

The Types and the Frequencies of Reporting Verbs in Research Articles Written by Lecturers in a Ghanaian University

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Abstract

Citation forms an essential component of academic writing. In citing works of other authors, writers make use of reporting verbs (RVs). The study investigated the use of reporting verbs in research articles written by lecturers in the Department of English. The study used Hyland's (2002) classification of RV as the theoretical framework. The study found that *Discourse Acts* type of RVs are mostly used by these lecturers, as compared to *Research Acts* category of RVs and the *Cognitive Acts* category of RVs. Like all other researches, this study adds to the existing body of knowledge on academic discourse.

Keywords: reporting verbs, citation, research articles

1. Introduction

One important aspect of academic writing is citation. Citation helps authors to refer to the disciplinary community to which they belong and also to indicate the writer's understanding of previous works (Yeganeh & Boghayeri, 2014). Citing Jalilifar (2012), Loan and Pramoolsook (2015) indicate that citation has a complex communicative function with syntactic, semantic and pragmatic variations. As a result of this, it is very important to appropriately cite and integrate others' work in order for a writer to present his work persuasively. Citations are normally found in journal articles and other works such as text books, government publications and PhD theses (Yeganeh & Boghayeri, 2014). Generally, citations are made using reporting verbs (RVs) and RVs are known as one of the ways by which writers establish the credibility or otherwise of the cited information (Loan & Pramoolsook, 2015). Just like other important aspects of academic writing, the use of RVs in academic writing has been explored by various researchers from different perspectives (Nor & Noorizah, 2013; Yeganeh & Boghayeri 2014), with some classifying them into various categories (Thompson & Ye, 1991; Hyland 2000; Hyland, 2002). Of particular interest to the present study are the studies of Nor and Noorizah (2013), Yeganeh and Boghayeri (2014), Jafarigohar and Mohammadkhani (2015), Loan and Pramoolsook (2015), and Ramoroka (2014) which analyzed how RVs are used in academic discourse.

Manan and Noor (2013), using Hyland's (2000) model, investigated the use of RVs in Master's theses written by Malaysian students. The corpus for their study comprised 6 theses completed in 2012 by Malaysian students who did their masters in the English Language Studies (ELS) program of National University of Malaysia (UKM). They found that the RVs from *Research Acts* category had the highest percentage of occurrence (44.8%), followed by *Cognition Acts* and *Discourse Acts* categories, which recorded 30.2% and 25.0% respectively of the total occurrence of RVs in the data. It was also found that in the *Research Acts* category the reporting verb *found* recorded the highest frequency, while *suggest* and *states* emerged first with respect to frequency of occurrence in the *Cognition Acts* category and the *Discourse Acts* category respectively. Given these findings, Manan and Noor (2013) concluded that Master's students were more familiar with the reporting verbs from the *Research Acts* category, as compared to those from the *Cognition Acts* and the *Discourse Acts* categories. Also, Loan and Pramoolsook (2015) investigated the use of RVs in the Literature Review sections of theses written by Vietnamese students. Using Hyland's (2002) model of classifying RVs, they analyzed a corpus of 24 Literature Review sections of theses written by Vietnamese students. It became evident from the study that the Vietnamese students randomly used RVs without paying attention to their rhetorical functions. Regarding the evaluative potentials of RVs, and the tense and voice used, these Vietnamese writers appeared to be unfamiliar with using RVs to achieve the communicative purposes of Literature Review chapters. Loan and Pramoolsook (2015), therefore, suggested that explicit constructions should be provided to help novice writers effectively use RVs in their Master's theses.

