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W. T. T

## ABSTRACT

### A Contrastive Study of Authorial Reference Terms by Chinese Writers and English Writers in English Academic Writing

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This thesis reports a contrastive study about the use of the authorial reference terms in academic writing. It aims at figuring out how the authorial reference terms are used in English academic papers by English writers and Chinese writers respectively and in what ways their use of various authorial reference terms in academic writing is an adaptive behavior.

English academic papers in the linguistic field written by native English speakers and native Chinese speakers were employed as data sources of this study. The authorial reference terms, including first person and non-first person terms, were studied from the perspective of Adaptation Theory. Detailed analysis yielded the following major findings:

A. The most explicit difference reflected in the two corpora between native Chinese speakers and native English speakers in the linguistics field is that native Chinese speakers prefer to use *we* while native English speakers prefer *I* in their writing. This suggests that there is a more powerful authorial presence intended by native English speakers than by native Chinese speakers. Native English speakers seem to have a stronger sense of self in their linguistic writing. At the same time it shows that it might be an adaptation to their own different cultures: collectivism versus individualism.

B. Native English speakers seldom use *researcher-like* terms to refer to themselves in their writing while the number of *researcher-like* terms used by native Chinese writers is even larger than the number of *I* they use in their linguistic writing. The difference may suggest that their academic writing is an adaptation to their native culture.

C. Both native English and Chinese speakers often use research-like terms to refer to themselves. The use of this authorial reference terms only trails *I* in the case of native English speakers and *we* in the case of native Chinese speakers, ranking second in each corpus. Using research-like terms to avoid explicit self presence can be interpreted as an adaptation to the similar mental world of both native English and Chinese speakers, i.e., to make their research sound impersonal and scientific.

D. Native Chinese prefer to express their opinions, ideas, thoughts, and suggestions, etc. by using *we*-sentences while the frequency of *we*-sentences used by native English to serve the same function is lower. Compared with *we*, native English like *I*-sentences more to perform this function. The absolute number of *I*-sentences in both the corpora to perform the function of “proposing opinions, ideas, thoughts, and suggestions, etc.” is small. The data manifest that both native Chinese speakers and English speakers are quite cautious about launching personal opinions by using first person pronouns. It may prove common that in the mental world of all researchers, they are aware that it is quite dangerous to explicitly give personal thought though sometimes it will benefit them. They first want to be accepted by the academic world, and then gradually be recognized.

By exploring the authorial reference terms in academic writing from the perspective of Adaptation Theory, this study enriches the study of person deixis and academic culture. Practically, it helps English users with their L2 academic writing.

## 摘要

### 母语为中文的语言研究者和母语为英文的语言研究者 在英文学术论文中作者指称语使用情况对比研究

王婷婷

本文对从事语言学研究的中国学者和英美学者在学术期刊上发表的英文学术论文中作者指称语的使用情况进行了对比性研究,探索了英文学术论文中指代作者本人的指称语使用情况,从顺应理论的视角出发解读选择不同指称语的背后因素以及中国学者和英美学者在作者指称语使用上的异同。

通过数据分析,本文得出以下结论:

- 一、在英文学术论文中,中国学者倾向使用“we(我们)”而英美学者则倾向使用“I(我)”。这一现象似乎表明英美学者在学术写作时的自我意识相对于中国学者来说更为强烈一些,同时这也是对各自文化的一种顺应。中国文化中强调的是集体主义,而西方文化中个人主义更为突出,两国学者在学术论文中作者指称语的使用上基本上印证了这样的文化的倾向性。
- 二、英美学者几乎不用与“笔者”相对应的表达指称自己,而中国学者在英文论文中大量使用了该类指称,比使用“I(我)”的频率高。然而,研究发现中国学者和英美学者都爱使用如“本文”这样的表达来指代自己,在中国学者中该表达的使用频率仅次于“we(我们)”,英美学者中仅次于“I(我)”,位居第二。这很可能是为了顺应母语文化而在英语写作中出现的负迁移现象。
- 三、中国学者和英美学者都倾向于使用“本文”之类的词来指代自己,该类指代词的出现频率紧随中文学者常用的“我们”,英美学者常用的“我”。使用该类的人称指示语是一种对写作者心理世界的普遍顺应,即使用该

类中立的人称指示语从而使得其研究显得科学和不带个人主观色彩。

四、用第一人称来表达个人观点、想法、建议等在中国学者和英美学者的文章中出现的都不多，这表明中国学者和英美学者在使用第一人称来表达这个功能时都是非常谨慎，这反映了所有学者的一个普遍的心理，即，公然地表明个人观点有时虽然能为他们带来好处，但同时也存在着极大的风险，他们所需要的是先被学术界所接受。

本研究将学术论文和作者指称语相结合，将顺应理论和作者指称语相结合，从顺应理论的视角探讨了中西方学者在英文论文中作者指称语的使用情况，丰富了指称语和学术文化的研究。从实践上来讲，本研究对第二语言的学术写作有所帮助。

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# Chapter One

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Object of the Study

Academic papers are usually said to be impersonal, characterized by lexico-grammatical features such as nominalization and the passive voice. They are, in fact, more complicated and subtle than this simple view. The use of authorial reference terms in academic papers is one phenomenon worth researching. The use of personal pronouns is central to face-to-face interaction. They usually define or reveal interpersonal relationships between or among the individuals involved in interaction. In written texts the use of personal pronouns also reveals interpersonal relationships between or among the individuals involved. As Hyland (1994, p.240) indicates, “rather than being factual and impersonal, effective academic writing actually depends on interactional elements which supplement propositional information in the text and alert readers to the writer’s opinion.” The choice of a certain authorial reference term in an academic paper may reveal how writers view themselves, their relationship with their potential readers, and their relationship with the community they belong to.

The current thesis addresses the use of authorial reference terms in academic papers and intends to explore the differences and similarities in the use of various authorial reference terms between English writers and Chinese writers in English writing.

Unlike previous studies concerning the person deixis in academic papers from the perspective, such as politeness, identity and L2 writing, the current thesis will examine the strategic use of authorial reference terms which include non-first person terms from an entirely new perspective --- the perspective of Adaptation Theory by Verschueren (1999).

## **1.2 Need for the Study**

To researchers, academic papers are quite important in their academic life. They are the means whereby scholars get accepted and recognized by the academic world. Researchers communicate with their potential readers through their writing. Therefore, their writing not only manifests their research fruit but also serves as the medium to communicate with others in order to be accepted by others. One of the important interactional elements in academic writing is the use of authorial reference terms. Some studies have been carried out on such topics as the first person pronouns and the discourse functions of the sentences in which they occur (Kuo, 1999), *I* and writer identity in student academic writing (Tang & John, 1999), and L2 writers' use of first person pronouns (Hyland, 2002; Ivanic & Camps, 2001). Almost all of the previous research is descriptive. This study provides both a quantitative and qualitative study to dig deeper into the use of authorial reference terms in academic writing. Besides, this is a contrastive study. It is necessary to discover what differences and similarities there are between English writers and Chinese writers in using authorial reference terms and what affects their choices.

## **1.3 Significance of the Study**

To begin with, this study can contribute to the study of person deixis, which enriches the definition of first person terms by adding some non-first person terms.

More importantly, I try to describe and analyze the use of authorial reference terms in academic writing from the perspective of Adaptation Theory, which contributes to the research of academic culture.

Practically, this study may contribute to a better understanding of the writing tendency in some international key journals in the linguistics field. It will be valuable for the English majors to write their English papers to some international journals. In addition, starting from this study, a comparison could be made between different groups in academic writing, such as males and females, novices and experienced writers to discover the differences and similarities between them when using authorial reference terms in their academic writing.

## **1.4 Structure of the Thesis**

This study consists of six chapters. Chapter One serves as an introduction to the need and significance of the study. Chapter Two reviews some studies related to person deixis, focusing on three studies that directly inspire the current study. Chapter Three introduces the theoretical framework of this study, Verschueren's Adaptation Theory, probing the factors which influence the choice of authorial reference terms. Chapter Four describes the methodology of the study, including the sources of data, the procedures of data collection and the method of data analysis, as well as the problems encountered and solutions adopted in the process. Chapter Five reports the results of the study, discusses the possible factors that might have accounted for the results of the data collection. Chapter Six summarizes the whole study and the major findings, discusses the implications and limitations of the study, and suggests some directions for future studies.

## **Chapter Two**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter starts with an introduction to the pragmatic studies on academic writing, and the definition and types of authorial reference follow. Then, it presents two different voices towards the use of authorial reference terms to show a tendency of using them in academic writing. The last part of this chapter briefly reviews some studies on person deixis from different perspectives to discover the research gap.

#### **2.1 Pragmatic Studies on Academic Writing**

Academic writing is often described as scientific, creative, professional, theoretical and the like. In terms of its linguistic features, academic writing is generally precise, succinct and orderly. In addition, it is said to be impersonal, characterized by lexico-grammatical features such as nominalization and the passive voice. In fact, academic writing is more complicated and subtle than the view mentioned above. A brief review of academic writing as a specific genre helps reveal how their form and style have changed over time and how textual evolution has addressed the communicative purposes of authors. Research on academic writing mainly concerns hedges (Bloor & Bloor, 1993; Hyland, 1994; Salager-Meyer, 1994), voice (Tarone et al., 1998), reporting verbs (Hyland, 1999; Thompson & Ye, 1991), authorial identity (Bazerman, 1988; Hyland, 2001; Hyland, 2002; Ivanic, 1995, 1998; Myers, 1989), and person pronouns (Ivanic & Camps, 2001; Kuo, 1999; Tang & John, 1999). Of all the research, first person pronouns have received special attention, partly because there is conflicting information on their use in style manuals (Hyland, 2001) and partly because their appropriate use is still unclear. This study will focus on authorial reference in academic writing. The reason for using the term “authorial reference” is that this paper intends to study both the first person terms and

non-first person terms which can function as first person to refer to the author(s), a phenomenon ignored by many researchers. My interest in this issue is aroused by the conflicting information on the use of authorial reference which will be talked about in the following section. It is my hope to discover what the tendency in the field of English linguistics is and whether there are salient differences in this respect between the English academic papers by English speakers and Chinese speakers.

