

Jarkovská, Martina; Jarkovská, Petra

**Types and functions of reporting verbs in English and Czech-medium master's thesis literature review sections**

*Brno Studies in English*. 2025, vol. 51, iss. 2, pp. 5-29

ISSN 0524-6881 (print); ISSN 1805-0867 (online)

Stable URL (DOI): <https://doi.org/10.5817/BSE2025-2-1>

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/digilib.83796>

License: [CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

Access Date: 11. 03. 2026

Version: 20260306

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

**TYPES AND FUNCTIONS  
OF REPORTING VERBS IN ENGLISH  
AND CZECH-MEDIUM  
MASTER'S THESIS LITERATURE  
REVIEW SECTIONS**

*Brno Studies in English*  
Volume 51, No. 2, 2025

ISSN 0524-6881 | e-ISSN 1805-0867  
<https://doi.org/10.5817/BSE2025-2-1>

**MARTINA JARKOVSKÁ AND PETRA JARKOVSKÁ**

---

**Abstract**

This study examines the types and functions of reporting verbs (RVs) in L2 undergraduate academic writing and elucidates first language (L1) academic proficiency's impact on verb choice. The data were collected from literature review sections of English and Czech-medium master's theses authored by economics students whose first language is Czech. The study combined corpus-based and contrastive approaches. RVs were classified based on their discourse functions, and tense and voice grammatical categories were identified. Findings indicate that a weaker academic proficiency in the native language may lead to a reduced capacity to utilize rhetorical devices and express one's stance effectively in L2 English learner writing. Limited academic proficiency in L2 English-medium theses was suggested by a restricted vocabulary of RVs and inconsistent use of grammatical patterns. Both L2 English and L1 Czech-medium theses displayed a notable tendency to use non-committal verbs, avoiding making strong textual judgments.

**Key words**

*Academic proficiency; citation; evaluative function; stance*

---

**1. Introduction**

Reporting verbs (RVs) are considered stance markers in academic discourse. Due to their grammatical and semantic complexity, stance markers pose a challenge for novice research writers, as evidenced by studies on RVs in novice researcher writing (e.g., Jomaa and Bidin 2016, 2019; Mansourizadeh and Ahmad 2011), and particularly in L2 writing (e.g., Jafarigozar and Mohammadkhani 2015). Studies on novice academic writing in L2 English have observed that verbs tend to have reduced lexical diversity and communicate stance less distinctly (Jafarigozar and Mohammadkhani 2015; Jomaa and Bidin, 2016; Mansourizadeh and Ahmad 2011).

Several studies have identified variations in RV usage across different disciplines, with higher frequencies observed in soft disciplines like linguistics or psychology compared to hard disciplines like biology or physics (Charles 2006; Hyland 1999; Hyland and Jiang 2017; Thompson and Tribble 2001; Uba 2020). Hyland (1999) states that RVs are more frequently used in humanities than scientific fields, enabling writers to express their perspectives and judgements. The increased usage of RVs in soft disciplines can be explained by the subjective aspect of academic discourse, as noted by Hyland and Jiang (2017), Thompson and Tribble (2001), and Uba (2020).

Restricted use of RVs and adoption of a non-committal rather than a strong positive or negative position towards a cited material (Manan and Noor 2014, 2015) have also been reported by studies conducted on undergraduate academic papers (Lee et al. 2018; Liardét and Black 2019)) and undergraduate theses (Huang 2022; Malá et al. 2022; Manan and Noor 2014, 2015; Nguyen and Pramoolsook 2014, 2015; Wen and Prymoolsook 2021), advocating the need for more explicit instruction on the use of RVs in the citation at an undergraduate level (Nguyen and Pramoolsook 2014; Samraj 2013). RVs are essential in academic writing as they assist authors in assessing and articulating their stance on existing research and developing their argument based on the reported claim (Thompson and Ye 1991). However, improper or inadequate use of RVs in undergraduate academic writing is often caused by students' lack of awareness of the verbs' evaluative significance (Luzón 2015: 60).

The current research has primarily focused on using RVs in academic writing by L2 versus L1 writers or novice versus expert writers (e.g., Dontcheva-Navratilova 2008; Jafarigohar and Mohammadkani 2015; Malá et al. 2022; Soler-Monreal and Gil-Salom 2011), or "local" academics versus researchers publishing internationally (e.g., Farnia et al. 2018; Jalilifar et al. 2012; Nkemleke 2014). However, there is a lack of investigation into how writers' L1 influences their selection of RVs as stance markers in English as L2. Specifically, there is a gap in understanding the academic proficiency in using RVs as stance markers in English as L2 compared to the proficiency in using RVs in the writers' L1. For example, in their studies of postgraduate theses, Jomaa and Bidin (2016, 2019) pointed out that RV choices may be influenced by writers' intercultural backgrounds and L1 interference. The possible effect of L1 on using RVs in L2 English was also reported by Rowley-Jolivet and Carter-Thomas (2014), who explored French researchers' reporting structures in their L2 English and L1 French academic writing. They also confirm that the writers' L1 could negatively influence the choice of RVs in L2.

A study on English-medium undergraduate papers written by Czech academic English learners (Malá et al. 2022: 144) found that they often use RV patterns linked to conversational or informal styles rather than academic styles. The study also noted a restricted range of RVs used to express a more committal writer's perspective, aligning with previous research on RVs in L2 academic writing. An in-depth examination of English-medium theses authored by Czech academic English learners (Jančaříková et al. 2020) revealed a lower level of proficiency in academic writing, particularly in terms of writer-reader interaction and the requirement for more persuasive argumentation. This deficiency leads to the

need for a more assertive writer's voice, which could be improved by utilizing a wider range of rhetorical devices in different rhetorical functions (Dontcheva-Navratilova 2008: 98).

In another study conducted by Jančaříková (2023), a comparison was made between master's theses written by Czech students and papers authored by L1 students. The findings revealed a decreased occurrence of attitudinal markers, particularly verbs, in both novice academic writing. While it is common for student thesis writing to display a lack of knowledge of academic writing rhetorical functions, the impact of writers' L1 academic writing skills on L2 academic writing remains poorly explored.

This paper analyses the use of RVs in L2 English-medium and L1 Czech-medium undergraduate theses, examining how writers' proficiency in their native language may affect their proficiency in using RVs in their L2. The study attempted to determine how often certain RVs were used in their evaluative functions and to identify the grammatical categories of tense and voice in which these verbs appeared in citations in undergraduate writing in both L2 and L1. The results may clarify how a person's L1 influences their L2 choices of RVs as indicators of attitude in academic writing and suggest potential modifications to current academic writing courses. This study was motivated by the following two research questions:

1. How are RVs used in English and Czech-medium undergraduate theses, both authored by Czech native speakers?
2. Can L1 academic proficiency motivate the RV choice in L2 English?

## **2. Theoretical background**

RVs have been studied regarding their various types, functions (Hyland 2002; Thomas and Hawes 1994; Thompson and Ye 1991), tense choices (Hawes and Thomas 1997; Swales and Feak 2004), and semantic evaluation (Hyland 2002; Petrić and Harwood 2013; Swales 2014), offering valuable insights for academic writing and establishing criteria for classifying RVs in academic contexts. A commonly employed categorization is a tripartite classification of RVs, initially proposed by Thompson and Ye (1991: 372-373), wherein RVs are classified according to the processes they denote. Thompson and Ye (1991) distinguished textual verbs, which encompass verbal expression; mental verbs, which relate to mental processes; and research verbs, which relate to processes essential to research activity. Following Thompson and Ye (1991), Thomas and Hawes (1994: 132-133) categorized verbs into three main groups based on their role in the text: Discourse, Real-World, and Cognition activities. These categories align closely with their predecessors' previously established denotative categories (Thompson and Ye 1991). While the initial paradigm proposed by Thompson and Ye (1991) focused mainly on the denotative potential of RVs in terms of signalling evaluation, the subsequent framework developed by Thomas and Hawes (1994) primarily examined the implications of RVs' choices in the context of discourse.

Building upon the prior research conducted by Thomas and Hawes (1994) and Thompson and Ye (1991), Hyland (1999: 349) categorized research verbs (RVs) into three primary functional categories. These categories encompass Research Acts, which pertain to experimental activities conducted in real-world settings; Cognition Acts, which are associated with the mental processes of the researcher; and Discourse Acts, which revolve around linguistic activities related to the verbal expression of cognitive or research activities.

Unlike his predecessors (Thomas and Hawes 1994; Thompson and Ye 1991), Hyland (2002: 118) divides each type of RV into minor subsets based on their evaluative function in the discourse, introducing another perspective, the writer. In citations, writers can thus take either a supportive, tentative, critical, or neutral stance towards the reported claim and vary their commitment by employing RVs, which imply a personal stance (e.g., *show*, *demonstrate*) or attribute a position to the cited author (e.g., *accuse*, *believe*).

The categorization, however, allows for overlap between categories. As an illustration, the verb “*agree*,” which falls under the category of cognitive verbs, conveys a robust verbal expression typical of discourse verbs. A procedural Research Act verb “*analyse*” may refer to mental processes and be classified as a cognition verb. Nevertheless, such “inconsistencies” may not necessarily cause ambiguities regarding the verb’s primary function in context (Hyland 1999: 349).

RVs can also be analysed through the examination of syntactic patterns. According to Hawes and Thomas (1997), the reporting sentences most employed in medical papers were the past tense in the active voice, present tense, and present perfect active and passive. In addition, the selection of tense was associated with classifying RVs into discourse and non-discourse verbs (Thomas and Hawes 1994). Thomas and Hawes (1994) stated that citations with RVs in the past tense signified a generalization or assertion. In contrast, citations with verbs in the present tense indicated broad interpretations and suggested the author’s dedication to the presented content. According to Hawes and Thomas (1997), the present perfect tense typically emphasizes the pertinence of prior studies to the writer’s study manuscript. Similarly, Swales and Feak (2004) asserted that the past tense was employed to denote individual studies, the present tense denoted an area of investigation, and the present perfect tense was favoured when referring to existing knowledge.

In the study conducted by Charles (2006: 493), an examination of RV phraseological patterns revealed the presence of two commonly employed patterns: *V-that* (*Charles argues that*) and *V-ed that* (*it has been argued that*). Writers utilize the detected patterns to contextualize the study conducted by other researchers within the field and subsequently position themselves suitably. Based on the categorizations proposed by Thomson and Ye (1991) and Francis et al. (1996) regarding the semantic groups of RVs, namely *argue*, *find*, *think*, and *show* verbs, Charles (2006) provided evidence that both patterns were progressively employed in conjunction with the *argue* verb group. This observation highlights the writer’s enhanced ability to evaluate the cited material. According to Hyland and Tse (2005), the evaluation that presents the proposal enhances the writer’s credibility and highlights the writer’s perspective and standpoint.

While the RV categorizations mentioned thus far encompass three verbal processes, textual (discourse verbs), mental (cognitive verbs), and experimental (research verbs) (Hyland 1999, 2002; Thomas and Hawes 1994; Thompson and Tribble 2001), the systemic functional linguistics (SFL) approach also includes behavioural, relational, and existential processes (Jomaa and Bidin 2016, 2019). In their study, Jomaa and Bidin (2016: 223) employed the SFL framework to identify thirteen functional roles of the cited author in the citations. Among these roles, the most notable ones were “Sayer,” “Actor,” and “Senser.” The study by Jun (2020) examined students’ proficiency in utilizing RVs for source incorporation. The research employed appraisal theory (Martin and White 2005), which contributes to SFL by emphasizing the role of speaker/writer attitude and evaluation in language usage.

Aligned with prior studies conducted at both the postgraduate (Jomaa and Bidin 2019) and undergraduate levels (Manan and Noor 2015; Nguyen and Pramoolsook 2014, 2015; Samraj 2013), Jun (2020) underscores the importance of employing genre and context-based teaching methods when utilizing RVs. Furthermore, these findings highlight the imperative of enhancing students’ understanding and utilization of RVs in citation practices. In academic writing, it is crucial to communicate assessment by adopting an evaluative stance or argumentative claim (Jalilifar et al. 2012).

Extensive research on undergraduate academic writing in L1 or L2 has focused chiefly on the denotative potential of RVs (Hyland, 2002). Studies conducted in a single field (Malá et al. 2022; Nguyen and Pramoolsook 2015; Wen and Pramoolsook 2021) or papers involving multiple fields (e.g., Jarkovská and Kučirková 2021) indicate that RVs are primarily used to refer to actions related to discourse rather than research or cognitive activities. These studies also show that verbs are rarely used for evaluative purposes. Studies conducted on students’ theses reveal a limited range of RVs with a narrow repertoire. These verbs are typically neutral to the reported context, primarily attributed to the inferior L2 English academic competency (Huang 2022; Nguyen and Pramoolsook 2015; Wen and Pramoolsook 2021).

Malá et al. (2022) observe that L1 and L2 English novice writers’ papers tend to depend more on conversational patterns than academic style, which is further supported by the preference for “non-academic” RVs in L2 novice theses (Malá et al. 2022). Despite apparent indicators of RVs’ cognizance of evaluative functions, Huang (2022) notes their misinterpretation in L2 undergraduate theses. As previously indicated by Jarkovská and Kučirková (2021) and Nguyen and Pramoolsook (2015), there is a notable absence of negative RVs that critique or refute reported messages in undergraduate or novice L2 English academic writing.

Furthermore, besides restricted scope and impartial stance, studies have uncovered incongruities in the grammatical structure (Huang 2022; Jarkovská and Kučirková 2021) and syntactic patterns of RVs (Malá et al. 2022). L2 learners frequently encounter difficulties in selecting RVs that satisfy the syntactic criteria of a sentence and effectively convey their views towards the reported assertions (Bloch 2010; Joaa and Bidin 2019). According to Nguyen and Pramoolsook (2015: 196), the latter could be influenced by writers’ cultural beliefs, leading to

situations where such confrontations are deemed improper. Thus, the difficulties in establishing textual voices through using RVs in university L2 undergraduate academic writing can be attributed to a combination of factors, including lower academic L2 English proficiency, cultural conventions (Huang, 2022), native language interference (Rowley-Jolivet and Carter-Thomas 2014) and L1 academic style influence (Malá et al. 2022).

Consistent with broader patterns identified in non-native English academic writing, the Czech academic norm in the use of reporting verbs (RVs) typically favours a descriptive approach, emphasizing neutrality and factual representation, with limited use of evaluative verbs that indicate evaluation, contrast, or critique (Čmejrková and Daneš 1997; Laputková 2023). This results in a more detached writing style, contrasting with L1 English expert writing, which frequently utilizes evaluative RVs to position arguments more explicitly in academic discussions (Hyland 2002; Swales 2014).

This paper aimed to examine the use of RVs in literature review sections of master's theses written by Czech economics students in English-medium and Czech-medium settings. Additionally, the study aimed to assess the extent to which L1 academic proficiency influences L2 learners' RV choices.

### **3. Corpora and methodology**

This study combined a contrastive and corpus-based approach. For this purpose, three corpora were created. The first corpus contained 30 English-medium master's thesis literature review sections (the L2 English corpus). This section of a master's thesis was chosen because, in students' theses, literature reviews tend to contain a significant number of citations (Soler-Monreal and Gil-Salom 2011). The texts were authored by Czech students pursuing a master's degree in an English-medium economics program at a university in the Czech Republic. Following the Common European Framework for Languages, a prerequisite for participation in the program is a minimum level of English language competency at the B2 level. Additionally, students receive formal academic writing instruction as a part of their coursework yet lack adequate exposure to texts that exemplify scholarly writing.

The second corpus comprised 30 literature review sections written in the native language by Czech students pursuing a master's degree in a Czech-medium economic program at the same institution (the L1 Czech corpus). These theses were written in L1 Czech.

Identical prerequisites established by the university bind both types of theses. One essential criterion that must be adhered to is including a recognizable literature review section in the thesis. The theses were randomly selected without considering their final grades or evaluation criteria to ensure an unbiased representation of student writing. While topics were not a controlled variable in the selection, all the theses were from the field of economics, guaranteeing thematic consistency. The theses were submitted and successfully defended from January 2019 to February 2023. The texts were accessible through the university library database and could be obtained as PDF files.

The third corpus, consisting of 30 research article literature review sections authored by expert researchers, L1 English speakers (the L1 English corpus), was established as a benchmark against which the students' use of RVs could be compared. Previous research has observed similar tendencies in academic aptitude and competence levels between native and non-native novice writing (Dontcheva-Navratilova 2008; Huang 2022; Malá et al. 2022). Although they would provide an ideal comparison, theses authored by L1 English students may still reflect the developmental aspects of academic writing. Instead, research articles authored by L1 English writers were chosen as they represent an established academic norm regarding rhetorical stance, RV usage, and evaluative language. Despite the differences in terms of genre, expected readership or writer expertise, these texts provide a valuable reference point for understanding how proficient native writers realize academic writing conventions. The selected publications were sourced from three reputable journals within the same field as the theses and published between 2017 and 2023. These journals include the *Journal of Business Research* (with an impact factor (IF) of 11.3), the *Journal of World Business* (with an IF of 8.9), and *Business Horizons* (with an IF of 7.4).

Although linguistic background or affiliation does not determine competence in a specific field of study or academic writing, only the publications by single or multiple authors affiliated with an Anglophone university were selected. The author's native speaker status was validated whenever feasible by cross-referencing it with the author's biodata, which can be found on a journal's or affiliated institution's website. While not entirely trustworthy, the author's name was an additional reference point.

Hence, three corpora were created (Table 1). The L2 English corpus consisted of a total of 155,590 words. The words varied between 3,899 and 6,401, with an average of 5,186 words per text. The L1 Czech corpus contained 159,512 words, ranging from 4,119 to 6,300 words, with 5,317 words on average. The L1 English corpus contained a total of 81,049 words. The texts varied between 1,989 and 3,100 words, with an average of 2,702 words per text. The corpora were carefully examined, and the citations were systematically searched for RV instances.

**Table 1.** Corpora

Corpus	L2 English	L1 Czech	L1 English
Number of texts	30	30	30
Words in total	155,590	159,512	81,049
Mean number of words per text	5,186	5,317	2,702

The concept of citation (non)integration in sentence construction was initially introduced by Swales (1990: 148), who distinguished between reporting citations that carried RVs and non-reporting citations that did not. The Swales's categorisation was further elaborated by Thompson and Tribble (2001: 94). Non-integral citations, which include the cited author outside the sentence in parentheses, were further classified based on their functions in the discourse. On the other

hand, integral citations, which include the cited author within the sentence structure, were categorized according to formal criteria, i.e., the type and position of the citation in the sentence (Thompson and Tribble 2001).

The present study examined the reporting citations that included verbs referring to the work of other authors, regardless of the (non)integration of the citation or the convention used for citation, such as author-date or numerical system (Hyland and Jiang 2017). The data were gathered manually to incorporate and consider RVs in the lexical variety.

The data analysis was performed in two steps. The initial step involved quantifying the rates of occurrences, followed by a qualitative analysis of the extracted verbs. To prevent any partial evaluation or misinterpretation of the data, we invited another researcher, an English native speaker, to help categorize the data and guarantee the dependability of the findings. The inter-rater dependability of the obtained data was established through the attainment of a 97% agreement. The English translations of Czech RVs obtained from the L1 Czech theses were meticulously cross-referenced with the respective dictionary entries (Fronek 2016) and consulted with the invited researcher.

To account for the diverse sizes of the corpora, we calculated a relative frequency (rf) per 1,000 words alongside the raw count of occurrences (n). L1 Czech student writers used RVs more frequently (3.40) than L2 English student writers (2.55), with a slightly wider repertoire, as the Type-Token Ratios (TTRs) indicate (Table 2). L1 English expert writers displayed the highest TTR, suggesting the highest degree of lexical diversity.

**Table 2.** Reporting verbs in the corpora

Corpora	L2 English		L1 Czech		L1 English	
	n	rf	n	rf	n	rf
Types	69	0.44	111	0.69	146	1.80
Tokens	397	2.55	543	3.40	448	5.52
Type-Token Ratio	0.17		0.20		0.33	

The RV functional analysis utilized Hyland's (2002: 118) typology. RVs were classified according to the type of activity they referred to and the evaluative load they carried into processes and evaluative functions, further subdivided based on the writer's stance towards the reported message. This approach appears to be most appropriate for analysing student writers' comprehension of the cited information by incorporating RVs used in academic writing contexts in their entirety, encompassing their complete lexical range. Hence, the RVs were subsequently classified according to Hyland's (2002) criteria in the following manner:

Research Act verbs refer to the research activity or experimental procedure. They occur in statements of Findings (e.g., *observe*, *discover*, *notice*, *show*) or Procedures (e.g., *analyse*, *calculate*, *explore*). Within the Findings subcategory, writers can acknowledge the reported results with factive verbs (e.g., *confirm*), portray

the author's judgement as false or incorrect by adopting a counter-factive stance (e.g., *fail, misunderstand, ignore*), or comment on research findings non-factively (e.g., *find, identify, observe, obtain*).

Cognitive Act verbs portray the cited work in terms of mental processes. The writers have either a positive attitude (e.g., *agree, hold, know, think, understand*), a tentative view (e.g., *believe, doubt, suppose, suspect*), a critical stance (e.g., *disagree, dispute, not think*), or a neutral attitude (e.g., *picture, conceive, reflect*) to the reported material.

Discourse Act verbs are verbal expressions of research and cognitive activities. Doubt verbs are further sub-divided into tentative (e.g., *hypothesize, indicate, postulate*) or directly critical (e.g., *exaggerate, not account, not make point*) verbs. Assurance verbs introduce the reported material more positively. They are further sub-divided into non-factive verbs neutrally informing the reader about the author's position (e.g., *describe, discuss, report, define, summarize*) and factive verbs supporting the writer's position toward the cited author (e.g., *argue, affirm, explain, note, point out, claim*). Counters express reservations or objections to the report, with the writer attributing the objections to the cited author (e.g., *deny, challenge, question, refute, rule out*).

The verbs not explicitly mentioned by Hyland (2002) were thoroughly examined within the context of the reporting structure and categorized into the above semantic functions based on the verb activity in the text.

In addition to the RVs' denotative potential and evaluative functions, tense and voice categories were identified. It should be noted that although the English and Czech temporal systems share the primary distinction between the present and past, they differ in individual temporal spheres (Dušková 2012). Czech has one tense for the present and one for the past, each modified with aspectual variations. They stand in contrast to perfective tenses, which are non-existent in the Czech temporal system. In English academic writing, simple tense forms are an accepted norm (Hawes and Thomas 1997). The tenses discussed in the Results section can be understood as simple forms.

It should be mentioned that the excerpts from the corpora included as examples in this work were not altered or corrected. As is customary in most research in this field, we designate the citing person as the writer and the cited person as the author.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Functional analysis of reporting verbs

All three corpora included discourse, research, and cognition verbs (Table 3), with discourse verbs significantly more prevalent than research verbs in both the student writer corpora and the expert writer corpus. Cognitive verbs were used infrequently by all three types of writers. Czech students writing in L1 Czech utilized RVs from all three categories with slightly greater frequency than those writing in L2 English yet less frequently than L1 English expert writers.

**Table 3.** Distribution of reporting verbs in the corpora

Reporting verbs	L2 English		L1 Czech		L1 English	
	n	rf	n	rf	n	rf
Discourse Act verbs	279	1.79	351	2.21	279	3.44
Research Act verbs	82	0.53	148	0.92	145	1.78
Cognitive Act verbs	36	0.23	44	0.27	24	0.29
Total	397	2.55	543	3.40	448	5.52

While the lexical range of RVs in L2 English texts was somewhat limited, the communicative functions of RVs were found to be identical in both student writer corpora (Table 4). The top choices for RVs were *state*, *define*, and *describe*, indicating a neutral position towards the cited content. The stance of L1 expert writers was far more explicit, as evidenced by the frequent use of verbs *note*, *point out* and *suggest* in the L1 English corpus (see Table A1 in the Appendix).

Novice writers frequently avoid evaluative verbs because they do not yet see themselves as authorities in their field (Hyland 2002). Additionally, student writers may not actively seek recognition within their discourse community, unlike expert writers who articulate their stance more explicitly (Jančaříková 2023). Such neutral reporting, suggesting factual or unarguable claims, is demonstrated in examples (1) and (2).

- (1) Kotler (2016) *states* that an effective marketing strategy must be adaptable to changing consumer behaviours and technological advancements. (L2 English)
- (2) Miller (2018) *defines* leadership as an important skill that helps managers guide their teams and make good decisions. (L2 English)

A strong preference for neutral RVs and avoidance of evaluative language aligns with Czech academic conventions prioritizing objectivity over subjective interpretation (Čmejrková and Daneš 1997). In example (3), the non-factive assurance discourse verb *popisovat* [*describe*] neutrally and objectively conveys the quoted message to the reader.

- (3) Hroník (2006) *popisuje* výběr pracovníků založený na kompetencích v sedmi krocích. (L1 Czech)  
[Hroník (2006) *describes* competency-based employee selection in seven steps.]

While non-factive assurance verbs *define* (n=36) and *describe* (n=26) and their Czech counterparts, “*definovat*” (n=42) and “*popisovat*” (n=27) were used in comparable frequency by both L2 English and L1 Czech writers, “*uvádět*” (n=137), corresponding to *state* (n=50), was observed to be overused by L1 Czech students in their native language with plentiful occurrences, as shown in examples (4) and

- (5). The preference for neutral, highly descriptive verbs is frequently observed in L1 Czech-medium academic writing (Laputková 2023).
- (4) Jurečka a kol. (2013) *uvádí*, že důvodem, který vede lidi k ekonomické činnosti, je snaha uspokojit jejich potřeby. (L1 Czech)  
[Jurečka et al. (2013) *state* that the reason that leads people to engage in economic activity is the effort to satisfy their needs.]
- (5) Kociánová (2010) *uvádí*, že školení je poskytováno novému zaměstnanci pouze jednou na začátku adaptačního procesu. (L1 Czech)  
[Kociánová (2010) *states* that training is provided to a new employee only once at the beginning of the adaptation process.]

The occurrence of factive assurance discourse verbs in L2 English texts ranked second highest, with *point out* (n=24), *claim* (n=23), and *argue* (n=12) identified as the most prevalent. L1 English experts favoured the doubt discourse verb *suggest* (n=51), which tentatively reported the work of others, introducing the reported claim cautiously or non-assertively as in example (6), followed by the factive assurance discourse verb *note* (n=31), confirming or highlighting the reported information as in example (7).

- (6) Heikkilä et al. (2021) *suggest* that the economic growth theory has neglected the role of standardization. (L1 English)
- (7) Barbaglia et al. (2022) *note* that several measures of economic sentiment track closely business cycle fluctuations. (L1 English)

While student writers used *suggest* for tentative reporting to some extent (n=13), *note* was not recorded, which again supports tendencies observed in learners' writing toward impartial, neutral reporting (Malá et al. 2022).

**Table 4.** Functional classification of reporting verbs in the corpora

Category / Subcategory / Evaluative function	L2 English		L1 Czech		L1 English	
	n	rf	n	rf	n	rf
<b>Discourse Act verbs</b>	279	1.79	351	2.21	279	3.44
Doubt	17	0.11	4	0.03	62	0.76
<i>Tentative</i>	17	0.11	4	0.03	60	0.74
<i>Critical</i>	0	0	0	0	2	0.02
Assurance	262	1.68	343	2.15	214	2.64
<i>Factive</i>	100	0.64	58	0.36	83	1.02
<i>Non-factive</i>	162	1.04	285	1.79	131	1.62
Counters	0	0	4	0.03	3	0.04

Category / Subcategory / Evaluative function	L2 English		L1 Czech		L1 English	
	n	rf	n	rf	n	rf
<b>Research Act verbs</b>	82	0.53	148	0.92	145	1.78
Findings	34	0.22	36	0.22	98	1.21
<i>Factive</i>	16	0.10	10	0.06	35	0.43
<i>Non-factive</i>	18	0.12	26	0.16	63	0.78
<i>Counter-factive</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
Procedures	48	0.31	112	0.70	47	0.57
<b>Cognitive Act verbs</b>	36	0.23	44	0.27	24	0.29
<i>Positive</i>	24	0.15	32	0.20	3	0.04
<i>Tentative</i>	4	0.03	2	0.01	5	0.06
<i>Neutral</i>	8	0.05	9	0.05	16	0.19
<i>Critical</i>	0	0	1	0.01	0	0

Most L2 English writers preferred Research Act verbs that denote the procedural aspects of the cited author's inquiry. The verb *divide* accounted for virtually all instances of procedure verb usage (n=33). The procedure verb “*rozdělovat*” [*divide*] was identified as the most employed verb (n=25) among L1 Czech writers, while “*používat*” [*use*] ranked second in frequency (n=15). In examples (8) and (9), the non-evaluative RVs objectively present the cited authors' actions as factual statements without expressing agreement, evaluation, or critique.

- (8) Some authors *divide* the development of tourism into four distinct eras. (L2 English)
- (9) Tito autoři na základě tohoto marketingového kontinua *používají* pojem produkt pro zboží i pro služby. (L1 Czech)  
[These authors based on this marketing continuum *use* the term product for both goods and services.]

Verbs denoting other procedures were infrequently found in English-medium theses but were relatively common in Czech-medium texts (n=112), albeit in low frequencies.

The occurrence of research verbs acknowledging the results or conclusions of the cited authors was identical (0.22) in both student writer corpora. In the L2 English theses, *factive* (n=16) and *non-factive* (n=18) findings research verbs were nearly comparable in frequency. However, in the L1 Czech theses, *non-factive* findings verbs (n=26) somewhat outnumbered *factive* findings verbs (n=10). In both student writer corpora, the most common *non-factive* findings verbs were *find* (n=8 in L2 English and n=4 in L1 Czech) and *identify* (n=4 in L2 English and n=5 in L1 Czech). *Non-factive* research verbs dominated the L1 English expert corpus, with *find* (n=41) identified as the most frequent verb, presenting the cited

authors' conclusions as established results while reinforcing their credibility yet maintaining a neutral stance, as in example (10).

- (10) Wilson and Zhao (2023) *find* that productivity increased by 83 percent on average from 1990 to 2019. (L1 English)

Positive Cognitive Act verbs were more common in student corpora, indicating consensus or support without suggesting new findings, thereby positioning cited authors as corroborating the claim and strengthening the writers' arguments through the cited authors' authority, as in example (11). Critical stance verbs were virtually absent in both student corpora.

- (11) Cannon and McGee (2007, p. 1) also *agree* with the above definition of talent. (L2 English)

#### 4.2 Tense and voice

RVs were mainly used in the active voice across all three corpora, surpassing the passive voice (Table 5). Both student corpora displayed a stronger preference for the present tense (1.95 in L2 English, 2.86 in L1 Czech) over the past tense (0.36 in L2 English, 0.44 in L1 Czech). The expert writers' corpus showed a notable use of the present active (2.73) while simultaneously demonstrating a significant usage of the past active (2.07).

Both types of student writers predominantly used the present active across all verb categories, with discourse verbs occurring most frequently in this tense (see Tables A2 and A3 in the Appendix). L1 Czech student writers used research verbs in the past tense more frequently than L2 English writers, who favoured the past tense for discourse verbs. L1 English expert writers demonstrated the tendency to use discourse verbs in the present tense when citing sources, while they preferred the past tense for research verbs when presenting findings (see Table A4 in the Appendix).

**Table 5.** Tense and voice of reporting verbs in the corpora

Tense and voice in reporting verbs	L2 English		L1 Czech		L1 English	
	n	rf	n	rf	n	rf
Present active	304	1.95	457	2.86	222	2.73
Present perfect active	9	0.06			26	0.32
Past active	56	0.36	71	0.44	168	2.07
Subtotal	369	2.37	528	3.30	416	5.12
Present passive	22	0.14	4	0.03	13	0.16
Present perfect passive	0	0			2	0.02
Past passive	6	0.04	11	0.07	17	0.21

Tense and voice in reporting verbs	L2 English		L1 Czech		L1 English	
	n	rf	n	rf	n	rf
Subtotal	28	0.18	15	0.10	32	0.39

In examples (12) and (13), the present tense diminishes the already low evaluative load of the non-factive discourse verbs, positioning the referenced sources as applicable regardless of their publication date.

- (12) Peter Drucker (1973, s. 64-65) ve své definici *zmiňuje*, že hlavním posláním marketingu není uskutečnit prodej. (L1 Czech)  
[Peter Drucker (1973, pp. 64-65) *mentions* in his definition that the main mission of marketing is not to make a sale.]
- (13) Beer (1984) *describes* HRM as a managerial decision or action that affects the relationship between employees and the organisation. (L2 English)

The distinction between past and present tenses depends on the reference. For example, when commenting on study findings, the difference between *find* and *found* may be minimal depending on the time between the original and reported communication. However, with cognition verbs like *believe* or *agree*, the tense choice can significantly alter the meaning. In example (14), the past tense indicates a one-time agreement rather than an ongoing or accepted viewpoint.

- (14) Autoři *se shodli* na tom, že manažer se musí soustředit na vnější i na vnitřní motivaci. (L1 Czech)  
[Authors *agreed* that managers must concentrate on external and internal motivation.]

L2 English student writers used the passive voice more frequently (0.18) than L1 Czech writers (0.10), primarily in the present tense, while L1 Czech writers favored the past passive over the present. L1 English experts used the passive across all tenses (0.39). While neither student group overused the passive voice, there were instances of unnecessary redundancy, as shown in examples (15) and (16).

- (15) It *is believed* by Bromiley et al. (2015) that effective exploitation of opportunities brings competitive advantages. (L2 English)
- (16) Jak již *bylo řečeno* Philipem Kotlerem (2001), aby podnik správně fungoval, je nezbytné, aby byl management efektivní. (L1 Czech)  
[As *said* by Philip Kotler (2001), for a business to function properly, it is essential that management is effective.]

The present perfect, often used for concise overviews in academic writing, was rarely used by L2 English writers (0.06), possibly reflecting the difficulty in supporting generalizations or claims. Even L1 expert writers used it sparingly (0.32),

preferring present or past tense. This observation suggests that tense and voice in RVs signal the writer's presence and authority, not just stylistic choice (Groom 2000).

The distinction between the two learner corpora and the expert corpus was particularly evident in the ability to convey the writer's authority. Examples (17) and (18) demonstrate the transfer of authority from the writer to the cited author by omitting an evaluative *that*, which diminishes the writer's position.

(17) Armstrong (2014) *states*: HRM means utilising the efforts of line managers and human resources employees in a company. (L2 English)

(18) Koubek (2007) *říká*: Proces výběru má klíčovou roli při formování pracovní síly organizace. (L1 Czech)  
[Koubek *says*: The selection process is fundamental to the organization's workforce formation.]

Contrastingly, in example (19), the writer takes on the responsibility for the impartial observation initially made by the cited author, resulting in the writer's voice being more apparent than that of the cited author. The use of *state* indicates that the evaluative *that* (Hyland and Tse 2005) in a reporting *that*-clause (Charles 2006) enhances both the writer's credibility and position.

(19) Armstrong (2014) *states* that a person's specification criteria are compared with application information. (L2 English)

An undeniable characteristic of proficient academic writing is the writer's aptitude for integrating sources to establish meaningful exchanges between them (Jun 2020), as shown in example (20), wherein the verbs *argue* and *suggest* serve to underscore disagreement.

(20) Mair et al. (2016) *argue* that it rests with destination management organisations and managers; conversely, Varghese and Paul (2014) *suggest* it lies with individual tourism stakeholders. (L1 English)

Such cases were infrequent in Czech-medium theses, with only two occurrences as in example (21), where the verbs "*souhlasit*" [*agree*] and "*uvádět*" [*state*] serve to signify agreement within the context of the dialogue. In English-medium theses, this dialogical aspect of RVs was not demonstrated.

(21) Dvořáková (2017) *souhlasí* s Šikýřem a kol. (2007), kteří *uvádějí*, že přesnost informace poskytuje uchazečům možnost posoudit, zda mají dostatečné kvalifikace. (L1 Czech)  
[Dvořáková (2017) *agrees* with Šikýř et al. (2007), who *state* that punctuality of information provides applicants with the possibility to judge whether they have adequate qualifications.]

## 5. Discussion

This study examined the use of RVs in literature reviews authored by L1 Czech economics students in L2 English- and L1 Czech-medium master's theses. Furthermore, the RVs employed by proficient L1 English researchers were examined as a benchmark group. In addition to the types, semantic roles, and frequency of RV occurrences, the tense and voice categories were also identified. Studies in this realm draw on various approaches to examine RVs, such as investigating evaluative *that*-reporting clauses (Charles 2006; Rowley-Jolivet and Carter-Thomas 2014) or utilizing SFL to analyse interpersonal, textual and ideational meanings in the citation (Jomaa and Bidin 2019). The study intentionally utilized Hyland's (2002) categorization of verbs into three categories based on the type of verbal activity to encompass a comprehensive range of verbs. The motivation behind this study stemmed from two research questions examining how Czech native speakers use RVs in both Czech- and English-medium undergraduate theses and whether their L1 academic writing conventions influence their L2 English usage.

The present findings corroborate the outcomes of prior research conducted on L2 undergraduate academic writing (e.g., Huang 2022; Malá et al. 2022; Nguyen and Primoolsook 2015), which similarly document a restricted range of non-evaluative verbs that abstain from the writers' interpretation of the reported context. Despite the higher occurrence of RVs in L1 Czech-medium texts than in L2 English-medium texts, both L1 Czech and L2 English student writers refrained from adopting a more profound stance towards the reported topic. Indeed, a lexical variation revealed modest variations in the data obtained from the two learner corpora. The L2 English writers appeared to utilize a more limited range of RVs than L1 Czech student writers, potentially due to the comparatively lower academic vocabulary of L2 English learners.

Nevertheless, the repetitive selection of RVs with limited communication capabilities observed in both learner corpora suggests that the excessive use of non-factive, non-evaluative RVs, without engaging in more substantive content analysis, may not necessarily be distinctive to L2 English learners. As evidenced by previous research (e.g., Malá et al. 2022; Nguyen and Prymoolsook 2015; Wen and Prymoolsook 2021), it appears that this phenomenon can be attributed to a lower level of competency among inexperienced authors in the academic writing style. The study conducted by Wen and Prymoolsook (2021) revealed a notable transition in the usage of non-factive discourse verbs among Chinese English majors. Specifically, the frequency of such verbs decreased dramatically from bachelor theses to master's theses. This change suggests a clear improvement in students' confidence in their L2 academic writing skills. In this context, it is evident that both L2 English and L1 Czech student writing exhibited diminished levels of academic confidence. Instead, they prioritise factual reporting over interpretation. The predominant verbs employed by both groups of student writers were neutral discourse verbs such as *state*, *define* and *describe*, as well as their corresponding Czech counterparts, namely “*uvádět*” [*state*], “*definovat*” [*define*], and “*popisovat*” [*describe*].

While the use of *suggest*, cautiously reporting on the work of other authors, and *note* expressing support for the reported message was limited in both student corpora, it was plentiful in texts written by L1 English experts. This observation is consistent with the findings of Malá et al. (2022), who similarly point out the limited use of *note* in the papers of L2 English learners and attribute the preference for neutral discourse verbs, such as *say* and *state*, to the dependence on a conversational style rather than an academic one in learner L2 English academic writing.

Corroborating previous research on Czech academic writing norms (Čmejrková and Daneš 1997; Laputková 2023), our results imply that Czech students writing in English may incorporate native academic conventions into their L2 writing, resulting in a more descriptive and less critically engaged approach to source use. This was particularly evident in the extensive use of the verb “*uvádět*” [*state*], typically found in Czech-medium research articles (Čmejrková and Daneš 1997).

It could be argued that the repeated selection of RVs with limited communication capabilities pertains to a particular field of study. Prior studies on L2 English novice reporting have indicated that in addition to economic fields (Malá et al. 2022), monotonous RV choices devoid of stance are commonly found in novice writing across both soft (e.g., Nguyen and Prymoolsook 2015; Wen and Prymoolsook 2021) and hard disciplines (Jarkovská and Kučirková 2021).

A noteworthy observation in the context of novice L2 English writing is the transition of authority from the writer to the quoted author. According to Charles (2006) and Groom (2000), a more uniform usage of *that*-reporting clauses would allow writers to articulate their position rather than simply ascribing knowledge to the referenced source. The absence of the complementizer in the examined L2 English corpus, namely in the verbs *argue* and *suggest*, can be attributed to the writers’ poor academic expertise and preference for a conversational style. This observation is consistent with the findings of Malá et al. (2022: 144), who noted a notable absence of *that* in the novice writing of both L2 and L1 English writers.

In Jun’s (2020) simplified version of appraisal theory, attitude (positive, negative, and neutral) and graduation (strong, weak, and medium) categories are introduced. In line with this framework, the current results indicate that L2 English and L1 Czech writers primarily employed verbs that conveyed a moderately neutral attitude. Jun (2020) suggests that the students’ firm reliance on frequently repeated verbs may indicate their restricted options and requirement for increased consciousness of the RV value. Consistent with the findings of Jalilifar et al. (2012) and Jun (2020), we agree that university courses should emphasize acquainting students with the appraisal system and imparting the skill of argumentative writing. Luzón (2015), who explored the use of RVs by Spanish L2 English undergraduate learners, argues that students tend to collate rather than evaluate other authors’ facts and perceive writing academic texts as reporting information rather than constructing arguments. Our results thus corroborate Luzón’s (2015) findings that students’ unawareness of RVs as a means of evaluation often leads to the verbs’ misuse.

Aligning with previous research conducted by Jarkovská and Kučirková (2021) and Malá et al. (2022), it was observed that most RVs in the texts of both L2

English and L1 Czech student writers were in the present tense, as opposed to the past tense. In addition, the writing styles of economic discipline students may not significantly diverge from those of other social science writers who employ present tense discourse verbs (Hyland and Jiang 2017: 49). According to Swales and Feak (2014), this tense is the most common in the literature review sections of theses. At the same time, selecting a suitable tense cannot be determined exclusively based on grammatical preference. As stated by Jarkovská and Kučírková (2021: 137), the use of the past tense not only signifies a heightened level of detachment from the reported information but may also serve as an indicator of the temporal origin of the reported source.

Malá et al. (2022: 138) suggest that the lack of uniformity in tense usage may indicate that novice writers are unaware that the present tense is the unmarked tense to report the research of others. The variations in tense usage observed in both student corpora may also stem from a reluctance to adopt a more profound position towards the referenced author and from awareness of or respect for the author's authority.

Consistent with previous research (e.g., Malá et al. 2022; Wen and Prymoolsook 2021), our empirical evidence has demonstrated a higher prevalence of the active voice than the passive voice in the L1 Czech and L2 English novice writing. The restricted use of the present perfect tense among L2 English student writers can be ascribed to its nonexistence in the Czech temporal system and the consequent challenges that may arise from employing this tense for the learners. According to Malá et al. (2022), L1 English writers, irrespective of their proficiency level, utilized verbs in the present perfect tense with varying degrees of frequency. In contrast to L1 English writers, novice or experienced, previous research (e.g., Wen and Prymoolsook 2021) has highlighted the limited use of the present perfect tense in L2 English novice writing. This underutilization is similarly observed among L2 English learners in this study, hindering their capacity to employ RVs for effective communication.

Both types of student writers primarily used reporting verbs (RVs) with the author's name as the subject, as shown in example (1). Instances of plural author references, as seen in example (8), were rare. In contrast, research nouns appeared more frequently in the expert corpus. While this study did not specifically focus on this area of investigation, the results obtained support previous research on the use of citations in academic writing by L2 learners or novice writers (e.g., Farnia et al. 2018; Luzón 2015; Nkemleke 2014). In this context, it is common for learners to use reporting sentences with the RV and the cited author as the subject of the RV (Luzón 2015), focusing on the reported author rather than the reported message (Farnia et al. 2018).

The outcomes of this study align with previous research conducted by Jaliliar et al. (2012), Jun (2020), and Luzón (2015), which emphasizes the importance of teaching citations using source-based and genre-based approaches. Effectively using RVs to assess the reported material should not be taught separately but rather as a component of the comprehensive skills of synthesizing, paraphrasing, and summarizing. It is important to highlight the linguistic and rhetorical aspects of these skills (Luzón 2015). Our findings suggest that it is essential to prioritize

these aspects, especially the latter, in undergraduate academic writing by both L2 English and L1 writers.

A potential limitation of this study is the use of published journal articles as the L1 English reference corpus. In journal articles directed at a professional audience, writers generally articulate or justify their stance within the academic community. In contrast, student theses mainly showcase the writers' capacity to summarise pertinent literature in the respective field of study. Comparison with theses authored by L1 English students would enhance the control over variations in expertise and genre. Future research could address this limitation by incorporating L1 English student theses to strengthen the comparative analysis. Additional investigation could entail a pedagogical stage examining learners' verb selections in their L1 and L2 educational environments.

## **6. Conclusion**

This investigation examined the impact of academic proficiency in L1 Czech on the academic aptitude of undergraduate students in L2 English. This study centred on using RVs as indicators of position in scholarly communication. The study's limited scope and use of small-scale corpus analysis can be considered a constraint. Nevertheless, drawing upon rigorous research and meticulous analysis, the results could provide further insights into the academic writing requirements of university students not pursuing a philology degree. Furthermore, they could enhance comprehension regarding the impact of speakers' mother tongue on English as L2.

The study's findings indicate that a lack of L2 English academic proficiency does not necessarily influence L2 learners' RV selections. Conversely, they demonstrate comparable inclinations in the utilization of RVs by students who write in L2 English and L1 Czech, suggesting a diminished level of academic competence in both languages. The observation of students' hesitancy to adopt a more assertive or critical stance towards the referenced information using RVs in their diverse evaluative roles, as opposed to relying on neutral verbs with minimal communicative functions, is seen in texts written in both L2 English and L1 Czech.

The results suggest that students' written L2 English performance may be influenced by their insufficient and inadequate use of vocabulary and potential lack of knowledge about grammatical patterns. This effect was slightly less noticeable in L1 Czech written performance, especially concerning vocabulary. Hence, it is imperative to underscore and instruct the significance of RVs as indicators of stance in L2 English academic writing courses and to acquaint learners with various reporting functions in their native language academic discourse. Enhancing learners' academic aptitude in their mother tongue could benefit their academic achievement in English as L2.

To improve academic writing proficiency, instructors should focus on helping learners develop a more argumentative and evaluative reporting style. By introducing students to English-specific reporting conventions and strategies,

such as using evaluative language, students can learn to engage more critically with sources. A genre-based approach, which emphasizes the rhetorical functions of RVs, can also help students move beyond neutral reporting. Exposure to expert-authored texts that demonstrate strong evaluative language use may further raise students' awareness of RVs' role in academic writing. These pedagogical strategies may not only improve students' academic competence in English but also strengthen their overall academic skills, fostering a more confident and analytical approach to scholarly communication.

## References

- Bloch, Joel (2010) A concordance-based study of the use of reporting verbs as rhetorical devices in academic papers. *Journal of Writing Research* 2, 219–244. <https://doi.org/10.17239/jowr-2010.02.02.7>.
- Charles, Maggie (2006) The construction of stance in reporting clauses: A cross-disciplinary study of theses. *Applied Linguistics* 27(3), 492–518.
- Čmejrková, Světa and František Daneš (1997) Academic writing and cultural identity: the case of Czech academic writing. In: Duszak, Anna (ed.) *Culture and Styles of Academic Discourse*. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 41–42. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110821048.41>.
- Dontcheva-Navrátilová, Olga (2008) Reporting verbs as indicators of stance in academic discourse. *Porta Lingua* 2008 (1), 97–104.
- Dušková, Libuše (2012) *Mluvnice současné angličtiny na pozadí češtiny* [A Grammar of Contemporary English against the Background of Czech]. Prague: Academia.
- Farnia, Maryam, Zohreh Bagheri and Masoud Saeedi (2018) Comparative citation analysis of applied linguistics research articles' introduction sections. *Brno Studies in English* 44 (1), 27–42. <https://doi.org/10.5817/BSE2018-1-2>.
- Francis, Gill, Susan Hunston and Elizabeth Manning (1996) *Collins COBUILD Grammar Patterns 1: Verbs*. London: Harper Collins.
- Fronek, Josef (2016) *Velký anglicko-český slovník* [A Comprehensive English-Czech Dictionary]. Voznice: Leda.
- Groom, Nicholas (2000) Attribution and averral revisited: Three perspectives on manifest intertextuality in academic writing. In: Thompson, Paul (ed.) *Patterns and Perspectives: Insights into EAP writing practice*. Reading, UK: Centre for Applied Language Studies, University of Reading, 14–25.
- Hawes Thomas and Sarah Thomas (1997) Tense choices in citations. *Research in the Teaching of English* 31 (3), 393–414.
- Huang, Yueyue (2022) A corpus-based study on the semantic use of reporting verbs in English majors' undergraduate thesis writing. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 13 (6), 1287–1295. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1306.17>
- Hyland, Ken (1999) Academic attribution: Citation and the construction of disciplinary knowledge. *Applied Linguistics* 20 (3), 341–367. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/20.3.341>
- Hyland, Ken (2002) Activity and evaluation: Reporting practices in academic writing. In: Flowerdew, John (ed.) *Academic Discourse*. London: Longman, 115–130.
- Hyland, Ken and Feng Jiang (2017) Is academic writing becoming more informal? *English for Specific Purposes* 45, 40–51. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2016.09.001>.
- Hyland, Ken and Polly Tse (2005) Hooking the reader: A corpus study of evaluative that in abstracts. *English For Specific Purposes* 24, 123–139. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2004.02.002>.

- Jafarigohar, Manoochehr and Amirali Mohammadkani (2015) Reporting verbs in applied linguistics research articles by native and non-native writers. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 5 (12), 2490–2496. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tp.0512.08>.
- Jalilifar, Alireza, Majid A. Hayati and Amir Mashhadi (2012) Evaluative strategies in Iranian and international research article introductions: Assessment of academic writing. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics* 3 (1), 81–109.
- Jančaříková, Renata (2023) Attitude markers in L2 learners' academic writing: A case study of master's theses by Czech students compared to L1 students' writing. *Brno Studies in English* 49 (1), 5–31. <https://doi.org/10.5817/BSE2023-1-1>.
- Jančaříková, Renata, Renata Povolná, Olga Dontcheva-Navrátilová, Světlana Hanušová and Martin Němec (2020) An academic needs analysis of Czech university graduate students. *Discourse and Interaction* 13 (1), 42–66. <https://doi.org/10.5817/di2020-1-42>.
- Jarkovská, Martina and Lenka Kučirková (2021) Reporting verbs and related syntactic choices in students' theses: A study of two disciplines. *Journal on Efficiency and Responsibility in Education and Science* 14 (3), 130–142. <https://doi.org/10.7160/eriesj.2021.140301>.
- Jomaa, Nayeff and Siti Jamilah Bidin (2016) Roles of the cited author in citations of the literature review by EFL postgraduates. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature* 5(7), 213–225. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.5n.7p.213>.
- Jomaa, Nayeff and Siti Jamilah Bidin (2019) Variations in the citation use and perceptions in writing the literature review by EFL postgraduates. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 5 (3), 441–460. <https://doi.org/10.32601/ejal.651398>.
- Jun, Zhao (2020) Teaching reporting verbs to English as a second language undergraduate writers in the academic context. *TESOL International Journal* 15 (2), 28–45.
- Laputková, Adriana (2023) Attribute and reliability hedging devices in English, Czech and Slovak research articles. *Brno Studies in English* 49 (2), 57–81. <https://doi.org/10.5817/BSE2023-2-3>.
- Lee, Joseph J., Chris Hitchcock and Elliott J. Casal (2018) Citation practices of L2 university students in first-year writing: Form, function, and stance. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 33, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.01.001>.
- Liardét, Cassi L. and Sharyn Black (2019) “So and so” says, states and argues: A corpus-assisted engagement analysis of reporting verbs. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 44, 37–50. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2019.02.001>.
- Malá, Markéta, Gabriela Brůhová and Kateřina Vašků (2022) Reporting verbs in L1 and L2 English novice academic writing. *ELOPE: English Language Overseas Perspectives and Enquiries* 19 (2), 127–147. <https://doi.org/10.4312/elope.19.2.127-147>.
- Luzón, María José (2015) An analysis of the citation practices of undergraduate Spanish students. *Journal of Academic Writing* 5 (1), 52–64.
- Manan, Nor Azma and Noorizah Mohd Noor (2014) Analysis of reporting verbs in master's theses. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 134, 140–145.
- Manan, Nor Azma and Noorizah Mohd Noor (2015) The use of integral citations in master's degree theses. *International Journal of Education and Research* 3 (7), 233–246.
- Mansourizadeh, Kobra and Ummul K. Ahmad (2011) Citation practices among non-native expert and novice scientific writers. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 10, 152–161. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2011.03.004>.
- Martin, James and Peter White (2005) *The Language of Evaluation. Appraisal in English*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nguyen, Thi Thuy Loan and Issra Pramoolsook (2014) A move-based structure of the master's thesis literature review chapters by Vietnamese TESOL postgraduates. *LangLit: An International Peer-Reviewed Open Access Journal* 1 (2), 283–301. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjflt.v6i1.222>.
- Nguyen, Thi Thuy Loan and Issra Pramoolsook (2015) Citation in Vietnamese TESOL: Analysis of master's thesis introduction chapters. *The Asian ESP Journal* 2 (1), 95–118.

- Nkemele, Daniel (2014) Researching the research article in Cameroon English. *Brno Studies in English* 40 (1), 175–203. <https://doi.org/10.5817/BSE2014-1-9>.
- Petrić, Bojana and Nigel Harwood (2013) Task requirements, task representation, and self-reported citation functions: An exploratory study of a successful L2 student's writing. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 12 (2), 110–124. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2013.01.002>.
- Rowley-Jolivet, Elizabeth and Shirley Carter-Thomas (2014) Citation practices of expert French writers of English: Issues of attribution and stance. In: Łyda, Andrzej and Krystyna Warchał (eds.) *Occupying Niches: Interculturality, Cross-culturality and Aculturality in Academic Research*. Springer International Publishing, 17–34.
- Samraj, Betty (2013) Form and function of citations in discussion sections of master's theses and RAs. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 12, 299–310. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2013.09.001>.
- Soler-Monreal, Carmen and Luz Gil-Salom (2011) A cross-language study on citation practice in Ph.D. theses. *International Journal of English Studies* 11 (2), 53–75. <https://doi.org/10.6018/ijes/2011/2/149641>.
- Swales, John M. (1990) *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, John M. (2014) Variation in citational practice in a corpus of student biology papers: From parenthetical plonking to intertextual storytelling. *Written Communication* 31 (1), 118–141. <https://doi.org/10.1177/074108831351516>.
- Swales, John M. and Christine B. Feak (2004) *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills* (2nd ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Thomas, Sarah and Thomas Hawes (1994) Reporting verbs in medical journal articles. *English for Specific Purposes* 13 (2), 129–148.
- Thompson, Paul and Chris Tribble (2001) Looking at citations: Using corpora in English for academic purposes. *Language, Learning and Technology* 5 (3), 91–105.
- Thompson, Geoff and Yiyun Ye (1991) Evaluation in the reporting verbs used in academic papers. *Applied Linguistics* 12 (4), 365–382. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/12.4.365>
- Uba, Sani Yantandu (2020) Semantic categories of reporting verbs across four disciplines in research articles. *English Language Teaching* 13(1), 89–98.
- Wen, Shuangqing and Issra Pramoolsook (2021) A comparative study of reporting verbs used in the Introduction chapters of bachelor's theses and master's theses by Chinese English-majored students. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 11 (2), 452–462. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v11i2.32748>

## APPENDIX A:

Table A1. Reporting verbs' multiple raw frequencies in the corpora

Category	L2 English	L1 English	L2 Czech
Discourse Acts (≥ 2)	state 50, define 38, describe 26, point out 24, claim 23, add 17, mention 17, suggest 13, argue 12, say 9, propose 7, emphasize 6, stress 6, highlight 5, express 2, predefine 2	suggest 51, note 39, report 19, highlight 18, argue 17, describe 16, state 15, propose 13, indicate 7, define 5, discuss 4, point out 4, write 4, emphasize 3, say 3, mention 2, claim 2	uvádět [state] 137, definovat [define] 42, popisovat [describe] 27, dodávat [add] 24, tvrdit [claim] 24, zdůrazňovat [emphasize/stress] 16, upozorňovat [point out] 14, zmiňovat [mention] 12, charakterizovat [characterize] 11, vysvětlovat [explain] 11, říkat [say] 7, hovořit [speak/discuss] 7, stanovit [define/specify] 6, navrhopvat [suggest] 4, psát [write] 3, mluvit [speak] 2, konstatovat [state/note] 2
Research Acts (≥ 2)	divide 33, find 8, recommend 5, examine 5, identify 4, compare 3, explore 2, confirm 2, create 2, develop 2, display 2	find 41, provide 10, identify 8, show 6, examine 6, conduct 6, develop 6, use 5, present 4, demonstrate 3, employ 3, establish 2, observe 2, create 2, explore 2	rozdělovat [divide] 25, používat [use] 15, představovat [present] 7, potvrzovat [confirm] 6, identifikovat [identify] 5, poskytovat [provide] 4, shledávat [find] 4, provádět [carry out] 4, doporučovat [recommend] 3, prokázat [show/demonstrate] 3, zkoumat [examine] 3, zjistit [find] 3, rozvinout [develop] 2, ukazovat [show] 2
Cognitive Acts (≥ 2)	agree 25, think 5, believe 3	recognize 3, associate 2, assume 2, perceive 2, reflect 2	shodovat se [agree] 16, souhlasit [agree] 15, vidět [see] 4, chápat [understand/perceive] 3, rozumět [understand] 2

**Table A2.** Tense and voice of reporting verbs in L2 English

Tense and voice of reporting verbs in their categories	Discourse Acts		Research Acts		Cognitive Acts	
	n	rf	n	rf	n	rf
Present active	218	1.40	52	0.33	34	0.21
Present perfect active	4	0.03	4	0.03	1	0.01
Past active	32	0.20	23	0.15	1	0.01
Subtotal	254	1.63	79	0.51	36	0.23
Present passive	21	0.13	1	0.01	0	0
Present perfect passive	0	0	0	0	0	0
Past passive	4	0.03	2	0.01	0	0
Subtotal	25	0.16	3	0.02	0	0

**Table A3.** Tense and voice of reporting verbs in L1 Czech

Tense and voice of reporting verbs in their categories	Discourse Acts		Research Acts		Cognitive Acts	
	n	rf	n	rf	n	rf
Present active	325	2.04	91	0.57	41	0.25
Past active	21	0.14	49	0.30	1	0.01
Subtotal	346	2.18	140	0.87	42	0.26
Present passive	2	0.01	0	0	2	0.01
Past passive	3	0.02	8	0.05	0	0
Subtotal	5	0.03	8	0.05	2	0.01

**Table A4.** Tense and voice of reporting verbs in L1 English

Tense and voice of reporting verbs in their categories	Discourse Acts		Research Acts		Cognitive Acts	
	n	rf	n	rf	n	rf
Present active	158	1.95	47	0.58	17	0.21
Present perfect active	9	0.11	16	0.19	1	0.01
Past active	95	1.17	67	0.83	6	0.07
Subtotal	262	3.23	130	1.60	24	0.29
Present passive	11	0.14	2	0.02	0	0
Present perfect passive	1	0.01	1	0.01	0	0
Past passive	5	0.06	12	0.15	0	0
Subtotal	17	0.21	15	0.18	0	0

MARTINA JARKOVSKÁ received her Ph.D. in English linguistics at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague. She is a senior lecturer at the Department of Languages at the Faculty of Economics and Management, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague. She teaches English for Academic Purposes (EAP), English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and Czech as a foreign language. In her research activities, she focuses on issues related to EAP, ESP, and selected topics in applied linguistics. [ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4481-3743>]

Address: PhDr. Martina Jarkovská, Ph.D., Department of Languages, Faculty of Economics and Management, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, Kamýčká 129, 165 00 Praha – Suchbátka, Czech Republic. [email: [jarkovska@pef.czu.cz](mailto:jarkovska@pef.czu.cz)]

PETRA JARKOVSKÁ received her Ph.D. in Human Resources Management at the Faculty of Economics, University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice. She is a senior lecturer at the Department of Human Resources Management at Škoda Auto University in Mladá Boleslav. Besides human resources management, she teaches and researches EAP, ESP and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). In her research activities, she focuses on ESP and CLIL issues related to marketing and human resources. [ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0732-5903>]

Address: Ing. Petra Jarkovská, Ph.D., Department of Human Resources Management, Škoda Auto University, Na Karmeli 1457, 293 01 Mladá Boleslav, Czech Republic. [email: [jarkovska@is.savs.cz](mailto:jarkovska@is.savs.cz)]



This work can be used in accordance with the Creative Commons BY-NC-ND 4.0 International license terms and conditions (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode>). This does not apply to works or elements (such as image or photographs) that are used in the work under a contractual license or exception or limitation to relevant rights.

