doró, 2014a, p. 32). The literature indicates that the use of RVs in the citation behaviour of an academic writer depends on the writers' proficiency in English and the mastery of genre-appropriate conventions of academic writing in English (Kapranov, 2023d). For instance, novice academic writers and, in particular, undergraduate student writers utilize a limited range of RVs (for instance, *explain*, *know*, *say*, etc.) in their citation practices in contrast to those of postgraduates, who typically employ a more extensive and genre-appropriate repertoire of RVs, such as *admit*, *assert*, *imply*, etc. (Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2008).

Summarising the literature, it can be posited that academic writers take advantage of RVs in signalling citation and referencing, evidentiality, knowledge-stating, and stance. They resort to using RVs in order to (i) report the findings and methods/procedure, (ii) present their reasoning and/or discussion of the results, and (iii) organize the RA discursively (Hyland, 1999b, p. 349).

3 RAAS IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND PSYCHOLINGUISTICS

RAAs are defined as a textual piece that provides the reader with an exact and concise description of the full article and/or a factual summary of the full article (Bhatia, 1993, p. 78). RAAs constitute a typical feature of written academic discourse (Bhatia, 1993; Gillaerts & Van de Velde, 2010; Samraj, 2005; Swales, 1990), which is expected and, very often, mandated by peer-review outlets in their article submission guidelines (see, for instance, the author's guidelines by the journal *Applied Linguistics* (2022)).

Given that abstracts (i.e., RAAs) are “an essential and inalienable part of research articles” (Tseng, 2011, p. 27), they have been studied extensively in academic writing, scientific discourse, and applied linguistics (Samraj, 2005, p. 141). It should be noted that there is a line of research that considers RAAs a part-genre (Samraj, 2005; Swales, 1990) due to their function either as a condensed version of the complete article or as an extension of the article’s title (Gillaerts & Van de Velde, 2010). However, taking into account their well-defined purpose and structural organisation (Swales, 1990), RAAs are argued to constitute a separate genre (Gillaerts & Van de Velde, 2010), which is characterized by a set of peculiarities associated with grammar, lexis, and rhetorical structure, which is often analysed through the prism of “moves” (Swales, 1981), i.e. functional units that facilitate the communicative purpose of the text written in a particular genre, for instance, in the genre of academic research article (Cortes, 2013, p. 33).

In applied linguistics, RAAs are argued to involve such obligatory moves, as (i) the study aim, (ii) research methodology, and (iii) the summary of the results (Dos Santos, 1996; Golebiowski, 2009; Pho, 2008; Tseng, 2011), which seem to correlate with a fairly standard sequence “introduction-purpose-methods-results-discussion” (Bhatia, 1993; Can et al., 2016; Hyland, 1999a; Jiang & Hyland, 2017). Similarly, RAAs in applied psycholinguistics and theoretical psycholinguistics quite often encompass a set of moves that consists in (i) instigating the reader’s interest in the topic, (ii) presenting the focus of the article, (iii) outlining the study design, (iv) providing the major findings, and (v) pointing out to the general conclusions and further research (Saidi & Khazaei, 2021).

From the vantage point of grammatical peculiarities, RAAs in applied linguistics are typically characterized by the prevalence of simple present tense, with simple past being epiphenomenal and associated with the presentation of methodology and/or results (Doró, 2014b; Tseng, 2011; Wang & Tu, 2014). Additionally, the prior research indicates that the major bulk of verbs that are used in RAAs in applied linguistics is represented by finite verbs (Doró, 2014b) and nouns (Malah, 2015), which usually are employed by the authors to ensure cohesive textual ties (Ebrahimi & Chan, 2015; Malah, 2015).

In summary to this section of the article, it is possible to observe that whilst there are multiple studies that pay attention to the rhetorical structure and lexico-grammatical peculiarities of RAAs in applied linguistics, there is insufficient research that focuses on RAAs in the cognate scientific field of applied psycholinguistics. Whilst there is a paucity of published studies that specifically address the issue of evidentiality and its linguistic manifestation by RVs in RAAs in applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics, there is no state-of-the-art research that examines a diachronic dimension of their distribution. Aiming to address the current gap in the literature, the study, which is further presented in the article, explores the frequency and distribution of RVs in diachrony within the timeframe of ten years from 2012 to 2022 in the corpus of RAAs in the aforementioned disciplines.





