
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Investigating Writer's Stance in University Academic Group Discussions

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ABSTRACT

Online group discussion is a typical learning activity in academic English lessons at universities. Students exchange research ideas and evaluate each other's work. However, many non-English major undergraduates experience challenges in expressing their opinions and developing arguments during this discussion process. Stance analysis is a crucial linguistic tool for obtaining an understanding of how participants express their ideas. Using the stance framework proposed by Biber (2006), the aim of this study was to examine the main grammatical markers and relevant semantic categories found in written online group discussions. We intended to investigate the expressions of the writer's stance (such as stance adverbials, stance nouns, stance adjectives, and stance verbs) in academic group discussions by analyzing a corpus of texts from an online discussion within a university setting from a forum. A total of 34 online group discussions with a combined word count of 199,559 contributed by 187 Hong Kong Chinese undergraduate students comprised the dataset. To pinpoint stance lexical items that appeared in particular grammatical frames, the frequencies and roles of stance expressions were calculated and thoroughly examined. The results demonstrated that the most widely used grammatical stance expressions in these academic discourses to convey attitudes and opinions were stance adverbials and stance verbs. By examining the linguistic resources used by non-English major students to express their perspectives and attitudes, as well as how stance is manifested in the context of academic online discussions, this study provides insights for both linguistics and education.

KEYWORDS

Academic discourse, writer's stance, online group discussions, linguistic stance markers, non-English major undergraduates

ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 28 August 2023

PUBLISHED: 06 September 2023

DOI: 10.32996/jeltal.2023.5.3.11

1. Introduction

Academic group discussions provide an essential platform for cooperative learning and knowledge creation (Herrera-Pavo, 2021; Qureshi et al., 2023; Wu & Wang, 2023). Writing academic research papers requires a high level of writing proficiency and expertise (Sun & Wang, 2020). According to Biber and Gary (2011), this literary genre has undergone extensive revision and editing. Research writing was described as "an extremely dense use of phrasal modifier, extremely complex noun phrase structures" by Biber and Gray (2011, p. 226). In this study, we focused on online academic research discussions at the university level. These discussions are dynamic, with the goal of disseminating research content and evaluating one's own beliefs and arguments. Werner and Tegge (2021) stated that the online text format is collaborative and interactive rather than static. As such, we aimed to determine the extent to which non-English major university students are capable of engaging in the lexico-grammatical expression of "stance" behaviors on an online platform. In this context, stance describes attitudinal remarks on propositional information (Biber & Finegan, 1988). Various grammatical devices are used in university registers to express stance and writer's attitude. One major question for our study was developed to guide the analysis of student-written online platform postings:

What lexical-grammatical stance expressions and their functions are most frequently used by students to convey their writing attitude on an online group discussion platform?

Finding patterns and distinctions in how stance verbs, stance nouns, stance adjectives, and stance adverbs are used in these discussions was our goal in this study. We intended to define the role that stance plays in influencing written discourse by analyzing a corpus of text extracted from an academic institution's online discussion forum. This study also provides pedagogical implications for teaching stance skills to students who do not major in English and raises students' awareness of their stance in group discussions so that students can write more objective and persuasive arguments by developing their stance knowledge. The following section provides further details about the critical key concept of stance. The methodology and analyses of the results are then described.

2. Stance framework

The term "stance" refers to an individual's attitudes, convictions, and points of view on a specific topic or problem (Gray & Biber, 2012). Stance can be expressed in a variety of lexical and grammatical ways, using adverbs, nouns, adjectives, and verbs (Alghazo et al., 2021; Lewis, 2020). An understanding of how stance is expressed in academic discourse benefits the exploration of knowledge construction and meaning negotiation in a collaborative learning environment. Discourse analysis can be approached from different perspectives, ranging from textual linguistic analyses to a sociocultural approach (Joye & Maesele, 2022; Partington, Duquid, & Taylor, 2013). The use of attitudinal linguistic devices by authors has long captivated researchers (Ahmad Baaqeel, 2020; Castelló et al., 2021; Jindapitak, 2022; Hyland & Jiang, 2022). Three major frameworks for the analysis of written discourse include stance, appraisal theory, and evaluation (c.f. Ebrahimi & Mohsenzadeh, 2022; Gray & Biber, 2012; Hunston, 2011; Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2005; Pasaribu & Dewi, 2021; Puspita & Pranoto, 2021; Thompson & Hunston, 2000; Quinn, 2020; Zhang, 2020). These frameworks emphasize detailed attitudinal descriptions of a single text. According to Biber et al. (1999), stance is the study of how lexico-grammatical resources are used to convey the unique emotions, attitudes, value judgments, or assessments of the speaker or writer. In this study, we employed the stance framework to investigate the typical patterns of evaluative language in a corpus of text. A corpus linguistics approach was used to systematically analyze a group of texts from an online academic discussion. Using a large dataset, recurring patterns can be identified, and broad conclusions can be drawn about the writer's point of view. A summary of the data's grammatical stance features and the number of frequency tokens adopted from Biber (2006) is provided in Appendix 1. The following grammatical stance devices were examined in this study: stance adverbials, stance adjectives, stance nouns, and stance verbs. The examples of data stances were counted, cited, and examined to support the analysis.