## **2.2 Definition and Types of Authorial Reference Terms**

### **2.2.1 The concept of authorial reference**

Reference, as Yule (2000, p. 4) defined in his book *Pragmatics*, is an act in which a speaker, or writer, uses linguistic forms to enable a listener, or reader, to identify something. Those linguistic forms are called referring expressions and can be, according to him, proper names like “Shakespeare,” “New York City,” noun phrases which are definite like “the girl with a red face,” “the author of the book,” or indefinite like “a boy” and “a town” and pronouns like “I” and “he.” So far there is no explicit or generally accepted definition. Based on Yule’s definition for authorial reference, a working definition can be given, namely, an act in which the author(s) uses linguistic forms to identify himself/herself or themselves, usually consisting of the first person pronouns like *I* and *we*, and the non-first person pronoun terms like *the author/writer/researcher* and *this paper/study/research*. But in the process of studying, we can easily find that *we* sometimes does not refer to the author alone. It is not a pure authorial reference term. It will be further discussed in the next section.

### **2.2.2 Types of authorial reference terms**

In most cases the authorial reference terms are first person pronouns. “First person” means that the person used by a speaker in statements refers to himself/herself or themselves, as *I* and *we* in English (*Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*, 1994, p. 536). However, the present study finds that sometimes the author uses some non-first person terms to refer to himself/herself such as *the researcher* or even *the research*. Another phenomenon worth pointing out here is that the first person

singular pronoun *I* is usually unambiguous in referring to the speaker/writer, the meaning of the first person plural pronoun is often vague: *we* usually refers to the speaker/writer and the addressees (inclusive *we*), or to the speaker/writer (exclusive *we*).

The use of the first person plural is notable in academic writing, where “we” may refer to a single author, a group of authors, to the author and reader, or to people in general (Biber et al., 1999, p.329).

- (1) We spoke of Dirac’s piece of chalk. (as cited by Biber et al.)
- (2) We are now able to understand why our information about the states of motion is so restricted in quantum mechanics. (ibid.)
- (3) When we want talking we often cease to listen. (ibid.)

According to the explanation of Biber et al in (1), *we* refers to the author(s), while in (2) *we* refers to the author and the reader (inviting the reader into the author’s argument), and in (3), the reference is to people in general.

Therefore, instead of using *first person pronouns*, *authorial reference terms* is employed in this present study to cover the terms used to refer to the author himself/herself including the special *we*. For the convenience of discussion, this study will divide authorial reference terms into first person pronouns and non-first person pronoun terms. In the first person category, two subcategories are studied: *I*, and *we* (*we*: the author, *we*: the author and the reader, *we*: the author and other researcher(s), *we*: discipline as a whole, *we*: general sense). In the non-first person pronoun terms, there are also two subcategories, that is, the researcher-like terms (e.g. x researcher/author/writer) and the research-like terms (e.g. x research/study/paper).

## **2.3 Studies on Person Deixis in Academic Writing.**

### **2.3.1 Different views on the use of authorial reference**

Research on the historical development of academic writing has indicated that early academic papers were mostly in the form of letter that scientists wrote to each other to exchange information or points of view. Many of them, therefore, used first-person narrative (Swales, 1990). Since the nineteenth century, academic papers gradually became public and shifted to emphasizing the method of investigation and the results and findings

rather than peer exchanges personally. The textual changes were characterized by a shift from description and narration to explanation and analysis. This trend put the publishing scientists to “a back seat” (Bazerman, 1988, p. 170). In general, the growing impersonality became a distinctive feature of academic writing.

In modern times, academic writing shows a more varied and dynamic style (Kuo, 1999). With respect to authorial reference, two voices are heard. One is that academic papers are purely empirical and objective, and therefore best presented as if the author were not part of the writing process. Albert Einstein (1934, p. 113) once wrote: “when a man is talking about scientific subjects, the little word *I* should play no part in his expositions.” Lester (1993, p. 144) also suggested writing one’s paper with a third person voice that avoids “I believe” or “It is my opinion.” It is seen as a strategy that maximizes the credibility of the writer and works. Lachowicz (1981, p.111) argued that impersonality emphasizes “objectivity, open-mindedness, and the established factual nature of a given activity.”, functions to underline the “common share of knowledge with the community,” and stresses the collective responsibility of academic endeavor. Eradication of the self is therefore seen as demonstrating a grasp of scholarly persuasion as it allows the research to speak directly to the reader in an unmediated way (Hyland, 2001). The research article is regarded as a modest and self-effacing genre in which the author acts as an invisible person to give priority to objectivity. There is, of course, some truth in it, but it is challenged by another voice that advocates the use of such little word as *I* in academic writing to bravely identify the author. Kuo (1999) points out that the strategic use of personal pronouns allows writers to emphasize their own contribution to the field and to seek agreement for it. Personal reference sends a clear indication to the reader of the perspective from which their statements should be interpreted. For this reason, using authorial reference is often seen positively by many researchers nowadays. *Manual on Scientific Writing* (1993) encourages writers to employ the first person, as does the authoritative *Council of Biology Editors Style Manual* (1978, p. 5), which advises writers to shun “the passive of modesty” and suggests that “the first person (I, we) is natural for relating what you did.” The suggestion of using first person is echoed by several influential style guides:



I herewith ask all young scientists to renounce the false modesty of previous generations of scientists. Do not be afraid to name the agent of the action in a sentence, even when it is “I” or “we” (Day, 1994, p. 166).

...most of our recommendations are designed to help you maintain a scholarly and objective tone in your writing. This does not mean (and we have not said) that you should never use I or we in your writing. The use of I or we does not make a piece of writing informal (Swales & Feak, 1994, p. 20).

Recent research (Clark, 1992; Ivanic, 1994, 1995, 1998; Ivanic & Simpson, 1992; Lillis, 1997) suggests a growing trend away from the traditional notion of academic writing as distant and impersonal, towards a recognition that academic writing need not be totally absent of writers because academic writing involves writers in a process of both textualizing their work and in building their own status in the discipline, (Ervin, 1993; Pare, 1993). Therefore, authors can't avoid projecting a particular impression of themselves.

In summary, there is no such thing as “impersonal” writing because authors convey messages about themselves by means of many acts, particularly through the use of the words “I” and “we.” They more or less present themselves in their writing by claiming explicitly “I think...,” “We disagree...” or some other implicit expressions like “the study” and “the author”. What matters is how they use the authorial reference terms which arouses many researchers interest and, therefore, some research on it from different perspectives is called for.

### **2.3.2 Studies on person deixis from different perspectives**

Person deixis, particularly first person pronouns, is mainly studied from the following perspectives.

#### **2.3.2.1 From the perspective of politeness**

Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 127) argued that the use of “we” to get both speaker and hearer involved in the speech act is identified with positive politeness, which was echoed by Myers (1989) who agreed that person pronouns are related to the motivation of being polite and maintaining face.

(4) We will shut the door, ma'am. The wind's coming in. (cited by Brown & Levinson, 1987)

As was written by Brown and Levinson in their book, "we will" in the above sentence actually means "I will." The inclusive *we* form is used to soften offers, pretending that the speaker is as eager as the hearer to have the action performed. By uttering "we will shut the door..." the speaker implies that "I will do it for our benefit."

(5) We don't hit dogs with stones. (cited by Gu Weixia, 2005)

The above sentence was used by an adult to tell a child not to hit dogs with stones. *We* in this example refers to *you*, the child. *We* is used to redress FTAs, which gives us the impression that it seems the adult did not scold the child harshly, but just warned the child not to do the wrong thing.

Kamio (2001) highlighted the gradation of closeness from *we* (highest closeness) through *you* to *they*. Kuo (1999) concluded that the use of inclusive *we* in academic articles shortens the distance between writers and readers, shows politeness and stresses solidarity with readers.

(6) As teachers, should we exclude peer response from our teaching practice or substitute it for some other process writing techniques? (Fei Hong, 2006, p. 51)

The potential readers of this article are college English teachers. The present writer comes up with a question by using *we* to include her readers to arouse her colleagues' attention to and thought on this question. She uses *we* to invite readers into her writing, making them feel that they are respected and their opinion will be considered.

It is true that choosing a particular pronoun conveys the degree of politeness and closeness. However, we should not neglect the context. Only the context can give enough information to tell if the choice of one or other pronoun is related to a greater or a lesser politeness and closeness. This study will try to look at the use of authorial reference within the framework of Adaptation Theory since few studies have been conducted from this perspective.

### 2.3.2.2 From the perspective of identity

Academic writing is a channel where writers gain credibility by projecting an identity invested with individual authority, displaying confidence in their evaluations and commitment to their ideas. Perhaps the most visible manifestation of such an authorial identity is the use of first person pronouns. Some researchers have studied the identity issue by observing the use of person pronouns. Ivanic (1998) pointed that there is a continuum from not using *I* at all, through using *I* with verbs associated with the process of structuring the writing, to using *I* in association with the research process, and finally to using *I* with verbs associated with cognitive acts. Following Ivanic's model, Tang and John (1999) set up a typology of six different identities behind the first person pronoun in academic writing: *I* as the representative, *I* as the guide through the essay, *I* as the architect of the essay, *I* as the recounter of the research process, *I* as the opinion holder and *I* as the originator. Hyland (2001, 2002) and Ivanic and Camps (2001) wrote first person pronouns reveal the way writers position themselves in the scientific community. They argued that first person helps to construct the writer's identity by emphasizing the writer's contribution while carrying connotations of authority, especially the first person singular. Hyland (2001) found more specific functions of the use of pronouns, for example, the use of self-mention by research articles authors closely associates them with their work. He also pointed out the growing preference of the use of *I* over *we* specifically in the hard science disciplines. Gragson and Selzer (1990, p. 34) argued that the effect of the use of *I* (e.g., "I have taken as my starting point... I first outline... I then discuss... I summarize and comment on.") is to "establish the author as the authority and the implied reader as the novice in need of direction." Hyland (2001) and Tang and John (1999) argued that the use of *I* shows that the writer is responsible for what he says, stresses the ownership of his work, and tries to persuade the reader to believe that his words are worth taking notice of. By contrast, *we* shows less confidence than *I*. The researchers, say Hyland (2002b), Ivanic (1998) and Tang and John (1994), all stated that inclusive *we* is often used when the author makes claims, which usually carry much greater threat to face.

