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Voice in Textbooks: between Exposition and Argument

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1   Introduction: the concept of authorial voice

The notion of voice has been discussed from different perspectives in academic discourse studies, often in relation to discursive identity and self-representation. A major concern has been the formation of student writer identity, with the literature on composition often highlighting the need to show individuality and personal expressiveness in discourse (Bowden, 1995). Literacy studies have also pointed to writers' need to demonstrate awareness of the discourse practices of their community and to take a stance towards other social codes and voices (Ivanič, 1998), insisting that all writing reinterprets collective voice types in ways that locate users culturally and historically (Ivanič and Camps, 2001). Teachers are asked to draw attention to issues of discursive identity, to the resources we use to project other voices, and to the continuous process of becoming in discourse (Prior, 2001). Educational debate has often centred on different cultural traditions in writing, showing great interest in the potential disadvantage of L2 writers (Ramanathan and Atkinson, 1999) whose individual voice may differ from the experience and expertise of writers from other cultures (Le Ha, 2009). Many have warned against a tendency to associate voice with individualism and to overlook the voices of L2 writers (Matsuda, 2001; Hirvela and Belcher, 2001), in line with critical approaches to the multiplicity of voices mani-fested by each writer. Increasing attention has also been paid to voice as the reader's construction of the author's voice (Matsuda and Tardy, 2007), interpreted in terms of Bakhtinian dialogism by Tang (2009).

Descriptive studies of voice in academic discourse have referred to a dialogic view of language, discourse and authority (e.g. Silver and Bondi, 2004; Fløttum et al., 2006; Fløttum, 2007). Bakhtin's (1981)

dialogism emphasizes the heteroglossia and internal stratification of any language, the dynamic process of taking and using another person's words, and the different degrees of distance that one may assume from one's own discourse. The multiplicity of textual voices in academic writing also includes the virtual voices of readers. Writers often address potential objections by showing temporary agreement with claims, which are then refuted, or subsequently revised. All this leads to a broad view of voice markers, including not only the most overt interactional features, engaging writers and readers explicitly in the process, but also the more discrete interactive features, i.e. language choices that show 'the writer's awareness of a participating audience and the ways he or she seeks to accommodate its probable knowledge, interests, rhetorical expectations and processing abilities' (Hyland, 2005: 49).

The range of relevant voice markers becomes extremely wide. Reference to discourse participants obviously plays a key role, as shown for example by studies on the use of first person in student writing (Tang and John, 1999) or self-mention in expert writing (Hyland, 2002a), but these are clearly extended to all forms of engagement and interpersonal metadiscourse in general (Hyland, 2005), including markers of evaluation (Hunston, 2000), whether expressing *status* (e.g. epistemic markers) or *value* (e.g. attitudinal markers). The writer's interpretative position in the text and the dialogic involvement of other voices can be seen as constitutive of authorial identity (Bondi, 2007), together with forms of explicit self- and other-representation.

Studies on academic discourse have become increasingly interested in evaluative language use, whether under the heading of evaluation or stance (Hunston and Thompson, 2000; Hyland, 2000; Mauranen and Bondi, 2003; Biber, 2006; Giannoni, 2010; Hunston, 2011), looking not only at forms of self-attribution (e.g. *we can argue that*), but also to unattributed expressions of writer's stance (e.g. *it is important to note*). Evaluative language use plays a major part in the definition of voice in many approaches. Martin and White (2005: 161) speak of 'evaluative key', referring to patterns in the use of evaluative resources occurring consistently across discourse domains; these patterns originate in conventionalized 'styles' or 'regimes' of evaluative positioning that 'construct particular authorial identities or personas'. Stance-taking thus becomes a chief element in the writer's voice, not only as individual but also from a cultural, domain-related and genre-related standpoint.

What constitutes authorial voice in a textbook? Textbook writers tend to hide behind the values of the community, often attributing stance to the community in general, but attention should be paid to ways of

expressing epistemic and deontic modality, attitudinal values or evaluations of importance. All these manifest the writer's position as to his/her own topic and discourse, contributing to the construction of the writer's voice. Their role in textbooks can be crucial and strategic to the management of reader–writer interaction.

Focusing on authorial voice in academic textbooks, this chapter looks at writers' professional identities, studying how they relate discursively to their object of discourse as well as to other textual voices, especially other discourse participants – the student-reader and the discourse community at large. The next section presents an overview of the literature on voice in textbooks and shows that a range of lexico-grammatical tools can be used in the typical moves of instructional discourse. We then present a sample study of a corpus of academic history, representative of the authorial voices university students are exposed to in their early studies.