3. Data collection and analysis

The study data were gathered from an online discussion platform at a university in Hong Kong, China. A corpus of written discussions with contributions from multiple participants was compiled. The corpus was qualitatively and quantitatively analyzed, with a focus on identifying and categorizing stance adverbs, stance nouns, stance adjectives, and stance verbs. The frequency and distribution of these linguistic markers were investigated to identify patterns and trends in the writer's expression of stance. The discussion forum focused on an English course, and students participated in collaborative discussions on a variety of academic-related topics. Students in Years One and Two who did not major in English could choose to take the course. The class size ranged from 35 to 40 students. The teacher met with the students once per week for three hours during the 15-week semester. One of the learning activities in the course involved ongoing online discussion. Students are divided into groups of five to six to hold an online discussion about some societal language issues. The entire discussion process lasted two academic weeks. Each student differently participated in the task: A starter was in charge of introducing group members, defining key terms, and creating a list of questions to be discussed; a few provocateurs were in charge of evaluating and criticizing the other participants' arguments and providing additional examples to stimulate the discussion; a summarizer was in charge of reviewing and summarizing the discussion. The teacher requested that the summarizer create a formal essay that had to be thoroughly edited.

A sample of 34 discussion threads, each consisting of at least 15 posts, was randomly selected for analysis. In total, 187 Hong Kong Chinese students contributed 195,955 English words to these group discussions. With sufficient data, we investigated the generalizability of the stance patterns using a corpus-based approach. In addition, 5 focus group interviews with 20 students were conducted as part of this study. The main themes covered in the interviews were students' perspectives on discourse awareness in written group discussions, their language difficulties, and linguistic strategies for communicating and reflecting attitudes and thoughts in the academic register using stance features. Using Biber's (2006) stance framework as a comprehensive check list, we examined the linguistic markers used to indicate stance in the data (see Appendix 1 for a frequency table of the stance categories counted in the data). The different categories, such as stance adverbials, stance adjectives, stance verbs, and stance nouns, were normalized to the total number of words per 10,000 words using the frequency findings from corpus linguistics to ensure the quantitative data were directly comparable across the categories. For normalization, the following formula from Biber et al. (1998) was used: *Distribution of use = Number of instances / Total number of words x 10 000*. The frequency distributions were thus normalized to the total number of words per 10,000 words.

4. Findings and Discussions

Stance is typically linked to extensive corpus-based analyses of grammatical features in particular registers and genres (Batchelor, 2023; Qin & Zhang, 2022). The following stance categories were investigated in this study: stance adverbs, stance verbs, stance

adjectives, and stance nouns. The results of the analysis revealed that the student participants used a variety of stance adverbs, stance nouns, stance adjectives, and stance verbs. Figure 1 depicts the distribution of stance categories in the students' online discussions.

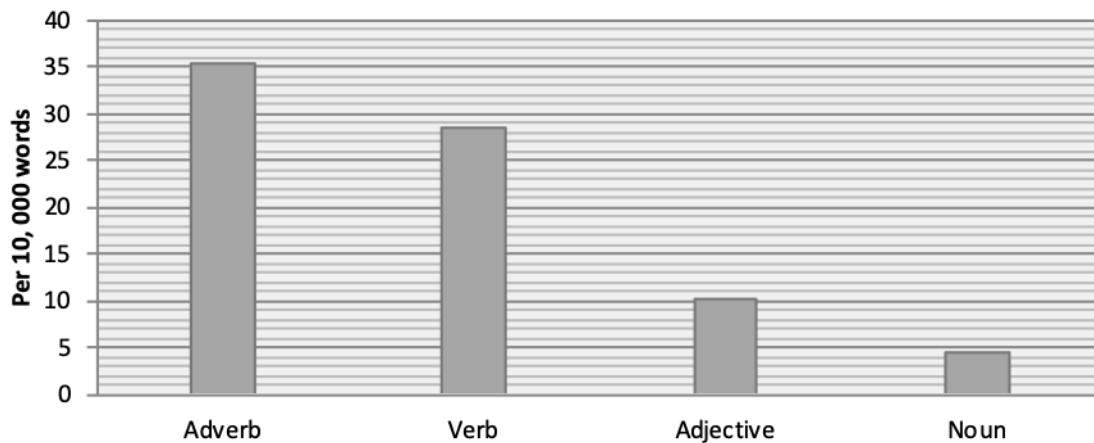


Figure 1 Distribution of stance categories in online student discussions

The category with the most appearances (35.3 times per 10,000 words) was stance adverbs. Stance verbs, adjectives, and nouns were counted 28.6, 10.1, and 4.6 times per 10,000 words, respectively. Sections 4.1–4.4 cover these four stance classifications in detail, with examples.

