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*How Can Students Find their Academic Discourse?  
Student Choices in BA / MA Theses in Germany and World-Wide*

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# 1.0 Background Methodology and Theories

**methodology** to empower students to compare their own writing with similar texts (genres) in their discourse community world-wide at advanced English levels when editing their own writings and considering their personal stance and identity as research novices compare linguistic and sociobiographical/textual variables

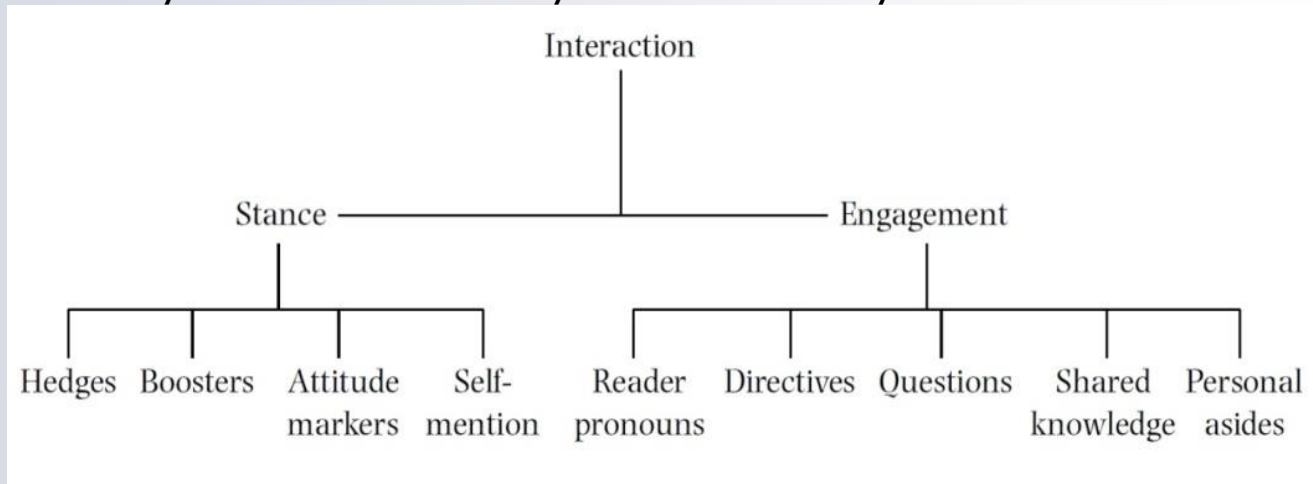
- students with other students,
- progress from BA to MA theses, 1<sup>st</sup> draft to final theses, etc.

## theoretical EFL concepts

- **inductive learning** = students discover usage patterns
- **consciousness-raising** = students may have noticed intuitively
- systematic functional instruction = form follows function
- integrated explicit instruction = discovery reading-->examples-->function?
- based on practical **project** discussions of our research group with international partners in SE Europe, Czech Rep., Cameroon, China, etc.
- general trend: included in MA (PhD) courses world-wide (e.g. Chemnitz)

## 1.1 Focus

- **meta discourse** = linguistic devices that assist writers to organize propositions and present them in a way that will be easily understood by readers