1.1   Authorial voice in textbooks

Textbooks are interestingly linked to 'a subject's methodology and values' and therefore likely to 'contain textual features and conventions of their respective disciplinary communities' (Hyland, 1999: 4) – ways of arguing, specific approaches, theories and positions. The representation of scientific discourse can be shown to be a central issue in the genre and to play a leading role in introductory chapters (Bondi, 1997, 1998), by explicitly initiating the reader-student in the basic conventions of the scientific community.

In English for Academic Purposes (EAP) studies, however, the emphasis on genre analysis in the last 20 years or so has raised greater interest in research genres. Textbooks are held to be good at transmitting the 'canon', but not at fostering critical reading (Swales, 1994). Students are introduced to the basic notions and questions of a discipline, but they are not necessarily presented with a picture of the multiplicity of positions that characterize scientific debate. Textbooks seem to conceal the argumentative nature of disciplinary knowledge by presenting a well-established set of facts and theories.

The issue of factivity fulfils an essential function in the genre. Myers (1992: 13) argues that textbooks typically add 'factive' certitude to the phenomena being described by avoiding hedging, by lack of references to the primary literature, by a wide use of the simple present and by a massive use of cross-references. This draws attention to an interesting paradox of textbooks: what makes them easier for students to read 'may make it harder for them to deal with other text types they encounter

later in a scientific career [...] because they get no sense of how facts are established' (Myers, 1992: 13). The pedagogic implications of this have often led applied linguists to point out that textbooks do not provide useful models for the teaching of writing (e.g. Paxton, 2007).

Hedging and attribution are pivotal elements in academic discourse. The need to hedge statements is usually higher in research articles than in textbooks, given the nature of the interaction: writers know that claims of originality may challenge their readers' own assumptions and theories when readers expect 'that their own views will be somehow acknowledged' (Hyland, 2000: 93). Textbooks show a tendency to use fewer hedges: in economics, for example, generalizing adverbials tend to occur in mid-position, rather than as sentence adverbs, in typical general–specific patterns (Bondi, 2002). The language used in setting out a canon may veil the argumentative nature of research discourse to emphasize the accredited nature of knowledge, often using boosters to give readers an idea of scientific progress (Hyland, 2000).

Attribution is also a minor component of textbooks. Writers usually make limited use of quotations from relevant literature, while often summarizing debates through forms of generalized attribution (e.g. *according to one argument…, there is no clear consensus as to…*). Introductory chapters of economics textbooks are typically devoted to a presentation of the discipline and its methodology (Bondi, 1999: 37–69) and aim at a representation of what economists think or should think. Metadiscursive practices centre on generic reference and highlight moves like identifying a problem, presenting methodological tools, representing debate within the discipline and guiding the reader through argument (Bondi, 2005). This does not prevent textbooks from taking articulate positions about the arguments they report. Writers' discourse is often juxtaposed with reported argument in a sort of 'montage', turning it into forms of constructed debate (Bondi, 1997) that somehow mould the reader, by establishing shared knowledge and accepted reasoning strategies, in accord with the apprenticeship function of textbooks (Hyland, 1999; Bhatia, 2002).

A critical analysis of textbooks could help readers see the traces of different types of dialogues (Bondi, 1998): the debates taking place in the context, the dialogic interactions represented in the text, and the ongoing textual dialogue of writers interacting with their readers. The use of personal pronouns like *you* or *we* (Poppi, 2004) or that of interrogatives and imperatives (Hyland, 2002b) are just the most obvious signals of this dialogue. They presuppose and explicitly mark the presence of a reader whose attention is captured and selectively focused on

key issues or junctures in the writer's argument. The *mise-en-scène* of the dialogue with the reader is often direct in materials that are openly presented as coursework. In economics, for example (Bondi, 1998), the textbook writer often asks questions or makes suggestions and addresses the reader directly. At other times the writer's (and the reader's) voice may be 'distanced' by reporting frameworks or by projecting reader and writer on to 'third persons': *you might wonder*, *you should be able to realize, anyone who understands macroeconomic analysis can realize*, etc. Textbook writers often assign readers different roles in the construction of their own argument: readers may be asked to draw inferences, to make objections, even to assume a given ideological position, only to be brought to agreement with the writer by successive argumentative steps (Bondi, 1997).