Aside Manan and Noor (2013) and Loan and Pramoolsook (2015)'s study, the use of RVs has also featured in a number of cross-cultural studies on research articles. Prominent and most recent among these researches are those conducted by Yeganeh and Boghayeri (2014) and Jafarigohar and Mohammadkhani (2015). In their study, Yeganeh and Boghayeri (2014), using a corpus of 60 articles from the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), 30 by native English Speakers and 30 by Persian authors, did a cross cultural study on the use of RVs in and their functions in the Introduction and Literature Review sections of research articles written by native Persian and English speakers. In their study, they used Francis, Hunston & Manning's (1996) classification of RVs as their theoretical framework. The findings showed that both Persian and English speakers favored the use of *Argue* group of reporting verbs, as compared to the other categories of verbs. The results also indicated that while English authors show a tendency toward *Think* verbs as their second priority, the native

Persian writers are more oriented towards the use of *Find* verbs as their second priority. This result corroborates with Hyland's (2002) study, where the percentage of *Discourse Acts* verbs, an equivalent of *Argue* verbs, is higher in the social science than in the natural science. Finally, it was found that for both corpora, there is considerable use of reporting clauses with a *that*-clause complement in reporting others' research. Similarly, in a more recent study, using Thompson and Ye's (1991) classification of RVs, Jafarigohar and Mohammadkhani (2015) examined the differences in the use of reporting verbs in linguistic articles written by native and non-native speakers in English. They used 63 journal articles from the fields of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, 33 of which articles were written by non-native speakers, while the remaining were written by native speaker. The results showed that native writers made a higher use of direct quotations, something which Jafarigohar and Mohammadkhani (2015) attributed to the linguistic capability of native speakers in handling linguistic materials produced by other authors.

RVs have also featured in cross-disciplinary studies. Ramoroka (2014), for instance, investigated the use of RVs in essays written by non-native undergraduate students from the departments of Media Studies and Primary Education of the University of Botswana. The research focused on the range of RVs used and how they were used in citing the works of other authors. Using Thomas and Hawes' (1994) model, he examined a corpus consisting of 40 essays written by students from the aforementioned departments, focusing mainly on *Discourse Activity* verbs or *Textual* verbs. It was found that the students used more *Informing* verbs (verbs associated with the neutral passing of information from the source to the reader) without interpreting the information cited, as compared with *Argumentative* verbs which signify an evaluative role. The findings also showed that students from the Primary Education Department used more RVs than students from the Department of Media Studies.

Though in the past few decades, many studies have been conducted on the use of reporting verbs in academic writing, most of those studies were conducted outside Sub-Saharan Africa. Again, as far as I know, only that of Manan and Noor (2013) featured the discipline of English Language Studies. Moreover, the study of Manan and Noor (2013), which is the only study conducted in English Language Study, did not focus on research articles written by experts. This is a clear indication that much research has not been conducted in this area of study. To fill this lacuna, I aim at investigating the use of RVs in the Literature Review section of research articles written by lecturers in the Department of English of the University of Cape Coast. The study is guided by two main research questions:

1. What reporting verbs are used in research articles written by lecturers of the Department of English of The University of Cape Coast?
2. What are the frequencies of occurrence of the various categories of reporting verbs used in the research articles written by those lecturers?

2. Theoretical Framework

The theory that underpins this study is Hyland's (2002) classification of reporting verbs. Hyland (1999) categorized reporting verbs into three types, depending on the kind of activity they refer to: *Research Acts*, *Cognition Acts* and *Discourse Acts* verbs. *Research Acts* verbs include verbs that indicate experimental activity carried out in the real world. Such verbs, which generally occur in statements of findings or procedures, include *observe, discover, notice, show, analyse, calculate, assay, explore, plot and recover*. *Cognition Acts* verbs, according to Hyland (2002), are associated with the researcher's mental processes (e.g. *believe, conceptualize, suspect, assume, view*). The third category, *Discourse Act* verbs, are concerned with linguistic activities and focus on the verbal expression of cognitive or research activities (e.g. *ascribe, discuss, hypothesize, report, state*). Hyland (2002) elaborated on the earlier work (Hyland, 1999), adding the evaluative functions of the RVs to the process functions identified earlier. Each of the process categories of RVs was sub-divided into evaluative categories.