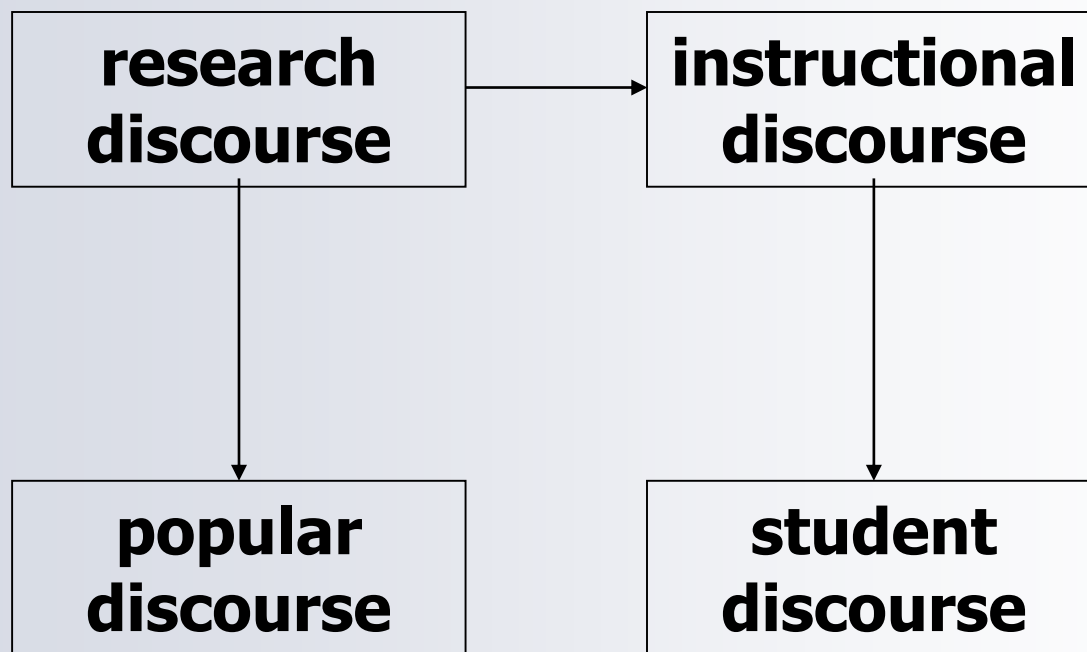


types of reader-writer interaction (Hyland 2005: 177)

- **academic writing in advanced language learning (MA)**  
international (Swales/Feak 2012) and national? (Siepmann et al. 2011)  
textbooks for teaching?

## 1.2 Discourses in science communication

discourse community approach = a writer/speaker appeals to shared knowledge to create a community of discourse: *of course, as we know from ...*



## 1.3 Def. Genre Approach

- (1) Genres are recognizable **communicative events, characterized by a set of communicative purposes** identified and mutually understood by members of the professional or academic community in which they regularly occur.
- (2) **Genres are highly structured and conventionalised constructs**, with constraints on allowable contributions not only in terms of the intentions one would like to give expression to and the shape they often take, but also in terms of the lexico-grammatical resources one can employ to give discursive values to such formal features.
- (3) Established members of **a particular professional community** will have a much greater knowledge and understanding of the use and exploitation of genres than those who are apprentices, new members or outsiders.
- (4) Although genres are viewed as conventionalised constructs, expert members of the disciplinary and professional communities often exploit generic resources to express not only 'private' but also organizational intentions within the constructs of 'socially recognized communicative purposes'.
- (5) **Genres are reflections of disciplinary and organizational cultures**, and in that sense, they focus on social actions embedded within disciplinary, professional and other institutional practices.
- (6) All disciplinary and professional genres have integrity of their own, which is often identified with reference to a combination of textual, discursive and contextual factors. (Bhatia 2004: 23)

## 1.4 Genres in academic discourses

### *research "output"*

- **research article**
- book reviews
- project proposals
- conference presentations

### *instructional disc./e-learning*

- ppt presentations
  - lectures
  - student presentations
- textbooks
  - Wikis
  - www pages (HTML, php)

**discipline-specific  
culture-specific**

### *science "journalism"*

- popular science articles
- popular blogs (David Crystal)
- popular science films (Horizon)
- popular science books
- science slam

