From assessment to interaction: Exploring author engagement strategies in manuscript reviews

Hadi Kashiha
Sohar University (Oman)
hkashiha@su.edu.om

Abstract

Despite the critical role of peer reviews in ensuring the quality and credibility of academic publications, little is known about how reviewers engage authors in double-blind peer reviews, particularly across various review recommendations. To address this gap, this study analyzes the use of engagement strategies in 268 reviewers' reports from 52 international applied linguistics journals. Findings indicate that directives are the primary means of engaging authors across all recommendation categories, with 'accept' recommendations containing the highest number. Directives are often softened by hedges or expressed indirectly, especially in major and minor revisions, potentially creating challenges for authors in interpreting specific comments. Certain engagement markers are infrequent or absent in particular review categories, reflecting the distinct rhetorical goals of each recommendation type. The findings have implications for EAP practitioners, journal editors, and reviewers by underscoring the importance of integrating engagement strategies into the instruction of writing for research and publication purposes. They also benefit early career and novice authors by providing insights into the linguistic and rhetorical patterns used in peer reviews, helping them better interpret feedback, respond effectively, and enhance their chances of publication success.

Keywords: Authors, engagement strategies, feedback, peer review, review categories, reviewers.

Resumen

De la evaluación a la interacción: explorando la interacción con los autores en la revisión de manuscritos

A pesar del papel fundamental de la revisión por pares para garantizar la calidad y la credibilidad de las publicaciones académicas, se sabe poco sobre el modo en que los revisores se relacionan discursivamente con los autores en las evaluaciones doble ciego, especialmente según las distintas recomendaciones de revisión. Para abordar esta laguna, este estudio analiza el uso de estrategias de interacción en 268 informes de revisión procedentes de 52 revistas internacionales de lingüística aplicada. Los resultados indican que las directrices *(directives)* constituyen el principal medio mediante el cual los revisores interactúan con los autores en todas las categorías de recomendación, siendo las de aceptación las que contienen el mayor número. Estas directrices suelen mitigarse mediante atenuadores o formularse de manera indirecta, especialmente cuando se solicitan revisiones mayores y menores, lo cual puede generar dificultades para que los autores interpreten determinados comentarios. Algunos marcadores de interacción son muy poco frecuentes o ni siquiera aparecen en ciertas categorías de revisión, lo cual refleja los distintos objetivos retóricos asociados a cada tipo de recomendación. Estos resultados tienen implicaciones para los especialistas en inglés con fines académicos, los editores de revistas y los evaluadores, ya que subrayan la importancia de integrar estrategias de interacción en la enseñanza de la escritura para la investigación y la publicación. Asimismo, benefician a los autores noveles y en etapas iniciales de su carrera al ofrecerles una comprensión más clara de los patrones lingüísticos y retóricos utilizados en las revisiones por pares, lo que les ayuda a interpretar mejor la retroalimentación, responder de manera eficaz y aumentar sus posibilidades de éxito en la publicación.

Palabras clave: Autores, estrategias de interacción, retroalimentación, evaluación por pares, categorías de evaluación, evaluadores.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, there has been a growing interest among scholars in publishing their work in prestigious English-medium journals. This trend can be attributed, in part, to the global recognition and credibility associated with engaging with disciplinary communities and disseminating research through internationally renowned outlets. Furthermore, a researcher's educational achievements and career advancement are often closely tied to their publication record.

For researchers, gaining visibility among their peers is crucial, and one way to enhance this visibility is by increasing the number of citations received from scholars worldwide who work in the same field. Consequently,

publishing in English has become highly sought after, as it provides scholars with the opportunity to reach a broader global audience (Lillis & Curry, 2010; Mungra & Webber, 2010). However, the dominance of English as the primary medium for international research publication has resulted in some inequities, particularly between native and non-native English-speaking researchers. Native English-speaking researchers, often referred to as "networked scholars" (Belcher, 2007, p. 1), generally face fewer challenges in mastering another language when writing scientific papers. In contrast, English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) researchers, known as "off-network scholars" (Swales, 1987, p. 43), often find themselves being marginalized within their scientific community due to the perceived lesser significance of their first language for international research purposes.

Moreover, off-network researchers often encounter challenges in publishing their work in English due to the high linguistic and academic standards set by international journals and the rigorous peer review process they employ. The feedback that reviewers provide plays a pivotal role in determining a manuscript's success or failure, making it a critical component of the publication process (Flowerdew, 2001; Gosden, 2001; Hames, 2007; McKay, 2003; Paltridge, 2019). Expert reviewers evaluate multiple aspects of a manuscript, including its content, methodology, clarity, and adherence to disciplinary conventions, before making any recommendation (Flowerdew, 2001; McKay, 2003; Paltridge, 2015, 2019). As a result, early career and nonnative researchers who are unfamiliar with the rhetorical and linguistic norms of peer review may struggle to interpret certain comments on their submissions, especially when those comments are hedged or expressed indirectly. Therefore, understanding the rhetorical features of this evaluative genre and the linguistic strategies reviewers employ is essential for helping these researchers better navigate the peer review process.

2. Literature review

This section begins by reviewing the relevant literature on the peer review genre, exploring its conventions and features. It then shifts to the concept of audience engagement in academic discourse, culminating in a discussion of how reviewers can interact with the recipients of their critiques through engagement strategies.

2.1. Research on peer reviews

Studies on peer-review discourse consistently demonstrate that reviewers mainly highlight language-related problems while also appraising the structural organisation of submitted manuscripts. For instance, Flowerdew (2001) conducted interviews with journal editors in applied linguistics and identified the deficiency in connecting the content and scope of research to the discipline to be the most prominent challenge faced by submitting authors. Belcher (2007) investigated the role of reviewers in the publication success of applied linguistics writers and highlighted that reviewers frequently commented on academic writing style and language use.

Gosden (2003), drawing on Halliday's (1985) meta-functional classification of language, compared reviewers' comments on submissions by English native and non-native speaker researchers. He found that communicative deficiencies, particularly those related to the interpersonal function of writing, were the most frequently raised issues for non-native researchers. In contrast, Mungra and Webber (2010) examined reviews of submissions by Italian researchers and found that reviewers focused more on issues concerning content, word choice, grammar, and clarity rather than communicative aspects. They attributed this to reviewers' primary concern with critiquing propositional content rather than evaluating the authors' ability to engage readers through interactional elements.