### **2.3.2.3 From the perspective of L2 writing**

The use of person pronouns is a perennial source of difficulty for both native speaker and second language students (Cadman, 1997; Connor, 1996). Chang and Swales (1999, p. 164) observed that “feelings and reactions can be both strong and unpredictable” on the use or avoidance of first person pronouns. They found that a group of 37 graduate students felt decidedly uncomfortable with the first person. Hyland (2002) studied twelve L2 undergraduate reports and compared the use of first person to a reference corpus of research articles and found that his L2 informants mainly used first person pronouns in non-controversial contributions, such as stating discourse goals or referring to methodological approaches, but avoided using them in the expression of arguments or opinions. Also Ivanic and Camps (2001) showed the avoidance of the use of first person in the writings of six Mexican postgraduate students. Thus, it seems common for the L2 writers to under-use first person pronouns. Whether it is the same case for English majors in China will be checked in this thesis, presenting a contrastive study by comparing the use of authorial reference terms in English academic papers written respectively by English speakers and Chinese speakers who major in English.

### **2.3.3 Summary**

In this section, I have given a general survey of what has been done on person pronouns in academic writing in the previous research.

Of all the three person pronouns, namely the first person, the second person and the third person, the first person has received the greatest attention because it is the very reference that can project the author himself in his writing and its usage is complicated while other person pronouns appear less often in academic writing. Kuo (1999) found that other person pronouns only consist of 137 occurrences in his data while the first person pronouns 960 occurrences. The existing research on first person pronouns in academic writing mainly focuses on the politeness issue reflected in the choice of a particular pronoun (Myers, 1989; Kamio, 2001; Kuo, 1999), the identity issue reflected in the choice of a particular pronouns (Gragson & Selzer, 1990; Ivanic, 1998; Kuo, 1999; Tang & John, 1999; Hyland, 2001, 2002; Ivanic & Camps, 2001), and the underuse of first person

pronouns in the second language academic writing (Chang & Swales, 1999; Ivanic & Camps, 2001; Hyland, 2002).

However, the previous studies have not dealt with the use of non-first person pronouns that can also be used to refer to the author himself in academic writing. The previous studies have not touched upon this issue from the Adaptation Theory, one of the most important theories in recent years and no studies have been conducted on the comparison of academic English writing by native English speakers and native Chinese speakers in the field of linguistics. This study will be intended to fill in these gaps.

## Chapter Three

### THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter aims to establish the conceptual framework for the analysis of authorial reference terms in the collected data. The first section introduces the adaptation theory briefly. Discourse functions of sentences in which authorial reference terms occur will be discussed in the second section.

#### 3.1 The Adaptation Theory

Verschueren (1999) proposed a new theory of pragmatics, the theory of adaptation, in his book *Understanding Pragmatics*. He upheld that using language consists of the continuous making of linguistic choices consciously or unconsciously on various levels: phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, semantic (1999, p. 56). It is suggested that making choices can be understood in terms of three factors: variability, negotiability and adaptability.

Variability refers to the range of possibilities from which choices can be made; negotiability means that choices are not made mechanically or according to strict rules or fixed principles and strategies; in other words, people can make linguistic choices flexibly; adaptability is the property of language that enables people to make negotiable linguistic choices from a variety of possibilities in such a way as to approach points of satisfaction for communicative needs (1999, p.p. 59-61). The three factors are inseparable and adaptability serves as the core of language use. Four angles are investigated in the Adaptation Theory. They are the contextual correlates, the structural object of adaptation, the dynamics of adaptation and the salience of adaptation process.

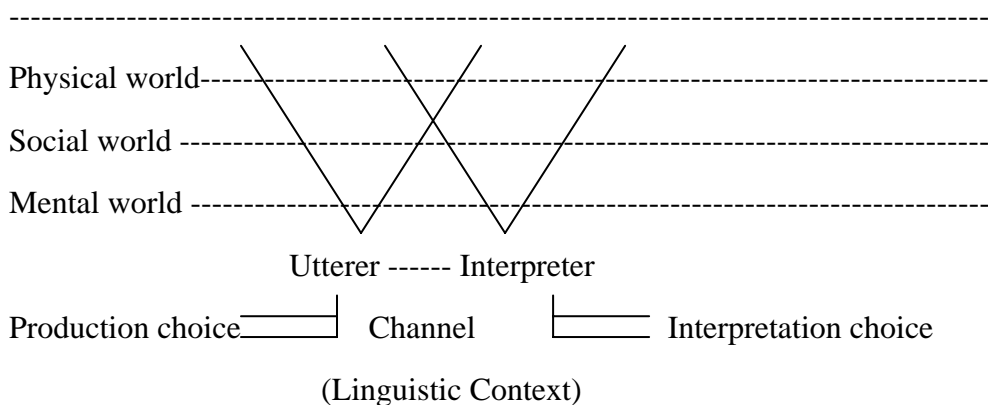
The contextual correlates of adaptability include all the ingredients of the communicative context and linguistic context in which the event takes place. The

communicative context has four parts: the language users, the mental world, the social world, and the physical world; the linguistic context means the contextual cohesion, intertextuality and sequencing. Figure 3.1 gives us a vivid explanation.

The language users include both the utterer and any interpreters (e.g. the hearer, the bystander) who may be involved in the communication event. The mental world means the utterer's and the interpreter's "personality, traits, emotional involvement, patterns of beliefs, wishes and desires, motivations and intentions" (Verschueren, 1999, p. 89). The social world is about the social settings, social institutions, cultures and rules that regulate people's linguistic choice in communication. Finally, the physical world involves the temporal reference and spatial reference.

When a person is going to utter something, he might take all these four parts mentioned above into consideration, then decides which linguistic form he would employ. In other words, a linguistic choice made by people adapts to the above four ingredients.

Figure 3.1 The Contextual Correlates of Adaptation (Verschueren, 1999, p. 76)



### 3.2 Discourse Functions of Sentences with Authorial Reference Terms

Based on Kuo (1999), a discourse function is defined as the function that a sentence containing an authorial reference term performs in the immediate discourse context of a journal article. It reflects the specific communicative purpose of the writer in a certain part of a journal article.

There is no set rule as to the classification of the discourse function that a sentence containing an authorial reference term performs. The previous studies always build their

own classification among which Kuo's classification is the most detailed. Kuo (1999) examined each occurrence of first person pronouns and categorized the discourse functions into 12 subcategories which are :

- 1) Explaining what was done
- 2) Proposing a theory, approach, etc
- 3) Stating a goal or purpose
- 4) Showing results or findings
- 5) Justifying a proposition
- 6) Hedging a proposition
- 7) Assuming shared knowledge, goals, beliefs, etc.
- 8) Seeking agreement or cooperation
- 9) Showing commitment or contribution to research
- 10) Comparing approaches, viewpoints, etc.
- 11) Giving a reason or indicating necessity
- 12) Expressing wish or expectation

Kuo gave a very detailed classification and in his study he matched each occurrence of first person pronouns with each of the twelve functions. It is dubious, however, whether his classification could really cover all of his occurrences and include all the possibilities, and whether it was necessary to cut the functions in such a detailed way. Some functions such as justifying a proposition, hedging a proposition, assuming shared knowledge, goals, beliefs, and seeking agreement or cooperation were really hard to identify and are trivial to define. For example,

(1) While we do not have a detailed microscopic model, we suspect that the Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> coating does not completely suppress facet degradation. (cited by Kuo, 1999)

(2) Finally, we believe that LEW satisfies better the important criterion of comprehensibility ... (ibid.)

Kuo claimed that the first sentence performs the function of hedging a proposition and the second sentence showing commitment or contribution to research. The two verbs *suspect* and *believe* present the author's mental process by giving the author's opinion or



thought. If we put both of the two sentences under the subcategory “state opinions, suggestions, ideas, thoughts, etc.,” it also works and facilitates the study.

(3) Since we also consider negative cues, we use Mode to indicate whether a cue is positive or negative. (ibid.)

According to Kuo, this sentence performs the function of justifying a proposition. But if we identify it with the first function “explaining what was done”, it is also acceptable.

I have ever thought of employing the speech act theory to categorize all the occurrences but I found that the speech act theory which gives a clear and vivid analysis of human beings’ verbal behavior is too big and needs narrowing down to deal with the study of authorial reference terms in papers. Kuo’s classification is a little bit trivial while the speech act theory is a little bit broad. Therefore, this study established its own discourse functions based on the previous studies as follows:

1. explaining what was done
2. stating phenomena, findings or data
3. proposing opinions, suggestions, thought, ideas etc.
4. expressing intentions, goals, decisions
5. expressing wish or expectation
6. expressing appreciation
7. others

Below are examples of each function.

(4) Based on grammar books and dictionaries, I classify do into six major categories from functional perspective. (Qi Yan, 2006)--- Function 1 explaining what was done

(5) What we find instead, though, is that epistemic stance expressions (as well as attitudinal expressions) are much more common in speech than in writing (Biber, 2006) --- Function 2 stating phenomena, findings, data, etc.

(6) I propose that teaching style as a more general term is something that reflects both the proficiency and personality of an individual instructor in the classroom. (Yan Ming, 2007) --- Function 3 proposing opinions, suggestions, thoughts, ideas, etc.

(7) This paper attempted to explore the sociocultural transfer (ST) within

the English performance of refusals by Chinese EFL learners and hence to reclassify the framework of speech act refusals. (Han Dawei, 2006) --- Function 4 expressing intentions, goals or decisions

(8) Obviously, reviews of studies published in contexts like Australia or South America would be particularly valuable in expanding our growing knowledge base, and I hope that others might feel motivated to take on such a task.(Tardy, 2006) --- Function 5 expressing wish or expectation

(9) I would like to thank Douglas Biber, William Grabe, and two anonymous reviewers for their feedback on an earlier version of this paper.(Keck, 2006) --- Function 6 expressing appreciation

(10) As English teachers we are always asking ourselves how best we can help our students learn the target language more effectively and how best we can help them become autonomous learners. (Cui Linlin, 2006) --- Function 7 others

I modified Kuo's classification by adding and combining some functions based on my data. Those that were ambiguous and did not belong to any other seven functions were listed under "others." This classification included the important discourse functions of the occurrences and excluded those that were trivial and unimportant. However, I admitted here that science, especially soft science, could not always be clearly cut by rules. My classification had its limitations which needed perfecting in future studies.

### **3.3 The Adaptive Nature of Authorial Reference Terms in Academic Writing**

Although we do not deny the fact that there is some personal preference or individual style in academic writing, the choice of authorial reference terms serves certain purposes in academic writing. Academic writing has traditionally been thought of, on the one hand, as "distant, convoluted and impersonal" (Tang & John, 1999, p. s23); on the other hand, a growing trend within academic writing suggests that academic writing need not be totally "devoid of a writer's presence" (ibid. 1999, p. s23). Facing up with a mixing of tradition and fashion, the strategic use of authorial reference terms is an effective way of achieving the above two demands.

As has been mentioned in the previous chapter, the author of a paper generally uses first person pronouns (I, we) and non-first person pronouns (the author, the research, the paper, etc.) to refer to himself. The choice of using different authorial reference terms is

not an easy case but theoretically a kind of linguistic adaptation to certain needs. From the perspective of Adaptation Theory, the choice of different authorial reference terms reflects two kinds of adaptation in academic writing process.

The first kind is to adapt to the mental world of the author. According to Verschuren, the mental world refers to the utterer's and the interpreter's "personality, traits, emotional involvement, patterns of beliefs, wishes and desires, motivations and intentions" (Verschuren, 1999, p. 89). Since personality, traits, and emotional involvement of the author are hard to perceive, I focus on the general wishes, desires or intentions of the author in his writing. Hyland (2001, 2002) interviewed some native English writers and L2 writers and discovered their attitudes toward using first person pronouns in their writing. He argued that when an author employs a first person singular pronoun, he seems to have the desire to both strongly identify himself with a particular argument and to gain credit for his individual perspective, act, or research decisions:

Using "I" emphasizes what you have done, what is yours in any piece of research. I notice it in papers and use it a lot myself. (An interview by Hyland, 2001)

The personal pronoun "I" is very important in philosophy. It not only tells people that it is your own unique point of view, but that you believe what you are saying. It shows your colleagues where you stand in relation to the issues and in relation to where they stand on them. It marks out the differences. (ibid.)

Of course we are involved in research and using "we" emphasizes this. It avoids generalities and focuses on specifics without being too aggressively personal. (ibid.)

We can see that in writing, the author's decision to choose an authorial reference term has something to do with his desire and intention. In order to adapt to his specific intention and desire, he chooses different authorial reference terms.

Second, the use of authorial reference terms in academic writing is an adaptation to the social world of authors. The social world here means the living surroundings around the authors. The authors who live in different cultural backgrounds have their own choices to use authorial reference terms to adapt to their mother culture. The mother culture and the customs affect the authors' choice more or less.

In conclusion, by adapting to the mental world of the authors themselves and the social world they live in, the authors make their choices regarding the use of authorial reference terms in their academic writing process.

## **Chapter Four**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter describes some methodological issues in carrying out the study and all the materials used in the study. It consists of four sections. Section One presents the research questions to be addressed. Section Two introduces the targets to be studied. Section Three reports the data resources and some difficulties encountered in data collection. The last section introduces the two variables in data analysis.

#### **4.1 Research Questions**

The present study aims to study the use of authorial reference terms in linguistic papers by native Chinese speakers and English speakers. By manifesting the differences and possible reasons for them, I indicate a possible direction for the English majors who want to publish their papers in some international journals. Specifically, the following research questions are addressed:

1. How are the authorial reference terms used in English academic papers by English writers and Chinese writers respectively?
  - 1) What is the frequency of first person terms and non-first person terms found in the data?
  - 2) How is the use of first person terms and non-first person terms affected by the discourse functions of the sentences in which they occur?
  - 3) What differences do the Chinese writers and the English writers manifest in these respects?
2. In what ways is the use of various authorial reference terms in academic writing an adaptive behavior?
  - 1) How can the use of various authorial reference terms in the two data observed as

a whole be viewed as an adaptation to the writer's desires or intentions?

- 2) How can the use of various authorial reference terms in the two data observed individually be viewed as an adaptation to the different cultures?

## 4.2 Research Targets

The most frequently-used authorial reference terms are personal pronouns, but as mentioned in the literature review section, we have some other ways to refer to the author himself besides using personal pronouns. Therefore, the present paper considers other self-referring terms. The self-referring here has two types in my study: the first is researcher-like terms and the second is research-like terms. The researcher-like terms mainly include *researcher*, *author*, and *writer* with several variations like *this researcher/author/writer*, *the researcher/author/writer*, and *the present researcher /author /writer*, and the research-like terms mainly refer to *research*, *study*, and *paper* in this present paper with several variations like *the/my research/study/paper*, *this research/study/paper*, *the present/current research/study/paper*. For the convenience of expression, all these variations are expressed as *x researcher/author/writer* and *x research/study/paper*. They are studied as a whole and I do not give any further analysis of the commonalities and distinctions of using *x researcher*, *x author* and *x writer* respectively. It is the same case in the examination of using *x research*, *x study*, and *x paper*.

The research-like terms usually appear in the subject position when they mean the author himself. In the following two examples “The paper examined Chinese students’ autonomous learning.” and “Chinese students’ autonomous learning is examined in the paper.” we can clearly find that *the paper* in the first sentence means the author of the paper, while *the paper* in the second sentence means the paper itself. Therefore, only the research-like terms in the subject position are studied in the present study. In order to be consistent I plan to examine only the authorial reference terms in the subject position excluding all other cases. The following table lists the targets studied in the paper:

Table 4.1 Research targets in the current study

	Personal pronouns	Researcher-like terms	Research-like terms
Subject type	I, we	x researcher /author/writer	x research/paper /study

### 4.3 Selecting the Journals

The present paper intended to study the authorial reference terms used in linguistics fields by English speakers and Chinese speakers respectively. I built two mini-corpora: one for the English papers by Chinese speakers (EPCS), the other for the English papers by English speakers (EPES). To ensure that the data are meaningful and manageable, I chose the single-authored articles. Articles by two or more authors were excluded from my study. Since the present study was not a diachronic one and aimed to discover a writing tendency, especially the tendency of using authorial reference terms, in linguistics fields of today, the two recent years' linguistic articles (2006 and 2007) formed the data used. One important feature of the present study was to measure the occurrences of authorial reference terms by the number of sentences involved instead of by words; therefore, it was more meaningful if we counted authorial reference terms in the number of sentences involved in my study. Therefore, the total number of words of the two corpora was not equal. 30 EPCS (4789 sentences) and 15 EPES (4816 sentences) had a similar number of sentences.

The English papers by Chinese speakers (EPCS) all came from *Teaching English in China*, the only English journal published in China. All the articles from this journal were about second language acquisition or teaching by college teachers or language researchers. The number of the articles that met the requirements mentioned in the above paragraph was 82. I first numbered them in the order of their publishing date, then selected 30 out of the 82 by simple random sampling. The random numbers were taken from Black (1992, p. 256 See Appendix 1). All the numbers greater than 82 must be ignored and finally I got 30 articles (See Appendix 2). Some information about the articles chosen was as follows:

Table 4.2 Information about the data from native Chinese speakers

	Num of Words	Num of Sentences	Info. about Author	Related Theme
<i>Teaching English in China(30)</i>	106,727	4,789	College English teachers or researchers in china	Second language acquisition and teaching

There are many journals for the English papers by English speakers. To ensure the selection of journals was as scientific as possible, I had my professor and classmates to recommend some prestigious ones. To be equivalent to the EPCS, the English papers by English speakers were also about second language acquisition or teaching. Finally I had five English journals: *English for Academic Purpose*, *Language Learning*, *Linguistics and Education*, *Journal of Second Language Writing*, and *System*. One difficulty I met was about how to identify the author's nationality. To deal with this problem, I first chose the papers sent from USA and UK, excluding the papers from other countries. Then I googled the authors to find personal information about them, but, unfortunately, not all the authors could be found on the Internet, and the information provided was not sufficient enough to identify their nationality. After excluding some explicitly non-native English authors with the help of Internet information, finally I had 22 papers. I assumed the 22 authors from USA and UK to be native English speakers. The next step was to choose 15 articles out of the 22. I first numbered them in alphabetic order, and then selected 15 out of the 22 by simple random sampling. The random numbers were taken from Black (1992, p. 256 See Appendix 1). All the numbers greater than 22 must be ignored and finally I got 15 articles (See Appendix 3). Some information about the articles chosen was as follows:



Table 4.3 Information about the data from native English speakers

	<b>Num of articles</b>	<b>Num of words</b>	<b>Num of sentences</b>	<b>Info about authors</b>	<b>Related themes</b>
<i>English for Academic Purpose</i>	4			College English teachers or	Second language
<i>Language Learning</i>	4	127,301	4,816	Researchers in USA	acquisition and teaching
<i>Linguistics and Education</i>	4				
<i>Second Language Writing System</i>	2			or UK	

#### 4.4 Building the Corpora

Two corpora were built: Corpus A with the 30 articles by native Chinese from *Teaching English in China* and Corpus B with the 15 articles by native English from *English for Academic Purpose*, *Language Learning*, *Linguistics and Education*, *Second Language Writing*, and *System*. For the analysis I used the program Wordsmith Tools (Scott, 2003). This is an integrated suite of programs for looking at how words behave in texts. Corpus A consists of 106,727 words and 4,789 sentences in total. Corpus B has 127,301 words and 4,816 sentences. I equalized the numbers to the occurrences per 1000 sentences in the frequency analysis.

The selected articles were obtained directly from the electronic versions of the journals and converted to Text format. All footnotes, endnotes, and reference lists were deleted, and the two corpora were analyzed using the Wordsmith 2003. All the occurrences of *I*, *we*, *x author/writer/researcher*, *x research/paper/study* had to be studied in their contexts to ensure they were being used by the writer of the text and not by other parties like the writer's informants. The following extracts from articles examined in my study gives examples of each occurrence that is not included in the data.

- (1) Yung-Li recognized that the other students in her program were benefiting from their interaction with one another, but she still felt unable to join into these peer relationships: "At first semester, many new student

came together and they did not know everyone, like me. So, I didn't feel that I was so different from them. But after that they could, they could just know more and more about people, system and everything. But I could not." (Krase, 2007)

In the above extract from articles examined in my study, the writer is quoting interview data, and the informant is using pronouns to interact with the interviewer to report what she thought.

(2) "We are becoming increasingly certain that the theory has far reaching implications..." (Biber, 2006)

The above extract is an example given by the writer to illustrate stance structures. *We* here does not refer to the writer.

(3) ... mostly in a mismatch between what the writer anticipates the reader can do to extract meaning from ... (Zhang Li, 2006)

*The writer* in the above extract refers to a person who writes articles in a general sense rather than the writer of the paper.

(4) Furthermore, the study revealed that the students' ability of grasping main idea and of making inferences from given passages was significantly enhanced. (Xue Fuping, 2006)

(5) The study in the above extract means the finding of the study which is unlike the study in the following sentence which refers to the writer of the paper: (Ding Aiyun, 2006)

(6) This study seeks to explore a more practical way to acquire fluency in English. (Lu Ying, 2006)

*The study* in Example (4) refers to the findings of the study, and *The study* in Example (5) means the study itself rather than the person who conducted the study in comparison to *This study* in Example (6). Therefore, the research-like terms of the two types in Examples (4) and (5) are deemed irrelevant for the purpose of this study.

#### **4.5 Some Variables: Semantic References**

Considering that *we* is a special authorial reference term which has several semantic references, I classified it into five categories:

We 1 --- the writer

We 2 --- the writer and the reader

We 3 --- the discipline as a whole

We 4 --- the writer and other researcher(s)

We 5 --- others

We 5 refers to those that are ambiguous to define and the ones that have a general sense. For example:

(7). We know little about how reflective practice enhances the Chinese learners' level of reflection, and how reflection helps to raise their awareness of language learning. (Cui Linlin, 2006)

(8). In Chinese we have 5 words to differentiate father's elder brother, father's younger brother, mother's brother, father's sister's husband, mother's sister's husband. (Pang Ping, 2006)

The reference of *we* in Example (7) is hard to define. From the context *we* here can refer to either the writer and the reader or the discipline as a whole. Therefore, I put this kind of occurrences under the category of "others". *We* in Example (8) has no specific reference, which is the same case like "We have 365 days a year." For the other four semantic references, I would give examples in the next chapter.

#### **4.6 Difficulties and Limitations in Data Analysis**

Before presenting the results of this analysis, I would like to point out some difficulties in the process of this analysis. The first difficulty was that there were hundreds of sentences in which the authorial reference terms occurred but the discourse functions employed in the present study were the main functions observed in the data which could not cover all possibilities. The second one was that functions of some sentences in which the authorial reference terms occurred were too ambiguous to identify. The third one was that there were a number of occurrences of *we* and the research-like terms whose referents could not be clearly classified. I have tried my best to minimize the methodological risks and maximize reliability of the study. To solve the first difficulty I added one special item "others" in the discourse functions, and all the sentences in which the authorial reference terms occurred performing the unimportant and ambiguous discourse functions were put under it which were not studied in the present study. For the determination of the semantic

reference and discourse function of each occurrence, I invited my classmates to help me identify the occurrences together. I put away the cases on which we all reached an agreement, discussed those we disagreed, and then took the opinion of the majority. In this way I tried to minimize any personal bias.

## Chapter Five

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides the results and discussions in accordance with the research questions raised in Chapter Three. The first section illustrates the frequency of different authorial reference terms in the two corpora and compares each corpus' preference in the use of authorial reference terms. In the second section, both quantitative and qualitative analysis are made about the use of different authorial reference terms to reveal how they are affected by the discourse functions of sentences in which they occur. The last section describes how the needs of adaptation affect different choices of authorial reference terms by native Chinese speakers and native English speakers respectively.

#### 5.1 Frequency of Authorial Reference Terms

From the figures listed below, we can see that the difference in frequency among the categories of first person, researcher-like terms and research-like terms is substantial and so is the difference between the two corpora. The native English speakers prefer to use *I* (151 occurrences) rather than use *we* (52 occurrences) while the native Chinese speakers like *we* (161 occurrences) more. The frequency of *I* in Corpus A is 6.5 which is only about one fifth of the frequency of *I* in Corpus B. As for the frequency of *we*, Corpus B is 10.8 and it triples that in Corpus A. It seems that the native English speakers seldom use the researcher-like terms to refer to themselves in their papers because all the three occurrences are by one author and there is no occurrence in the other 14 papers. Compared with them, the native Chinese speakers prefer to use the researcher-like terms to refer to themselves in their papers which even exceed the occurrences of *I*.

The difference in using the research-like terms between the two corpora is not that significant as in other cases mentioned above but the figures show that the research-like

terms, which put the author himself behind the curtain, are popular with both the native Chinese speakers and English speakers.

Table 5.1. Occurrences and frequency of authorial reference terms in the two corpora

Authorial reference terms	Corpus A			Corpus B		
	occurrences	Frequency Per 1000 sentences	Percentage (among all)	occurrences	Frequency Per 1000 sentences	Percentage (among all)
<i>First person</i>						
I	31	6.5	11.3%	151	31.4	57.0%
we	161	33.6	58.5%	52	10.9	19.6%
<i>Researcher-like terms</i>						
x researcher /author/writer	40	8.4	14.5%	3	0.6	1.1%
<i>Research-like terms</i>						
x research/study/paper	43	9.0	15.6%	59	12.3	22.3%

The difference within the corpus itself is also noticeable. The results from Table 5.1 show that *we* is native Chinese speakers' favorite. In Corpus A it is observed that apparently the use of *we* is more frequent than that of *I* and the other two types of authorial reference terms. The frequency of *we* is 33.6, which is more than 5 times that of *I* (6.5). *I* which only has 31 occurrences is the lowest frequently used among the authorial reference terms. The frequency of the researcher-like terms and research-like terms is 8.4 and 9.0 respectively. Therefore, we can find that *we* ranks the first, research-like terms the second, researcher-like terms the third, and *I* the last in Corpus A.

The results from Corpus B differ most noticeably from those of Corpus A, in that the frequency of *I* (31.4) is about triple that of *we* (10.8). It shows that the native English speakers like to put themselves before the curtain. The frequency of the research-like terms (12.3) comes the second among the three authorial reference terms.

The above discussion gives a brief frequency analysis of the data between the corpora and within the corpora, which helps us to picture the main differences within and between the two corpora. Beyond the frequency analysis, a thorough study was undertaken in order to establish the discourse functions in which the authorial reference terms appear.

## **5.2 Authorial Reference Terms in Relation to Discourse Functions and the Adaptation Theory**

In this part, I report the results of the use of authorial reference terms in relation to the discourse functions.

### **5.2.3 First person**

*I* and *we* which are the major authorial reference terms in papers are studied in this section.

#### **5.2.3.1 *I* used**

I first listed the occurrences of *I* and the distribution of the discourse functions of the sentences in which *I* occurs, then discussed *we* in terms of two variables: semantic references and discourse functions.

Table 4 shows that I-sentence is most frequently used to perform the function of “explaining what was done”, 35.5% in Corpus A, and 72.8% in Corpus B. For example,

(1) Based on this concept I designed a pre-course questionnaire on teachers’ perception of culture in language teaching in order to identify the problem or need and then proceeded to identify the aims, content and implementation of this course and did a post-course questionnaire after the course finished in order to see the teachers’ evaluation and comments on this training. (Han Hui, 2006)

(2) During this discussion, I created three columns titled History, Written, and Winners. (Zwiers, 2006)

In the first example, the author described his activities: “designed a pre-course questionnaire, proceeded to identify the aims, content and implementation, and did a post-course questionnaire.” By employing *I*, the author emphasized his personal procedural activities, which are important and necessary for a study. In the second example, the author explained what he did in the discussion. *I + created* stresses the author’s originality. *I* that is most frequently used to serve the function of explaining what was done is used to indicate the author’s unique procedural choice and to describe the author’s own work. It is an adaptation to the author’s mental world, that is, the intention to make his procedural choices conspicuous and emphasize what he has done for his research.

Table 5.2 Occurrences of *I* in relation to discourse functions in the two corpora

Discourse Functions	Corpus A			Corpus B		
	Occurrences	Frequency (per 1000 sentences)	Percentage (all functions)	Occurrences	Frequency (per 1000 sentences)	Percentage (all functions)
F1	11	2.3	35.5%	110	22.8	72.8%
F2	0	0.0	00.0%	10	2.1	6.6%
F3	6	1.3	19.4%	6	1.2	4.0%
F4	5	1.0	16.1%	13	2.7	8.6%
F5	2	0.4	6.5%	2	0.4	1.3%
F6	1	0.2	3.2%	7	1.5	4.6%
F7	6	1.3	19.4%	3	0.6	2.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>31.4</b>	<b>100%</b>

Notes: F1: explain what was done; F2: state phenomena, findings or data; F3: propose opinions, suggestions, thought, ideas etc.; F4: express intentions, goals, decisions; F5: express wish or expectation; F6: express appreciation; F7: others

Function 2 “state phenomena, findings or data” finds no occurrence in Corpus A and 8 occurrences in Corpus B. Here are some examples:

(3) *I* noticed that the more commonly used academic brick and mortar words in the student essays had been presented in more than one scaffold.



(Zwiers, 2006)

(4) *I* show that studies considering only one or two of these variables might yield ambiguous conclusions. (Stevens, 2006)

I-sentences with this function, which mainly make the reader know what the author has found, can let the reader know how well the author knows about his study. They help construct the author's identity.

I-sentences with the function of proposing opinions, suggestions, thoughts, ideas, etc. reveal the author's mental activities. The author emphasizes his personal role in research by putting himself into his remarks explicitly. For example,

(5) *I* propose that teaching style as a more general term is something that reflects both the proficiency and personality of an individual instructor in the classroom. (Yan Ming, 2007)

(6) *I* argue that in order to document the wide range of language demands and language learning opportunities inherent in doing academic work, as well as to understand what students from language minority backgrounds are able to do to meet these demands, the notion of "academic English" must be expanded beyond the "academic" vs. "conversational" language distinction. (Bunch, 2006)

As was suggested by Tang and John (1999), *I* as an opinion-holder shows a very powerful authorial presence. However, this function is a double-edged sword, which brings potential risks (e.g. challenged by other researchers) to the author as well as benefits the author by promoting the author's authority and fame.

Compared with Function 2 and 3, Function 4, 5, and 6 perform relatively safer roles because they express personal feelings rather than personal opinions. For example,

(7) Being a non-participant by-stander, *I* was looking for situations in which refusals were likely to occur. (Han Dawei, 2006) --- Function 4 expressing intentions, goals, and decisions

(8) *I* looked for gaps in the skills and language that students needed to succeed on their persuasive essays. (Zwiers, 2006) --- Function 4 expressing intentions, goals, and decisions

(9) *I* wish I were an invisible woman and could have been there sitting in on their dates to take all a whole picture of their conversations. (Zhao Lili, 2006) --- Function 5 expressing wish or expectation

(10) Obviously, reviews of studies published in contexts like Australia or

South America would be particularly valuable in expanding our growing knowledge base, and *I* hope that others might feel motivated to take on such a task. (Tardy, 2006) --- Function 5 expressing wish or expectation

(11) Yet *I* felt very thankful to her in that her note, however small, carries some information useful to me and what is more, she is so generous that she managed to find a slot between their dates to let me have a talk with them about her errors. (Zhao, 2006) --- Function 6 expressing appreciation

(12) *I* am also grateful to Tony Silva and John Swales for feedback on work leading to this paper. (Tardy, 2006) --- Function 6 expressing appreciation

In the above examples, we can find that the use of *I* is an adaptation to, on the one hand, the author's intention to 1) be unique and responsible for his research, which is mainly displayed in Functions 1, 2, and 3, and 2) strengthen his personal relationship with others, which is manifested in Function 6 expressing appreciation; and, on the other hand, 3) keep the tendency in academic world, that is, academic writing need not totally "devoid of a writer's presence" (Tang & John, 1999, p. s23). Another conspicuous phenomenon in the data is that the native English speakers use more *I* than the native Chinese speakers in their academic writing. From the perspective of the Adaptation Theory, it is an effect caused by the author's adaptation to his own mother culture. *I* in Corpus A accounts for 11.3% among all the authorial reference terms, the least among all, while in Corpus B 57.0%, the most among all. Western countries, for example USA and UK, are largely individualist. In individualist societies people are autonomous and independent of their in-groups; they give priority to their personal goals over the goals of their in-groups, they behave primarily on the basis of their attitudes rather than the norms of their in-groups (Triandis, 2001, p. 909). In other words, individualistic cultures foster a sense of autonomy, uniqueness, and personal responsibility, emphasizing individual deeds, needs, and desires over collective concerns. Chinese people are quite modest and not used to putting themselves onto the stage. Although they have the desire to be conspicuous, their culture gives them rooted habits of being low-key, and scrupulous in conduct and wording. The different cultures find vivid expressions in their use of *I* in their academic writing.

In summary, *I* is the most visible manifestation of the author's own authority and identity among all the authorial reference terms. The employment of it to express material

and mental processes impresses the readers with uniqueness and responsibility. It suggests that the author gains credibility by explicitly projecting himself, and displaying confidence in his research and commitment to his ideas.

### 5.2.3.2 *we* used

Tables 5.3 and 5.4 show respectively the number of occurrences of each semantic reference of *we* in relation to each discourse function. The results in both tables show that *we* is most frequently used to refer to writers themselves (55 occurrences, 11.5 frequency in Corpus A; 13 occurrences, 2.7 frequency in Corpus B). The function of proposing opinions, suggestions, thought, ideas etc. occurs most frequently (19 occurrences) in Corpus A while there is no occurrence of it in Corpus B. For example,

(13) However writing is the weak point of college students in China. We think there are two main reasons: 1) It is not ... (Zhang Yijun, 2006)

(14) We propose that this corpus be made freely available to Chinese researchers for use in language-related work, including not only computational linguistics but also literary studies, social science research, etc. (Pang Ping, 2006)

*We* that refers to the author himself is called exclusive *we*. Exclusive *we*-sentences with the function “proposing opinions, suggestions, thought, ideas etc.” reflect that the author wants to emphasize his own thoughts in research. However, compared with I-sentences with this function, exclusive *we*-sentences manifest a less powerful authorial presence because the author disguises himself under the coat of *we*.

Exclusive *we*-sentences also perform other discourse functions, such as explaining what was done, stating phenomena, findings or data, expressing intentions, goals, decisions and expressing wish or expectation, as illustrated in the following examples (each function two examples, one by the native English speaker, the other by the native Chinese speaker):

(15) To get a bit deeper into the use of his structure by native and non-native students, we have examined all the collocations that occurred at least twice in each corpus. (Qi Yan, 2006) --- explaining what was done

(16) The languages and nationalities of all the learners we interviewed are

shown in Fig. 1. (Cooke, 2006) --- explaining what was done

(17) In this investigation, we found that there is a considerable challenge for both teachers and students. (Guo Naizhao, 2006) --- stating phenomena, findings or data

(18) By considering both unique and general links together, we find that 32% of the paraphrase contains words that are also found within the original excerpt. (Keck, 2006) --- stating phenomena, findings or data

Table 5.3 Occurrences of *we* in relation to semantic references and discourse functions in Corpus A

<b>Discourse functions</b>	<b>We1</b>	<b>We 2</b>	<b>We 3</b>	<b>We 4</b>	<b>We 5</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>F1</i>	15	1	2	2	0	20	12.4%
<i>F2</i>	12	25	5	2	4	48	29.8%
<i>F3</i>	19	6	9	0	1	35	21.7%
<i>F4</i>	5	1	2	1	0	9	5.6%
<i>F5</i>	1	2	4	0	0	7	4.3%
<i>F6</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
<i>F7</i>	3	10	18	1	10	42	26.1%
<i>Total</i>	55	45	40	6	15	161	100%
Frequency	11.5	9.4	8.4	1.3	3.1	33.6	
(per 1000 sentences)							

Notes: F1: explain what was done; F2: state phenomena, findings or data; F3: propose opinions, suggestions, thought, ideas etc.; F4: express intentions, goals, decisions; F5: express wish or expectation; F6: express appreciation; F7: others; We 1: the writer; We 2: the writer and the reader; We 3: the discipline as a whole; We 4: the writer and other researcher(s); We 5: others

(19) In the following sections, we will concentrate on the two most frequent categories ---verbal operator and delexical uses --- which display striking differences across the corpora. (Qi Yan, 2006) --- expressing intentions, goals, and decisions

Table 5.4 Occurrences of *we* in relation to semantic references and discourse functions in Corpus B

<b>Discourse functions</b>	<b>We1</b>	<b>We 2</b>	<b>We 3</b>	<b>We 4</b>	<b>We 5</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
F1	5	0	0	0	19	24	46.2%
F2	3	5	0	0	0	8	15.4%
F3	0	3	0	0	0	3	5.8%
F4	0	0	1	0	0	1	1.9%
F5	3	0	0	0	0	3	5.8%
F6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
F7	2	3	6	0	2	13	25.0%
Total	13	11	7	0	21	52	100%
Frequency	2.7	2.3	1.5	0.0	4.4	10.8	
<i>(per 1000 sentences)</i>							

(20) Finally, we turn to the different frames which are brought about when interlocutors bring knowledge schemas different from testing schemas to the speaking test event.(Simpson, 2006) --- expressing intentions, goals, and decisions

(21) We hope to have illustrated how these principles have been realized in a concrete course outline and how the application of these principles culminated in the realization of a textbook. (Han Hui, 2006)--- expressing wish or expectation

(22) We might expect that textbook authors would feel obligated to signal the epistemic status of statements, because written language is generally regarded as more precise and accountable than speech.( Biber, 2006) --- expressing wish or expectation

From the perspective of the Adaptation Theory, the use of exclusive *we* to signal his presence as a researcher and emphasize his role in research is to adapt to the intention to be less prominent in case of the risk of being attacked by other researchers, or to appear modest by putting himself under the disguise of *we*, which particularly is conveyed in the function of proposing opinions, suggestions, thought, ideas etc.

*We* referring to the writer and the reader ranks the second in both tables (45

occurrences, 9.4 frequency in Corpus A; 11 occurrences, 2.3 frequency in Corpus B). The function of stating phenomena, findings or data occurs most frequently in both corpora. For example,

(23) Therefore, we can see, interpreted from the relevance theory perspective, first, the aim of listening comprehension is to obtain the speaker's intended meaning. (Wang Lei, 2006)

(24) Through the learning of a language, we find that a natural language environment is better than conscious learning. (Zhu Liyong, 2006)

(25) We can also see that Michael used classroom science discourse. (Gomez, 2007)

In Examples (23) and (25), taking the contexts into consideration, the author first demonstrated some examples and then invited the reader to look at the example together to find something special. The author got the reader involved in his findings, since these findings could be inferred by the reader after reading. In this way the reader might think of himself as one of the researchers in the study. Example (24) illustrates a common phenomenon in language learning which is shared by both the writer and the reader supposedly. From the perspective of the Adaptation Theory, using *we* to refer to both the author and the reader is to adapt to the author's intention to narrow the distance between him and the reader in order to make his research acceptable to the reader and stimulate the reader's resonance to pave the way for his following research. The reader would feel that he was invited by the author in his writing, which stresses solidarity with the reader.

*We* referring to the discipline as a whole ranks the third in both tables (40 occurrences, 8.4 frequency in Corpus A; 7 occurrences, 1.5 frequency in Corpus B). *We*-sentences with the function of proposing opinions, suggestions, thought, ideas etc. appear frequently in Corpus A. For example,

(26) As teachers we can approach this problem by manipulating either one of the two variables: the text and/or the reader. (Zhang Li, 2006)

In the above example, the author proposed a method to solve a problem discussed above. By resorting to the whole discipline, the author doubles her voice and makes her suggestion more acceptable to the reader. This strategic use is to adapt to the author's mental world in the hope that he can be backed up by his discipline.

*We* referring to the writer and other researcher(s) seldom occurs in both corpora. Five out of the six occurrences in Corpus A all come from one author who did a teaching project with his colleagues in Xinjiang, which was introduced at the beginning of his paper, and the other occurrence is owed to an author who informed the reader that she and other English teachers conducted the same teaching program in her university. For example,

(27) When giving a training course in intercultural dimension to middle school English teachers in Xinjiang we will face the difficult task of conquering immediately arising skepticism with regard to “this intercultural wave”. (Han Hui, 2006)

(28) The following are what we have done in our university to assess students’ speaking competence and the percentage of the assessment counted in the terminal exams: ... (Ding Aiyun, 2006)

To sum up, *we* is most frequently used in both the corpora to refer to the author himself. This strategic use of *we* is to adapt to the author’s intention to be less prominent for the sake of being modest as well as playing safe by reducing personal responsibilities. It seems as if there is someone else backing him and sharing responsibilities with him. Most occurrences of inclusive *we* refer to the writer and the reader and the discipline as a whole comes the second. Since the academic articles are born to be read by readers, there is invisible communication between the author and his potential readers. Therefore, the intention to shorten the distance from readers is inevitable. To adapt to this intention, inclusive *we* which refers to both the author and the reader is employed to stress solidarity with readers. When observing across the two corpora, we find that the native Chinese speakers use more *we* than the native English speakers. As was mentioned in the previous section, this is a result caused by the adaptation to their different cultures. In collectivist cultures people are interdependent on their in-groups (family, tribe, nation, etc.), give priority to the goals of their in-groups, shape their behavior primarily on the basis of in-group norms, behave in a communal way and are especially concerned with relationships (Mills & Clark, 1982). In other words, collectivistic cultures foster group harmony, cohesion, solidarity and cooperation, emphasizing groups over individuals and relationship with others. The people in collectivistic cultures mirror their special traits in their writing, among which the quantitative use of *we* is a case in point.

#### 5.2.4 Researcher-like terms used

Table 5.5 shows that there are 40 occurrences of researcher-like terms in Corpus A. The figure suggests that compared with *I* (31 occurrences) native Chinese speakers prefer to use *x researcher/author/writer* and to do self-referring. The 3 occurrences in Corpus B are all by one author, which indicates that native English speakers seldom use these terms to refer to themselves. Among the 40 occurrences in Corpus A, more than a half performs the function of explaining what was done. For example,

(29) Therefore, the author produced an autonomous learning model of college English and put it into teaching practice. (Guo Naizhao, 2006)

The number of the occurrences to perform the function “proposing opinions, suggestions, thought, ideas etc.” comes second, having 10 occurrences. For example,

(30) The author suggests teaching lexical phrase whilst expecting the active use of language to reach what Brumfit calls “natural language use” and provides a new remedy for the so-called “deaf-mute” English learning situation in China. (Lu Ying, 2006)

The author of the paper gave her advice on lexical phrase teaching. Instead of explicitly employing *I* to begin the sentence, she chose *the author*. Some other discourse functions, such as stating phenomena, findings or data, expressing intentions, goals, decisions and expressing wish or expectation, are illustrated in the following examples:

(31) Through classroom observation, the author noticed that when the teacher stopped and asked her students to have a discussion, the students were all reluctant, although she paused buton. (Hu Sufen, 2006) ---  
Function 2 stating phenomena, findings or data

(32) Basically, the author wants to see whether the effect of top-level structuring could be effective for the students, and whether new words can be negotiated by using top-level structures. (Pu Zhengfang, 2006) ---  
Function 4 expressing intentions, goals, and decisions

(33) The author hopes the following picture can clearly demonstrate the sequence of speaking in the 4/3/2 activity. (Zhou Aijie, 2006) ---  
Function 5 expressing wish or expectation



Table 5.5 Occurrences of researcher-like terms in relation to discourse functions in Corpus A and

Corpus B

Discourse functions	Corpus A		Corpus B	
	x researcher	/author/ writer	x researcher	/author/ writer
	Occurrences	Frequency (per 1000 sentences)	Occurrences	Frequency (per 1000 sentences)
F1	22	4.6	3	0.6
F2	4	0.8	0	0.0
F3	10	2.1	0	0.0
F4	3	0.6	0	0.0
F5	1	0.2	0	0.0
F6	0	0.0	0	0.0
F7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	40	8.4	3	0.6

Notes: F1: explain what was done; F2: state phenomena, findings or data; F3: propose opinions, suggestions, thought, ideas etc.; F4: express intentions, goals, decisions; F5: express wish or expectation; F6: express appreciation; F7: others

The employment of *x researcher /author/ writer* rather than *I* helps the author avoid being too conspicuous. It is a self-effacing strategy in Chinese writing. The Chinese speakers are used to turning to “bizhe” when it comes to refer to themselves. It seems that the author is describing a third person’s study instead of his own. The difference in using researcher-like terms adapts to different writing practices.

Native Chinese speakers like to use *x researcher /author/ writer* to refer to themselves in writing while native English speakers seldom use them. This phenomenon has a bearing on the writing practice in China. While writing in Chinese, native Chinese speakers are used to employing “bizhe” to refer to themselves, which is regarded as a self-effacing device (*ziquan*) in writing. The counterpart in English is “author.” According to my previous study (2006) of the use of authorial reference terms in linguistics papers concerning second language acquisition and teaching in Chinese, Chinese speakers tend to

use “bizhe” (author) to substitute “wo” (I). The study found that there is no occurrence of “wo” (I) and 55 occurrences of “bizhe” (author) in the collected data. Therefore, their mother tongue transfers in their English writing, which may explain why there are many occurrences of researcher-like terms in native Chinese speakers’ writing while few occurrences in native English speakers’. In summary, the adaptation to the mother tongue’s culture affects the writing trait of native Chinese speakers, therefore, distinguishing their English writing from native English speakers’. Therefore, it is not coincidental to find that the native Chinese speaker prefer to use the researcher-like terms in their English writing rather than use *I*. It is an effect caused by adapting to their native culture.

### 5.2.5 Research-like terms used

Table 5.6 indicates that the occurrences of the research-like terms in both corpora perform similar discourse functions. In both data the function of explaining what was done comes the first, expressing intentions, goals, and decisions ranks the second. There is no occurrence of Functions 2, 5, and 6. For example,

(34) This paper discusses the causes of students’ general perceptions of the lack of progress in speaking after two years of oral English classes. (Zhang Xiuqin, 2006) --- Function 1 explaining what was done

(35) Employing Vygotskyps sociocultural theory, this paper proposes that social interactions, a combination of input and output, causes second language development. (Gui Min, 2006) --- Function 3 proposing opinions, suggestions, thought, ideas etc.

(36) The paper employs the notions of knowledge schema and frame in discourse to draw together areas of interest in testing: whether the speaking assessment should be viewed as an interview or as a conversation; divergent interpretations of the test event by learners; and variation in interlocutor behaviour. (Simpson, 2006) --- Function 1 explaining what was done

(37) Like Solomon (1983) and Brown, this study argues that teachers and students could benefit from the use of an explicit bridging discourse that goes beyond basic science vocabulary instruction to offering contextualized ways of understanding and talking about science that allow students to move comfortably, according to context requirements and levels of developing confidence and skill across conceptual localities. (Gomez, 2007) --- Function 3 proposing opinions, suggestions, thought,

ideas etc.

Table 5.6 Occurrences of research-like terms in relation to discourse functions in Corpus A and  
Corpus B

Discourse functions	Corpus A		Corpus B	
	x research/ study/ paper	frequency (per 1000 sentences)	x research/ study/ paper	frequency (per 1000 sentences)
F1	20	4.2	52	10.8
F2	0	0.0	0	0.0
F3	5	1.0	2	0.4
F4	18	3.8	5	1.0
F5	0	0.0	0	0.0
F6	0	0.0	0	0.0
F7	0	0.0	0	0.0
total	43	9.0	59	12.3

Notes: F1: explain what was done; F2: state phenomena, findings or data; F3: propose opinions, suggestions, thought, ideas etc.; F4: express intentions, goals, decisions; F5: express wish or expectation; F6: express appreciation; F7: others

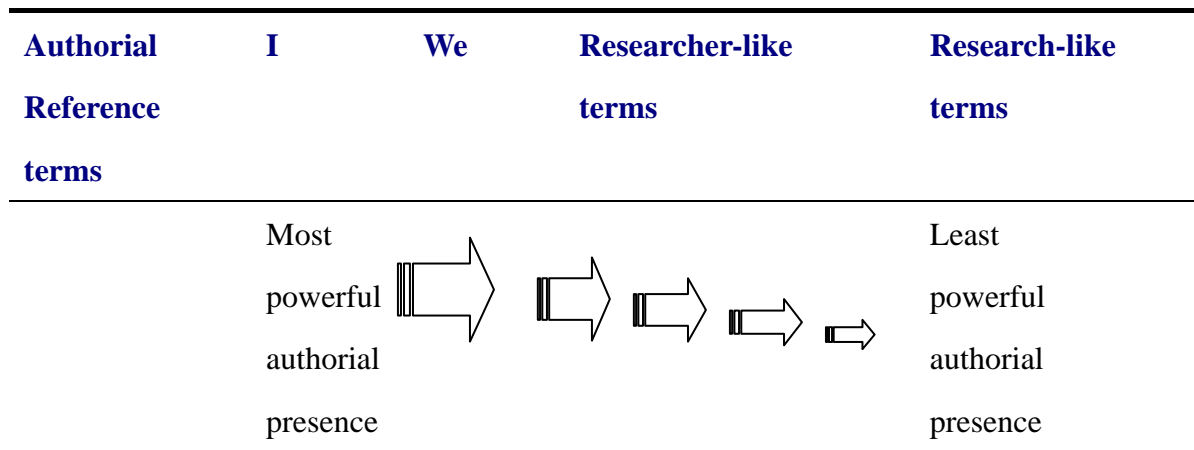
(38). This paper attempts to show the effect of writing conference on students' writing, presenting the result of a survey of 30 second-year college students while the performances of Chinese learners in teacher-led whole class and peer groups are examined. (Zhang Yijun, 2006) ---  
Function 4 expressing intentions, goals, and decisions

(39). However, this research still focuses on memory for previously acquired words (albeit in two languages) as opposed to the memory for new word forms and the development of form-meaning connections during vocabulary learning. (Barcroft, 2007) --- Function 4 expressing intentions, goals, and decisions

The research-like terms are neutral which completely efface the author from his writing. It makes the author invisible in his writing and helps the author avoid responsibility because it is not he who suggests or does so and so, it is the research that suggests or does. The research-like terms present the least powerful authorial presence in academic writing as shown in Figure 5.1. This usage is to adapt to 1) the intention to sound

objective and scientific, 2) the intention to avoid personal responsibility, and 3) the practice of writing impersonal academic papers in the academic world.

Figure 5.1 Power of authorial presence of the different authorial reference terms



### 5.2.6 Summary

This chapter mainly addressed two questions: one is how the authorial reference terms are used in English academic papers by English writers and Chinese writers respectively, and the other is the adaptive natures of various authorial reference terms in academic writings.

The frequency of various authorial reference terms was first investigated in this chapter. It was found that Chinese writers prefer to use *we* while English writers use *I* most frequently. The discourse functions of the sentences in which authorial reference terms occur were analyzed. The result showed that Function 1 (explaining what was done) and Function 2 (stating phenomena, findings or data) occur frequently. The adaptive nature of various authorial reference terms were discussed in each section. It turned out that the choice of different authorial reference terms clearly adapts to the different cultures and the general mental world of the author.

## Chapter Six

### CONCLUSION

This chapter summarizes the major findings of this study, followed by a brief discussion of practical and theoretical implications. Limitations and suggestions for future research are presented in the last section.

#### 6.1 Major Findings of the Study

The present study has yielded the following findings:

A. The most explicit difference reflected in the two corpora between native Chinese speakers and native English speakers in the linguistics field is that native Chinese speakers prefer to use *we* while native English speakers prefer *I* in their writing. This suggests that there is a more powerful authorial presence intended by native English speakers than by native Chinese speakers. Native English speakers seem to have a stronger sense of self in their linguistic writing. At the same time it shows that it might be an adaptation to their own different cultures: collectivism versus individualism.

B. Native English speakers seldom use *researcher-like* terms to refer to themselves in their writing while the number of *researcher-like* terms used by native Chinese writers is even larger than the number of *I* they use in their linguistic writing. The difference may suggest that their academic writing is an adaptation to their native culture.

C. Both native English and Chinese speakers often use research-like terms to refer to themselves. The use of this authorial reference terms only trails *I* in the case of native English speakers and *we* in the case of native Chinese speakers, ranking second in each corpus. Using research-like terms to avoid explicit self presence can be interpreted as an adaptation to the similar mental world of both native English and Chinese speakers, i.e., to make their research sound impersonal and scientific.

D. Native Chinese prefer to express their opinions, ideas, thoughts, and suggestions, etc. by using *we*-sentences (35 occurrences, 7.3 frequency) while the frequency of *we*-sentences used by native English to serve the same function is only 0.6. Compared with *we*, native English like *I*-sentences (6 occurrences, 1.2 frequency) more to perform this function. The absolute number of *I*-sentences in both the corpora to perform the function of “proposing opinions, ideas, thoughts, and suggestions, etc.” is small (occurrence: 6 vs 6). The data manifest that both native Chinese speakers and English speakers are quite cautious about launching personal opinions by using first person pronouns. It may prove that in the mental world of all researchers, they are aware that it is quite dangerous to explicitly give personal thought though sometimes it will benefit them. They first want to be accepted by the academic world, and then gradually be recognized.

In summary, all the differences and similarities presented here are the result of adaptation to each culture, mental world of the author and academic world’s practices.

## **6.2 Limitations of the Study**

Several limitations that more or less influence the results of the present study are listed as follows:

First, the single-authored English papers by native English speakers in two recent years are not abundantly available compared with those by native Chinese speakers, which may result in a relatively smaller range for me to do the sample selection.

Second, it is a little difficult to guarantee the English papers sent to the international key journals from USA and UK are all written by native English speakers. I traced online as far as possible to get more information about the authors to ensure authenticity, but it seemed that it is not the practice for the western countries to reveal much of the author’s personal information including nationality online like the case in China. Therefore, I had to assume that all the papers from USA and UK come from native English speakers, which might reduce the representativeness of the sample.

Third, the identification of discourse functions and semantic references of *we* and the research-like terms allows room for challenge since there is no set rule. As a result, identification might have been more or less subjective. It is inevitable to have some

disagreements on some cases.

### **6. 3 Implications of the Study and Suggestions for Future Research**

The present study took the data in the field of linguistics and compared the use of authorial reference terms by native Chinese speakers and English speakers respectively. We can discover the differences existing between native Chinese speakers and English speakers when writing academic papers in the field of linguistics and what affects the major differences between them. Taking the English papers by native English speakers published in some international key journals as the criterion, we can provide some regulations for the native Chinese speakers who may send their research papers to some international prestigious journals, especially, the English majors in the field of linguistics since the authorial reference terms are quite important for the writers to establish their identity, be compatible with the international writing practices and finally be accepted by the academic world. This study may facilitate English writing teaching in China.

As to the theoretical implication, the present study plumps the research of authorial reference terms makes us know that in addition to the first person pronouns there are some other forms of self-referring. Besides, this study provides some ideas from the perspective of Adaptation Theory to explain the differences on self-referring across two different cultures. It helps research the academic culture, such as the differences between male writers and females writers, novices and experienced researchers.

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## Appendix 1

**A brief table of random numbers (Taken from Black, 1992: 256)**

91567	42595	27958	30134	04024	86385	29880	99730
46503	18584	18845	49618	02304	51038	20655	58727
34914	63976	88720	82765	34476	17032	87589	40836
57491	16703	23167	49323	45021	33132	12544	41035
30405	83946	23792	14422	15059	45799	22716	19792
09983	74353	68668	30429	70735	25499	16631	35006
85900	07119	97336	71048	08178	77233	13916	47564

## Appendix 2

### 30 English articles by native Chinese speakers

- Cheng Feng (2006). The washback effect of college English test Band 4 on curricular planning and instruction. *Teaching English in China*. Vol.30, No.1, 19-27.
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- Gui Min (2006). Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the role of input and output in second language acquisition. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 29, No. 4, 87-92.
- Guo Naizhao (2006). An empirical investigation of cultivating students' autonomous learning capacity. *Teaching English in China*. Vol.29, No. 3, 45-54.
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- Sun Pinghua (2006). Influential factors and fundamental principles in developing policy for English language education. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 29, No. 5, 89-95.
- Tian Huifang (2006). Exploring the communicative potential of physical response to verbal stimuli. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 29, No. 5, 47-54.
- Wang Ying (2006). A corpus-based study of "almost" and "nearly" in Chinese EFL learners' writing. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 29, No. 6, 25-32.
- Wang Lei (2006). The understanding of context value in relevance theory and listening

- comprehension: Thoughts on the new form of longer conversation in TEM4. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 29, No. 4, 106-112
- Wu Xuehua (2006). A study of strategy use in showing agreement and disagreement to others' opinion. *Teaching English in China*. Vol.29, No. 5, 55-62.
- Xi Xingfa (2006). On the fundamental direction of the reform of foreign language education in China. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 29, No. 2, 107-112.
- Xue Fuping (2006). The impact of strategy training on reading comprehension. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 29, No. 4, 36-42.
- Yan Ming (2007). The hidden side of teaching style: a reflection on a local teachers survey. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 30, No. 1, 43-50.
- Zhao Lili (2006). A case study of an advanced English learner's errors in naturally occurring speech. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 29, No. 4, 116-119.
- Zhang Chun (2006). Strategy of English-Chinese bilingual instruction in the Chinese context. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 29, No.5, 116-125.
- Zhang Tao (2006). An investigation into vocabulary learning strategies used by non-English majors. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 29, No. 2, 27-34.
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- Zhu Linghong (2006). The linguistic features of English advertising. *Teaching English in China*. Vol. 29, No. 1, 71-78.
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### Appendix 3

#### 15 English articles by native English speakers

- Barcroft, J. (2007). Effects of Opportunities for Word Retrieval During Second Language Vocabulary Learning. *Language Learning* 57:1, 35–56.
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- Rott, S. (2007). The Effect of Frequency of Input-Enhancements on Word Learning and Text Comprehension. *Language Learning* 57:2, 165–199.
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