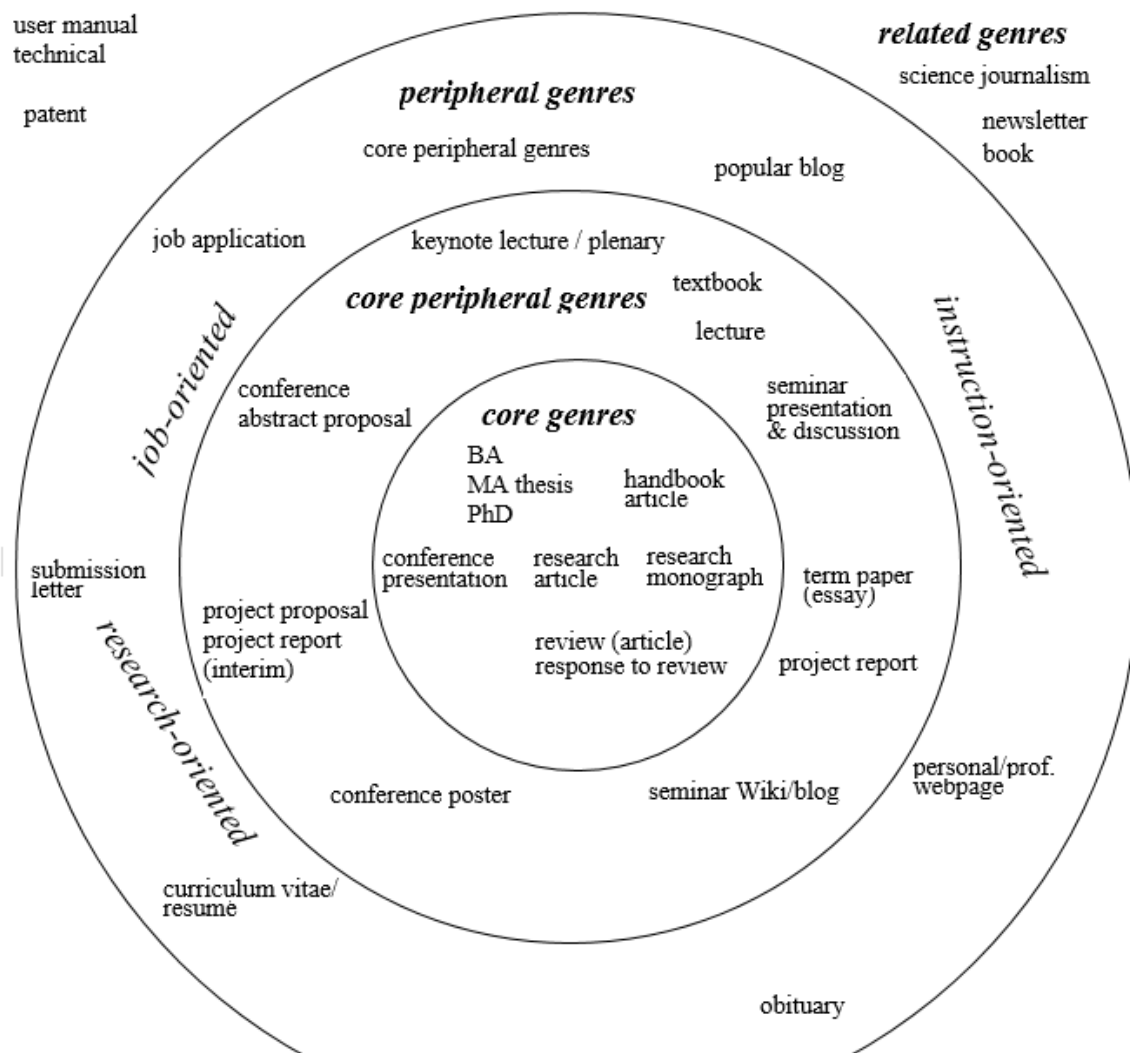
### *student "literacy"*

- fieldwork notes, **reports**
- **essays / term papers**
- **MA/BA/PhD thesis**
- seminar presentations, disc.