Other studies have shown similar trends in peer review reports across other disciplines. Tahririan and Sadri (2013), for example, analyzed comments on submissions by Iranian writers in engineering, medical, and social sciences, revealing that content-related issues were the most frequently raised concerns in the three disciplines. Similarly, Mason and Chong (2023), in their analysis of 62 peer review reports in higher education, examined communicative purposes, structural content, and the linguistic choices employed in these reports. Their findings revealed that peer review reports are primarily designed to prompt specific actions from authors, with a consistent structural pattern and particular emphasis on certain key elements like methodology.

Beyond this, peer reviews can take various forms, particularly in the context of double-blind reviews, where the identities of both reviewers and authors remain anonymous to prevent potential bias (Paltridge, 2017). Kashiha (2024a) found that this anonymity can influence the discourse decisions and tone of reviewers, and it may foster a professional and objective stance. For

instance, reviewers might refer to authors impersonally as "the author" or directly address them using the audience pronoun *you*. Such references shape the interpersonal dynamic between reviewers and authors, as they reflect varying degrees of directness and engagement. In double-blind settings, where personal biases are minimized, these linguistic features offer insight into how reviewers maintain objectivity while engaging with the authors' work.

The literature on peer reviews underscores that relying solely on authoritative strategies is insufficient for effective peer review writing. Reviewers must consider the primary audience of their reports — manuscript authors— and recognize that establishing rapport with them is essential for crafting impactful reviews. This rapport can be achieved through audience-oriented and engagement strategies, which form the focus of the present study.

2.2. Audience engagement in academic discourse

For Hyland and Jiang (2019), audience engagement in academic discourse is a multifaceted concept that involves a dynamic interplay between writers/speakers and readers/listeners. This interplay is crucial in shaping the persuasive and credible nature of academic texts. It involves considerations such as what the writer/speaker expects the reader/listener to know, what the reader/listener should know, and most importantly, the impact that the reader/listener can exert on the discourse of the writer/speaker. In the context of academic writing, the ways in which writers position themselves in their texts to display a fitting affective and disciplinary persona are influential in engaging readers. This engagement fosters a persuasive environment and enhances the likelihood that readers will perceive the information as compelling.

It is widely acknowledged that writers need to present a credible representation of themselves in a manner determined by their audience and accepted by their disciplinary community (Hyland, 2009). This positioning entails "negotiating a self which is coherent and meaningful to both the individual and the group" (Hyland, 2011, p. 11). Gaining credibility within a disciplinary community occurs when a writer's work is recognized and valued by their peers, who serve as the "audience" of their text. To foster this connection, writers often employ engagement strategies such as drawing readers into their texts, capturing their attention, posing questions, and providing explicit guidance (Hyland & Jiang,

2019). Research has shown that these forms of audience engagement are present in research articles (Hyland, 2005b; Hyland & Jiang, 2016a; 2016b; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012), specialized writing (Jiang & Ma, 2019), and student writing (Lee & Deakin, 2016).

As for peer reviews, reviewers' reports are often directed at multiple audiences, with the manuscript author being the primary addressee. However, as Bell (1984, p. 159) highlights, there are additional audiences who are "present but not directly addressed", including journal editors and other reviewers who may reassess the manuscript after the author has submitted revisions. Bell (1984, p. 159) classifies these audiences based on "whether or not they are addressed, ratified, and known", emphasizing the layered communicative complexity within the peer review process. Each of these audiences plays a role in shaping the review process, and their varied expectations may influence how the review is framed. To meet these varying audience expectations, reviewers can employ a range of engagement strategies, as a means of balancing critical feedback with acknowledgment of the research's originality, significance, and rigor.

2.3 The current study

While research on peer reviews has received little attention in the past due to their status as an "occluded genre" (Swales, 1996, p. 45), recent years have witnessed an increasing interest in exploring their discoursal and syntactical features, as well as their facilitative role in supporting publication (e.g., Belcher, 2007; Breeze, 2019; Breeze & Gerns, 2024; Fortanet, 2008; Gosden, 2003; Hewings, 2004, 2006; Kashiha, 2023, 2024a, 2024b; Lillis & Curry, 2015; Mungra & Webber, 2010; Paltridge, 2015, 2017; Samraj, 2016). Previous studies have primarily focused on aspects such as the structural conventions of review reports, the use of evaluative language, and the disciplinary norms governing reviewer feedback. However, relatively little attention has been given to the ways in which reviewers engage with authors, particularly through strategies that establish rapport, guide interpretation, and support the revision process. The lack of detailed examination of author engagement in peer reviews leaves a significant gap in understanding how reviewers navigate the dual role of critique and support, especially in the context of double-blind reviews where interaction remains anonymous.

This study seeks to address this gap by analyzing the types of engagement strategies employed in reviewers' reports across different recommendation

categories. Using Hyland's (2005a) engagement framework, the study examines how reviewers use linguistic devices to engage with authors throughout the review process. The insights from this study familiarize novice and nonnative writers aspiring to publish in high-stakes international journals with the rhetorical and linguistic features of the peer review genre, thereby equipping them to better navigate the evaluation process and craft more effective responses to reviewers' comments. The following research questions guide the study:

1) What are the engagement strategies employed in reviewers' reports, and how frequently are they used?

2) How do engagement strategies vary across different recommendation categories (i.e., accept, minor revisions, major revisions, reject) in reviewers' reports?

3. Corpus and methods

The corpus used in this study includes 268 reviewers' reports on submissions to 52 international journals in applied linguistics. The journals for which these review reports were written (see Appendix 1) were indexed in Scopus and/or ISI, had impact factors, and adhered to a double-blind review process, reflecting their academic credibility and quality. Reviewers evaluated manuscripts based on criteria such as originality, relevance to the journal's readership, appropriateness of data and methods, depth of literature review, and adherence to academic writing conventions. Subsequently, they rendered final decisions by selecting from recommendation categories like rejection, major revisions, minor revisions, or acceptance.

The review reports were collected directly from the reviewers who consented to have their reports utilized for this study. Although the review process followed a double-blind procedure, the collected reports were meticulously screened to eliminate any potential personal details, affiliations, or any comments hinting at the reviewer's identity. Out of the total 268 collected reviews, 204 reviews were on original submissions, while 64 were on revised submissions. The total word count of the corpus amounted to 226,884 words. As for distribution across review categories, more than half of the reviews (144) recommended major revisions, 80 recommended minor revisions, 32 recommended rejection, and only 12 reviews recommended acceptance. Table 1 provides an overview of the corpus.