Writer–reader dialogue, however, is not only realized by formal indicators of an addressee. It is also realized pragmatically by the coherence that the addressee can establish in textual structures. Textbooks are often characterized by repetition of schematic structures. Economics textbooks, for example, display regular expository patterns, where general statements about processes are preceded or followed by specific examples. As shown in Bondi (1999: 49), this expository structure might be interpreted both in terms of textual patterns and of didactic moves.

Textbooks can thus be seen at the intersection of two orders of discourse: educational and disciplinary (Hyland, 2000: 107). They incorporate established disciplinary knowledge in a text that reflects a teacher–student relationship in the typical communicative functions of description, definition, classification and predictive structures, together with easyfication procedures: rhetorical questions, visual elements, metadiscourse (Bhatia, 2002: 32–3). Other elements that can be related to the pedagogic dimension of the genre are simplification, abstraction and analogical reasoning. Grammatical metaphor and nominalization are habitually listed among the features of textbooks (Coffin, 2006). Nominalization is also higher in metadiscursive practices, turning the argumentative procedures of the community into discourse objects (Bondi, 2001). Cross-generic analysis also shows that greater cognitive difference between reader and writer often induces a wider use of simplified hypothetical scenarios and analogical procedures (Bondi, 1999), variously shaping readers' mental constructs. When representing themselves as experts, writers seem to adopt a knowledge transfer perspective of teaching (Hyland, 2009: 120).

My analyses suggest textbook writers see themselves as both researchers and teachers. As researchers, they take position towards different

approaches or positions. As teachers, they interact with other educators and with the students – the 'evaluator reader' and 'consumer reader' (Swales, 1994). Building on this distinction, we can identify different writer/reader roles for the textbook writer: *arguer/partner* in argument, *researcher/researcher*, *textbook writer/textbook evaluator*, *teacher/student* and *teacher/fellow teacher* (Bondi, 1998). Studies of writer identity and authorial voice in textbooks usually focus on professional identities rather than personal traits, even when dealing with specific case studies of very successful writers (e.g. Poppi, 2009 on Samuelson). We take the same stand here and look at the features that characterize textbook writers as such (i.e. keywords and relevance markers), testing some of the general trends on the borderline case of textbooks in the humanities.

2   History: a sample cross-generic study

If the difference between instructional and research materials is easily observable in the natural and social sciences, it is much fuzzier in the humanities at university level. The idea of a book constituting the basis for all subsequent studies is less widely accepted and students are exposed to a broader range of textual forms. Although some books are identified as introductory textbooks, there is much greater variation in their structure and scope than there is in the hard sciences. Set reading books in history, for example, may cover extensive major periods (e.g. medieval history), specific areas (e.g. Spanish history) or particular aspects of history (e.g. social history), rather than core theoretical issues. Reference work may be structured in chapters written by different authors, typically covering their special field of expertise. The distinction between textbooks and research articles is less clear-cut: there is a continuum between the texts that most explicitly address undergraduate students and the most unequivocally research-based journal article.

The discourse of history has another major peculiarity: the tension between narrative and argument in the basic structure of its discourse. The fundamental notions and facts are not just presented to the student in sequences of generalizations and examples, but rather in a narrative account of events in a particular context. If temporal notions play a major role (cf. Coffin, 1997, 2006), especially through the representation of time sequences and time settings ('packaging time', Martin, 2003: 28), it is the interpretative dimension of historical narratives that captures its essence. Schleppegrell and de Oliveira (2006: 256) identify three critical linguistic challenges in the discourse of history: the interaction of time and cause, the use of abstraction to generalize from

particular events and the foregrounding or backgrounding of interpretation (a more or less explicit interpretive stance).

Academic history is not just a narrative account of facts, but also interpretation of narrated events, and ultimately dialogic argumentation of the interpretation put forward. Adapting Coffin (1997), we can say that historians will accordingly appear in different roles – as *Recounters* (in the textual narrative), as *Interpreters* (in the interpretation of narrated events) and as *Academic Arguers* (in the dialogic argumentation of the interpretation) (Bondi, 2007: 68). The distinction between the roles of Interpreter and Academic Arguer is more one of degree than of kind. Writers present their arguments in ways that are aware of a reader in both cases, but overtly emphasizing either internal consistency or dialogic positioning. This is all *Appraiser* voice in Coffin's terms (2006: 152–5), even if increasingly engaging with alternative perspectives along the curriculum.