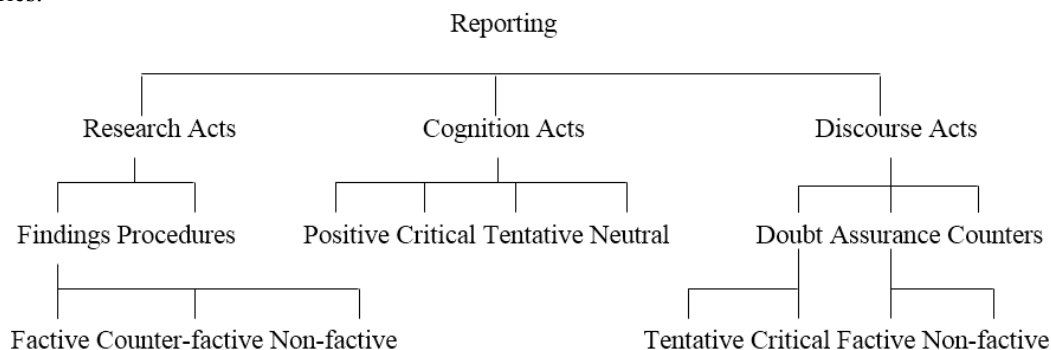


Figure 1 Categories of Reporting Verbs (Hyland, 2002, p. 119)

As can be seen in Figure 1 above, in the *Finding* category of *Research Acts* RVs in Hyland's (2002) new framework, writers can show their acceptance of the authors' results or conclusions with *Factive* verbs (e.g. *demonstrate, establish, show, solve, confirm*), portray the authors' judgments as false or incorrect by adopting a *Counter-Factive* stance (e.g. *fail, misunderstand, ignore, overlook*) or comment on research findings non-factively (e.g. *find, identify, observe, obtain*) using *Non-Factive* RVs. Verbs referring to procedural aspects of the author's investigation are found to carry no evaluation in themselves but simply report the research procedures neutrally. RVs in *Cognition Acts*, which portray the cited work in terms of mental process, are found to handle evaluation rather differently (Hyland, 2002). Instead of explicitly taking a personal stance on the reported information, writers can attribute a particular attitude to the cited author. Here, writers have to choose among four clear options. In the first place, by using RVs such as *agree, concur, hold, know, think, or understand*, the writer can show positive attitude towards the reported information as a way of accepting the information as correct. Secondly, the writer can approach the reported information with tentativeness. This the writer can do by using RVs such as *believe, doubt, speculate, suppose* and *suspect*. The writer may also take a critical stance against the reported information by the use of RVs such as *disagree, dispute* and *not think*. Finally, the author, using RVs such as *picture, conceive, anticipate, and reflect*, can hold a neutral attitude towards the reported information.

With regard to *Discourse Acts* RVs, Hyland's (2002) framework indicated that when writers use them, they allow the writers to either take responsibility for their interpretation of the information by conveying their uncertainty or assurance of the correctness of the claims reported or attribute a qualification to the author. The first category (Discourse verbs which express writers' view directly) further divide into *Doubt* and *Assurance* Verbs. *Doubt* RVs are further classified into *Tentative* RVs (e.g. *postulate, hypothesize, indicate, intimate, suggest*) and *Critical* RVs (e.g. *evade, exaggerate, not account, not make point*). Unlike the *Doubt* verbs, *Assurance* RVs serve two main purposes. Firstly, they can be used to report the authors position neutrally (*Non-Factive* RVs). Verbs such as *state, describe, discuss, report, answer, define, and summarize* are used in this regard. Also, writers may use some *Assurance* RVs (*Factive Assurance* RVs) to support their own views. Verbs that fall in this category include *argue, affirm, explain, note, point out* and *claim*. The last subdivision of *Discourse Acts* verbs is the *Counters*. This sub-category of *Discourse Acts* verbs allows writers to attribute the objections or reservations to the original author instead of taking responsibility for the evaluation. Examples of such verbs include *deny, critique, challenge, attack, question, warn* and *rule out*.