4 THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study is a corpus-based exploration that aims at shedding light on the frequency and distribution of RVs that are associated with evidentiality in RAAs published in the United Kingdom (the UK) by the high impact factor journals *Applied Linguistics* and *Applied Psycholinguistics* within ten years (2012–2022). Theoretically, the study is informed by the view of evidentiality as a distinct category in its own right that lacks a specific form of manifestation in English, in which it could be expressed by lexical verbs, in particular RVs, which refer to the information source (Aikhenvald, 2007; Shaw, 1992). More specifically, however, the study embraces the so-called broad construal of evidentiality that regards it as the information source behind a message (Carretero & Zamorano-Mansilla, 2015; Ekberg & Paradis, 2009). Furthermore, the study is advised by Szczygłowska's (2022) classification of RVs associated with evidentiality. According to her classification, the study considers the following types of RVs associated with evidentiality: (i) quotative (e.g., *show*), (ii) sensory (e.g., *notice*), and (iii) narrative (e.g., *attempt*).

In line with such understanding of evidentiality, two RQs are formulated in the study (see introduction). In concord with the RQs, the specific aims of the study consist in (i) collecting a corpus of RAAs published in *Applied Linguistics* and *Applied Psycholinguistics*, (ii) establishing the frequency and distribution of the RVs associated with evidentiality in diachrony (2012–2022) and finding out their most frequent types in accordance with the classification by Szczygłowska (2022), and (iii) examining whether or not there are disciplinary differences in the distribution of RVs associated with evidentiality in the corpus. Following the RQs and specific research aims, the procedure of corpus collection and its subsequent analysis have been conducted.

4.1 CORPUS

As previously mentioned, the corpus was comprised of RAAs published in *Applied Linguistics* (AL) and *Applied Psycholinguistics* (AP) from 2012 to 2022 (i.e., 10 years). The corpus was collected on the official websites of the journals, specifically <https://academic.oup.com/applij> (AL) and <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/applied-psycholinguistics> (AP). Taking into account AL's and AP's focus on the applied research dimension in linguistics and psycholinguistics, their contents deemed to be comparable for the purposes of the study. Following Kapranov (2017), the period of time of ten years was considered sufficient and representative as far as the corpus cut-off was concerned. Hence, the corpus was comprised of the RAAs published in AL and AP from 2012 to 2022. Notably, all other parts of RAs (for instance, keywords, titles, authors' affiliation, references, and the texts of RAs), as well as the texts labelled "extract" were excluded from the corpus collection. The RAAs found on the official websites of AL and AP were downloaded, saved as Word files and processed in the statistical program Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 (IBM) in order to compute the descriptive statistics of the corpus (see Table 1 below).

| # | Descriptive Statistics | AL | AP |
|----|------------------------------|---------|---------|
| 1 | Total number of words | 61,423 | 89,169 |
| 2 | Mean words | 5,583.9 | 8,106.3 |
| 3 | Standard deviation words | 1,207.1 | 1,892.8 |
| 4 | Minimum words | 3,865 | 4,997 |
| 5 | Maximum words | 6,974 | 10,786 |
| 6 | Total number of abstracts | 384 | 534 |
| 7 | Mean abstracts | 34.9 | 48.5 |
| 8 | Standard deviation abstracts | 6.5 | 9.1 |
| 9 | Minimum abstracts | 23 | 34 |
| 10 | Maximum abstracts | 43 | 59 |

TABLE 1. The Descriptive Statistics of the Corpus of RAAs Published in AL and AP from 2012 to 2022

It should be observed that the corpus appeared unbalanced in terms of the total number of words as well as the total number of RAAs (see Table 1) due to the following factors: (i) the difference in the number of journal volumes and issues per year between AL and AP and (ii) the differences in the number of articles per issue in AL and AP, respectively.

4.2 METHODS

Methodologically, the study was grounded in the broad approach to evidentiality postulated by Carretero and Zamorano-Mansilla (2015) and Ekberg and Paradis (2009). The approach was extended by the view of RVs as potential markers of evidentiality (Söderqvist, 2020) that in the present study are referred as “RVs associated with evidentiality”. Given that English could be described as a language with no explicit lexico-grammatical markers of evidentiality (Aikhenvald, 2007), the study further employed the construal “RVs associated with evidentiality” rather than “the marker of evidentiality”.

Based upon the aforementioned considerations, the corpus was searched for the RVs associated with evidentiality in the following manner. First, the corpus was examined manually for the presence of RVs associated with evidentiality in order to compile a list of them. Second, the corpus was searched for RVs associated with evidentiality from the compiled list in the computer software AntConc version 4.0.11 (Anthony, 2022). The search involved the software’s function “words” that yielded the frequency of the occurrence of the searched-for word per file. It should be explained that each file, which was processed in AntConc, was comprised of RAAs per year per journal. For example, all RAAs published in AL in 2012 were merged into one file and processed in AntConc by searching for all RVs associated with evidentiality. Importantly, the search in AntConc involved all forms of an RV associated with evidentiality. For instance, the program searched for *to argue*, *argues*, *argued*, and *arguing*. Afterwards, all values associated with the verb forms were merged into one numerical representation per RV per journal and per year. All RVs associated with evidentiality were processed in the identical manner as described above. Finally, the most frequent RVs associated with evidentiality were manually examined for their fit into Szczygłowska’s (2022) classification of the RVs.



Having obtained the non-normalized frequency data in AntConc (Anthony, 2022) per year and per journal, the data were processed in SPSS (IBM, 2011) in order to (i) calculate the means (M) and standard deviations (SD) of the RVs associated with evidentiality and (ii) normalize the frequency of the occurrence of the RVs per 10,000 words. The normalisation of the raw (i.e., non-normalized) frequencies was deemed necessary due to the differences in the subcorpora of RAAs published by AL and AP (see Table 1). The results of the descriptive statistics are further presented and discussed in subsection 4.3.

| # | RVs | *12 | *13 | *14 | *15 | *16 | *17 | *18 | *19 | *20 | *21 | *22 |
|----|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | Acknowledge | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | Add | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 3 | Appear | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | Argue | 7 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 9 | 4 |
| 5 | Assume | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | Attempt | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 7 | Claim | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | Consider | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 9 | Contrast | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | Describe | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 11 | Emphasize | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 | Explain | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 13 | Find | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 14 | Imply | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 15 | Indicate | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 8 |
| 16 | Mention | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 17 | Note | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 18 | Notice | 0 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 19 | Observe | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| 20 | Propose | 2 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 6 |
| 21 | Report | 3 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 15 | 17 | 7 | 7 | 4 |
| 22 | Reveal | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 23 | Seek | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 24 | Seem | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 25 | Show | 11 | 12 | 10 | 10 | 12 | 20 | 19 | 23 | 18 | 18 | 14 |
| 26 | State | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 27 | Suggest | 6 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 14 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 12 | 12 | 6 |
| 28 | Underline | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 29 | Understand | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 30 | View | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 4 |

TABLE 2. RVs Associated with Evidentiality in RAAs in AL (2012–2022)

4.3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are comprised of the frequency of the occurrence of RVs associated with evidentiality in non-normalized values in the corpus (see Tables 2-3), as well as their means and standard deviations (see Table 4). It should be observed that the years of publication are given in their shortened forms in Tables 2-3 (e.g., *12 instead of 2012).



| # | RVs | *12 | *13 | *14 | *15 | *16 | *17 | *18 | *19 | *20 | *21 | *22 |
|----|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | Acknowledge | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 2 | Add | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | Appear | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 2 |
| 4 | Argue | 1 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 0 |
| 5 | Assume | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | Attempt | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | Claim | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 8 | Consider | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 9 | Contrast | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 10 | Describe | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 | Emphasize | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 | Explain | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 13 | Find | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 14 | Imply | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 15 | Indicate | 8 | 5 | 7 | 15 | 16 | 10 | 18 | 12 | 9 | 13 | 10 |
| 16 | Mention | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 17 | Note | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 18 | Notice | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 19 | Observe | 6 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 10 | 3 |
| 20 | Propose | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| 21 | Report | 7 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 0 |
| 22 | Reveal | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 23 | Seek | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 24 | Seem | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 25 | Show | 22 | 21 | 18 | 20 | 19 | 20 | 24 | 28 | 37 | 18 | 33 |
| 26 | State | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 27 | Suggest | 13 | 21 | 15 | 25 | 29 | 19 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 30 | 9 |
| 28 | Underline | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 29 | Understand | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 30 | View | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |

TABLE 3. RVs Associated with Evidentiality in RAAs in AP (2012-2022)



| # | RVs | AL | AP |
|----|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1 | Acknowledge | M 0, SD 0 | M 0, SD 0 |
| 2 | Add | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.0, SD 0 |
| 3 | Appear | M 2.4, SD 0.9 | M 2.7, SD 1.3 |
| 4 | Argue | M 5.8, SD 2.1 | M 2.7, SD 1.5 |
| 5 | Assume | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.0, SD 0 |
| 6 | Attempt | M 1.6, SD 1.2 | M 1.6, SD 1.2 |
| 7 | Claim | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.2, SD 0.4 |
| 8 | Consider | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.0, SD 0 |
| 9 | Contrast | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.2, SD 0.4 |
| 10 | Describe | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.3, SD 0.5 |
| 11 | Emphasize | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.1, SD 0.3 |
| 12 | Explain | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.1, SD 0.4 |
| 13 | Find | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.0, SD 0 |
| 14 | Imply | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.0, SD 0 |
| 15 | Indicate | M 4.0, SD 1.8 | M 11.2, SD 3.8 |
| 16 | Mention | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.0, SD 0 |
| 17 | Note | M 1.3, SD 0.7 | M 0, SD 0 |
| 18 | Notice | M 2.3, SD 1.9 | M 3.0, SD 2.0 |
| 19 | Observe | M 2.0, SD 1.0 | M 4.9, SD 2.3 |
| 20 | Propose | M 3.5, SD 1.4 | M 2.6, SD 1.3 |
| 21 | Report | M 7.0, SD 4.6 | M 5.7, SD 1.5 |
| 22 | Reveal | M 1.1, SD 0.3 | M 1.2, SD 0.4 |
| 23 | Seek | M 2.0, SD 0.8 | M 1.0, SD 0.0 |
| 24 | Seem | M 1.6, SD 0.7 | M 1.4, SD 0.8 |
| 25 | Show | M 15.2, SD 4.3 | M 23.6, SD 6.1 |
| 26 | State | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.5, SD 0.5 |
| 27 | Suggest | M 8.1, SD 3.3 | M 21.7, SD 6.6 |
| 28 | Underline | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 0, SD 0 |
| 29 | Understand | M 1.0, SD 0 | M 1.0, SD 0 |
| 30 | View | M 3.1, SD 1.4 | M 2.8, SD 2.4 |

TABLE 4. Evidential RVs Means and Standard Deviations in AL and AP (2012–2022)

As already mentioned, the corpus data are unbalanced, given that the raw values of RAAs differ between the journals. Hence, we need to examine the normalized frequency of RVs associated with evidentiality in order to compare the data. Below, in Table 5, the frequencies of the occurrence of the RVs associated with evidentiality are normalized per 10,000 words and contrasted with the raw values (i.e., absolute values).

Now, let us discuss the findings presented in Tables 2–4 in conjunction with the RQs in the study. To reiterate, RQ 1 aims at establishing the most frequent RVs associated with evidentiality in the corpus from a diachronic aspect, whilst RQ 2 seeks to uncover possible disciplinary differences in the distribution of RVs associated with evidentiality.

| # | RVs | Raw AL | Normalized AL | Raw AP | Normalized AP |
|----|-------------|--------|---------------|--------|---------------|
| 1 | Acknowledge | 1 | 0.2 | 1 | 0.1 |
| 2 | Add | 4 | 0.7 | 2 | 0.2 |
| 3 | Appear | 22 | 3.6 | 27 | 3.0 |
| 4 | Argue | 64 | 10.4 | 27 | 3.0 |
| 5 | Assume | 2 | 0.3 | 2 | 0.2 |
| 6 | Attempt | 11 | 1.8 | 8 | 0.9 |
| 7 | Claim | 5 | 0.8 | 6 | 0.7 |
| 8 | Consider | 6 | 1.0 | 7 | 0.8 |
| 9 | Contrast | 2 | 0.3 | 12 | 1.3 |
| 10 | Describe | 5 | 0.8 | 4 | 0.4 |
| 11 | Emphasize | 2 | 0.3 | 4 | 0.4 |
| 12 | Explain | 4 | 0.7 | 8 | 0.9 |
| 13 | Find | 3 | 0.5 | 5 | 0.6 |
| 14 | Imply | 5 | 0.8 | 2 | 0.2 |
| 15 | Indicate | 44 | 7.2 | 123 | 13.8 |
| 16 | Mention | 3 | 0.5 | 3 | 0.3 |
| 17 | Note | 8 | 1.4 | 1 | 0.1 |
| 18 | Notice | 7 | 1.2 | 6 | 0.7 |
| 19 | Observe | 8 | 1.4 | 54 | 6.0 |
| 20 | Propose | 35 | 5.7 | 26 | 2.9 |
| 21 | Report | 77 | 12.5 | 57 | 6.4 |
| 22 | Reveal | 10 | 1.6 | 13 | 1.5 |
| 23 | Seek | 14 | 2.3 | 3 | 0.3 |
| 24 | Seem | 13 | 2.1 | 7 | 0.8 |
| 25 | Show | 167 | 27.2 | 260 | 29.2 |
| 26 | State | 3 | 0.5 | 3 | 0.3 |
| 27 | Suggest | 90 | 14.7 | 239 | 26.8 |
| 28 | Underline | 2 | 0.3 | 1 | 0.1 |
| 29 | Understand | 1 | 0.2 | 7 | 0.8 |
| 30 | View | 31 | 5.0 | 25 | 2.8 |

TABLE 5. The Normalized and Raw Values of RVs in the Corpus

4.3.1 THE MOST FREQUENT RVs ASSOCIATED WITH EVIDENTIALITY IN THE CORPUS

It follows from the normalized data summarized in Table 5 in the preceding section of the article that there are several RVs associated with evidentiality that exhibit the most frequent occurrence in the entire corpus (i.e., both AL and AP), namely *appear*, *argue*, *indicate*, *observe*, *propose*, *report*, *show*, *suggest*, and *view*. These findings lend support to Szczygłowska (2022), who has demonstrated that *appear*, *argue*, *indicate*, *observe*, *propose*, *report*, *show*, *suggest*, and *view* are frequently employed in scientific discourse in linguistics. As far as their high frequency of the occurrence in psycholinguistic discourse is concerned, it is argued that the present findings are novel

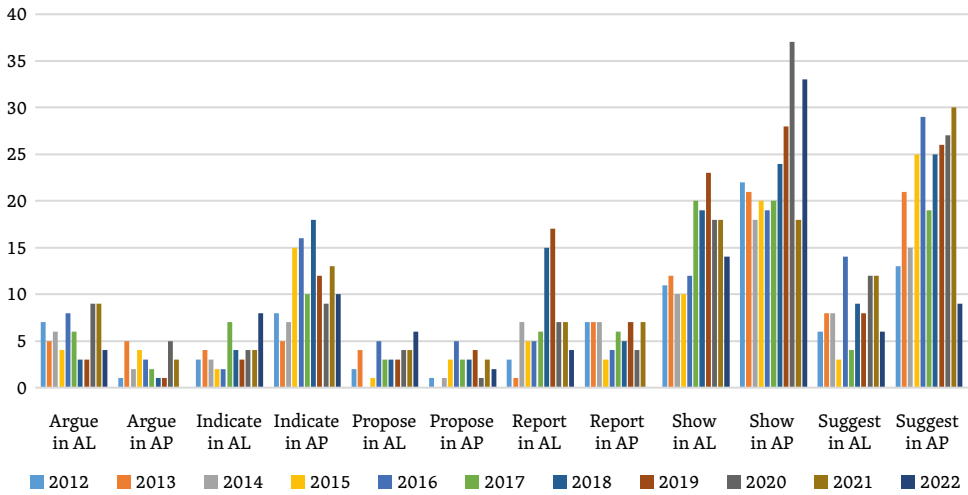


FIGURE 1. The Frequency of the Occurrence of Quotative RVs Associated with Evidentiality from 2012 to 2022

and have not been previously reported in the literature. In this regard, it should be mentioned that studies on psycholinguistic discourse are still rare (Kapranov, 2023b, 2023c) and, hence, we cannot draw parallels between the present findings and previous research as far as RVs associated with evidentiality in the subcorpus of AP are concerned. In terms of Szczygłowska's (2022) classification of the RVs associated with evidentiality, the most frequent types in the present corpus are (i) quotative (*argue*, *indicate*, *propose*, *report*, *show*, *suggest*); and (ii) sensory (*appear*, *observe*, *view*), whereas the narrative type is absent from the most frequent RVs.

Whilst we will dwell upon the issue of whether or not there are disciplinary differences in the most frequent RVs associated with evidentiality and their types further in the article in subsection 4.3.2, let us illuminate RQ 1 in more depth by addressing the diachronic dimension of the most frequent RVs associated with evidentiality (i.e., *appear*, *argue*, *indicate*, *observe*, *propose*, *report*, *show*, *suggest*, and *view*) and their types. First, let us focus our discussion on the diachronic changes of the quotative type of RVs associated with evidentiality (i.e., *argue*, *indicate*, *propose*, *report*, *show*, and *suggest*). Above, Figure 1 illustrates how the frequency of the occurrence of quotative RVs associated with evidentiality changes in raw values over the timeframe of ten years.

Leaving aside the disciplinary differences for now, we can observe in Figure 1 that the frequency of each quotative RV associated with evidentiality is not stable over time, given that it exhibits a tendency to fluctuate between multiple decreases and increases. Notably, the fluctuations that are emblemized by Figure 1 involve the highly frequent RVs of this type, *show* and *suggest*, whose frequencies of the occurrence in diachrony are characterized, at least, by one substantial increase per distribution. Similarly, the sensory RVs associated with evidentiality (*appear*, *observe*, *view*) are unevenly distributed diachronically, as seen in Figure 2 below.