Review categories	No. of reviews	Total word count	Mean length of reviews (words)
Accept	12	4,344	121
Minor revisions	80	87,576	956
Major revisions	144	113,340	1,189
Reject	32	21,624	483

Table 1. Overview of the corpus.

To account for variations in the length of reviews and ensure a consistent analysis of engagement strategies across review categories, frequency counts were normalized per 1,000 words. This normalization allowed for accurate comparisons of frequencies in the entire corpus.

The study employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies to investigate the use of engagement devices in reviewers' reports. The quantitative phase involved identifying various engagement strategies and calculating their frequencies across the entire corpus, as well as within each specific review category. The qualitative phase focused on examining the communicative function of each identified engagement marker within its contextual usage. This exploration sought to uncover the lexico-grammatical devices employed by the reviewers to establish solidarity with the writers and provide guidance toward the interpretations of the feedback provided. In so doing, each occurrence (token) of the marker was manually examined in its sentential context to determine its pragmatic function. In cases where a marker exhibited multiple functions, the primary function was identified based on its prominence and frequency of usage. An example of this is illustrated in example 1.

> (1) In choosing the journals did the researcher observe authors' credibility and reputability of the journal?

In this example, the reviewer uses a question to capture the author's attention and emphasize an important piece of information that requires consideration in the study. Although phrased as a question, this sentence functions as a directive, as its primary purpose is to provide guidance rather than to elicit a response. Here, the instruction or recommendation for a change is conveyed through a question. In cases where the primary function of ambiguous comments or those with dual functions was unclear, another researcher with expertise in discourse analysis was consulted to help identify these instances. The process involved collaborative discussions to resolve discrepancies and reach consensus on the categorization of such comments.

The inter-rater agreement was calculated using Cohen's Kappa, reaching a high agreement rate of 94.7%.

Hyland's (2005a, p. 177) taxonomy of engagement serves as the analytical framework for this study, classifying engagement into five discourse functions: directives, questions, reader pronouns, personal asides, and appeals to shared knowledge. Directives guide writers through the feedback and instruct them to perform specific actions, often realized through imperatives (e.g., *rephrase this sentence*, *please refer to*), obligation modals (e.g., *you must add*), and predicative adjectives conveying importance or necessity (e.g., *it is necessary to*, *it is essential to*). Questions, beyond their interrogative nature, pull writers along with feedback and draw their attention to specific assertions, sometimes adopting a rhetorical function (e.g., *Is there a way that the author rephrase this*?). Reader pronouns acknowledge the writer's presence, involving them as discourse participants through the use of the second-person pronoun. The inclusive pronoun *we* also brings the writer into the argument, fostering solidarity and considering their academic voice. Personal asides, often marked by hyphens, brackets, or expressions like *meanwhile* or *by the way*, are brief interruptions in the ongoing discourse that allow reviewers to provide additional information related to what was being said. This strategy adds value to the reviewer-writer relationship rather than focusing solely on the propositional content. Appeals to shared knowledge explicitly position the writer inside the feedback, treating the topic as something familiar or commonly accepted by using phrases like *as you know* or *of course.*

4. Results and discussion

Table 2 presents the frequency of engagement strategies across the entire corpus as well as in each review category. As can be seen, directives emerged as the most frequently used engagement device, followed by reader pronouns, questions, appeals to shared knowledge, and personal asides.

The high frequency of directives underscores their central role in peer review feedback, where expert reviewers aim to offer precise and actionable guidance to authors. This finding suggests that reviewers prioritize clarity and instructional tone to ensure authors can interpret and address the comments.

Engagement markers	Accept	Minor revisions	Major revisions	Reject	Total in the corpus
Directives	6.44	2.87	2.96	1.84	2.85
Reader pronouns	1.84	2.19	1.87	0.74	1.88
Questions	–	0.59	1.02	–	0.74
Appeals to shared knowledge	–	0.41	0.42	0.18	0.38
Personal asides	–	0.13	0.21	–	0.15

Table 2. Frequency of engagement markers across the review categories (per 1000 words).

The pronounced use of directives mirrors findings from previous studies on other written genres, including evaluative texts like thesis examiner reports (Jiang & Ma, 2018) and non-evaluative texts such as research articles (Hyland & Jiang, 2016a, 2016b), where directives also emerged as the most dominant engagement marker. This consistency underscores the critical role of directives in orienting the audience, whether they are authors revising a manuscript, candidates improving a thesis, or readers interpreting scholarly work. However, McGrath and Kuteeva's (2012) research on engagement strategies in mathematics research articles revealed a contrasting pattern, where reader pronouns were the most pervasive engagement device, comprising over 70% of all engagement markers, followed by directives and appeals to shared knowledge. This notable difference may reflect the unique disciplinary conventions and rhetorical goals of mathematical research writing, where cultivating an inclusive and dialogic interaction with the audience appears to take precedence.

Regarding the distribution of engagement strategies across recommendation categories, directives were far more frequent in the accept reviews compared to other categories, suggesting that reviewers in this category prioritize clear, actionable guidance to help authors prepare their work for publication. Reader pronouns were consistently the second most common engagement marker across all categories, reinforcing their role in establishing a direct, inclusive connection with authors regardless of the review outcome. Questions were limited to the minor revision and major revision reviews, likely indicating reviewers' preference for using this strategy to prompt reflection or seek clarification when substantial revisions were expected. Appeals to shared knowledge were absent in the accept reviews, and personal asides were the least frequent engagement device overall, appearing sparingly in the minor and major revision reviews but entirely absent in the accept and reject reviews. It is worth noting that not all engagement markers were employed uniformly by all reviewers or in all reports within a particular

category. This variability highlights the personalized nature of reviewer feedback, which is shaped by individual reviewer styles, the manuscript's content, and the expectations tied to the specific recommendation category.

One notable finding was the higher occurrence of all engagement markers in the reviews of original submissions compared to those of revised submissions. In particular, all 204 reviews on original submissions showcased a broader variety of engagement strategies, while engagement in revised submissions was primarily conveyed through directives and reader pronouns. This disparity can be attributed to the interactive characteristics of each review step. In reviews of original submissions, reviewers likely adopt a more comprehensive engagement approach to ensure that authors clearly understand the feedback and the revisions required to align their work with disciplinary norms and journal expectations. This process involves not only instructing authors but also engaging with them on an interpersonal level to build trust and foster collaboration. As such, engagement markers like questions, appeals to shared knowledge, and personal asides may be used more frequently to soften criticism, encourage reflection, or create a sense of inclusivity in the feedback. Conversely, in reviews of revised submissions, the emphasis shifts toward evaluating the authors' responses to prior feedback. At this stage, reviewers may feel less compelled to use a wide range of engagement strategies, as the focus narrows to verifying whether the revisions have addressed the concerns raised earlier.