Cross-disciplinary analysis of academic research genres has revealed that, despite historians keeping a very low profile in terms of metadiscourse (Bondi, 2005) and giving great prominence to a variety of textual voices (Silver and Bondi, 2004; Bondi, 2007), their discourse can still be characterized by a strong presence of an evaluating self. When looking at parameters of evaluation (Hunston and Thompson, 2000: 23–4), history seems to highlight evaluations of relevance or importance (Bondi, 2008), noticing the significance of events in the framework of a specific interpretation. Expressions of importance do not just present a writer's stance: they signal how significant elements are in the world of the text or in the organization of discourse. They can thus be interpreted pragmatically as directing the reader's attention to the proposition and its role in the co-text. The small-scale study presented here looks at voice markers and evaluations of importance in particular, across different genres of academic history.

2.1 Materials and methods

The study is based on the analysis of two corpora of materials designed to contrast academic textbooks and journal articles. The main corpus includes 30 chapters, randomly chosen from books that are variously identified as textbooks by publishers and by being set reading in early undergraduate English-medium courses. The volumes cover sociocultural, economic and general issues with reference to the UK, the US, Europe and the world, spanning across medieval, modern and contemporary, including thematic works. A corpus of journal articles comprising about 2.5 million words was used as a reference corpus.

The study combines a corpus and a discourse perspective. It draws on discourse and genre analysis for issues of contextual interpretation, considering both the macro-field of social action (academic discourse) and the characteristics of the genre. Corpus linguistics offers tools of lexical analysis, through some of the functions of *Wordsmith Tools* (Scott, 2008). A preliminary look at keywords – word forms that are significantly more or less frequent in one corpus or text as against a reference corpus (see also Bondi and Scott, 2010) – offers an overview of quantitative variation. A case study of markers of importance ('relevance' in Giannoni, 2010: 175–208) is then presented, through an analysis of concordances and collocations, highlighting how entities and processes are marked out for their significance.

2.2 Keywords: an overview

Keywords provide an interesting sketch of the lexico-grammatical resources of book chapters. Ignoring the quite expectedly high number of keywords referring to specific historical actors and processes, we focused on general lexis.

The top positive keywords – i.e. those more frequent in chapters than in articles – included many categories that can be related to writer/reader interaction as described in the literature. The most striking feature is the number of quantifiers found, ranging from *per cent/ percentage* to exact figures (grouped as # by the software), including indefinite quantifiers and approximators (*some, about, mid, nearly, many, much, half, total, quarter*). If we combine this with the very high keyness score of simple-past basic auxiliaries (*was, had, were*) and a wide range of verbs of change and their nominalizations (*decline, remained, became, grew, fall, rise, growing, increased, rising, declined, began*), we get a picture of the importance attributed to the reporting of facts and trends. Typical textual structures involve a general statement supported by specific data, as in Example 1, with its obviously expositive pattern:

(1) If, then, the ability to sign one's name is a reliable index of literacy, the aggregate data show a notable *rise* in the numbers of men and women able to read and write during the eighteenth century. In Scotland, literacy among adult males rose from approximately *25 per cent* in *1643* to *65 per cent* in the *1750s*. Figures for England in the *1640s* suggest a literacy rate for adult men of around *30 per cent*; by the *mid*-eighteenth century this percentage *had* grown to *60 per cent*, with a corresponding rate for adult females at around *35–40 per cent*. Statistics for France point to a similar *rise*. In *1686–90*, only about

> *29 per cent* of men and *14 per cent* of women *were* able to sign their
> names in parish marriage registers; by *1786–90*, the percentage *had*
> grown to *48 per cent* of men and *27 per cent* of women.

If passages like this seem to emphasize what we have called the voice
of the Recounter, other elements (see Example 2) point to the voice of
the Interpreter, for instance the presence among positive keywords of
potential elements of evaluation in terms of status (e.g. *seemed, probably*)
and of value (e.g. *huge, most, major, successful, low, hard*):

> (2) Unlike Richard Nixon's landslide victory in 1972, Ronald Reagan's
> thumping of Jimmy Carter *seemed* to signal a sea change in American
> politics, a *major* shift from a liberal to a conservative majority.

