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A comparative corpus based analysis of reflexive metadiscourse in L1 and FL research articles

Today, the overwhelming majority of impacted journals publish in English. While publishing in these journals is the aim of every scholar, who looks for promotion and other academic rewards, writing in English is difficult for Non Native English (NNE) academics, who have different writing conventions in their national disciplinary context. In this situation, it is useful to conduct specific comparative studies of the local and the native English socio-cultural contexts. Such analyses are insightful to NNE scholars, they inform about the necessary adjustments to be made in order to increase publication chances in international impacted journals. To serve this purpose, this study comparatively analyses reflexive metadiscourse use in research articles (RAs) written in English by native English and Tunisian researchers. The analysis investigates reflexive metadiscourse in a corpus of 100 RAs from hard and soft sciences, with 50 RAs from each cultural group. The focus of this work is on Economics, Business and Management RAs as samples of the soft sciences and Earth and Planetary Sciences RAs as samples of the hard sciences.

Basing my analysis on corpus linguistics (Hunston, 2002; McEnery, Xiao & Tono, 2006), this presentation explains the methodology used. The corpus for this study was individually compiled and processed manually and electronically. The procedure ranges from compiling the corpus, through coding the texts to extracting and comparing the metadiscursive instances.

This analysis will help identify divergence and similarities in the two cultural groups. The results will enable us to give more accurate guidance to Tunisian writers (or other FL writers) who wish to report their research in English for an international audience.

References

Hunston, S. (2002). *Corpora in applied linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McEnery, T., Xiao, R. & Tono, Y. (2006). *Corpus-based Language Studies: An Advanced Resource Book*. London/New York: Routledge.