3. Method

3.1 The Research Site

The study focused on the University of Cape Coast, particularly the Department of English. Established in 1962 in the coastal town of Cape Coast, the University of Cape Coast was to train teachers for Ghana's educational institutions. For this reason, the University coordinates the activities of all teacher training institutions in Ghana. Over the years, the University has incorporated courses and programmes relating to the sciences and humanities into its curriculum. Currently, like the other public universities in Ghana, the University offers both the traditional residential university education as well as distance education (Afful & Akoto, 2010).

Three reasons accounted for the choice of the University of Cape Coast, in general, and the Department of English, in particular, as my research site. The first reason is the researcher's affiliation to the university, in general, and the department, in particular. Being a Teaching Assistant in the Department of English, the researcher found it relatively easier to have access to the data. The second reason has to do with proximity. In this regard, conducting the research in this institution saved time and the limited resources available to the researcher since he did not need to be travelling all over the country to collect data. Finally, this site was chosen because there have not been any studies on the use of RVs in written academic discourse in this research site before. Using this research site, therefore, has helped extend studies of this kind in terms of geography.

3.2 Corpus and Analytical Procedure

The electronic copies (PDFs) of ten research articles written during the 2008 – 2016 period by Ghanaian lecturers in the Department of English of the University of Cape Coast were randomly collected from the internet. The Literature Review sections of these research articles were copied and pasted in Microsoft word. The Literature Review section was chosen because as Soler-Monreal and Gil-Salom (2011) rightly point out, reporting verbs are mostly found in the Literature Review section of research articles. For the ease of reference, each literature review section was randomly coded from LT1 to LT10. The resulting corpus made up of 16,811 words formed the data for the analysis. Using a checklist, I searched through the corpus for the various RVs. The RVs identified in each Literature Review section were then numbered. The RVs were then classified using Hyland's (2002) model. To ensure reliability of the results, the help of two inter-raters was sought during the analysis of the data. Afterwards, using a calculator, the researcher calculated the frequencies of occurrences of the various categories of RVs. Using descriptive statistics, the researcher was able to provide a graphical

presentation of the percentages as well as the frequency of occurrence of the various kinds of RVs identified in the data.

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Reporting verbs used in the data

Analyzing the data based on Hyland's (2002) model, it was found that the lecturers used all the three kinds of reporting verbs in varying proportions. Firstly, to present the views of other researchers, as indicated by the results, the lecturers used RVs from the *Research Acts* category. *Research Acts* verbs are verbs that refer to the research activity or experimental procedures (Loan & Pramoolsook, 2015). *Research Acts* verbs normally occur in statement of findings (e.g. *observe*, *discover*, *notice*, *show*) or procedures (e.g. *analyze*, *calculate*, *assay*, *explore*, *plot*, and *recover*) (Hyland, 2002). Those which are used to state findings are further categorized into *factive verbs*, *counter-factive verbs* and *non-factive verbs*, based on their evaluative functions. Using *factive verbs* (e.g. *demonstrate*, *establish*, *show*, *solve*), writers acknowledge their acceptance of the author's results, while the use of *counter-factive verbs* such as *fail*, *misunderstand*, *ignore*, and *overlook* suggests that the writer considers the author's judgments as false. The final option is to use *non-factive verbs* such as *find*, *identify*, *observe*, and *obtain* to comment on research findings 'with no clear attitudinal signal as to their reliability' (Hyland, 2002, p.7). The examples below show how Research verbs were used in the data analyzed.