4.1 Frequency and roles of stance adverbials

According to Biber et al. (1999), stance adverbials express the speaker's or writer's culturally organized personal opinions and assessments of the topic under discussion. Some examples of stance adverbs include *certainly*, *definitely*, and *eventually*. Stance adverbs were used in the university's online discussion to convey certainty or confidence in the writer's opinions. A student might write, *I definitely think that...* to express their certainty when they have a strong opinion on a particular topic. Another student demonstrated confidence in their position by stating their position *clearly* when making their argument. Stance adverbials can be further divided into three main subcategories: epistemic, attitudinal, and style stance, as shown in Figure 2.

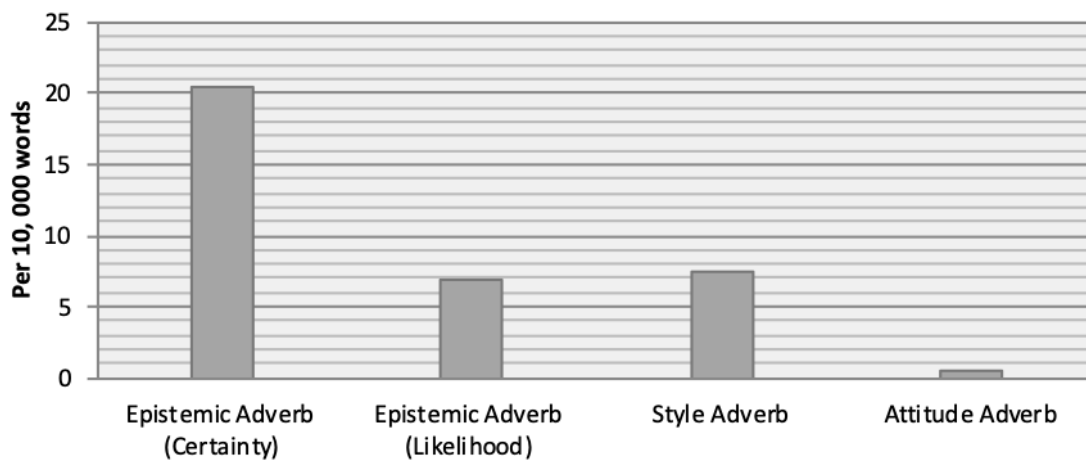


Figure 2 Adverb distribution indicating stance in online student discussions

The epistemic adverbial stance (for example, certainty and likelihood) focuses on a writer's level of commitment to, certainty about, or likelihood of a proposition (Biber et al., 1999; Conrad & Biber, 2000). The data contained certainty adverbs such as *actually*, *always*, *certainly*, *definitely*, *never*, *of course*, *obviously*, and *really*. Examples of likelihood adverbs include *apparently*, *kind of*, *perhaps*, *possibly*, *probably*, and *maybe*. Furthermore, style stance refers to the manner in which information is presented and is used to comment on the communication (Biber et al., 1999; Biber & Finegan, 1988). Examples of the style adverbs found in the students' discussion included *confidently*, *generally*, *technically*, *usually*, and *primarily*. Attitudinal stance markers are less

commonly used to convey attitudes, feelings, judgments, or expectations than epistemic markers (Biber et al., 1999). *Amazingly*, *importantly*, and *surprisingly* are some examples of attitudinal stance adverbs.

Table 1: The most common stance adverbs

Semantic category	Most frequent forms (total number of tokens in the data)
Epistemic adverb (certainty)	<i>always</i> (154), <i>really</i> (84), <i>actually</i> (81)
Epistemic adverb (likelihood)	<i>kind of</i> (116)
Style adverb	<i>usually</i> (123), <i>generally</i> (16)
Attitude adverb	<i>importantly</i> (8)

Table 1 shows the most common certainty adverbials that occurred in students' ongoing discussions, with *always*, *really*, and *actually* accounting for approximately 80% of that category. For example, *we can always see those tags on social media or in the movie Canton pop*. *Always* serves to improve the ability to locate specific subjects. *Really* adverbials, which indicate actuality, are very common in student writing. According to Biber et al. (1999), *really* can be found in the first, middle, and last positions. The data *really* indicated the students' perception of actuality or reality of a proposition. For example, *I really think code mixing and code switching can be well used in different advertisements*. Some *really* instances seem to indicate that the epistemic stance means "in reality"; others could be interpreted as intensifying a verb or adjective with the approximate meaning of "very (much)" (Biber et al. 1999). *Actually* serves as "a comment on the reality of being able to hear something being said" (Conrad & Biber, 2000: 59). *Actually* and *really* had the same number of tokens. For example, *from the below image, we can actually see ...* *Kind of* was the most common likelihood adverbial. For example, *[哩騷 late so] in the Chinese name showed a kind of vulgar style*.