The following sections present the use of each engagement strategy in reviewers' reports, supported by examples from the corpus.

4.1. Directives in reviewers' reports

Table 3 illustrates that directives were more heavily employed in the accept reviews (77.8%) compared to other recommendation categories. Specifically, nearly half of the engagement markers in the minor revision and major revision reviews and 66% of those in the reject recommendations consisted of directives. This consistent prevalence underscores the foundational role of directives in reviewer discourse, irrespective of the final decision on submissions.

Review category	% of total	per 1000 words
Accept	77.8%	6.44
Minor revisions	45.5%	2.78
Major revisions	45.7%	2.96
Reject	66.6%	1.84

Table 3. Frequency of directives across the review categories.

The supportive function of directive language becomes particularly evident in cases where a paper was either accepted in the first round of review or rejected and thus required submission to another journal. In accept recommendations, the greater dominance of directives can be attributed to the reviewers' focus on facilitating the manuscript's swift progression to publication. This often results in feedback that minimizes indirect or mitigating expressions in favor of concise, action-oriented comments that instruct authors on specific revisions necessary for prompt publication. Conversely, in reject recommendations, directives play a critical role in providing authors with clear guidance on substantial issues that need addressing before resubmission elsewhere.

There were some variations in the ways reviewers employed directives, reflecting differences in tone, style, and the degree of assertiveness. In some cases, directives were explicitly expressed through imperative structures, leaving little room for ambiguity and clearly signaling the need for specific changes in a particular section of the manuscript (see example 2). In other cases, reviewers employed a more indirect approach, using hedging devices to mitigate the force of their suggestions. In example 3, the writer is expected to infer that a change is being suggested to their text, as the recommendation is conveyed implicitly through the use of hedges like *perhaps* and *can*.

> (2) <u>Reconsider</u> the phrasing of the significance of the study. *(Major revision)*

> (3) <u>Perhaps</u> the author <u>can</u> provide a short description. *(Minor revision)*

To provide further insight, the distribution of direct and indirect types of directives was analyzed within each review category, as shown in Table 4. The analysis revealed that over 60% of the directives across the entire corpus were expressed indirectly, indicating a preference for softened language in peer review reports. This finding aligns with Paltridge's (2020) study, which also found indirect directives to be more prevalent in peer reviews written

for *English for Specific Purposes* journal, accounting for nearly half of all identified directives.

Directive types	Accept	Minor revisions	Major revisions	Reject	Total in the corpus
Direct directives	85.7%	37.8%	38.1%	40%	39.3%
Indirect directives	14.3%	62.2%	61.9%	60%	60.7%

Table 4. Frequency of the types of directives across the review categories.

The variations in Table 4 suggest that the reviewers' decision on a submission may influence their discourse choices when requesting corrections from authors. For instance, 85% of the directives in the accept recommendations were conveyed directly through the use of imperative verbs (see example 4). This can be attributed to the reviewers' confidence in the overall quality of the submission, which reduced the need for indirect or mitigated language. By the time a paper reaches the accept stage, reviewers often perceive the manuscript as publication-ready or nearly so, prompting them to use clear, unambiguous directives that directly outline the necessary final adjustments.

(4) <u>See</u> my previous note on citational information. *(Accept)*

Over 60% of the directives in the major and minor revision recommendations were conveyed indirectly, and there were slightly more indirect than direct directives in the reject recommendations. Paltridge (2020) also reported a similar distribution of direct and indirect directives in major and minor revision recommendations but noted a relatively higher proportion of direct directives in reject recommendations. This difference could stem from the nuanced nature of reviewer-author interactions in the review reports analyzed in the two studies.

Beyond these general trends, variations were observed in the linguistic choices of reviewers across recommendation categories. For example, when giving a major revision recommendation, reviewers relied on diverse rhetorical strategies to convey their suggestions implicitly, such as posing questions (example 5), making statements (example 6), or offering suggestions (example 7) rather than issuing overt directives. This tendency to embed guidance within indirect linguistic structures reflects reviewers' intent to foster collaboration and encourage authors to reflect critically on their work, particularly when substantial revisions are required.

(5) What is the problem(s) that this study aims to solve?

(6) The abstract lacks information that summarizes the study

(7) The paper would have been more complete if the pedagogical implications were looked at.

When explicitly providing guidance, reviewers predominantly made use of imperatives (68%), followed by *should* (30%) and *must* (2%), especially in major revision recommendations. The higher prevalence of imperatives in this category can be relatively attributed to the nature of the decision, as major revisions typically require extensive and substantive changes to ensure the manuscript meets publication standards. Reviewers often provide a considerable number of comments addressing critical issues, necessitating the use of more directive language to emphasize the urgency and importance of addressing these concerns. The following example illustrates the use of direct directives in major reviews:

(8) The paper's literature review should be updated with the latest published results on the topic.

In minor revisions, *should* accounted for the most frequent realization of directives (68%), followed by imperatives (32%). This contrasts with Paltridge's (2020) results, where imperatives had the greatest density of directives in minor revisions (60%).

In some cases, in minor revisions, the use of imperatives was tempered with mitigating devices such as *perhaps*, *suggest*, *may*, and *could* to allow reviewers to reduce the perceived imposition of their directives while maintaining clarity in their recommendations, as in:

(9) The authors in all the tables could include number of occurrences.

(10) I suggest the author emphasises that this study sheds light on how...

Likewise, directives in reject recommendations were more commonly expressed using *should* (72.6%) rather than imperatives (27.4%). Since the decision to reject a manuscript typically involves broad feedback for improvement rather than detailed corrective actions, the use of *should* as a less forceful modality enabled reviewers to offer general guidance on how to enhance the overall quality of the manuscript for resubmission to another journal, as in:

(11) The language of the whole paper <u>should</u> be carefully edited. *(Reject)*

(12) You <u>should</u> justify relevant references. *(Reject)*

Another indirect strategy common in both major and minor revisions involved the use of negative structures to emphasize deficiencies in various parts of the manuscript (examples 13 and 14). This strategy also proved effective in drawing attention to areas requiring improvement.