1. In particular, Fernandez, (2006/2007) **identified** devices that constitute the figurative language used in obituaries. LT1RV6
2. Soler (2007), on the other hand, **examined** 480 journal review papers and 90 RA titles in Biological and Social Sciences. LT7RV2
3. Wong & Leung (2004) **investigated** address forms among undergraduate students in Hong Kong. LT2RV6
4. Fortanet et al. (1997) had also **observed** that the colon, semicolon, and full stop were the most frequent punctuation marks in Business and Economics titles, and the least common in Computer Science titles. LT7RV3
5. Like Wong & Leung (2004), Li (1997) explored the use of address forms among HongKonger university students, and **established** a bicultural identity of HongKongers, in their use of address forms. LT2RV5

Examples (1), (2), (3) and (4) above show how *Research Acts* verbs were used to report the studies of other researchers in the data analyzed. As can be seen from the above examples, *identify* in (1) above is used to state the findings of Fernandez (2007/2008) non-factively. Similarly, *observe* is used non-factively to report the findings of the other researchers identified as Fortanet et al. (1997). In (2) and (3), the verbs *examine* and *investigate* are respectively used as procedural verbs to report the research procedure of other researchers. In (5), the verb *establish* was used as a *factive verb* to report the findings, indicating the writer's acceptance of the findings being reported. Other *Research Acts* verbs identified in the data include *conduct*, *add*, *develop*, *show*, *prove*, *compare*, etc.

Aside *Research Acts* verbs, *Cognitive Acts* verbs were also used to report the findings of other scholars. Hyland (2002) defines *Cognitive Acts* verbs as verbs that are concerned with the researcher's mental processes. Using *Cognitive Acts* RVs, writers are able to attribute a particular attitude to the cited author. In this regard, writers can represent the author as having a positive attitude to the material, accepting it as true or correct with verbs such as *agree*, *concur*, *hold*, *know*, *think*, or *understand*. Alternatively authors' may be characterized as having a tentative view towards the reported matter (e.g. *believe*, *doubt*, *speculate*, *suppose*, *suspect*), or, more rarely, as taking a critical stance (e.g. *disagree*, *dispute*, *not think*). Finally, the writer can portray the author as holding a neutral attitude towards the proposition (*picture*, *conceive*, *anticipate*, *reflect*). Below are illustrative examples indicating how cognitive verbs were used in the data analysed.

6. Yet, a number of genre theorists (e.g. Bhatia, Swales, 2009) **agree** that genres allow for individual choices while admitting constraints. LT7RV6
7. Morasch (2004) **believes** that cultural and linguistic differences between physicians and patients are among the barriers of effective conversation and clear communication. LT8RV3
8. Crismore and Vaude Kopple (1988, p. 185) also **see** hedges as items that "signal a tentative or cautious assessment of the truth of referential", which allow senders to reduce their responsibility toward information presented. LT10RV1

It became clear from the data analyzed that the lecturers did not use *Cognitive Acts* RVs that positioned them critical to the findings being reported. They rather positioned themselves as either positive tentative or neutral to the claims they reported. As seen in (6) above, *agree* was used to express a positive attitude to the claim being reported. Moreover, while *believes* was used in (7) to approach the claim tentatively, the writer in example (8), by using the *Cognitive Acts* verb *see*, assumes a neutral position towards the reported material.

Finally, these writers employed *Discourse Acts* verbs to report the claims of other authors. Regarding the evaluative category of *Discourse Acts* verbs, it was found that reporting verbs from the *Doubt* assurance categories. With regard to the *Doubt* category, verbs were used tentatively (e.g. *postulate, hypothesize, indicate, intimate, suggest*). Also, *Assurance* verbs were used from both the *Non-Factive* category (e.g. *state, describe, discuss, report, answer, define, and summarize*) and *Factive* category (e.g. *argue, affirm, explain, note, point out and claim*). *Counters* and verbs which are directly critical were, however, not used in the data analyzed. Below are extracts from the data analyzed which shows how *Discourse Acts* verbs were used.