The most common style adverbs were *usually* and *generally*. The style stance describes how information is presented (Conrad & Biber, 2000). For example, *the short form PhD usually means Doctor of Philosophy*. An example of *generally* describing information includes *We have generally explained the definition and reasons from different perspectives*. Attitudinal stance markers were important in the students' online discussions in a few ways. These were less common than epistemic and style markers. For example, *more importantly, all of the replies are really well done and elaborated on their arguments*. In the data, we found that students liked to use the adverbial pattern "more/most + importantly" to demonstrate their positive attitude toward a proposition. According to the findings, attitude adverbs were the most frequently used. The use of these adverbs emphasized the writer's conviction in their arguments and suggested a firm position on the subject.

4.2 Frequency and roles of stance verbs

Verbs used to express the speaker's stance on a subject are referred to as stance verbs. *Believe*, *argue*, and *hesitate* are examples of common stance verbs used in online discussions to more directly express the speaker's stance. One student expressed their belief about the subject by writing, *I believe that...*, for instance. Another student expressed a position in a weaker way by writing; *I hesitate about that*. We examined "to" complement clauses (e.g., *I hope to get some information from everyone*.) and "that" complement clauses controlled by a verb (e.g., *I suggest that we can take a look at an example in detail*.) According to Biber et al. (1999), *that* complement clauses are controlled by verbs from only two semantic domains: mental verbs that directly express an epistemic or attitudinal stance (e.g., *think*, *know*, and *hope*) and communication verbs that indicate the source of information (e.g., *say*, *report*, and *suggest*).

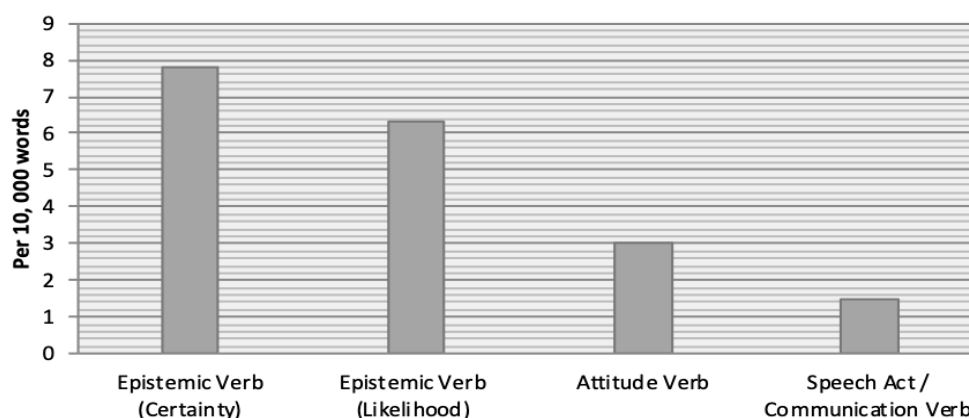


Figure 3 Distribution of stance verbs + that clauses in students' online discussions

The most common certainty verbs that occurred in the students' ongoing discussion, as shown in Table 2, were *find*, *see*, and *know*, which accounted for 32% of that category. *Find*, *see*, and *know* are mental verbs that demonstrate certainty using the epistemic stance function. For example, *I find that they are appearing more and more in my life*. An example of *see* is *we can see that English words and culture have been an essential part of Japan people's lives*. Over 86% of the concordance lines in the data showed a combination of *we can see that*. "Can + see that" was a very common lexico-grammatical pattern among these students. *Know* is a mental verb used to express an epistemic stance. A grammatical pattern that was frequently found in the data was *we all know that*. As *we all know that, Hong Kong has been a colonial area for the British in the past, ... and we all know that most of the news of Daily Apple are opposing the government*. Students seem to prefer using the phrase *we all know that* to garner agreement from others and establish a common understanding rather than confirming a high degree of authoritative knowledge.

Table 2: The most common stance verb + that clause

Semantic category	Most frequent forms (total number of tokens in the data)
Epistemic verb (certainty)	<i>find</i> (49), <i>see</i> (43), <i>know</i> (26)
Epistemic verb (likelihood)	<i>think</i> (64), <i>believe</i> (49)
Attitude verb	<i>agree</i> (38), <i>feel</i> (16), <i>hope</i> (8)
Speech act/communication adverb	<i>suggest</i> (17)

Think and *believe* are verbs that describe mental cognitive states (Biber et al., 1999). *Think* is the most common epistemic verb used to express likelihood. For example, *I think that cultural development is one of the most interesting parts of our discussion* and *In general, we believe that when we want to study this topic*. For writers who expressed their opinions and academic knowledge using the semantic meaning of likelihood verb *think* and *believe*, the most common attitudinal verb was *agree*, and the most common speech act/communication adverb in the +*that* complement clause was *suggest*.

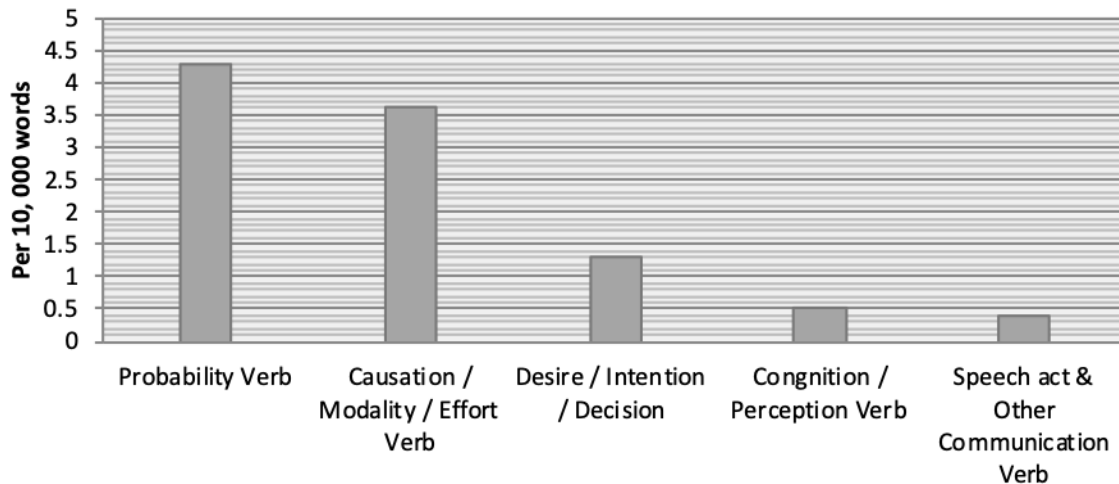


Figure 4 Distribution indicating verb stance + to clauses

Figure 4 depicts the distribution of verbs used to take a stance in "to" complement clauses. The five types of stance verbs include probability, causation/modality/effort, desire/intention/decision, cognition/perception, and speech act and other communication verbs (Biber et al., 1999). The most common categories were probability verbs and causation/modality/effort verbs.

Table 3: Most common stance verb+ to clause

Semantic category	Most frequent forms (total number of tokens in the data)
Probability Verb	<i>tend</i> (60), <i>seem</i> (18)
Causation / Modality / Effort Verb	<i>try</i> (37), <i>help</i> (23)
Desire / Intention / Decision Verb	<i>choose</i> (10)
Cognition / Perception Verb	<i>suppose</i> (4)
Speech Act and Other	<i>invite</i> (3)

As shown in Table 3, the verbs controlling clauses were most frequently those from the semantic class expressing probability (e.g., *tend* and *seem*). For example, *we tend to code-switch very often*, and *these approaches seem to be popular in mass media*. The

semantic verbs of causation (for example, *try* and *help*) were the second most common category, accounting for approximately half of the total. For instance, *they try to show off their language skills*, and *this song helps to promote the nightlife and the "bad girl" idea to them*. The data showed a fairly even distribution of cognition verbs (e.g., *suppose*) and speech act verbs (e.g., *invite* and *remind*), for instance, *despite the fact that Ta Kung Pao has a long history and is supposed to have in-depth analysis...and customer are invited to order food at discretion*. The writer's engagement with the subject was expressed with a high frequency of stance verbs. These verbs demonstrated the writer's active engagement in the discussion and willingness to adopt a viewpoint.

4.3 Frequency and roles of stance adjectives

Stance adjectives are adjectives that express the speaker's attitude toward a specific topic. The *that* complement clauses were examined, for example, *It's surprising that code-mixing and code-switching appear in this way*; and the adjective-controlled to-complement clauses, for example, *I am afraid to retake the same course next year*.

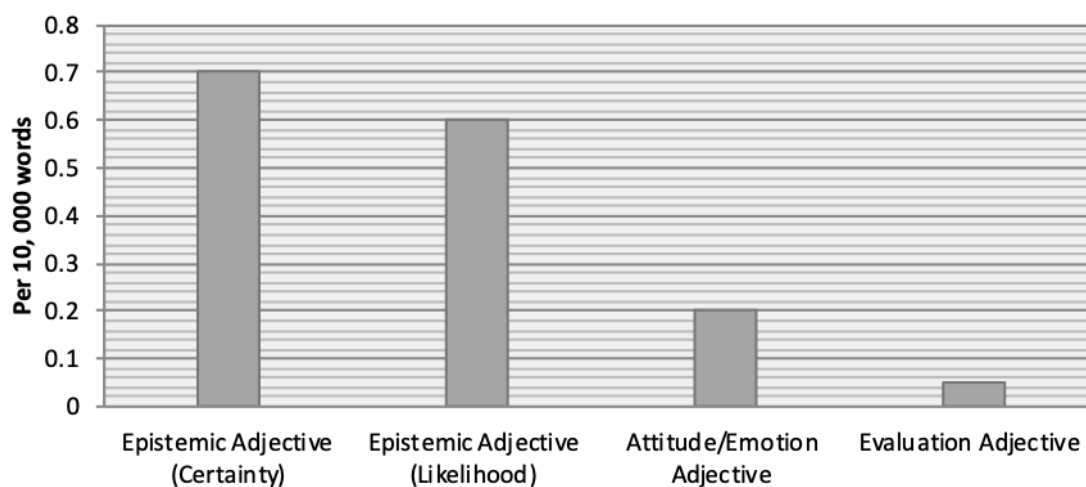


Figure 5 Adjectives used to mark stance + *that* clauses in students' online discussions

Figure 5 displays the adjectives controlling *that* complement clauses expressing epistemic certainty/likelihood, evaluations, and other attitudes. These examples of *that* complement clause express writer's stance.

Table 4: Most frequent stance adjective+ *that* clause in students' online discussions

Semantic category	Most frequent forms (total number of tokens in the data)
Epistemic adjective (certainty)	<i>true</i> (6), <i>obvious</i> (4)
Epistemic adjective (likelihood)	<i>doubtful</i> (10)
Attitude/emotion adjective	<i>worried</i> (3)
Evaluation adjective	<i>surprising</i> (1)

According to Table 4, the most common categories are epistemic adjectives expressing certainty (e.g., *true* and *obvious*) and likelihood (e.g., *doubtful*). More than 90% of the concordance lines in the data showed a combination of *it is true that...* "It is + true that" is a common lexico-grammatical pattern used in student writing to add force and power to an argument. The data contained examples of affective adjectives (e.g., *worried*) and evaluation adjectives (e.g., *surprising*). For example, *some residents are worried that the price of commodities in the area will rise*.

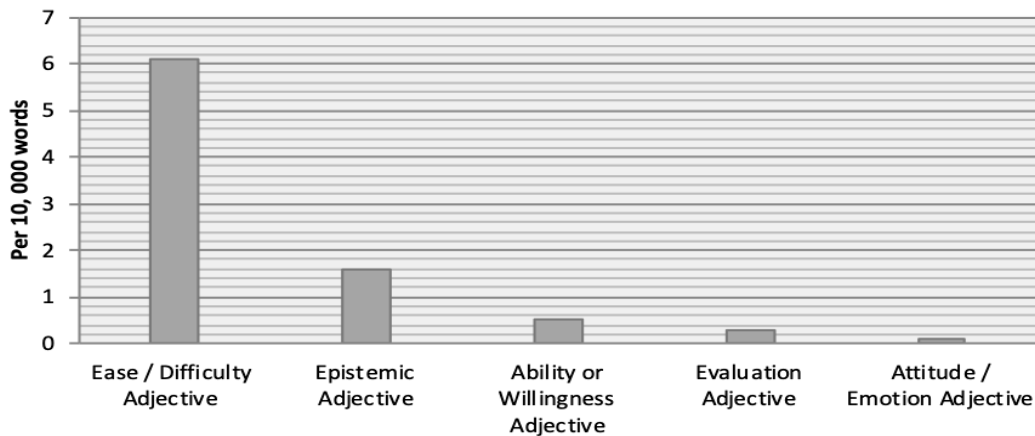


Figure 6 Adjectives used to mark stance + to clauses in students' online discussions

As illustrated in Figure 6, the adjectives controlling to complement clauses express ease/difficulty, epistemic adjective, ability or willingness adjective, evaluation adjectives, and attitude/emotion adjectives. The most frequently used adjectives controlling clauses were those from the semantic class expressing ease/difficulty (e.g., *difficult* and *easy*).

Table 5: Most common stance adjective+ to clause in students' online discussions

Semantic category	Most frequent forms (total number of tokens in the data)
Ease or difficulty adjective	<i>difficult</i> (33), <i>easy</i> (33)
Epistemic adjective	<i>likely</i> (29)
Ability or willingness adjective	<i>(un)able</i> (8)
Evaluation adjectives	<i>convenient</i> (3)
Attitude/emotion adjective	<i>afraid</i> (2)

Adjectives such as *difficult*, *easy*, and *likely* were more frequently found in the online discussion, whereas ability adjectives such as *unable*, evaluation adjectives such as *convenient*, and emotion adjectives such as *afraid* were less frequently found. Stance adjectives express the author's opinion or evaluation of a specific concept or idea. These adjectives provide a more complex viewpoint for the writer's position, allowing for a more in-depth examination of their opinions.

4.4 Frequency and roles of stance nouns

Stance nouns are nouns that are used to convey the speaker's viewpoint on a particular subject. As shown in Figure 7, nouns marking stance in + that clauses were classified into three types: epistemic (certainty/likelihood), attitude/perspective, and communication noun. The top two categories were epistemic nouns expressing certainty and attitude/perspective nouns.

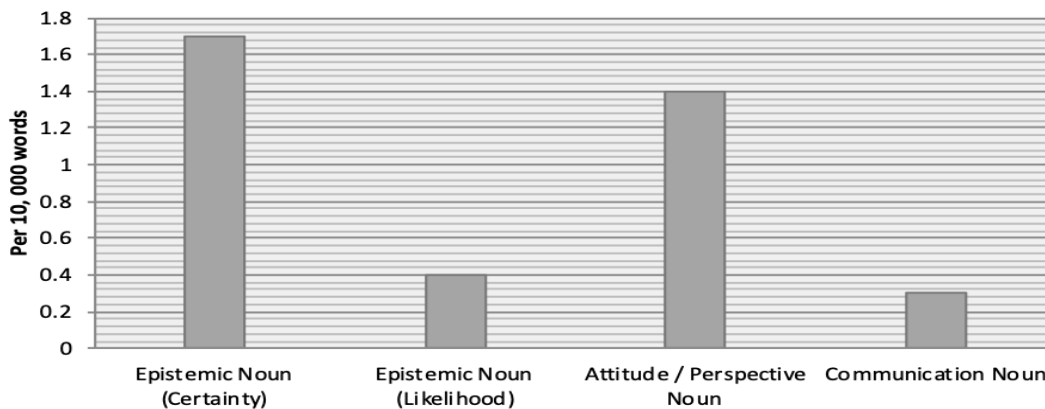


Figure 7 Distribution of nouns denoting stance + that clauses in online student discussions

The most common epistemic nouns in + that clauses that express certainty include *fact*. In this category, 40% of the tokens were the expression *due to the fact that*. This grammatical structure was popular among students for expressing their level of certainty.

For example, "why the language is so powerful due to the fact that...". Another common category was attitude/perspective nouns (for example, *reason*, *hope*, and *thought*).

Table 5: Most frequent stance nouns + *that* clauses in students' online discussion

Semantic category	Most frequent forms (total number of tokens in the data)
Epistemic noun (certainty)	<i>fact</i> (26)
Epistemic noun (likelihood)	<i>impression</i> (2)
Attitude/perspective noun	<i>reason</i> (10), <i>hope</i> (8), <i>thought</i> (6)
Communication noun	<i>news</i> (6)

Some stance nouns + *to* clauses include *right*, *responsibility*, *opportunity*, *desire*, and *failure*. For instance, *everybody has the right to choose*. In comparison with other categories, stance nouns were less frequently used; they nevertheless substantially contributed to conveying the author's viewpoint. Common stance nouns include *reasons*, *thought*, *impression*, and *viewpoint*. These nouns were employed to clarify the writer's position clear and to provide the foundation for their arguments.

To summarize, a variety of linguistic stance markers were discovered, indicating that the authors used them to voice their opinions in academic group discussions. The top category in terms of token frequency counted in the online group discussions by Biber (2006) was stance adverbs (e.g., *always*, *really*, *actually*, *kind of*, and *usually*). Stance adverbs, such as *always*, *really*, and *actually*, were frequently employed to indicate a strong position or certainty. The epistemic stance verbs (certainty) were the most common category in *that* complement clauses (e.g., *find*, *see*, *think*, *believe*, and *agree*). Stance verbs such as *find*, *see*, and *think* were used to convey the author's position with respect to the subject under discussion. The second category in *that* complement clauses was epistemic adjectives (e.g., *true*, *obvious* and *doubtful*); the third included epistemic nouns (e.g., *fact*) and attitude/perspective nouns (e.g., *reason*, *hope* and *thought*). Stance nouns, such as *reason*, *hope*, and *thought*, were used to explicitly state the writer's standpoint. Furthermore, probability verbs (e.g., *tend* and *seem*) and effort verbs (e.g., *try*) were the most common categories in *to* complement clauses; the next category was easy/difficult adjectives (e.g., *difficult* and *easy*), and the last category was stance nouns (e.g., *right*). The findings of this study highlight the importance of considering linguistic markers of stance in academic group discussions. By examining the use of stance adverbs, nouns, adjectives, and verbs, we can learn about the writer's attitudes, opinions, and beliefs. This understanding can assist participants in recognizing and engaging with different points of view, resulting in more effective communication and collaboration in educational settings.

4.5 Students' voice of stance markers

In focus group interviews, students expressed their agreement with Biber et al. (1999) in that the stance position in academic writing and group discussions is crucial. They found that online discussion involved a lively exchange of ideas from their research and the viewpoints of writers and readers. One of the main tools used to build this exchange was the use of stance markers. Some students also expressed worry as English was not their first language. They struggled with writing academic written arguments in English as a second language. Concerns were raised by two students when using the stance markers. However, the data showed that the students were capable of using a variety of stance strategies, particularly when interpreting the attitudinal meanings of certainty and probability. Furthermore, we found that the group was not always eager to raise immediate objections or authoritative evaluative judgments when mistakes were discovered during the discussion. Negative evaluative lexis was almost absent from the discussion. On the contrary, the participants tried to maintain a positive discussion atmosphere. This may be considered excessive in a formal academic discussion. The following excerpt serves as an example: *All of the replies are really well done and elaborated on their arguments. Good job!* When this observation was further discussed with the students, an intriguing phenomenon emerged: students were reluctant to criticize and disagree with their peers because they thought the online discussion was a public forum. This phenomenon is in line with the earlier findings of stance research regarding the idea of avoiding conflict and preserving interpersonal and group harmony (cf. Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Ho, 1998; MacKenzie, 1997; Yu, Lee, & Mak, 2016). Furthermore, the students may be lacking in sophisticated stance strategies, such as how to effectively refute opposing viewpoints.

5. Conclusions

Studying stance patterns in online discussions can help students understand how they introduce academic concepts, evaluate issues, and express their attitudinal meanings. Biber's (2006) analysis of stance adverbs, nouns, adjectives, and verbs was adopted in this study to investigate a writer stance in academic group discussions in a university-level course. In academic discourse, the most commonly used grammatical stance expressions to convey views and opinions are stance adverbials and stance verbs. Here, we examined the stance performance of groups of university undergraduate students in their first and second years who participated in an online discussion platform. We discovered that they were able to use a variety of linguistic markers effectively to express their positions. Students employed different stance strategies, although they tended to favor positive "personal opinion"

strategies. The purpose of this study was to determine the linguistic stance pattern frequency and functional roles that reflect how undergraduate students construct knowledge through research discussions. This study revealed important insights into the construction of meaning and knowledge in cooperative learning settings. These findings are important because they have pedagogical implications for teaching research writing and group discussions at the university level, especially for non-English majors. In future studies, researchers can further investigate how stance affects group dynamics and the implications for collaborative learning across disciplines.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Appendix 1 A summary of the data's grammatical stance expression and token frequency (adopted by Biber's Stance Framework 2006)

Stance Expression		Examples and Token Frequency
Stance adverbs		<p>Epistemic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certainty: <i>always (154), really (84), actually (81), never (25), definitely (18), obviously (17), of course (11), certainly (10)</i> • Likelihood: <i>kind of (93), maybe (23), probably (8), perhaps (6), apparently (3), possibly (2)</i> <p>Attitude: <i>importantly (8), surprisingly (2), amazingly (1)</i></p> <p>Style: <i>usually (123), generally (16), primarily (5), confidently (1), technically (1)</i></p>
Stance verb	Stance verb + <i>that</i> clause	<p>Epistemic verbs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certainty: <i>find (49), see (43), know (26), prove (14), realize (14), understand (6)</i> • Likelihood: <i>think (64), believe (49), doubt (8), suspect (2), assume (1)</i> <p>Attitude verbs: <i>agree (38), feel (8), hope (8), worry (3), expect (1), wish (1)</i></p> <p>Speech act/communication verbs: <i>suggest (17), argue (6), claim (6), respond (1)</i></p>
	Stance verb + <i>to</i> clause	<p>Probability verbs: <i>tend (60), seem (18), happen (4), appear (2)</i></p> <p>Cognition/perception verbs: <i>suppose (4), learn (3), expect (2)</i></p> <p>Desire/intention/decision verbs: <i>choose (10), wish (6), prefer (5), love (4), hesitate (1)</i></p> <p>Causation/modality/effort verbs: <i>try (37), help (23), require (8), fail (2)</i></p> <p>Speech act and other communication verbs: <i>invite (3), teach (1)</i></p>
Stance adjective	Stance adjective + <i>that</i> clause	<p>Epistemic adjectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certainty: <i>true (6), obvious (4), evident (2), sure (1)</i> • Likelihood: <i>doubtful (10), likely (1)</i> <p>Attitude/emotion adjectives: <i>worried (3), hopeful (1)</i></p> <p>—Evaluation adjectives: <i>surprising (1)</i></p>
	Stance adjective + <i>to</i> clause	<p>Epistemic adjectives: <i>likely (29), sure (3)</i></p> <p>Attitude/emotion adjectives: <i>afraid (2),</i></p> <p>Evaluation adjectives: <i>convenient (3), reasonable (2)</i></p> <p>Ability or willingness adjectives: <i>(un)able (8), eager (1)</i></p> <p>Ease or difficulty adjectives: <i>difficult (33), easy (33), easier (25), hard (24), (im)possible (5)</i></p>
Stance noun	Stance noun + <i>that</i> clause	<p>Epistemic nouns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certainty: <i>fact (26), conclusion (4), conviction (2), knowledge (1), result (1)</i> • Likelihood: <i>impression (2), belief (1), claim (1), implication (1), opinion (1), possibility (1)</i> <p>Attitude/perspective nouns: <i>reason (10), hope (8), thought (6), view (4)</i></p> <p>Communication nouns: <i>news (6)</i></p>
	Stance noun + <i>to</i> clause	<i>right (8), desire (2), opportunity (2), responsibility (2), failure (1)</i>