(13) There are <u>no</u> indications of the problem in the body of related research, <u>nor</u> the implications of… (*Major revision*)

(14) The research questions are <u>not</u> stated properly *(Minor revision)*

4.2. Reader pronouns in the reviewers' reports

Table 5 indicates that minor revisions contained the highest number of reader pronouns, followed by major revisions, reject, and accept recommendations. Interestingly, 89% of reviewers recommending minor revisions (example 15) and 84% of those recommending major revisions (example 16) employed reader pronouns. These percentages surpass the figures reported by Paltridge (2020), where only 32% of reviewers for minor revisions and 25% for major revisions used reader pronouns. The marked variation may be attributed to differences in corpus size and the contextual factors associated with the journals for which the review reports were written. The diversity of the journals in this study could capture a wider array of disciplinary practices and stylistic conventions, resulting in higher frequencies of reader pronouns.

(15) <u>You</u> can cop out merely by noting the problem of fuzzy categories in a footnote. *(Minor revision)*

(16) A good way to improve the originality of <u>your</u> work is by investigating… *(Major revision)*

Review category	% of total	per 1000 words
Accept	22.2%	1.84
Minor revisions	35.8%	2.19
Major revisions	28.8%	1.87
Reject	26.6%	0.74

Table 5. Frequency of reader pronouns across the review categories.

The use of reader pronouns in major and minor reviews signaled the interpersonal dynamics and collaborative tone inherent in these recommendation categories, where reviewers aimed to foster a constructive and harmonious rapport with authors and encourage them to address identified issues while maintaining a collegial relationship. The frequent use of the pronoun *you* or its possessive form *your* served to directly address the authors, reinforcing their role as active participants in the revision process. This explicit involvement not only humanized the feedback process but also positioned authors as co-contributors rather than distant recipients of critique, as in example 17:

> (17) There is limited information on how <u>you</u> selected the data for analysis, and the general characteristics of <u>your</u> samples. *(Major revision)*

The level of such engagement, however, was less prominent in accept and reject recommendations, with only 3 of the 12 reviewers who recommended acceptance and 8 of the 32 reviewers who recommended rejection employing reader pronouns. This lower frequency suggests that these review categories placed less emphasis on direct engagement with authors, reflecting the distinct communicative goals and expectations associated with each recommendation type.

4.3. Questions in the reviewers' reports

Questions were notably absent in both accept and reject recommendations, whereas 15.7% of all engagement markers in major revisions and 9.7% in minor revisions consisted of questions, as shown in Table 6. The absence of interrogative structures in accept and reject recommendations mirrors Paltridge's (2020) findings and likely reflects the specific communicative purposes of these categories. For reject recommendations, the lack of questions may stem from the finality of the decision, as reviewers had deemed the manuscript unsuitable for publication, eliminating the need for further inquiries. Similarly, questions were unnecessary in accept recommendations because reviewers perceived the manuscript as meeting the required standards for publication, rendering additional inquiries irrelevant. In both cases, reviewers prioritized either overarching critiques or affirmations of the manuscript's quality over engaging in detailed dialogues with the authors.

Review category	% of total	per 1000 words
Accept	–	–
Minor revisions	9.7%	0.59
Major revisions	15.7%	1.02
Reject	–	–

Table 6. Frequency of questions across the review categories.

In contrast, the inclusion of questions in major and minor revisions highlighted their function as a tool for fostering dialogue and guiding authors toward improvement. Questions were often employed to direct the writer's attention to specific areas of the manuscript that required clarification or revision. As described in the method section, some of these instances were classified as directive because their primary function was to prompt authors to address particular issues or reconsider aspects of their work. For example, reviewers used interrogative structures to request clarification, challenge assumptions, or invite reflection, thus encouraging authors to actively engage with the feedback provided, as in example 18:

(18) Do you mean "to detect" or "to discover"? *(Minor revision)*

Examples demonstrating the dual functions of questions appeared across all review categories. However, instances, where reviewers posed genuine questions, rather than rhetorical ones, to seek clarification or invite further elaboration from authors, were primarily observed in major and minor reviews. Out of 80 reviewers who provided minor revisions, 57 used questions to solicit the authors' perspective on specific notions or claims, as in the following example:

(19) Are there some differences between the academic writing conventions and the way the students write their theses?

In major revision reviews, 93 out of 144 reviewers utilized questions, with a prominent emphasis on methodology (20), findings (21), or theoretical aspects (22) of the submitted work. Through these inquiries, reviewers communicated their expectations for rigor and alignment with scholarly and disciplinary standards, particularly in cases where significant revisions were required to meet publication criteria. By raising questions about field-specific norms or expectations, reviewers strived to position themselves as informed and authoritative experts engaged in the principles of their field. This

portrayal reflects their scientific persona —balancing authority with engagement— by signaling both expertise and a willingness to challenge or express disagreement with the authors' interpretations or conclusions.

> (20) My strongest reservations have to do with the methodology used. Up to what extent are the…?

> (21) Could their tendency to use more direct lexical bundles have been dictated by cultural preferences in their L1?

> (22) What is meant by "context" here and how may it tie in with Hyland's model about context?

There were some cases in both major and minor reviews where reviewers strategically emphasized particular words in their question to narrow down the focus of scrutiny (see example 23). There were also instances where reviewers combined a question with a reader pronoun to underscore the importance of their comment. In example 24, the reviewer emphasizes the personalized nature of their suggestion by associating the feedback with the author through the use of *you*. This rhetorical strategy not only reinforces the interactive tone of the review but also establishes a sense of shared responsibility in addressing the identified issue.

> (23) Why is the use of 'we' inappropriate (what kind of 'we' is it?) Is this related to the genre? *(Minor revision)*

> (24) Are you studying the difficulties that students have in the context of second language learners? *(Major revision)*

Overall, the findings on questions postulate that their use varies depending on the recommendation type, reflecting the shifting priorities of reviewers as they navigate their dual roles as gatekeepers and collaborators in the academic publishing process. While questions were absent in accept and reject recommendations, they served as a valuable rhetorical strategy in major and minor revisions to allow reviewers to adopt an interactive tone while providing detailed, actionable feedback.

4.4. Appeals to shared knowledge in the reviewers' reports

Table 7 shows that appeals to shared knowledge were infrequent in minor revisions (6.7%), major revisions (6.5%), and reject recommendations (6.6%), with no occurrences in the accept recommendations.

Review category	% of total	per 1000 words
Accept	–	–
Minor revisions	6.7%	0.41
Major revisions	6.5%	0.42
Reject	6.6%	0.18

Table 7. Frequency of appeals to shared knowledge across the review categories.