9. In his revised work, Swales (1990a) **indicates** three “moves’ which are undertaken by expert writers: establishing a territory, establishing a niche, and occupying the niche. LT5RV1
10. In all these studies, Afful (ibid) **suggests** that the linguistic resources used as address forms by university students reflect a warm and vivacious culture. LT2RV7
11. Al-Ali **describes** nine moves, some of which overlap with others identified in Matiki (2001), Bonsu (2002, 2007), and Nwoye (2007) in Malawi, Ghana, and Nigeria respectively. LT1RV4
12. While one is born into or naturally belongs to a speech community, Swales (1990) **notes** that one chooses to join a particular discourse community based on personal motivations. LT7RV1

In (9) and (10), the verbs *indicates* and *suggests* respectively were used from the *Doubt* category to tentatively report the works of other authors. In (11) the verb *describes* is used from the *Non-Factive* assurance category of verbs to neutrally report the works of the other author, while the verb *notes* from the *Factive* assurance category of discourse verbs to indicate a support for the reported information.

4.2 The Frequency of Occurrence of the Various Categories of Reporting Verbs

In this section of the Analysis and Discussion, I present in tabular form the various categories of the RVs used in the data analyzed, paying attention to both the process functions and the evaluative categories of RVs identified by Hyland (2002). As indicated in Table 1, it is evident that the RVs from the *Discourse Acts* category had the highest occurrence (108 occurrences), representing 51% of the total reporting verbs identified in the data. This is followed by the *Research Acts* category which recorded 84 occurrences, representing 42% of the total occurrences of reporting verbs in the data. The *Cognitive Acts* verbs had the lowest number of occurrences (13 occurrences), which is 6.7% of the total number of reporting verbs recorded in the data. These findings are in tandem with those of Yaganeh and Boghayeri (2014) and Jafarigohar and Mohammadkhani (2015) and Loan and Pramoolsook (2015) in which similar results were obtained. The agreement between this finding and those of Yaganeh and Boghayeri (2014) and Jafarigohar and Mohammadkhani (2015) could be explained by the fact that they all focused on research articles written by experts. The finding, however, contradicts that of Manan and Noor (2013) where the verbs in the *Research Acts* category recorded the highest frequency of occurrence (44.8%), followed by the *Cognitive Acts* category which recorded 30.2% of the total reporting verbs identified in the data, and *Discourse Acts* category, which had the lowest percentage (25%). This contrasting finding may be attributed to the different levels of education involved in the two studies: the present study involves experts whereas the previous study involves graduate research students.

Also, in the discourse act category, the reporting verb that had the highest number of occurrences was *discuss* (7 occurrences), followed by *report, point out, say, present* and *note*, each of which verbs recorded six occurrences. While *examine* had the highest number of occurrences in the *Research Acts* category (10 occurrences), *consider* and *believe* each had three occurrences, the highest occurrences, in the *Cognitive Acts* verb category. This result contradicts that of Manan and Noor (2013) where the verbs *found, suggest* and *state* had the highest occurrences in the *Research Acts, Cognition Acts* and *Discourse Acts* categories respectively.

Table 1. Frequency of occurrence of the various categories of the reporting verbs

CATEGORY/SUB-CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Research Act	84	42%
<i>Findings</i>	34	17%
Factive	9	4.5%
Counter-Factive	0	0%
Non-Factive	25	12.5%
<i>Procedures</i>	50	25%
Cognitive Acts	13	6.5
<i>Positive</i>	5	2.5%
<i>Critical</i>	0	0%
<i>Tentative</i>	6	3%
<i>Neutral</i>	2	1%
Discourse Acts	103	51.5
<i>Doubt</i>	5	2.5%
Tentative	5	2.5%
Critical	0	0%
<i>Assurance</i>	98	49%
Factive	38	19%
Non-factive	60	30%
<i>Counters</i>	0	0%
TOTAL	200	100%

Regarding the evaluative functions of the reporting verbs, interesting results were found. In the *Research Acts* category of verbs, *Findings*, had 17% of the total number of reporting verbs identified in the data. Under the category of *Findings*, factive verbs had 9 occurrences, representing 4.5% of the total number of reporting verbs identified in the data and non-factive recorded 25 occurrences, representing 12.5% of the total number of reporting verbs in the data, while counter-factive had no occurrence in the data. The fact that counter-factive verbs did not occur in this data confirms Hyland's (2002) claim that counter-factive verbs are rarely used by authors in reporting information of other authors.

In the *Cognitive Acts* verbs, RVs used to express positive stance, tentative stance and neutral stance recorded 5 occurrences (2.5%), 6 occurrences (3%) and 2 occurrences (1%) respectively. The verbs used to express critical stance in relation to the information being reported were, however, not used in the data. This finding resonates with Loan and Pramoolsook's (2015) study which produced similar results. In Loan and Pramoolsook's (2015) study, while *Cognitive Acts* RVs used to express positive evaluation recorded 18 occurrences (2.05%), reporting verbs used to express tentative stance against the information reported had 51 occurrences (5.81%) and those used to express neutral stance had 7 occurrences (0.80%), those used to express critical stance in relation to the material reported had no occurrence.

In terms of *Discourse Acts* verbs, which either express writer's view (*Doubt* and *Assurance*) or attribute an attitude to the cited author, interesting results sufficed. With regard to those that express *Doubt*, 5 occurrences (2.5%) were recorded, all of which were tentative reporting verbs. The absence of verbs which expressed critical opinions to the authors cited implies that these writers avoided approaching the views of other authors critically. This finding is in agreement with that of Loan and Pramoolsook's (2015) where critical verbs under the *Doubt* verb group had no occurrence. With regard to the *Assurance* verb group, 98 occurrences were recorded, representing 49% of the total number of the reporting verbs identified in the data. Of this number, 38 (19%) were factive verbs while 60(30%) were non-factive verbs. *Counters* verb group under the *Discourse Acts* category of verbs, however, did not occur in the data analyzed. The high occurrence of *Assurance* verbs as compared to *Doubt* verbs and *Counters* in the data analyzed reflect previous findings (Hyland's, 2002; Loan & Pramoolsook's 2015). In Hyland (2002), for instance, *Assurance* verbs recorded 71% of the total discourse act verbs, followed by *Doubt* verbs and *Counters*, which recorded 24% and 5% respectively of the total number of *Discourse Acts* verbs recorded in the data. In Loan and Pramoolsook's (2015) *Assurance* verbs occurred 486 times in the data, representing 53.42% of the total number of reporting verbs recorded in the data. This was followed by *Doubt* verbs and *Counters*, which recorded 80 occurrences (9.13%) and 3 occurrences (0.34%) respectively. The low occurrence of *Counters* in this and previous researches (e.g. Hyland 2002) suggests that writers generally are not familiar with such verbs.

5. Conclusion

The study investigated the use of reporting verbs in research articles written by lecturers in the Department of English of the University of Cape Coast. The corpus for the study comprised 16,811 words Literature Review sections of research articles written by the lecturers. Using Hyland's (2002) model, the reporting verbs in the

articles were examined and classified under the various types. The findings indicate that all the three process types of RVs identified by Hyland (2002) were used in the research articles examined, with *Discourse Acts* RVs recording the highest occurrence, followed by *Research Acts* RVs and *Cognitive Acts* RVs. *Discuss* emerged the RV that recorded the highest number of occurrences in the *Discourse Acts* RVs while *examine* recorded the highest frequency of occurrence in the *Research Acts* RVs. As regards *Cognitive Acts* RVs, *consider* and *believe* came up first with each recording three occurrences.

This study, like all other researches in academia, adds to the existing body of literature on the academic discourse, in general, and citation, in particular. The significance of this research will be realized particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa where studies of this nature are given less attention. This research will therefore serve as a reference material for further research.

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