**"Novice Academic English"**

**author-specific  
culture-specific**

## 1.6 Prototype approach to genres in academic writing



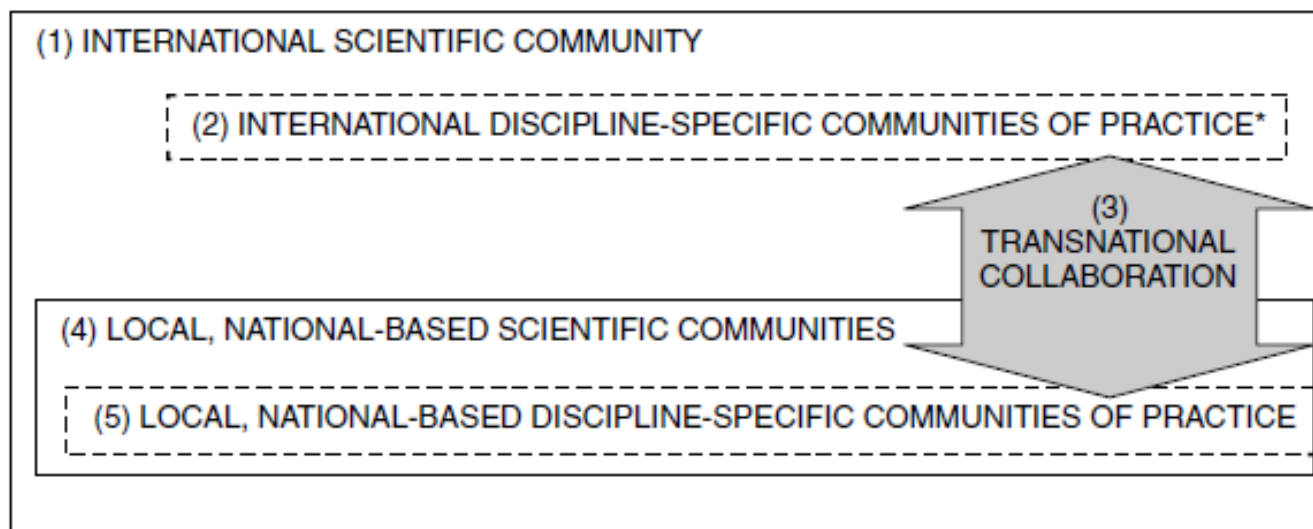
## 1.8 AIMAC organization: Revised IMRAD structure

structure	substructure (tactical alternative)	key lexemes/phrases (as indicators)
<b>A = abstract</b>	keywords in context	<i>focus, discuss, approach</i>
<b>I = issue</b>	new	<i>not enough research yet</i>
	relevant	<i>important, academic discourse, practical application</i>
	focussed	<i>concentrate, emphasise, purpose</i>
<b>M = methodology</b>	previous research, i.e. lit. review incl. evaluation	<i>concept developed, review, refer to, proceed to, claim</i>
	hypotheses possible?	<i>research question</i>
	data base	<i>corpus, data collection</i>
	tests/procedure	<i>calculate</i>
<b>A = analysis</b>	examples as evidence	<i>illustrate, show, prove</i>
	statistical tables as summaries	<i>table, figure, diagram, graph, bar</i>
	significance to generalise	<i>significant, chi<sup>2</sup></i>
<b>C = conclusion</b>	summary	<i>in conclusion, finally/at last, we have shown, discussed above</i>
	interpretation	<i>this proves that</i>
	contextualisation	<i>in a wider perspective, apply</i>
	limitations	<i>more data, beyond the scope</i>
	outlook	<i>further research is necessary, predict, dissemination/application of results</i>



## 2. ChemCorpus as a reference corpus

### 2.1 ChemCorpus Principles



**FIGURE 3.2** Proposed social framing context for scientific discourse

Pérez-Llantada, C. (2012). *Scientific Discourse and the Rhetoric of Globalization*. London: Continuum: 52.

discover “more grammar than meets the eye”

Tool: Antconc (like WordSmith)

→ relative frequencies ←comparable corpora? subcorpora

## 2.2 ChemCorpus set-up by genre and specialisation

genre	specialisation	number of texts	average length	total words
<i>term paper BA</i>	language/linguistics	100	4,200	0.5 Mill.
	culture/literature	100	4,700	0.5 Mill.
<i>project report</i>	(cultural)	120	4,000	0.5 Mill.
<i>BA thesis</i>	language/linguistics	80	12,000	1 Mill.
	culture/literature	80	16,000	1 Mill.
<i>term paper MA</i>	language/linguistics	80	5,700	0.5 Mill.
	culture/literature	80	6,600	0.5 Mill.
<i>MA thesis</i>	language/linguistics	40	25,000	1 Mill.
	culture/literature	40	25,000	1 Mill.
total		720		6.5 Mill.