Despite their limited use, this engagement strategy allowed reviewers to pull authors into their arguments by referencing information presumed to be commonly known in the field of applied linguistics —knowledge that authors themselves might or should be aware of. The most commonly used phrase included *as we know*, followed by *as you know*, *we all know that*, and *of course*. The use of the inclusive pronoun *we* in these expressions sought to establish a sense of camaraderie, implying that both reviewers and authors possessed a mutual understanding within their disciplinary domain. In the following examples, reviewers intend to promote collaboration and intellectual equality by invoking shared knowledge.

(25) <u>As you know</u>, metadiscourse is a fuzzy phenomenon *(Minor revision)*

(26) <u>As we know</u>, this is due to the generic differences between the two genres. *(Major revision)*

(27) <u>We all know that</u> this taxonomy is intended to be applicable to both personal and impersonal features. *(Reject)*

Establishing such affinity is particularly significant for novice and non-native writers in the early stages of their academic careers, who may be less familiar with the nuances of the peer review process. By extending encouragement through appeals to shared knowledge expressions, reviewers can help writers perceive themselves as capable, equal, and active participants in the ongoing disciplinary dialogue.

4.5. Personal asides in the reviewers' reports

Personal asides were the least frequently used engagement devices in the corpus, accounting for only 3.2% and 2.2% of the total engagement devices in major and minor revisions, respectively, while being absent in accept and reject recommendations (see Table 8). The scarcity of this engagement strategy highlights its peripheral role in peer review reports, where direct, content-focused comments dominate.

Review category	% of total	per 1000 words
Accept	–	–
Minor revisions	2.2%	0.13
Major revisions	3.2%	0.21
Reject	–	–

Table 8. Frequency of personal asides across the review categories.

The few identified personal asides primarily served to strengthen the reviewer-author relationship rather than directly engage with the manuscript's content. These instances often featured reviewers momentarily pausing their discourse to insert a new comment, typically framed as an evaluative or supportive statement, to emphasize the importance of a particular point for the author's consideration. Such asides were often signaled through punctuation devices like hyphens, which reviewers used to shift the focus momentarily, as in the following example:

(28) The prefabricated nature of political discourse –language is prefabricated to quite an extent in all sorts of contexts– would lead to… *(Major revision)*

In the following example, the reviewer employs the personal aside expression "I think it is used by Biber and his colleagues" not only to provide a piece of information but as an indirect directive to remind the author(s) of the importance of supporting their arguments with proper citations. This usage exemplifies the multifunctionality of engagement markers, allowing reviewers to blend interpersonal rapport-building with their evaluative role. By incorporating personal asides, reviewers could temporarily step away from their authoritative stance and instead engage with authors in a more conversational and collegial level, thereby fostering a sense of partnership in the academic discourse.

(29) The concept of discourse organizer, I think it is used by Biber and his colleagues, has been widely… *(Minor revision)*

On a broader note, the absence of specific engagement markers, including personal asides, in accept and reject recommendations could partly be attributed to differences in average word counts and the number of review reports in these categories compared to major and minor revision categories. Accept recommendations had an average word count of 121,

while reject recommendations averaged 483 words. In contrast, major and minor revisions were considerably longer, averaging 1,189 and 956 words, respectively. These disparities in length reflect the more straightforward nature of accept and reject decisions, which often require fewer comments and less detailed feedback compared to revision recommendations. Although these recommendations lack the depth of engagement markers found in revision-oriented feedback, they still offer valuable insights for authors (Iida, 2016). For instance, reject recommendations, despite their brevity, can serve as a critical learning opportunity for authors to enhance their work and prepare it for submission to another journal.

4.6. Diversity in the reviewers' roles

Beyond the distinct nature of review categories, which shaped the linguistic choices made by reviewers, the roles that reviewers assumed during the review process were found to influence their use of engaging discourse. One prevalent role was that of making editorial comments, offering detailed comments primarily focusing on language-related issues, such as grammar, syntax, and word choice, as in example 30:

(30) There are many language errors (grammar, lexis collocations).

Another role taken by reviewers was that of an evaluator, where they provided formal recommendations regarding the submission's suitability for publication, as in example 31:

(31) I recommend accepting and publishing this paper.

Reviewers often sought to establish their academic voice by offering a credible representation of themselves (32). This representation allowed reviewers to demonstrate their expertise and align their feedback with established disciplinary norms. At times, they also implicitly acted as gatekeepers, exercising influence and control over the research field or specific topics under review. This gatekeeping role carried with it a responsibility to not only evaluate the manuscript's scholarly merit but also to guide its alignment with broader disciplinary expectations (33).

(32) I think the issue of the topic warrants not this single line but a more complete elaboration.

(33) The author(s) state that… But in such investigations, we need to justify why we adopt a certain label or term and disregard others.

There were also instances where reviewers seamlessly transitioned between multiple roles. In the following example, the reviewer adopts the role of a decision-maker by explicitly declaring their final decision while simultaneously acknowledging the author's efforts. This dual role highlights the complexity of the peer review process, where reviewers need to navigate between being critical evaluators and supportive mentors.

(34) Although some efforts have been made to improve the quality of the paper, I have no alternative but to reject the work.

Assuming a persuasive role was a common practice when reviewers delivered negative feedback. Acknowledging that criticism has the potential to be perceived as a bold, on-record, and face-threatening act (Brown & Levinson, 1987), reviewers often employed strategies to mitigate the impact of their critique. They softened their tone by using hedged language and adopting a polite, considerate approach, making their criticism appear more constructive and less confrontational. This strategy was particularly evident in rejection recommendations, where reviewers balanced their negative feedback by incorporating positive elements, such as acknowledging the strengths of the work. This duality served to cushion the blow of rejection and maintain an encouraging atmosphere for the author.

A common approach among reviewers recommending rejection was to begin with praise or expressions of interest in the manuscript's topic before transitioning to critique. This shift was often marked by adversative conjunctions such as *but* or *however* to signal a subtle change in tone, followed by apology expressions like *I'm sorry* and *I regret*, which further mitigated the impact of negative feedback, as in:

(35) I really appreciate the author's effort and the topic is quite interesting, but I'm sorry to say that I cannot recommend this paper for publication.

This careful balance between critique and encouragement underscored reviewers' efforts to uphold a respectful and professional tone, even when delivering disappointing feedback. In sum, these roles, in combination with the previously discussed engagement markers, enabled reviewers to

effectively situate authors within the peer review process and provide actionable, constructive guidance for improving their manuscripts.