The clearest patterns, however, are found in the negative keywords, the
words that are significantly missing from book chapters when compared
to articles. Negative keywords are vastly dominated by general lexis: 93
out of the 209 negative keywords are clearly not topic-related. These
general words fall largely within the category of potential metadiscourse
items. The highest keyness scores are found for self-reference (e.g. *I, my,
we, our, me, us,* but also *article, study, essay, pages, section, paper, book*),
references to the discipline (e.g. *history, historical*) and to a very long
list of nouns referring to the basic cognitive constructs of the disci-
pline (e.g. *analysis, knowledge, account, discussion, matter, text, context,
questions, category, explanation, relationship, story, narrative/s, concepts,
meaning, interpretation, definition, case, method, proof, approach, meanings,
point/s, studies,* etc.). This combines with the presence of conclusion
markers (such as *thus* and *suggests*), connectors like *how, what, that* and
as – often involved in a 'local grammar of evaluation' (Hunston and
Sinclair, 2000; Hunston, 2011) – and explicitly evaluative elements like
original and modal *must, will, can.* The voice that seems to be missing
here is that of the Academic Arguer, typically represented in articles by
sections that not only highlight the scope of the claim made, but also
assess other claims, or place one's argument in the context of current
debate, as in Example 3:

> (3) While *this article is* very much an exploratory one, it indicates
> *that* the records of the Manx secular courts constitute an extremely
> rich resource with which to test the *assumptions* of early modern *his-
> torians about* the nature and pattern of the prosecution of crime and,
> perhaps more importantly, of civil litigation. *We will* welcome the

opportunity to pursue broad comparisons with other samples of litigation from the period, but even at this early stage of our *analysis*, it would appear *that* the broad fluctuations of business in English local and national courts were paralleled in those of the island. The more detailed *analysis* of samples of Manx court business which may allow a greater precision in mapping and explaining such fluctuations, and consequently of pursuing comparisons, has yet to be carried out. Early soundings, however, *suggest* that such an *analysis* would deepen our understanding of that neglected area of historical investigation: civil litigation. [...] Civil litigation demands closer attention in the near future, and it is clear that the *study* of the courts of the Isle of Man *will* make an important contribution to this process.

2.3 Importance markers

The only marker with a significantly higher frequency in textbooks is *major*, with a frequency of about 4 pttw (per ten thousand words), as against 2 pttw in articles (keyness score 38.83). The peculiarity of this marker (shared by other less frequent ones grouped with it by Giannoni, 2010) is that all its occurrences are attributive rather than predicative. This means evaluation is an element of the clause, though not necessarily its main discourse function. Of the 130 evaluative occurrences of *major*, all of them attributive, 81 (62 per cent) simply qualify historical actors within the narrative, without any reference to their role and the reasons for the importance (e.g. *By 1800 most of the major cities of the future Midwest had already been founded*), whereas 49 (38 per cent) are involved in acts of evaluation, pointing to the role of actors and processes in the temporal–causal sequence of events (e.g. *The major causes of the buoyancy were the rapid expansion of world trade and investment*, or *they [reformers] proved a major force behind Maria Theresia's compulsory school edict of 1774).* Authorial voice can take up the role of the Interpreter more clearly when the adjective qualifies a general abstract noun referring to metacognitive constructs of exposition (e.g. *example, features, aspect, element, issue*), causality (e.g. *factor, force, contribution, cause*s) or temporality (e.g. *change, shift, progress*), preceded or followed by linking verbs (e.g. *the major factor is, … were major factors).* The collocation with general nouns allows attributive adjectives to take part in predicative constructions. The vast majority of these are found in narrative sequences with no explicit reference to a debate or form of explicit engagement with alternative perspectives. Only four occurrences collocate with explicit reporting/citation (related to the evaluation of importance averred by the writer), and another three are involved in general

reference (to the impression *one gets*, the importance *people* attribute and the question tackled by *many studies)*.

Other interesting markers of importance are the lexical sets *importance, important, importantly* and *significance, significant, significantly*. These are not statistical keywords, but they are foregrounded in articles by the most typical evaluative patterns involving adjectival forms: *it is/would be/seem to be ... to/that*. While *important* is the most frequent adjective altogether in the *to*-pattern (64/492), *significant* is the most frequent importance adjective in the *that*-pattern (14/364). The quantitative data in both corpora are presented in Tables 7.1(a) and (b).

The data confirm the general trends observed in the literature on textbooks. Evaluation of importance is generally less frequent in book chapters than in articles, and this is especially true of the nominal elements of the sets, where normalized frequency is almost halved, whereas adverbials, in a reversed trend, are slightly more used.