### 3. Organisation, argumentative structure

#### 3.1 AIMAC from natural sciences into humanities?

structure	substructure (tactical alternative)	key lexemes/phrases (as indicators)
<b>A = abstract</b>	keywords in context	<i>focus, discuss, approach</i>
<b>I = issue</b>	new	<i>not enough research yet</i>
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	contextualisation	<i>in a wider perspective, apply</i>
	limitations	<i>more data, beyond the scope</i>
	outlook	<i>further research is necessary, predict, dissemination/application of results</i>

## 3.2 ToC of a BA thesis with IMRAD structure

Table of Contents	
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2 Literature Review</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1 Canada's settlement history	10
2.2 English in Canada	12
2.2.1 Standard Canadian English	12
2.2.2 Newfoundland English	13
2.3 Selected Phonetic Features of English in Canada	14
2.3.1 Canadian Raising	15
2.3.1.1 Mainland Canada	15
2.3.1.2 Newfoundland	18
2.3.1.3 Quantitative, phonetic definition	19
<b>3 Methodology</b>	<b>22</b>
3.1 Participants	22
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3.3.1.1 Canadian Raising	25
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## 3.3 ToC of a BA thesis with a non-IMRAD structure

Polish Migration to the UK

### Contents

Abstract	1
1. Introduction	2
2. The Term Migration and Polish Migration Motivations	4
2.1. Types of Migration	5
2.2. Ravenstein's Migration Theory	8
2.3. Lee's Migration Theory: Push and Pull Factors	10
3. Polish Migration Behavior and Motivations	13
3.1. Gender-Relation	15
3.2. Age-Relation	16
3.3. Length of Stay	18
3.4. Labour Market	21
3.5. Social Networks	24
3.5.1. Polish Diaspora	28
4. Polish Migration in Historical Perspective	30
4.1. Polish Migration to the UK before 2004	30
4.2. Polish Migration to the UK after 2004	32
5. Conclusion	36

2. Theoretical background
2.1. Definition of the key concept migration
2.2. Types of migration
2.3. Theories explaining migration
2.3.1. Ravenstein's Migration theory
2.3.2. Lee's Migration Theory: Push and Pull Factors
3. Case study: Polish migration to the UK
3.1. Behaviour
3.2. Motivation etc.

## 3.5 ToCof a literature BA term paper with non-IMRAD structure

### Table of Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Theoretical Approaches	
2.1. Key concepts .....	4
2.2. Interpretation of dreams – important terminology .....	5
3. Text Analysis	
3.1. Mohsin Hamid's <i>The Reluctant Fundamentalist</i> .....	6
3.2. Dreams in <i>The Reluctant Fundamentalist</i> .....	7
3.3. Dreams versus reality .....	9
4. Conclusion .....	12
5. Bibliography .....	13

## 4. Linking

### Indicators: cohesive devices

formal:

conjunctions: *but, while*

adverbs: *first, then, finally*

functional:

sentence adverbials, e.g. clause-initial adverb *\*ly*,

function

prototype

additive

*and*

adversative/contrastive

*but*

sequential/temporal

*then*

causal

*because*

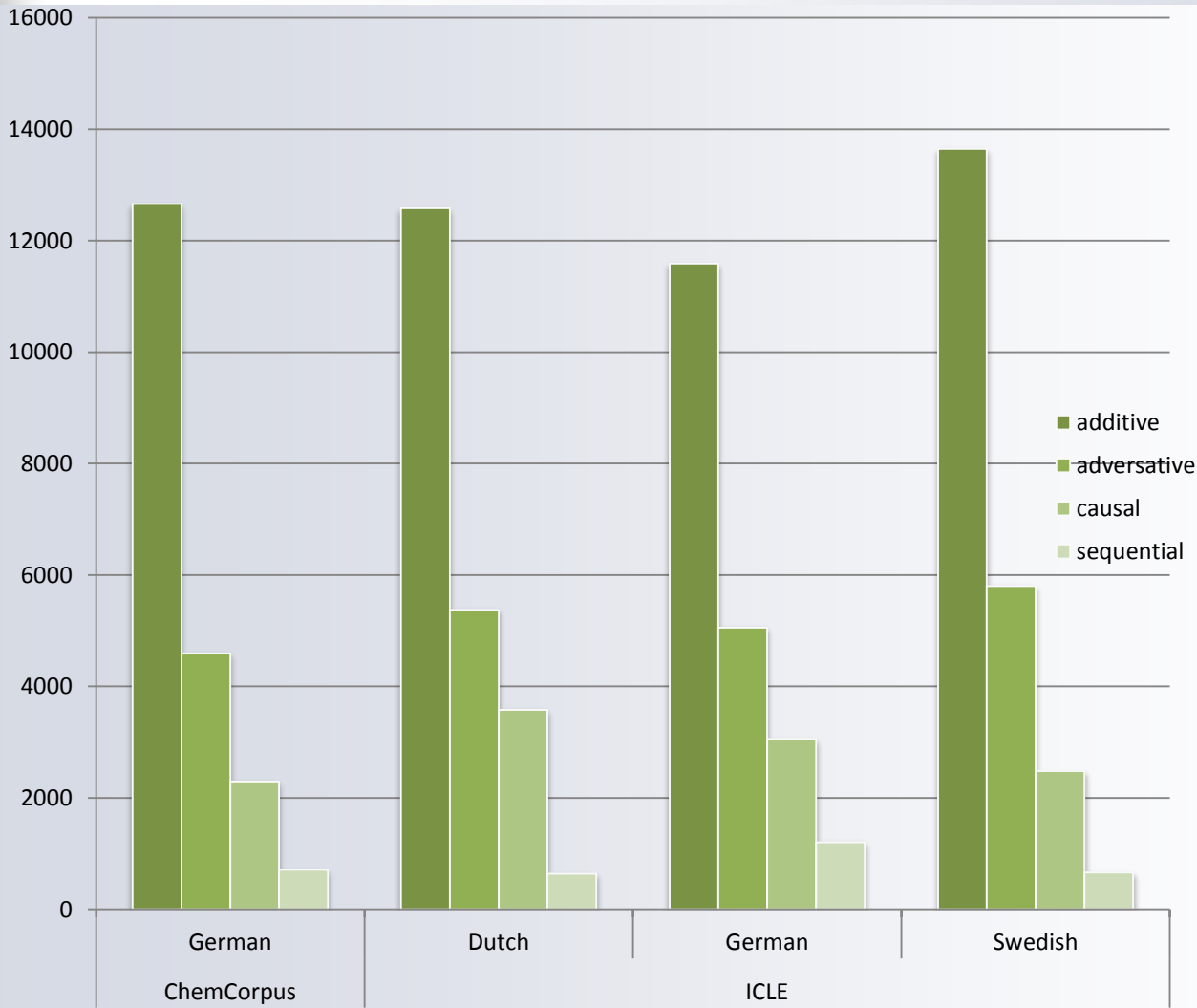


author reader interaction = contrary to what one might expect, hope

Concordance	Concordance Plot	File View	Clusters	Collocates	Word List	Keyword List
Hit	KWIC					
1	n the general South African elections this year.	Unfortunately, there exists hardly any empirical work on 'born-				
2	ers about the ethnic share of the population do,	unfortunately, not exist. <fig> Figure 1 Share of South African				
3	frican because in all honesty that is what I am.	Unfortunately, the legacy of apartheid as such instilled race a				
4	position towards this 'New South Africa'? I-ee:	Unfortunately, it's been said so often it's lost its meaning. A				
5	n awareness. Working further on this issue goes,	unfortunately, beyond the scope of this work, however, further				
6	one, but on several paragraphs of the Agreement.	Unfortunately, in most researches, the changes that the GFA has				
7	The statistic provided in Tim Pat Coogan's work	unfortunately only reaches until the year 1993, however, a diff				
8	phrey, 2003, p.75). Although most classrooms are	unfortunately not designed after proved principles of learning				
9	schools' and teachers' readiness to participate	unfortunately remained rare. Once having receive				
10	. The incomplete questionnaires - of which there	unfortunately were quite a lot, both among the paper and online				
11	g inclusion of student opinions and perceptions.	Unfortunately, this, on the one hand, intricate and complex but				
12	corpus including the Tweets regarded to the PL	(unfortunately no differentiation between personal and official				
13	requent abbreviations in the PL Twitter corpora.	Unfortunately, the AntConc toolkit does not work smoothly in co				
14	tion of Twitter Corpora Abbreviations </tab>	Unfortunately, some abbreviations from Table 8 could not be cle				
15	anation could be that v is even shorter than vs.	Unfortunately, in the frame of the present thesis no clear evid				
16	slation: But this LTI-like abbreviation mania is	unfortunately quite convenient for Twitter) (Twitter, 2013).				
17	ions. Otherwise, this thesis would be redundant.	Unfortunately, within the frame of the PL Twitter analysis it w				
18	h. Regarding another filtering option, it is	unfortunately not possible to separate official Tweets, which a				
19	e some problems regarding these scales. First, I	unfortunately could not find a current probability scale. It is				
20	er words serves to distinguish between speakers.	Unfortunately, films often create a misleading impression of th				
21	ent, thus I decided to use older books which are	unfortunately part of a series. Furthermore, despite the fact t				
22	Mystic River which was released in 2001.	Unfortunately, all five novels by Stephen J. Cannell are part o				
23	r he also became producer, mainly of CBS series.	Unfortunately, Straw wrote and published just one novel that ca				
24	crime related words which is generally accepted.	Unfortunately their is no such word list. It is conceivable tha				



4.4 Functional Categories by L1 (Albrecht 2013: 36, figure 11)



## 5. Stance

### 5.1. key terms: stance > hedging > modality

- “personal feelings, attitudes, value judgments, or assessments” (Biber et al. 1999: 966)
  - “subjective” evaluation on the basis of own knowledge, experience, etc.
  - context-dependency
- academic culture in the discourse community determines how stance is expressed!

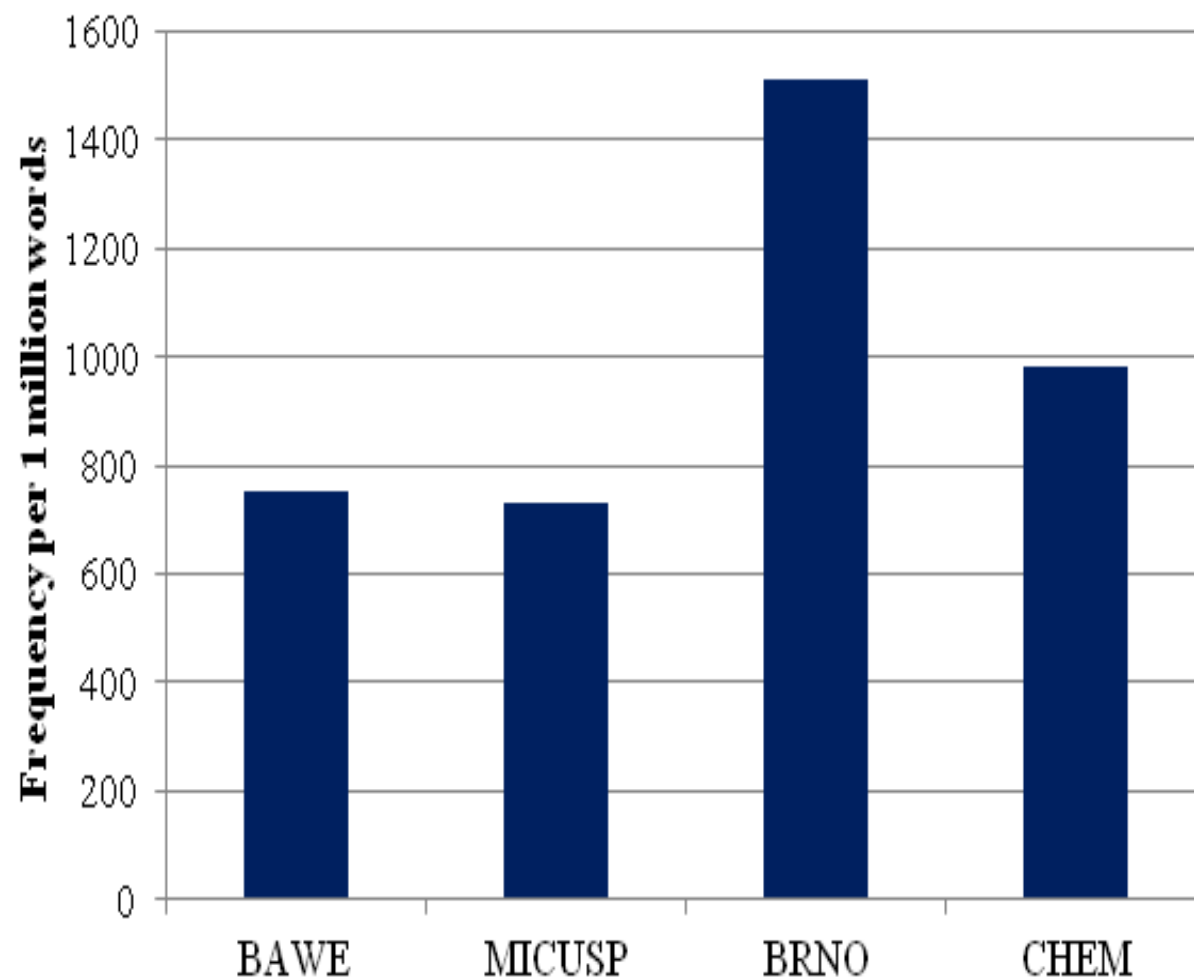
author stance and engagement are crucial variables in academic interaction:

“writing is always a personal and socio-cultural act of identity whereby writers both signal their membership in a range of communities as well as express their own creative presence” (Hyland 2006: 35)

## 5.2 Rel. frequencies per 1 million words in the BrnoCorpus and ChemCorpus (Bräuer 2013:49, table 17)

	Brno	Chemnitz	p-value
<b>Amplifier</b>	<b>2,105.07</b>	<b>1,932.36</b>	
<b>Booster</b>	1,713.69	1,303.09	
<i>considerably</i>	30.40	102.79	< 0.001
<i>highly</i>	136.79	134.76	> 0.05
<i>strongly</i>	34.20	76.52	$0.001 \leq p < 0.01$
<i>tremendously</i>	1.90	7.99	> 0.05
<i>very</i>	1,510.40	981.03	$0.01 \leq p < 0.05$
<b>Maximizer</b>	391.38	629.27	
<i>absolutely</i>	58.90	31.98	< 0.001
<i>clearly</i>	148.19	462.53	< 0.001
<i>extremely</i>	74.10	57.10	$0.01 \leq p < 0.05$
<i>fully</i>	83.59	63.96	$0.001 \leq p < 0.01$
<i>thoroughly</i>	26.60	13.70	> 0.05
<b>Downtoner</b>	<b>609.86</b>	<b>785.74</b>	
<b>Approximator</b>	317.28	404.29	
<i>almost</i>	237.49	340.33	> 0.05
<i>nearly</i>	72.20	36.55	$0.001 \leq p < 0.01$
<i>virtually</i>	7.60	27.41	< 0.05
<b>Diminisher</b>	199.49	229.55	
<i>a bit</i>	76.00	15.99	< 0.001
<i>slightly</i>	93.09	143.90	> 0.05
<i>somewhat</i>	24.70	41.11	> 0.05
<i>to some extent</i>	5.70	28.55	> 0.05
<b>Minimizer</b>	93.09	151.89	
<i>barely</i>	7.60	11.42	> 0.05
<i>hardly</i>	76.00	132.48	> 0.05
<i>scarcely</i>	9.50	7.99	> 0.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,714.93</b>	<b>2,718.10</b>	

### 5.3 Relative frequencies of *very* in BAWE, MICUSP, the BrnoCorpus and ChemCorpus (Bräuer 2013: 63, figure 3)



## 6. Conclusion

Academic English is an accessible and useful topic for students of applied linguistics (including TESOL)

metadiscourse features can be learnt easily and inductively

- junior writers, MA students become aware of reader - writer interaction – and can use this in their own thesis writing ...
- through explorative investigation of model texts they find their own stance between personal identity and disciplinary conventions

*issues:*

- Can corpus databases replace native-speaker introspection?
  - objective – subjective?
  - frequency + attitudes?!
- Are conventions becoming more and more similar because of Anglo-American dominance (gate keepers and guidebook publications)?
- Can we establish an academic *lingua franca* norm on a functional basis? – even against Anglo-American traditions?
- Can the (non-native) ChemCorpus serve as a model?
- Remember there are no native speakers/writers of Academic English!

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