5. Conclusion and implications

Drawing on Hyland's (2005a) engagement framework, this study analyzed 268 review reports, which resulted in four distinct recommendations (i.e., accept, minor revisions, major revisions, and reject) to explore how reviewers engaged with and evaluated authors during the double-blind review process. Directives emerged as the most pervasive engagement device across all review recommendations, followed by reader pronouns, questions, appeals to shared knowledge, and personal asides. Accept recommendations exhibited the highest frequency of directives, signaling the reviewers' tendency to provide clear and explicit instructions in reviews that conclude with a definitive decision. The absence of certain engagement markers in a specific review category was found to be relatively tied to the distinct nature of the recommendations offered in each category. For example, the lack of questions in accept and reject recommendations reflected the finality of these decisions, where additional inquiries or contextual clarifications were unnecessary.

In line with previous research on evaluative and non-evaluative genres, this study reinforces the idea that linguistic and rhetorical choices are influenced by the conventions and expectations of the genre writers engaged with. In this study, reviewers frequently relied on indirect and interpersonal strategies to acknowledge the presence of submitting authors, capture their attention, and pull them along with their comments, signaling collaboration and respect while delivering critical feedback. However, such strategies, particularly when hedged or subtly nuanced, may pose challenges for novice and nonnative researchers who are less familiar with the conventions of the peer review process. Misinterpretation of comments, such as viewing a question as optional feedback rather than an implicit directive, can lead to misunderstandings and hinder the authors' ability to address reviewers' concerns. These challenges are further compounded when reviewers fluidly switch between roles —such as evaluator, mentor, and gatekeeper— within their comments.

The findings of this study have implications for EAP practitioners, journal editors, and reviewers, particularly in fostering awareness of the importance

of teaching research writing and publication skills. Early career scholars, especially those new to the publishing process, should be equipped with strategies to navigate peer reviewer feedback effectively, recognizing that constructive criticism is an integral aspect of scholarly discourse. Familiarity with commonly used engagement strategies can help them decode the intended meaning behind comments and thus craft informed responses. By gaining a deeper understanding of these rhetorical patterns, novice authors can improve their ability to engage in scholarly conversations and increase their chances of publication in reputable journals.

Equally important is understanding the dual importance of content and tone in reviewer feedback. The ways in which criticisms are constructed, scaffolded, and delivered can significantly influence how authors perceive and respond to feedback. Emerging researchers should understand that reviewers' reports often contain a higher proportion of critical comments than positive ones, especially during the initial stages of manuscript review. Therefore, developing resilience to handle extensive critical feedback is vital for these researchers. Institutions and EAP teachers can support this process by contextualizing the peer review system as distinct from other academic genres, emphasizing its purpose as a constructive mechanism aimed at refining scholarly work. Unlike non-evaluative genres, peer reviews prioritize rigorous scrutiny and detailed judgment of a manuscript's quality, which is essential for maintaining the integrity of academic publishing.

While this study provides valuable insights, its scope is limited by its focus on reviews from a specific subset of applied linguistics journals. As such, caution should be exercised when generalizing these findings to other journals or disciplines. Nevertheless, these results lay a foundation for future research to delve into how reviewers engage with submitting authors, draw them into their discourse, and guide them through the review process across a broader range of journals and fields. Exploring engagement strategies in review feedback across different disciplines may yield nuanced differences in how disciplinary communities establish reviewer-author interactions and maintain their academic standards. Moreover, this study exclusively analyzed reviews conducted under a double-blind review system, where the anonymity of both reviewers and authors may have shaped the discourse choices observed. Future research could explore how engagement strategies differ in single-blind or open peer review systems, shedding light on the impact of varying review modalities on reviewers' evaluative language and their interaction with

authors. Such comparative studies could deepen our understanding of how peer review practices evolve across different contexts and contribute to the ongoing refinement of scholarly publishing processes.

References

Belcher, D. D. (2007). Seeking acceptance in an English-only research world. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *16*(1), 1-22. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2006.12.001

Bell, A. (1984). Language style as audience design. *Language in Society*, *13*(2), 145-204. https://doi.org/10.1017/S004740450000137X

Breeze, R. (2019). Continuity and change. Negotiating relationships in traditional and online peer review genres. In M. J. Luzón & C. Pérez-Llantada (Eds.), *Science communication on the internet. Old genres meet new genres* (pp. 107-130). John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/pbns.308.06bre

Breeze, R., & Gerns, P. (2024). Performing criticism in digital peer review: A comparative study of open and traditional referee reports. In A. Curado Fuentes, M. Rico García & L. Fielden Burns (Eds.), *Exploring open science in applied linguistics: Reviews and case studies* (pp. 110-126). Applied Linguistics Press.

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge University Press.

Flowerdew, J. (2001). Attitudes of journal editors to nonnative speaker contributions. *TESOL Quarterly*, *35*(1), 121-150. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587862

Fortanet, I. (2008). Evaluative language in peer review referee reports. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *7*(1), 27-37. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2008.02.004

Gosden, H. (2001). "Thank you for your critical comments and helpful suggestions": Compliance and conflict in authors' replies to referees' comments in peer reviews of scientific research papers. *Ibérica, Journal of European Association of Languages for Specific Purposes, 3*, 3-17. https://revistaiberica.org/index.php/iberica/article/view/510

Gosden, H. (2003). 'Why not give us the full story?': functions of referees' comments in peer reviews of scientific research papers. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *2*(2), 87-101. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1475-1585(02)00037-1

Halliday, M. (1985). *An introduction to Functional Grammar*. Edward Arnold.

Hames, I. (2007). *Peer review and manuscript management in scientific journals: Guidelines for good practice*. John Wiley & Sons. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470750803

Hewings, M. (2004). An 'important contribution' or 'tiresome reading'? A study of evaluation in peer reviews of journal article submissions. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Professional Practice*, *1*(3), 247-274. https://doi.org/10.1558/japl.2004.1.3.247

Hewings, M. (2006). English language standards in academic articles: Attitudes of peer reviewers. *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses*, *53*, 47-62.

Hyland, K. (2005a). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. Continuum.

Hyland, K. (2005b). Stance and engagement: A model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies*, *7*(2), 173-192. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445605050365

Hyland, K. (2009). *Academic discourse: English in a global context*. Continuum.