Adjectives, though showing no significant quantitative variation, reveal a preference for different phraseological contexts. Articles show frequent clusters like: *it is important to note, one of the most important, play(ed) an important role, was an important part of, it is important to stress* or *it is significant that, a significant number of, a significant role in,*

Table 7.1(a) Frequency of importance markers in textbooks

Lexical set	Total frequency		Noun		Adjective		Adverb	
	No.	Pttw	No.	Pttw	No.	Pttw	No.	Pttw
Significance/ant/antly	146	4.65	22	0.70	94	2.99	30	0.95
Importance/ant/antly	274	8.73	50	1.59	209	6.65	15	0.47
Total (/313 857)	420	13.38	72	2.29	303	9.65	45	1.43

Table 7.1(b) Frequency of importance markers in journal articles

Lexical set	Total frequency		Noun		Adjective		Adverb	
	No.	Pttw	No.	Pttw	No.	Pttw	No.	Pttw
Significance/ant/antly	1262	5,22	391	1,61	657	2,71	214	0,88
Importance/ant/antly	2113	8,74	584	2,41	1435	5,93	94	0,38
Total (/5 009 871)	8979	17,92	1964	3,92	5920	11,81	1195	2,38

a significant proportion of, played a significant role, a significant impact on. Textbook chapters (obviously much more limited in size), mostly employ repetition of the superlatives (e.g. *the most significant, one of the most important*) and *played an important role*. The use of anticipatory *it* thematizing the evaluation (e.g. *it is important to note that*) is more limited, thus reducing the visibility of evaluation in textbooks.

The adverbials considered, both recurring more often in textbooks, show divergent patterns. *Significantly*, rarely used as an intensifier in both corpora (44/214 = 20.5 per cent in journal articles, 6/30 = 20 per cent in book chapters), often takes thematic position, extending its scope to cohesive functions, typically to introduce an important element corroborating or elaborating a previous statement. This happens more prominently in book chapters (9/30 = 25 per cent) than in journal articles (38/214 = 17.7 per cent). *Importantly*, on the other hand, usually marks a climax in a list including alternative perspectives, underlining the decisive element among many. Thematic position, normally extending its scope above the sentence, is somewhat more common in journal articles (56/94 = 59.57 per cent) than book chapters (8/15 = 53.3 per cent).

A closer look at *significance* and *importance* reveals interesting trends. If post-modification largely corresponds to qualifying adjectives (e.g. *position of importance/important position*), head position can easily turn 'importance' into the subject or object of a clause, one that can be modified by adjectives (e.g. *less/unprecedented/growing importance; great/modest/little significance)* or subjected to an explicit assessment (e.g. *the significance of these measures should not be underestimated, one can hardly exaggerate the importance of moral weeklies)*. Nominalized evaluation can also be more easily attributed (6/22 occurrences of *significance* and 15/50 of *importance*) and be part of explicit statements of purpose (e.g. *We set out to evaluate the relative importance of problems, How can we assess the importance of careerism in late Medieval England?*). The tendency to use the nominal in reporting evaluation and in self-attribution is slightly higher in articles (up to 40 per cent with *importance*), but modified occurrences are more numerous in textbooks (44 against 40 per cent). On the whole, then, book chapters do not fully exploit the potential of nominals in representing academic argument, but they do highlight the possibility to assess importance, once again privileging the voice of the Interpreter over the Academic Arguer.

Conclusions

The chapter has looked at voice as manifesting a multiplicity of identities in discourse. This implies a wide range of voice markers, from

self-mention to forms of engagement and markers of evaluation, spot-lighting the writer's interpretative position in the text and the dialogic involvement of other voices.

Most literature on textbooks so far has looked at them as merely expositive texts, concealing the argumentative nature of science, in order to offer an established view of the discipline. The chapter has investigated this, pointing out issues like factivity, hedging, attribution, metadiscourse and repetitive textual structures as elements contributing to the voice of the textbook writer addressing the student as well as the colleague.

Historical discourse seems to deviate from some specific tendencies noted in the hard and social sciences. Hedging, for example, was found to be more frequent in book chapters than in journal articles, but it was also accompanied by greater display of data and facts. The overview of positive and negative keywords revealed a varied use of authorial voice: the textbook writer moves between the Recounter (with an emphasis on facts and the narrative) and the Interpreter (assessing historical actors and processes of change), whereas the researcher talking to other researchers in the journal article favours the Academic Arguer (placing the research in the context of a debate). Markers of importance conform to this tendency, variously showing a preference for forms that assess entities and processes, rather than alternative perspectives. The voice of the Interpreter, supported by the authority of the Recounter, may well be the most suitable for a genre addressing such a wide range of readers with their background knowledge and expertise.

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