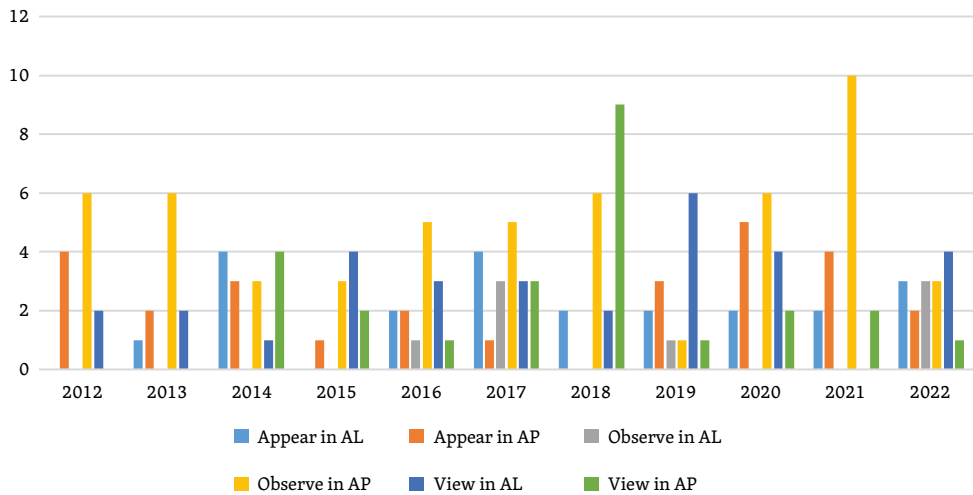


FIGURE 2. The Frequency of the Occurrence of Sensory RVs Associated with Evidentiality from 2012 to 2022

It follows from Figure 2 that the distribution of the sensory RVs associated with evidentiality ranges from the instances of zero occurrence (e.g., *observe* in AL in 2012) to several substantial increases (e.g., *observe* in AP in 2021). Even though the distributional properties of RVs associated with evidentiality are rarely investigated from a diachronic perspective, it appears possible to posit that the present data reveal their dynamic nature. Specifically, it is possible to argue that the most frequent RVs associated with evidentiality are in the state of flux diachronically, at least within the timeframe of ten years. The varied occurrence of the most frequent RVs associated with evidentiality is indicative, although indirectly, of the following contention. Given that the discursive space of a RAA serves a well-defined purpose of presenting the article (Gillaerts & Van de Velde, 2010; Swales, 1990) in a concise form (Bhatia, 1993; Tseng, 2011) that requires peculiar lexico-grammatical and discursive means (Samraj, 2005), it follows from the data that academic writers in applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics alike gravitate towards a set of RVs that they invariably choose to manifest evidentiality with. Judging from Figures 1 and 2, we may argue that *observe*, *show*, *suggest*, and *view* appear to be the so-called “attractors” that are most likely to be used by the academic writers in the corpus in conjunction with the discursive expression of evidentiality. Their high frequency can be explained by the academic authors’ preferences, genre constraints, and scholarly practices of academic writing that facilitate the usage of stylistically neutral RVs. This contention is further illustrated by the analysis of the RV associated with evidentiality *show* in the key words in context (KWIC) function in AntConc (Antony, 2022) in the corpus. The reason that we focus our attention on *show* is explained by the finding that it is the most frequent RV associated with evidentiality in the entire corpus (see Tables 4 and 5). Further, in Table 6 below, two most frequent KWIC collocations with *show* in RAAs are presented per journal per year.



| # | Year | KWIC Show |
|----|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | 2012 | AL: Analyses of multi-participant voice-based chat rooms show that; the results of the study show that; AP: The results show; our results show |
| 2 | 2013 | AL: Analyses show that; analyses also show that; AP: The findings show; These results show |
| 3 | 2014 | AL: Correlational and regression analyses show that; results from these oral interviews show that; AP: The results show that; the results also show that |
| 4 | 2015 | AL: Results drawn from the focus group show that; the results show that; AP: Results show; they show |
| 5 | 2016 | AL: The patterns show that; results show that; AP: The data show; the results show |
| 6 | 2017 | AL: Findings show that; results show that; AP: The results show that; results show that |
| 7 | 2018 | AL: The results show that; the findings show that; AP: The results show; studies show |
| 8 | 2019 | AL: Data show that; our results show that; AP: Our results show that; results show that |
| 9 | 2020 | AL: The results show that; our results show that; AP: Results show that; our data show that |
| 10 | 2021 | AL: The findings show; the results show; AP: Our data show that; these findings show that |
| 11 | 2022 | AL: The findings show; they show; AP: Previous studies show that; the results show that |

TABLE 6. The RV Associated with Evidentiality *Show* in KWIC in AL and AP per Year from 2012 to 2022

It follows from Table 6 that *show* is involved in a number of recurring collocations, such as “the results show that”, “data show that”, etc., which are eagerly utilized by the academic writers in applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics alike. Based upon the KWIC data summarized in Table 6, it seems feasible to argue that the RV associated with evidentiality *show* may signal what Hyland (2009) refers to as an academic author’s entrenchment and acculturation to the discipline that presupposes the use of lexical and discursive means which are readily employed by other academic writers and, most likely, are expected to be used by the academic community in these two disciplines.

So far, we can summarize this section of the article as follows. Judging from the data, there is a group of frequently occurring RVs associated with evidentiality both in AL and AP (*appear, argue, indicate, observe, propose, report, show, suggest, and view*), with *show* being the most frequent one. Its collocations in the corpus point to the sources of evidence in the RAAs that are typically represented by *show + that* clause, *data + show, results + show, and findings + show*. These findings, arguably, are indicative of the recurrent and routinized lexico-discursive means of expressing evidentiality in RAAs in applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics.

4.3.2 DISCIPLINARY DIFFERENCES IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF RVS ASSOCIATED WITH EVIDENTIALITY IN THE CORPUS

Having established the group of frequently occurring RVs associated with evidentiality in RAAs in AL and AP, let us address the issue of potential disciplinary differences in the frequency of the occurrence of RVs associated with evidentiality in the corpus (see RQ 2 in the introduction). Given that *show* has been established to be the most frequent RV associated with evidentiality in the entire corpus, it seems pertinent to examine whether or not its occurrence is similar or dissimilar between the subcorpora of RAAs in AL and AP. The application of the unpaired t-test to the data has revealed that the frequency of the occurrence of *show* is significantly higher in the subcorpus of RAAs in AP, $t(425) = 15.49$, $p < .001$, with 95% confidence interval. In other words, it appears that academic writers in applied psycholinguistics resort to using *show* in conjunction with evidentiality more often than their counterparts in applied linguistics do. The use of the RV *to show* is emblemized by the quote that provides insight into, presumably, a typical RAA published in one of the recent issues of AP: “Previous studies **show** that attention plays an important role in second language (L2) phonetic attainment” (Carlet & Cebrian, 2022, p. 271). In this quote, the fact that “attention plays an important role in second language (L2) phonetic attainment” stems from the piece of evidence that is provided by “previous studies”, which “show” this finding.

Similarly to *show*, the frequencies of the occurrence of the RV associated with evidentiality *argue* ($t(89) = 6.9$, $p < .001$), *indicate* ($t(165) = 12.01$, $p < .001$), *observe* ($t(60) = 3.49$, $p < .001$), and *suggest* ($t(327) = 18.67$, $p < .001$) are significant, which point to the disciplinary differences between applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics. Put differently, *argue*, *indicate*, *observe*, *show* and *suggest* are more likely to be employed by academic writers to manifest evidentiality in RAAs in applied psycholinguistics in contrast to those in applied linguistics. Conversely, however, the application of the unpaired t-test to the data indicates that *propose* ($t(59) = 2.55$, $p < .001$) and *report* ($t(132) = 2.05$, $p < .001$) are significantly more present in the RAAs in applied linguistics.

It should be noted, however, that the frequencies of some of the RVs associated with evidentiality do not exhibit significant differences between the two subcorpora. For instance, the results of the unpaired t-test demonstrate that the frequencies of the occurrence of *appear* ($t(47) = 0.91$, $p < .001$) and *view* ($t(54) = 0.58$, $p < .001$) are not statistically significant. Consequently, we argue that they are similarly distributed in the corpus, thus pointing to certain lexico-discursive similarities in the manifestation of evidentiality in AL and AP.

As far as other aspects of similarities between the subcorpora are concerned, it is observed that both AL and AP are characterized by a clear preference for the quotative type of RVs associated with evidentiality. To reiterate, the study, in accordance with Szczygłowska (2022), considers the following types of RVs associated with evidentiality: (i) quotative, (ii) sensory, and (iii) narrative. Comparing the percentage of the aforementioned types to the total number of RVs associated with evidentiality in AL (total $N = 649$) and AP (total $N = 943$), it is seen that RAAs in both AL and AP involve, predominantly, the quotative type, as seen in Figure 3 below.

Judging from Figure 3, the quotative type of RVs associated with evidentiality accounts for approximately 80% of the total occurrence of the RVs in RAAs both in AL



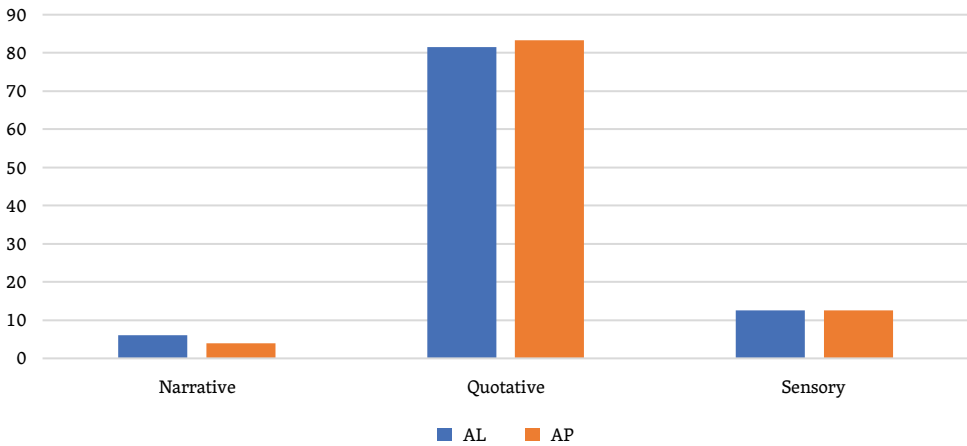


FIGURE 3. The Types of the RVs Associated with Evidentiality (in Percent) in AL and AP from 2012 to 2022

and AP. It follows from Figure 3 that the quotative type of the RVs associated with evidentiality occupies the niche of the by-default manifestation of evidentiality in applied linguistics and applied psycholinguistics, at least as far as the RAAs in these two cognate disciplines are concerned. These findings are, perhaps, not at all unexpected, given that the quotative RVs *show* and *suggest* are highly frequent both in AL and AP. Moreover, it has been established that the RVs *show* and *suggest* that belong to the quotative type are significantly more prevalent in AP, thus indicating that the quotative RVs associated with evidentiality are far more common in RAAs in applied psycholinguistics, where their frequent occurrence is reflective of the disciplinary discursive practices.

Concluding the discussion of the results, it seems possible to generalize that whereas RAAs in both AL and AP involve the quotative type of RVs associated with evidentiality, we may distinguish quite separate discipline-related tendencies of using highly frequent RVs in order to manifest evidentiality. As shown by the statistical analysis, these tendencies involve a significantly frequent use of *propose* and *report* in RAAs in applied linguistics and *argue*, *indicate*, *observe*, *show* and *suggest* in RAAs in applied psycholinguistics.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The article discusses a corpus-based study that aims at investigating the frequency of the occurrence of RVs associated with evidentiality in RAAs in AL and AP published between 2012 and 2022. The study has established that the majority of RVs associated with evidentiality belong to the quotative type (for instance, *argue*, *show*, *suggest*, etc.) that appears to be dominant in the diachrony. This finding indicates that, to an extent, an evidential dimension of this type of RVs is manifested by the recurrent and routinized lexico-discursive means of expressing evidentiality by pointing to or quoting the sources of evidence (cf., *show* + *that* clause, *data* + *show*, *results* + *show*, and *findings* + *show*).



Another conclusion that arises from the findings demonstrates that whilst RAAs in both AL and AP involve, predominantly, the quotative type of RVs associated with evidentiality, there are several discipline-related tendencies of using highly frequent RVs in order to manifest evidentiality. Specifically, the RVs associated with evidentiality *propose* and *report* are significantly more frequent in the RAAs in AL, whereas *argue*, *indicate*, *observe*, *show* and *suggest* occur significantly more frequently in the RAAs in AP. It can be generalized that these findings provide an insight into the frequency of the occurrence of RVs associated with evidentiality in the discursive practices in applied linguistics and psycholinguistics. From a broader theoretical perspective, the findings feed into the current research on evidentiality in English, which, as previously explained, does not possess morpho-syntactic evidential markers (Aikhenvald, 2007). In this regard, the study has uncovered additional evidence that points to a number of RVs (for instance, *show* and *suggest*) that are frequently used in order to indicate the quoted source of evidence in RAAs in applied linguistics and psycholinguistics.

Additionally, the study sheds light onto a less researched area of psycholinguistic discourse as far as lexico-discursive manifestations of evidentiality are concerned. Given the paucity of the state-of-the-art studies on psycholinguistic discourse, the study can be used as a benchmark for further research in the discourse of RAs and RAAs in psycholinguistics and in future studies aimed at investigating evidentiality in academic writing in psycholinguistics.

It should be noted that the study has several limitations. In particular, the study could have benefitted from a rhetorical analysis of moves in the sense postulated by Swales (1981). Arguably, the analysis of the Swalesian moves in conjunction with the distribution of the RVs associated with evidentiality could provide a deeper insight into the markers of evidentiality in academic writing in applied linguistics and psycholinguistics. Furthermore, the study design could have been enhanced by a more representative corpus. Hopefully, the shortcomings of the study will be remedied in the future investigations.

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