Hyland, K. (2011). Projecting an academic identity in some reflective genres. *Ibérica, Journal of the European Association of Languages for Specific Purposes*, *21*, 9-30. https://revistaiberica.org/index.php/iberica/article/view/326

Hyland, K., & Jiang, F. K. (2016a). Change of attitude? A diachronic study of stance. *Written Communication*, *33*(3), 251-274. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088316650399

Hyland, K., & Jiang, F. K. (2016b). "We must conclude that…": A diachronic study of academic

engagement. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *24*, 29-42. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2016.09.003

Hyland, K., & Jiang, F. K. (2019). *Academic discourse and global publishing: Disciplinary persuasion in changing times*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429433962

Iida, A. (2016). Scholarly publication: A multilingual perspective. In C. Macmaster, & C. Murphy (Eds.), *Graduate study in the USA: Succeeding and surviving* (pp. 41-50). Peter Lang.

Jiang, F. K., & Ma, X. (2018). 'As we can see': Reader engagement in PhD candidature confirmation reports. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *35*, 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.05.003

Jiang, F. K., & Ma, X. (2019). Positioning and proximity of reader engagement: Authorial identity in professional and apprentice academic genres. In C. Sancho Guinda (Ed.), *Engagement in professional genres* (pp. 29-46). John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/pbns.301.02jia

Kashiha, H. (2023). Beyond words in evaluation: Formulaic language in critical reviews of research articles across disciplines. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, *27*(2). 251-275. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-34320

Kashiha, H. (2024a). Stance-taking in peer reviewer and thesis examiner feedback on Iranian scholarly contributions. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *68*. 101364. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2024.101364

Kashiha, H. (2024b). Critical comments in the disciplines: A comparative look at peer review reports in applied linguistics and engineering. *Text & Talk, 45*(2), 227-250. https://doi.org/10.1515/text-2023-0055

Lee, J., & Deakin, L. (2016). Interactions in L1 and L2 undergraduate student writing: Interactional metadiscourse in successful and less-successful argumentative essays. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *33*, 21-34. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2016.06.004

Lillis, T., & Curry, M. J. (2010). *Academic writing in a global context: The politics and practices of publishing in English*. Routledge.

Lillis, T., & Curry, M. J. (2015). The politics of English, language and uptake: The case of international academic journal article reviews. *AILA Review*, *28*(1), 127-150. https://doi.org/10.1075/aila.28.06lil

Mason, S., & Chong, S. W. (2023). Bringing light to a hidden genre: The peer review report. *Higher Education Research & Development*, *42*(3), 664-678. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2022.2073976

McGrath, L., & Kuteeva, M. (2012). Stance and engagement in pure mathematics research: Linking discourse features to disciplinary practice. *English for Specific Purposes*, *31*(3), 161-173. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2011.11.002

McKay, S. L. (2003). Reflections on being a gatekeeper. In C. P. Casanave, & S. Vandrick (Eds.), *Writing for scholarly publication: Behind the scenes in language education* (pp. 91-102). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Mungra, P., & Webber, P. (2010). Peer review process in medical research publications: Language and content comments. *English for Specific Purposes*, *29*(1), 43-53. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2009.07.002

Paltridge, B. (2015). Referees' comments on submissions to peer-reviewed journals: When is a suggestion not a suggestion? *Studies in Higher Education*, *40*(1), 106-122. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2013.818641

Paltridge, B. (2017). *The discourse of peer review: Reviewing submissions to academic journals*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Paltridge, B. (2019). Looking inside the world of peer review: Implications for graduate student writers. *Language Teaching*, *52*(3), 331-342. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444818000150

Paltridge, B. (2020). Engagement and reviewers' reports on submissions to academic journals. *Journal of English for Research Publication Purposes*, *1*(1), 4-27. https://doi.org/10.1075/jerpp.19007.pal

Samraj, B. (2016). Discourse structure and variation in manuscript reviews: Implications for genre categorization. *English for Specific Purposes*, *42*, 76-88. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2015.12.003

Swales, J. (1987). Utilizing the literatures in teaching the research paper. *TESOL Quarterly*, *21*(1), 41-68. https://doi.org/10.2307/3586354

Swales, J. (1996). Occluded genres in the academy: The case of the submission letter. In E. Ventola & A. Mauranen (Eds.), *Academic writing: Intercultural and textual issues* (pp. 45-58). John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/pbns.41.06swa

Tahririan, M. H., & Sadri, E. (2013). Peer reviewers' comments on research articles submitted by Iranian researchers. *Journal of Teaching Language Skills*, *32*(3), 107-123. https://doi.org/10.22099/jtls.2013.1558

Hadi Kashiha is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics at Sohar University in Oman and a former postdoctoral researcher at Alzahra University in Iran. His research interests focus on English for Academic/Specific Purposes, Corpus-based Discourse Analysis, Genre Studies, and Pragmatics. He has published extensively in peer-reviewed international journals, including *Journal of Second Language Writing, Journal of English for Academic Purposes, Journal of Pragmatics, Text & Talk, Australian Journal of Linguistics, European Journal of Applied Linguistics, Lodz Papers in Pragmatics, and Discourse & Interaction.*

APPENDIX 1

List of journals:

1. Journal of English for Academic Purposes

2. English for Specific Purposes

3. Applied Linguistics Review

4. Discourse and Interaction

5. European Journal of Applied Linguistics

6. International Review of Applied Linguistics

7. Discourse Studies

8. International Journal of Applied Linguistics

9. Southern African Linguistics & Applied Language Studies

10. Discourse Processes

11. Australian Journal of Linguistics

12. Classroom Discourse

13. Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics

14. Journal of Pragmatics

15. Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory

16. Lodz Papers in Pragmatics

17. Argumentation

18. Functions of Language

19. Australian Review of Applied Linguistics

20. Poznan (Studies in Contemporary Linguistics)

21. Journal of Writing Research

22. Learning and Instruction

23. Pragmatics and Society

24. Corpus Pragmatics

25. Text & Talk

26. Discourse and Communication

27. Written Communication

28. Contrastive Pragmatics

29. System

30. Russian Journal of Linguistics

31. Journal of Second Language Writing

32. Open Linguistics

33. Journal of Applied Linguistics and Professional Practice

34. Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics

35. Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Review

36. Annual Review of Linguistics

37. Syntax

38. Linguistics and Education

39. Lingua

40. ESP Today

41. Journal of Semantics

42. Journal of Linguistics

43. Ibérica

44. Theoretical Linguistics

45. 3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature

46. GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies

47. Pragmatics and Cognition

48. International Review of Pragmatics

49. Cognitive Linguistics

50. English Language and Linguistics

51. International Journal of Corpus Linguistics

52. Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics