

# **Authorial Stances in Classroom Speeches: A Corpus-Based Study**

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## **Abstract**

Corpus-based studies have become increasingly popular among researchers in the field of linguistics and language studies, as they may shed light on language instruction and course designs (Conrad, 1999). Given this emphasis, a corpus-based analysis on stances (Hyland, 2005) in students' classroom speeches has been employed. The analysis of a corpus of 104 undergraduate students' speech transcriptions reveals that students employed authorial stances in their speeches. Such results, however, only suggest that these stances were used subconsciously by the students, given that they have never been introduced to such a concept. It is then suggested that the concepts of authorial stances be introduced to Thai students so they may employ these linguistics items on a more strategic level and become more competent speakers and writers of English.

**Keyword:** authorial stance, hedge, booster, attitude marker, self-mention, public speaking, corpus, AntConc

# การศึกษาคำแสดงจุดยืนผู้พูดในสุนทรพจน์ภายในห้องเรียน โดยใช้คลังข้อมูลภาษา

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## บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาโดยใช้คลังข้อมูลภาษาได้รับความนิยมเพิ่มขึ้นจากนักวิชาการด้านภาษาศาสตร์และนักวิชาการด้านภาษาเนื่องจากคลังข้อมูลภาษานั้นเป็นประโยชน์ต่อการเรียนการสอนภาษาและการออกแบบหลักสูตรทางภาษา (Conrad, 1999) และด้วยเหตุนี้ งานวิจัยนี้จึงใช้คลังข้อมูลภาษาในการศึกษาคำแสดงจุดยืนผู้พูด (Hyland, 2005) ในสุนทรพจน์ของนักศึกษาในระดับปริญญาตรี โดยการศึกษาค้นคลังข้อมูลภาษาที่ได้จากการถอดคำพูดจากสุนทรพจน์ของนักศึกษาระดับปริญญาตรีจำนวน 104 สุนทรพจน์ได้แสดงให้เห็นว่า นักศึกษาทุกคนในกลุ่มตัวอย่างได้ใช้คำแสดงจุดยืนผู้พูดในสุนทรพจน์ของตน อย่างไรก็ตาม เนื่องจากนักศึกษาเหล่านี้ไม่เคยได้เรียนรู้ถึงหลักการของคำแสดงจุดยืนผู้พูด ผลการวิจัยดังกล่าวนี้จึงเพียงแสดงให้เห็นว่านักศึกษาในกลุ่มตัวอย่างใช้คำแสดงจุดยืนเหล่านี้โดยไม่รู้ตัว งานวิจัยนี้จึงเสนอให้มีการรวมหลักการของคำแสดงจุดยืนผู้พูดเข้าไปในหลักสูตรด้วย เพื่อให้ นักศึกษาไทยสามารถพูดและเขียนภาษาอังกฤษได้มีประสิทธิภาพยิ่งขึ้น

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## **Introduction**

### **Statement of the Research Problem**

English public speaking skills are essential and need to be promoted among Thai students. Boyce, Alber-Morgan & Riley as well as Hefferin (as cited in Johnson, 2012) have claimed that such skills benefit students in their academic studies and, since employers tend to expect their potential employees to possess these skills, are vital to their future careers. Despite the considerable amount of effort devoted to the teaching and learning of English skills, there has been limited success among students in Thailand (Hayes, 2016). It is then important to address the issue of how English skills, public speaking in particular, are taught and fostered.

The traditional methods tend to focus mainly on ‘what to say’ or ‘what should be said’, and the order in which each element should appear in the speech. Students are taught the techniques of how to begin and end a speech effectively so that the speech leaves an impact on the listeners. Further attention is also paid to the use of certain discourse markers and phrases that give the speech its fluency, such as signposts (e.g., first, second, finally), internal preview (e.g., we will discuss, next we will talk about), and internal summary (e.g., so far we have discussed, now that we have learned).

Regardless of these aspects addressed in public speaking teaching, students in the sample group were unaware of the authorial stances they use subconsciously when delivering their prepared speeches in class. This also suggests that there has been little attention on addressing the linguistic items of authorial stances as part of the teaching curriculum. It is proposed that once the students are introduced to these linguistic items to the extent that they can use them strategically, it might impact the way speeches are written and delivered.

Moreover, corpus-based studies have grown in popularity among researchers, especially those in the linguistic fields. These studies may shed light on how language instructors should design the appropriate tools for instructions (Conrad, 1999). Given this emphasis, a corpus-based analysis on authorial stances in speech genres is needed.

With the stated problem, this study will be helpful in promoting the awareness of authorial stances among undergraduate speech givers. It will introduce such concepts to

the students and highlight the effect authorial stances have on their speech construction. Students may benefit from this study in terms of how they construct and organize their speech. In turn, instructors of related subjects may advance this knowledge in future curriculum development. Also, there might be a significant difference when authorial stances are employed more strategically.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Empirical evidence has shown that a considerable number of studies have investigated authorial stances in an academic context. According to Hyland (2005), authors express themselves, their judgments, and commitments to a particular topic, establish authority or hide involvements through the use of so-called authorial stances. Authorial stances, according to Hyland (2005) are divided into four main categories: boosters, hedges, attitude markers, and self-mentions.

#### ***Hedges:***

Probably among the most popular stances in investigation, ‘hedges’ may be described as buffers. Hedges lessen the commitments that are put on a claim; in other words, they give the readers, or listeners, the chance to disagree and argue.

According to Hyland (1998, 2005), hedges – also often referred to as ‘down toners’, ‘under-staters’, ‘mitigators’, and ‘downgraders’ (Silver, 2003), and stance markers of degree of uncertainty (Uccelli, Dobbs & Scott, 2013) – convey the authors’ reluctant desire not to be completely committed to the claim being made, open discursive spaces that render the readers the opportunity to dispute, convey respect to the viewpoints of others, and mark a statement provisional. In a similar way, Aull and Lancaster (2014) suggested that hedges are numerous linguistic devices that can be used to decrease epistemic commitment, as well as to extend the discursive space.

Silver (2003) and Vázquez and Giner (2009) added that hedges express doubts and tentativeness of a statement, and specifically in academic writing, hedges protect the writers from attacks that may occur due to giving too strong assertions.

In addition, Aull and Lancaster (2014) categorized in their study on *‘Stance Markers in Early and Advanced Academic Writing’* a type of hedging device called ‘self-mention hedges’. They are, unlike self-mentions that only indicate the authors

mentioning themselves, linguistic devices used when the authors engage themselves in the effort to ‘hedge’ a statement or a claim. These hedges are phrases like ‘from my experience’, ‘I think’, and ‘to my knowledge’. They are meant to lessen the commitments by stating that the authors themselves are ‘unsure’ or only suggesting things based on their personal knowledge and experiences, and are not explicitly pointing out that something is true or untrue.

### ***Boosters:***

On the other end of the continuum, boosters, or ‘overstaters’, ‘intensifiers’, and ‘emphasizers’ (Silver, 2003), or ‘emphatics’ and ‘strengtheners’ (Abdollahzadeh, 2011; Dobakhti, 2013), serve as devices that ‘boost’, strengthen, and enhance the claim an author is making. They can present the authors as being more credible and knowledgeable about the subject matters and are very essential in the authors’ attempts to convince or persuade the readers with data presented as backups (Vázquez & Giner, 2009).

Boosters serve as devices that can convey conviction and assurance, express and assert certainty, and emphasis and indicate involvements and solidarity (Hyland, 2000, 2005; Silver, 2003). In addition, Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, Finegan & Quirk, and Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik (as cited in Aull & Lancaster, 2014) as well as Hyland (2005) all mentioned that boosters are usually realized through the use of amplifying or intensifying adverbs, ‘absolutely’, for instance. In a similar way, Dobakhti (2013) defines boosters as words that signal the writer’s assurance of the statement that is being claimed. Macintyre (2013) also adds that boosters may come in the form of a single word, like ‘actually’, and it can sometimes be in the form of a phrase as in ‘it is obvious that’.

Because the functions of hedges and boosters are somewhat correlating, many researchers tend to regard these two as a pair of epistemic stances to be investigated alongside one another.

### ***Attitude Markers:***

The next type of authorial stance researchers are interested in is attitude marker. As the name suggests, these linguistic devices are utilized to ‘mark’ the ‘attitudes’ the authors hold towards certain subjects, phenomena, claims, or statements. Attitude markers also bring with them the sense of evaluation, such as an author may evaluate a claim as being ‘surprising’, or ‘interesting’.

Attitude marker, or ‘affective stance’ (Tracy, 2011), not only allow authors to convey attitudes, surprise, agreement, importance, and frustration, but they also lure readers down into the “conspiracy of agreement”, making it more difficult to argue (Hyland, 2005). It is defined as pragmatic connectives that allow authors to express their affective values (Abdollahzadeh, 2011). They reveal the authors’ personal evaluation towards the subject matter or the issues being discussed (Adams & Quintana-Toledo, 2013). Duenas (2010) adds to this notion by suggesting that, through the use of attitude markers that convey proper stance, scholarly authors have the necessity to make explicit their stances towards their claims and towards their readers so as to appear convincingly credible and their findings valid.

### ***Self-Mentions:***

The last type of stance concerned in this present study is self-mention. Self-mentions are generally the authors ‘mentioning’ themselves in the text, or in this case of study, in the speech. It is generally the use of the first personal pronouns: I, and we. The absence or presence of self-mentions depends on the authors’ own conscious decisions in terms of creating an ‘authorial identity’ (Hyland, 2005), or ‘personae’ (Martin & White, 2005), or persona (Hyland, 1998; Vázquez & Giner, 2009). Many speakers may consciously prefer the use of self-mentions in their speeches, as to create the aforementioned authorial identity or personae.

Since traditional academic writing practices, especially those in scientific disciplines, have dictated the writers to write in the most objective manner, the appropriateness of subjectivity through the inclusion of the first personal pronoun “I” remains a debated issue and highly controversial (Hyland, 2001). As Albert Einstein (as cited in Hyland, *ibid*) stated, “When a man is talking about scientific subjects, the little

word ‘I’ should play no part in his expositions”. In the same study, Hyland (ibid.) noted that students are taught in academic writing classes that the use of the first personal pronoun ‘I’ be dropped, yet it still plays a prominent role in allowing the writers to be perceived as an idea originator. He, as well as Harwood (2005), also suggested that ‘self-citation’ or simply put, referencing one’s own previous work, is an additional and possibly the most apparent form of self-mention.

Certain studies have been conducted in devotion to the use of stance in the written discourse (e.g., Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011; Hyland, 2001; Tang & John, 1999). However, in the sphere of spoken discourse, stances are often investigated under the concept of self-mentions. For instance, the pronoun ‘we’ was examined in the Michigan Corpus of Spoken Academic English (Fortanet, 2004), and pronouns employed to create a speaker’s stance in Javanese (Manns, 2012).

Researchers have also addressed self-mentions in the form of a pronoun adjacent to another stance type, for example, self-mention hedges (Aull & Lancaster, 2014), the self-repair functions of ‘I mean’ (Fernández-Polo, 2014), and the stance-taking in arguments of blog discussions (Myers, 2010).

Noteworthy is the study conducted by Biber in 2006. In that particular study, authorial stances were examined comparatively in a university written and spoken register. It was revealed that stances were far more common in the spoken academic register, compared to that of the written counterpart. The results here are understandable, due to the nature of speech whereby one tends to address oneself.

In the Thai context, few studies have addressed the issue of authorial stances in the spoken context. Contributions towards the study of authorial stances in the Thai context can, however, be illustrated by the study conducted by Sukhanindr (2008). The study, though conducted from a written academic discourse perspective, has contributed to the pool of academic knowledge by revealing that Thai authors tend to hedge less than English native speaker authors. She linked this result to the educational system in Thailand that results in the knowledge of lexical choices among the Thai authors being limited. Further investigation may be needed to determine whether or not this assertion holds true to speech related context in Thailand.

Other related studies in the literature regarding authorial stances include stances in classrooms contexts (Lee & Subtirelu, 2015), epistemic stances in classroom discussions (Kirkham, 2011), as well as gender-based analysis of speech in public contexts (Baxter, 2002).

Despite the considerable research that has been devoted to authorial stances and their related implications, rather less attention has been paid to the use of authorial stances in a public speaking classroom's speech genres, specifically at the Thai undergraduate study level. Further, their relations to speech constructions and organizations have not been fully addressed.

### **Purpose of the Study**

By employing the model on Hyland's (2005) authorial stances, this study is therefore designed to address the issues of authorial stances in relation to the Thai undergraduate classroom speeches. It will examine to what extent Thai undergraduate students use authorial stances in their speech delivered in a classroom setting. The specific objective of the present paper is to explore the types of authorial stance used in speeches delivered in an undergraduate classroom setting of a public speaking class

### **Research Questions**

- 1) What are the types of authorial stances found in speeches delivered in an undergraduate level public speaking class?
- 2) What are the most frequently used stance types in each category?

## **Methodology**

### ***Samples and Population:***

The population of this study is 60 third and fourth year undergraduate students in the Bachelor of Arts program, majoring in Business English, at an international university in Thailand. These students were enrolled in the Major Requirement Course, Public Speaking, during semester 1/2014. Using the random sampling method, a sample size of 26 students was selected. Each student delivered four speeches, resulting in 104 speeches in total. The speeches were not impromptu, but prepared speeches of approximately five to seven minutes. Topics of the speech are based on freely open



propositions, with the instructor's approval. The topics may or may not affect the degree of authorial stances used.

### ***The Corpus:***

The data was collected by videotaping the speeches delivered in class. In addressing the ethical issues, consent that the videotaping will be utilized for further academic uses has already been asked. The students whose speeches were used in this study will remain anonymous.

The speeches, four from each student, 104 speeches in total, were then transcribed into plain text documents to create the corpus of this study. The corpus consists of 63,661 words in total.

### ***Instrument:***

A concordance program called AntConc, a freeware concordance program that allows researchers to extract the frequencies of a specific linguistic item found in the corpus, which includes tools for lexical bundle analysis and word distribution plot, was used.

The data was input into AntConc as plain text. The program then searched for the occurrences of the specified authorial stances. The frequency of each specific word was normalized (per 1000 words) for further comparisons. Table 1 shows the linguistic items under each authorial stance category investigated in this study. These linguistic devices commonly appeared and were classified in the studies of Duenas (2010), and Hyland (1998, 2000). Only self-mention hedge was adapted from Aull and Lancaster (2014).

After eliciting the frequencies of each particular linguistic item, PASW Statistics, statistical analysis software, was used to normalize the frequencies and generate the means value respectively. Furthermore, to ensure the accuracy of the data, the author manually rechecked the linguistic items elicited from the software in their contexts. This was to confirm that the items found were functioning as authorial stances in the discourse.

### ***Data Analysis:***

In answering the research questions, the corpus of transcribed spoken speeches was input into the concordance program, AntConc, to elicit the occurrences of each type

of authorial stances. The means, standard deviations, and frequencies were used to analyze the data. The author also manually checked the words in their contexts to confirm that they are functioning as boosters, hedges, attitude markers, and self-mentions.

**Table 1** List of Authorial Stances Investigated, based on (Aull & Lancaster, 2014; Duenas, 2010; Hyland, 1998, 2000)

<b>Boosters</b>	
<b>Verbs</b>	<i>believe / be going to / claim / confirm / demonstrate / find / highlight / know / realize / reveal / show that / show</i>
<b>Adjectives</b>	<i>certain / clear / considerable / demonstrable / definite / evident noticeable / obvious / significant / sure / true</i>
<b>Adverbs</b>	<i>accurately / actually / always / certainly / clearly / completely considerably / definitely / entirely / especially / essentially / extremely / fully / greatly / heavily / highly / indeed / in fact / necessarily / never / noticeably / obviously / of course / overly / particularly / really / significantly / so / strongly / substantially / surely / too / truly / very / vividly / wholly</i>
<b>Modals</b>	<i>must / ought to / should / will</i>
<b>Nouns</b>	<i>certainty / fact / significance</i>
<b>Hedges</b>	
<b>Verbs</b>	<i>appear / assume / guess / hypothesize / indicate / seem / speculate / suggest / suppose / tend</i>
<b>Adjectives</b>	<i>plausible / possible / potential / relative / some / typical / uncertain / unclear / unsure</i>
<b>Adverbs</b>	<i>about / almost / apparently / approximately / around / broadly / commonly / doubtful / fairly / frequently / generally / in general / in most cases / in some cases / in some ways / largely / likely / maybe / mostly / normally / often / on some occasion / overall / perhaps / possibly / potentially/ predominantly / presumably / primarily / probably / quite / rather / relatively / roughly / seemingly / sometimes / somewhat / to some degree / to some extent / typically / uncertainly / unclearly / unlikely / usually</i>
<b>Nouns</b>	<i>assumption / hypothesis / indication / possibility / tendency</i>
<b>Modals</b>	<i>can / could / may / might / would</i>
<b>Self-Mention hedges</b>	<i>from my (own) experience / from my (own) perspective I think / in my opinion / in my view / to my knowledge</i>
<b>Attitude Markers</b>	
<b>Verbs</b>	<i>contribute / deserve / ensure / extend / expand / fail / lack / support</i>

<b>Adjectives</b>	<i>adequate / better / best / central / complex / comprehensive / confident / consistent / core / critical / crucial / dangerous / difficult / easy / effective / essential / fundamental / good / great / hard / hopeful / important / influential / interesting / limited / main / major / meaningful / key / necessary / narrow / new / poor / primary / problematic / promising / reasonable / significant / serious / strict / sufficient / suggestive / tremendous / true / unique / useful / valid / well known / worthwhile</i>
<b>Adverbs</b>	<i>critically / importantly / interestingly / only / surprisingly / truly / usefully / uniquely / unfortunately</i>
<b>Nouns</b>	<i>absence / caution / contribution / limitation / importance / insight / support</i>
<b>Self-Mentions</b>	
<b>Subjective</b>	<i>I / we (exclusive only)</i>
<b>Objective</b>	<i>me / us (exclusive only)</i>
<b>Possessive</b>	<i>mine / my / our / ours</i>
<b>Reflexive</b>	<i>myself / ourselves (exclusive only)</i>

## Results

The four types of authorial stance concerned in this study, namely booster, hedge, attitude marker, and self-mention, were all found in the corpus of speeches delivered by undergraduate level students in a public speaking class. The sub-categories of each stance type occurred at least once throughout the corpus. The detailed descriptive statistics are presented in Tables 2 to 5

**Table 2** Averages of Boosters

Booster	Minimum	Maximum	$\bar{X}$	SD
Adjectives	.00	5.12	0.76	1.22
Adverbs	.00	49.57	17.98	10.23
Modals	.00	45.05	11.93	9.55
Nouns	.00	4.35	0.19	0.72
Verbs	.00	28.90	7.10	5.04

According to Table 2, all sub-categories of boosters are present in the corpus. By comparing the means, it is evident that booster adverbs ( $M = 17.98$ ,  $SD = 10.22$ ) are the most frequently used, followed by booster modals ( $M = 11.93$ ,  $SD = 9.55$ ) as the second most frequently used when compared to the other types of boosters. Booster nouns ( $M =$

0.19, SD = 0.72) are, on the other hand, the least employed by the speakers in the corpus, with a maximum number of occurrences of 4.35 times per 1000 words.

Hedges are divided into six different sub-categories, as shown in Table 3. Hedge modals (M = 17.92, SD = 9.59) are ranked first among other types of hedges, with hedge adverbs (M = 10.25, SD = 6.83) as the second most frequently used item. Like boosters, hedge nouns (M = 0.03, SD = 0.16) are the least employed by the speakers in the corpus, appearing only 1.01 times per 1000 words throughout the corpus.

**Table 3** Averages of Hedges

Hedge	Minimum	Maximum	$\bar{X}$	SD
Adjectives	.00	12.88	2.53	2.74
Adverbs	.00	34.65	10.25	6.83
Modals	3.10	45.20	17.92	9.59
Nouns	.00	1.01	0.03	0.16
Self-Mentions	.00	9.55	1.12	1.99
Verbs	.00	5.26	0.47	1.07

Table 4 shows the average frequencies of attitude markers, classified by its sub-categories, appearing in the corpus. Attitude marker adjectives (M = 9.29, SD = 5.87) are among the most frequently used items in this particular stance type. Consistent with boosters and hedges, attitude marker nouns (M = 0.08, SD = 0.36) are the least used throughout the corpus, appearing up to 2.12 times per 1000 words in the corpus.

**Table 4** Averages of Attitude Markers

Attitude Marker	Minimum	Maximum	$\bar{X}$	SD
Adjectives	.00	35.39	9.29	5.87
Adverbs	.00	8.81	1.50	2.18
Nouns	.00	2.12	0.08	0.36
Verbs	.00	9.72	0.41	1.24

For self-mentions, the subjective first person singular pronoun ‘I’ (M= 18.69, SD = 11.96) is the most frequently used. The exclusive ‘we’ (M = 0.66, SD = 5.5) is also found in the corpus. The reflexive form (M = 0.21, SD = 0.73) is only found up to 4.25 times per 1000 words (see Table 5).

**Table 5** Averages of Self-Mentions

Self-Mention	Minimum	Maximum	$\bar{X}$	SD
Subjective (I)	1.58	82.01	18.69	11.96
Objective	.00	14.08	3.27	3.24
Possessive	.00	47.62	5.23	6.01
Reflexive	.00	4.25	0.21	0.73
Exclusive We	.00	55.34	0.66	5.50

## Discussion

The types of authorial stances found in the speeches delivered in an undergraduate level public speaking class were boosters, hedges, attitude markers, and self-mentions. As previously noted, all four types of authorial stances concerned in this present investigation were found in the corpus. Previous research (e.g. Biber, 2006; Tracy, 2011) have also found such stances in the spoken discourse. It should be noted that the use of the self-mention “I” was the most frequent among other stance types in the corpus.

It should also be noted that in spoken speech of this sample group – although students tend to memorize the speech – the use of the self-mention “I” may be more necessary when compared to the usage in written discourse, in which academic convention discourages the use of the self-mention “I”. When the speakers are attempting to get the message across, it may be more effective to employ the self-mention “I”, making the message more personal and therefore positioning themselves into the discourse.

Given that the instructor of the public speaking course in this investigation allowed no script to be used when delivering the speech, it is typical that mistakes in the

speech did occur. In correcting such mistakes, speakers employed the self-mention “I” to perform the role of self-repairs (Fernández-Polo, 2014), contributing to the number of “I”s found in the corpus as shown in example (1).

- (1) ***I will** say that everyone in this society of the world can be compared to the picture, **I'm sorry I mean** drawing.*

The result showing self-mention (subjective ‘I’) as the most frequently used stance in the corpus is in line with Lee and Subtirelu (2015), who also found in their study that the first personal pronoun ‘I’ was more frequently used than the exclusive ‘we’. The present study found that the exclusive ‘we’ was used by only four speakers, whereas all 26 speakers did make use of the personal pronoun ‘I’. Such findings are also similar to that of Fortanet (2004), who found that the use of ‘we’ was of lower frequency than that of ‘I’ in the spoken discourse.

The present study found a few instances of the use of the exclusive ‘we’, one of which can be considered as performing the representative function of the self-mention (Tang & John, 1999), realized through the use of the exclusive ‘we’ to represent a group of people as shown in example (2).

- (2) *“In Chiang Mai **we** have a lot tourist attraction, like [...] this is the [...] and [...]. And if you compare to, and **we** also have the historic site that tell our long story, unlike Phuket, **they** have only sea for sightseeing. This flowers, can you see in Phuket? No **they** don't have it. And **we** have the mountain which is the tallest mountain in Thailand.”*

The speaker in the text sample tried to persuade her audience that travelling in Chiang Mai is better than travelling in Phuket. She gives specific details of the tourist attractions, using the exclusive ‘we’ to refer to people of Chiang Mai and herself, who is also from Chiang Mai, although the audience is not from Chiang Mai. This example is rather clear, as separation in the use of pronouns is presented. The speaker referred to the people of Phuket as ‘they’, discriminating herself as not being a part of those in Phuket, in her discourse.

Furthermore, adverbs were the most frequent type of booster, whereas modals were the most frequent type of hedge, and adjectives were the most frequently used form of attitude marker.

Examples from the corpus showed that most booster adverbs were realized through the use of lexical items, such as ‘really’ and ‘very’. It is important to consider that, in the Thai educational system, Thai students were taught a very limited number of words, giving them limited lexical choices, as suggested by Sukhanindr (2008). As a result, the only available lexical items for the students when attempting to boost their claim may be restricted to these two common adverbs. The use of booster nouns, for instance, to emphasize a claim or statement was considerably rare in the corpus as shown in example (3).

- (3) *Yes, and basically this feature makes the game really realistic, and makes it really live.*

Modal verbs for hedges, on the other hand, were the most frequently used. It may be due to the same reason as suggested by Sukhanindr (2008) that the students were familiar with few word choices. Therefore, the common modal verbs, ones such as ‘may’, and ‘can’, were repeatedly used in the corpus as shown in example (4).

- (4) *...your new shoes, new bags it can show that how luxury your lifestyle is it can make you look rich...*

Lastly, it is not surprising that adjectives were the most frequently used form of attitude marker. As suggested by Abdollahzadeh (2011) and Adam and Quintana-toledo (2013), attitude markers were mainly used to express the author’s, in this particular case, the speaker’s attitudes, affective values, or personal evaluation towards the subject matter. As Thai students are somewhat familiar with the use of adjectives in modifying a noun, giving it values such as ‘good’, or ‘bad’, attitude marker adjectives were the most frequently used in this type of stance. This may also be because students in this sample group have never been taught how to evaluate or express personal judgments towards a subject through the verbal realizations of evaluative nouns; for example, they tend to employ only adjectives when they need to show evaluations as shown in example (5).

- (5) *And it is a **good** idea to take a lot of picture and be creative and move around and see which is better for each plate.*

In addition, attitude markers were the least employed by the speakers in the corpus as a whole. This is also consistent with Lee and Subtirelu (2015), who also stated that spoken discourse does not require much use of attitude markers because other paralinguistic features, especially the tone, the pitch, and the speed of voice, have already signaled attitudes towards the subject spoken. Therefore, the verbal realizations of attitudes are not as necessary in spoken discourse as they are in written discourse, where these paralinguistic features are missing.

## **Conclusion**

As the empirical findings of this investigation suggest, authorial stances, namely boosters, hedges, attitude markers, and self-mentions, are parts of the Thai students' vocabulary repertoire.

It is important to note that, as can be expected, the self-mention "I" was the most frequently used stance in the corpus, whereas attitude markers were the least employed. Possible reasons may be that the speakers need to position themselves into the discourse, resulting in the considerable implementation of "I" to establish a persona (Hyland, 1998; Vazquer & Giner, 2009) in the discourse. On the other hand, attitude markers were not as necessary because attitudes or personal judgments towards the subject matter have already been expressed through the various paralinguistic features (e.g., the tone of voice), and other bodily movements (Lee & Subtirelu, 2015).

Furthermore, noteworthy was the fact that booster adverbs and hedge modals were found almost equally frequent. It is an assumption that the speakers require a certain level of credibility (Vazquer & Giner, 2009) while at the same time need to open certain spaces for the listeners to dispute in the discourse (Aull & Lancaster, 2014).

The empirical findings from this study suggest that authorial stances are employed by undergraduate students, despite the fact that the topic has never been a part of the lesson plan. This also suggests that the use of authorial stances may not be as strategically employed as they should be. The author proposes that the topic be introduced in an academic manner to students of public speaking courses alongside other



linguistic features that are already being taught (e.g., logical markers and verbal signposts) so that they employ the stances strategically in the future, allowing themselves to make optimal use of their speech.

Furthermore, educating Thai students of these authorial stances may increase their range of lexical choices under each category of stances. As also suggested by Sukhanindr (2008), students in the corpus of this investigation tend to employ the same few words they are accustomed to, diminishing the potential to expand their styles of speech development. By introducing such topics to Thai students, they may become more competent speakers of English in the future.

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## **Appendix:**

### **Sample from the Corpus**

**(All grammatical mistakes are kept as is)**

[...] lady and gentlemen. Today I'm going to talk about the signs of lying. And the topic is "How can you tell when boyfriend or girlfriend is lying to you". alright, let me start with a question, "Have your boyfriend or girlfriend ever lied to you, or even you ever lied to them?" just keep your answer in mind, I I really don't wanna know. Umm, I actually got got the inspiration from a tv show called lie to me. In this show, there are experts of lying. They can tell right away that the person they are talking to is telling the truth or lying. And it really impress me, so after I watch this show, I google it, and, yeah, it's my inspiration. And of course, it's also from my own experience. Umm, I chose three major of technique that can tell you the person you are talking to are lying to you or not. It's very simple and easy that you can do it. Umm, first, lack of eye contact. One of the classic sign that I believe most of you know. If someone is telling the truth, ah, he or she is likely to give full attention to you. they can look look right to your eye without avoiding eye contact, and maybe too much eye contact. Sometimes liars are aware, they kind of paranoid that you'll catch them, you will know that they are not making enough eye contact. So they give you too much eye contact. It's kind of creepy when it happens. I try this most of the time when I ask my boyfriend a question, and it work, but just sometimes because not everyone can, umm, good at making eye contact, because some some someone they're not comfortable with looking right at people's eye. So let's move to the second sign. They will get mad easily when you ask them the same question for many times. For example, from my own experience, I used to ask my boyfriend question like "did you skip class today?". And for the first and second time he said no. but I didn't believe him. I think he's lying to me. And I wanted him to tell me the truth. So I kept asking him with the same question for like four or five times. And, in the end he said "Whatever you think" with a loud noise. And he said, umm "If you don't believe me so don't ask". And I was like, alright you don't have, you really don't have to say that loud, it's okay. And then we end up fight. And for the last sign, there was too much detail for their story. Cuz they are fake that you know that they are lying. And so they have to make so much detail, unnecessary detail to to make their story more believable. And they will say that over and over again with no point, and sometimes they change the subject. And the detail they making, it's, sometimes it doesn't have anything to do with the question you ask. And in conclusion, lying is not always bad because, you know for like, white lie. White lie is just a lie that you, you lie for comfort other people's feelings, and I hope you find my presentation useful for you and it's really easy. I hope you can do it, adapt to your daily life, thank you.

#### Biodata

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