# Analyzing Nouns and Verbs Marked With Self-Mention Suffixes in Graduate Theses

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| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
|---|---|
| | Self-mention is considered as the most powerful tool to project authorial presence in academic writing. Although some research has been done on self-mention, there is still little investigated in Turkish academic writers' self-mention use. Descriptive in nature, the study aims to discover the lexical items marked with first person pronoun suffixes, with a focus on nouns and verbs. Data in this study is drawn from a corpus of master and doctorate theses written in the field of teaching Turkish as a foreign language. The results suggest that writers make use of more nouns than verbs to code their authorial identity, even though verbs display a greater variety. While nouns marked with a self-mention suffix dominate verbs in abstract, introduction, methodology and discussion, conclusion and suggestion chapters, verbs suffixed by a self-mention stand out in literature and results chapters. The study ends with a discussion of top frequent noun and verbs. |
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## Introduction

In academic writing, writers not only present the information or propositions, they also reflect their identity through the text as Dahl (2004, p.1807) states "*academic writers leave traces of themselves in their writing which may be linked to national as well as disciplinary culture*". All writers embed information about their identities in their texts. Academic writing is not just constructing a paper based on empirical findings; academic writer needs to know how to use the language to interact with their reader (Hyland, 2004) and this interaction is conducted through the use of metadiscourse markers.

Supporting writers to encode the message and serving the readers to decode the message in an successful way (Deng et al., 2021), metadiscourse markers are used by the writers to organize the ideas to be presented in the text, interact with the reader and to give clues about the attitude of the writer (Mu, et. al., 2015). The use of these markers makes the written texts to be comprehensible for the reader and helps authors to reach their audience (Abdollahzadeh, 2011). Derived from Halliday's (1994) macro-functions of language, the analysis of metadiscourse markers help us to identify the knowledge construction in the academic texts (Mu, et. al., 2015). Defining an argument as effective is directly related to the use of some linguistic resources oriented by a community and personal presence, the discussion of an argument and creating an interaction with the reader, all these notions are decided by the culture or the professional community we belong (Abdollahzadeh, 2011, p.289).

In order to persuade the reader about the strength of their propositions, writers, especially in academic fields, need to apply some strategies while constructing their papers. Using metadiscourse markers helps writers not only to convey a kind of information but also enable them to be present in their writings with their "*personalities, attitudes and assumptions*" (Hyland, 2005b, p. 3). Even tough scientific and academic writing was seen as the objective reporting of an independent and external reality until recently (Hyland, 2001, p. 207), studies examining the presence of authors in academic texts (e.g. Kuo, 1999; Hyland, 2001, 2002a, 2002b; Mur Duenas, 2007) have shown that, contrary to popular belief, academic discourse is not free from author identity and that authors code themselves in the text. With the belief that academic texts contain a social interaction, it has been determined that authors reflect their selves in discourse with their readers in different ways through various linguistic sources: hedges (e.g. Kim & Lim, 2015; Nhuyen & Thuy, 2021), boosters (e.g. Yağız & Demir, 2015; Şanverdi, 2021), attitude markers (e.g. Mur Duenas, 2010; Azar & Hashim, 2019), engagement markers (e.g. Kuteeva, 2011; Khatibi & Esfandiari, 2021), and self-mention (e.g. Harwood, 2005; Tao, 2021). However, among all the metadiscourse markers, self-mention realised by first person pronouns are probably the strongest means of writers' self-representation (Ivanic, 1998).

The use of the first person pronouns in academic writing is considered not only as a linguistic choice, but also as a way of creating author identity and reflecting the presence of the author. According to Hyland (2002b, p. 1094), "first person pronouns are powerful tools for writers to reveal their identity by asserting their claim as an authority, and are an essential element of successful academic writing". Many researchers state that scientific

texts are not completely devoid of authorship; on the contrary, every academic text reflects the identity of the author (Ivanic, 1998; Kuo, 1999; Hyland, 2001). Moreover, it is emphasized that authors use first person pronouns to fulfil some rhetorical functions in scientific texts (Harwood, 2005a; McGrath, 2016; Walkova, 2019). Thus, in the academic literature, it seems that the authors refer to themselves with first person pronouns despite opposing views, and they do this strategically to fulfil some rhetorical functions (Gray, 2015, p. 106).

Self-mention, a rhetorical strategy that clearly demonstrates the identity of the author, allows academics to highlight their contributions to the field and themselves as writers (Khedri, 2016, p. 403). However, thesis writing guides, manuals and the general opinion of authorities that shape the language and expression characteristics of academic discourse contain partially deterrent and partially contradictory directions for the use of first person pronouns that show the presence of the author (Hyland, 2002a, p. 351). The controversial subject of self-mention has been a constant problem for students, teachers and even experienced writers, but has received little attention as a research area (Hyland, 2001, p. 208). In particular, the use of first person pronouns is one of the key elements of an effective academic discourse and is an important area in academic writing research (Lores Sanz, 2005, p. 3).

Self-mention has been studied with different approaches in the academic literature. Most of the studies, with an intercultural approach, reveal the frequencies of self-mention markers in English research articles as first and second language (Basal, 2006), doctoral dissertations (Can & Cangır, 2019) and students' academic essays (Candarlı et al., 2015) and their functions were examined in research articles (Işık Taş, 2018; Kafes, 2017; Karahan, 2013) and in undergraduate theses (Hyland, 2002b). On the other hand, in the studies adopted the interdisciplinary approach the frequencies (Tarcan, 2019; Sen, 2019; 2020) and functions (Hyland, 2001; Harwood, 2005a, 2005b; Khedri, 2016; McGrath, 2016) of self-mention markers were compared in the research articles written in soft and hard sciences. In the light of previous studies, examining the rhetorical functions of self-mention metadiscourse markers in academic texts written in Turkish by Turkish authors, and especially in their master's theses, may be helpful in describing the actual use of the Turkish academic language.

Although academic writing in graduate theses has not yet seen the necessary interest as a research topic, it can be said that there are not enough theses examining academic writing in graduate theses prepared in Turkey, the theses in this field are quite new and very few of them examine academic Turkish (Kan, 2017, p. 1045). In this study, examining writers' choices of verbs and nouns marked with self-mention metadiscourse markers in postgraduate theses written in the department of teaching Turkish as a foreign language can help both to understand the academic writing language of Turkish and to reveal the ways of reflecting the author's presence in academic literature. Thus, this study may contribute to the literature on Turkish academic writing and metadiscourse research.

The aim of this study is examine the suffixes of first person pronouns functioning as self-mention with the focus of discovering nouns and verbs reflecting authorial presence. The research questions addresses in this study are:

1. What is the distribution of verbs and nouns marked with a self-mention suffix across theses chapters?

2. What are the most repeated nouns marked with a self-mention suffix?

3. What are the most repeated verbs marked with a self-mention suffix?

## Literature review

### Metadiscourse

The term *metadiscourse* was first mentioned in his work "Papers in Structural and Transformational Linguistics" by Zellig Harris in 1959 and reflected the guidance of the perception of the audience by the speaker or the writer through the use of language (Hyland, 2005, p.3; Cavalieri, 2011, p.80). Similarly, Crismore (1984, p.2) states that "*metadiscourse is, simply, an author's discoursing about the discourse; it is the author's intrusion into the discourse, either explicitly or non-explicitly, to direct rather than inform the readers*". Over the time, scholars have added new notions to the description of this concept. While Vande Kopple (1985) and Crismore, et. al. (1993) highlighted the features such as "*textual*", "*interpersonal*" or "*interpretive*" markers in their descriptions, Hyland (2005b) made the categorization of "*interactive*" and "*interactional*" metadiscourse markers and defines metadiscourse with these exact words; "*metadiscourse is the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community*."(p. 37).

Metadiscourse is the use of some features by the author to guide the readers and help them to understand the message presented through the text (Milne, 2008). Maybe what makes the use of metadiscourse important is the reason behind producing an academic paper. Hyland (2011, p.177) claims that the main objective of academic writing is to persuade the audience about something. Here the key word is the reader. According to Maurane (1993) readers evaluate the texts in line with their expectations and the texts that fail to meet these expectations are labeled as unconvincing. Thus, we can say that the expectations of the readers and the aim of the academic writing are the issues that connected with each other and the importance of the metadiscourse becomes clear at this point because as Hyland (2010) states it is difficult for a text without metadiscourse features to attract the attention of the reader and be followed easily.

### Metadiscourse Models

In order to analyze metadiscoursal features in a text, there is a need for a model or taxonomy and the literature provides some metadiscourse models that approached and categorized these features differently to some extent. Four of these metadiscourse models are presented in Table 1.

The model presented by Vande Kopple (1985) is divided into two main categories and seven subcategories, textual and personal: text binders (indicating inter-sectional links), explanatory (providing guidance on desired meaning), validators (explaining the

precision or probability of statements), narrators (informs about the source of the statement), illocutionary determinants (the author's use of discursive actions), attitude determinants (explains the author's attitude towards the proposition), comments (involves the reader). Although it contains detailed information, the Vande Kopple model has been criticized by Hyland (2005b, p.32) especially because it is complicated to distinguish between the narrators and the references.

**Table 1**. Metadiscourse Models

| Scholar (s) | Categorization | | Sub-categories |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Vande Kopple (1985)** | Textual | | Text Connectives |
| | | | Code Glosses |
| | | | Action Markers |
| | | | Narrators |
| | Interpersonal | | Modality Markers |
| | | | Attitude Markers |
| | | | Commentary |
| **Crismore et. al. (1993)** | Textual | Textual markers | Logical connectives |
| | | | Sequencers |
| | | | Reminders |
| | | | Topicalizers |
| | | Interpretive markers | Code Glosses |
| | | | Illocution Markers |
| | | | Announcements |
| | Interpersonal | | Hedges |
| | | | Certainty markers |
| | | | Attributors |
| | | | Attitude Markers |
| | | | Commentary |
| **Hyland (2005)** | Interactive | | Transitions |
| | | | Frame Markers |
| | | | Endophoric Markers |
| | | | Evidentials |
| | | | Code Glosses |
| | Interactional | | Hedges |
| | | | Boosters |
| | | | Attitude Markers |
| | | | Self-Mentions |
| | | | Engagement Markers |
| **Adel (2006)** | Meta-text | Impersonal | Text/code oriented |
| | | Personal | Participant oriented |
| | | | Writer oriented |
| | | | Reader oriented |
| | Writer-reader interaction | Personal | Participant oriented |
| | | | Reader oriented |

The model of Crismore et al. (1993), which has a similar design and classification to the above model, consists of two main and 12 subcategories. As can be seen in Table

2.1, unlike the Vande Kopple model, there are no narrators, and the expository and illocutionary markers have been changed. This model of Crismore et al. has also been criticized by Hyland (2005b, p. 34) on the grounds that there is confusion between categories.

Another model was designed by Hyland (2005b) and consists of two main categories: interactive and interactional metadiscourse. According to Hyland (2005b, p.49), the interactive metadiscourse dimension considers the potential needs of the reader and includes organizational characteristics. On the other hand, interactional metadiscourse aims to communicate with the reader while conveying the message (Hyland, 2005b). *transitions (help to the reader to create link between the ideas of the writer), frame markers (sequence the ideas or define the frame of the text), endophoric markers (refer other parts of the texts), evidentials (representing ideas of different sources), code glosses (helps readers by supplying additional information)* (Hyland, 2005b, p. 51). The category of interactional metadiscourse contains*; hedges (present the subjectivity of a proposition), boosters (indicates certainty), attitude markers (shows the attitude of the writer towards the propositions), self-mentions (presence of the author in the text) and engagement markers (taking their attention or engaging them as a participant)* (Hyland, 2005b, p. 53).

Presenting a different terminology, the claim of Adel (2006, p.16) is to provide an alternative framework to the model of Halliday (1994), which is commonly adopted by the scholars. In this model text/code refer to the words, chapters or the writing itself and represent metalinguistic functions, and the ignorance of reader and writer is rejected (Adel, 2006). Adel (2006) sees the personal metadiscourse as the relation of reader and writer with each other as well as with the text and bases the categorization of the model on the distinction between the factors relate to the text itself and the interaction between reader and writer.

### Self-mention as a metadiscourse marker

Crismore (1983, p. 15) does not examine the use of the pronoun as an autonomous category in his classification. However, the author states that first person pronouns (author), second person pronouns (reader) and third person pronouns (text) are used in expressing metadiscursive items. According to the author, the amount of metadiscourse and the pronouns used in their expression can be seen as a sign of the author's addition to the text, the personality of the author and the author-reader relationship.

Self-mention markers were included first as person markers in the metadiscourse classification created by Hyland (1998, p. 444) and later named as self-mention under the interactional metadiscourse category. Hyland (1998, p. 444; 2005, p. 49; Hyland & Tse, 2004, p. 169) states that the person markers reflect the importance of the degree of author presence that contributes to the diversity in the discourse form of the text. He also notes that this reflection can be evaluated with the frequency of first person pronouns and possessive adjectives used while presenting both propositional and metadiscursive information.

Adel (2006, p. 38) defines the use of first person pronouns as metatext-personal-author based in his metadiscourse classification with a different approach. She also states

that first person pronouns offer the author the opportunity to show his presence in the text most clearly. In addition, she underlines that authors can refer to themselves as third persons (author, researcher), and states that the authors' naming of themselves with such names is an outdated and traditionalized form of expression in some genres.

Milne (2003, p. 38; 2008, p. 99) considers the use of the first person pronoun in her classification as personalization in the subcategory of interpretations in the interpersonal metadiscourse class. She says that such use helps to establish a relationship between the author and the reader through the text.

Toumi (2009, p. 71) considers the use of pronouns as author-derived metadiscourse in the transformative metadiscourse classification. She states that this metadiscourse class includes examples that show the author's clear awareness of himself as the author of the current text, not as the author of other texts or as an experiencer of the external world, and that it serves the expressive function of language. It explains that this sub-classification will consist of first person singular nouns (I), exclusionary we, and nouns (author, researcher) together with their possessive forms.

## Methodology

### Corpus Design

Researching academic writing in the field of Teaching Turkish as a foreign language has not attracted enough attention neither in graduate theses (Türkben, 2018 ) nor research articles (Biçer, 2017). Therefore, this study is based on a corpus of 148 master and 20 doctoral theses published between 2005 and 2020 in the discipline of teaching Turkish as a foreign language. All the theses written in this field constituted the research corpus by purposeful sampling as Creswell (2012, p. 205) suggested "[…] in *qualitative* research, we identify our participants and sites on purposeful sampling, based on places and people that can best help us understand our central phenomenon". All the theses, downloaded from the National Thesis Centre of Council of Higher Education, were written in Turkish, open to access and convertible to text format (.txt). The corpus included abstracts, introductions, literature review, methodology, results, and discussion, conclusion and suggestions sections. All the theses were downloaded in portable document format (PDF) and manually converted into text (.txt) format. The headings, tables, figures and direct quotations of more than 40 words were excluded from the corpus.

### Data Collection and Analysis

The data in this study was collected according to Hyland's (2005) classification of self-mention markers referring to the authors in terms of first person pronouns. As Turkish is an agglutinative language, first person pronouns also occur in suffix forms as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** English First Person Pronouns And Their Turkish Suffix Equivalents

| First person pronouns in English | *Turkish suffix equivalent of first person pronouns |
|---|---|
| I | -m/ -im / -ım / -um / -üm |
| My | -m/ -im / -ım / -um / -üm |
| We (exclusive) | -k/ -ız / -iz / - uz/ -üz |
| Our (exclusive) | -mız/ -miz/ -muz/ -müz |

*adapted from Karağaç, 2016, p.356-357

The data analysis was performed through AntConc (version 4.0.11) corpus analysis tool. AntConc, a freeware tool for corpus studies, enables researchers to conduct concordancing and text analysis. The corpus in text format was uploaded into the corpus analysis toolkit and Turkish first person pronouns in suffix forms were searched in the corpus to find out the words marked with self-mentions. This tool found and listed all the occurrences ending with the first person pronouns suffixes. All occurrences were investigated in context and co-text through manual reading to make sure whether they had self-mention function.

Two coders in this study coded the occurrences of first person plural pronouns to decide whether they were inclusive or exclusive "we". The codings were compared and the reliability of the study was provided by using Miles and Huberman formula which is Reliability = consensus /consensus+disagreement. Thus, the intercoder reliability was found 96 % which is within acceptable range (O'Conner & Joffe, 2020, p.9). The disagreed occurrences were compromised mutually.

## Results

Table 3 illustrates the overall distribution and variety of words marked with self-mentions. Corpus analysis of self-mention suffixes yielded a total number of 1698 words. 55% of these words were nouns and 45% were verbs. When it comes to word variety, 68 different nouns and 112 different verbs were found to be marked with a self-mention suffix. It is clear from the results that while nouns made up slightly more than half of the total words; variety in verbs was richer than the one in nouns.

**Table 3.** Total Distribution Of Nouns And Verbs Marked With A Self-Mention Suffix

|  | f (Raw frequencies) | Percentage % | Word variety |
|---|---|---|---|
| Nouns | 938 | 55 % | 68 |
| Verbs | 760 | 45 % | 112 |
| TOTAL | 1698 | 100 | 180 |

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Table 3 compares the overall distribution of the nouns and verbs marked with self-mention suffixes. Closer inspection of the distribution of nouns shows that discussion, conclusions and suggestions chapters (f=251, 26,8%) combined have the highest proportion of nouns. Following up, results chapter (f=201, 21,4%) ranks the second and introduction chapter (f=187, 19,9%) comes third. While methodology chapter (f=135, f=14,4) includes more nouns than literature review chapter (f=124, 13,2%), abstract chapter (f=40, 4,3%) contains the lowest number of nouns marked with a self-mention suffix.

**Table 4.** Distribution Of Nouns And Verbs Marked With Self-Mention Across Theses Chapters

| | Nouns | | Verbs | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thesis chapters | F (Raw) | % | F (Raw) | % |
| Abstract | 40 | 4,3 | 11 | 1,4 |
| Introduction | 187 | 19,9 | 82 | 10,8 |
| Literature review | 124 | 13,2 | 146 | 19,2 |
| Methodology | 135 | 14,4 | 57 | 7,5 |
| Results | 201 | 21,4 | 265 | 34,9 |
| Discussion & Conclusion & Suggestion | 251 | 26,8 | 199 | 26,2 |
| TOTAL | 938 | 100 | 760 | 100 |

From the data about the distribution of verbs suffixed by self-mentions across chapters in Table 4, it is apparent that results chapter (f=265, 34,9%) has the highest number of verbs that writers coded themselves into. Discussion, conclusion and suggestions chapters (f= 199, 26,2%) combined includes such verbs second most frequently. Literature review chapter (f=146, 19,2%) also contains verbs reflecting writers' presences. Following these chapters at the fourth rank, introduction chapter (f=82, 10,8%) alone includes more verbs than methodology (f=57, 7,5%) and abstract (f=11, 1,4%) chapters.

**Graph 1.** Most Frequently Repeated Nouns Marked With A Self-Mention Suffix
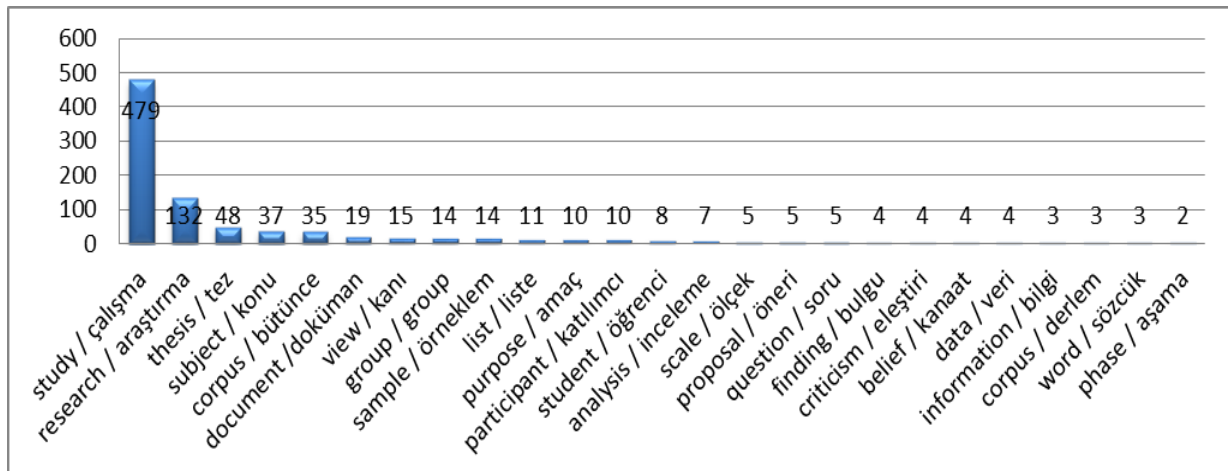
Graph 1 presents the most repeated 25 nouns marked with a self-mention suffix in the whole theses. What is striking in this graph is that 'study (çalışma)' (f=479) is by far the most repeated noun in which writers coded their presence with a personal pronoun suffix (Example 1). 'Research (araştırma)' (f=132) is the second frequent item found in the analysis (Example 2). 'Thesis (tez)' (f=48) is the third most frequented item projecting authors' presence (Example 3). Having two synonymous equivalent in Turkish, 'corpus' (as bütünce, f=35; as derlem, f=3) is another most occurring noun reflecting writers' presence. The least frequented items shown in Graph 1 are 'word' (sözcük, f=3), 'information' (bilgi, f=3) and phase (aşama, f=2).

(Example 1) Çalışma**mız**da televizyon programlarının sunduğu deyimleri ele alarak özel alan derlemi oluşturulmak amaçlanmıştır.

*(In **our** study, it is aimed to create a special field corpus by considering the idioms presented by television programs.)*

(Example 2) Araştırma**mız**da iki tümcede bu belirteç {-DIr} biçimbirimi ile birlikte kullanılmıştır.

*(In **our** research, this signifier was used together with the {-DIr} morpheme in two sentences.)*

(Example 3) Bu okullarda, Türkçe derslerinin zorunlu tutulduğu nizamnamelerle açıklandığından bu tablolar tezi**miz**de yer almaktadır.

*(These tables are included in **our** thesis, since it is stated in the regulations that Turkish lessons are compulsory in these schools.)*

Graph 2 provides the most repeated 25 verbs which theses writers in the discipline of TTFL used in their text to mark their authorial presence. What stands out in this graph is that 'conduct (yapmak, f=66) is the by far the most frequent verb projecting authorial stance (Example 4). It is also striking that verbs examine (incelemek, f=50) and state (belirtmek, f=49) are also the next most frequented items in Graph 2 (Example 5-6).

**Graph 2.** Most Frequently Repeated Verbs Marked With A Self-Mention Suffix
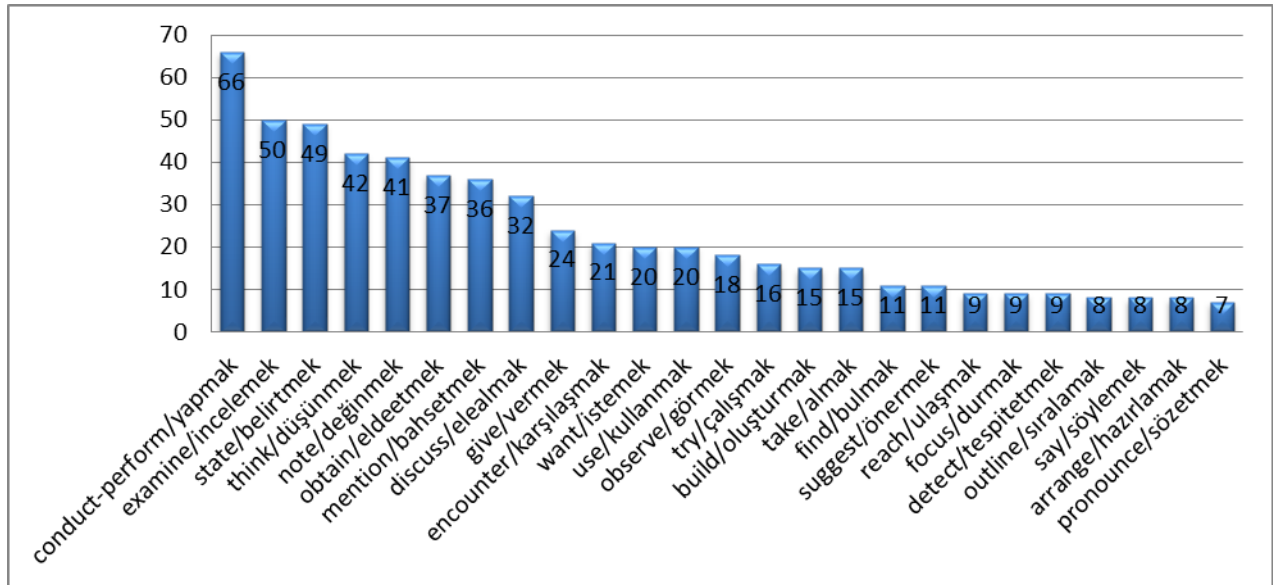
(Example 4) **Yapmış olduğumuz** bu çalışmanın sonuçları ile Erdost 'un çalışmasının sonuçlarının birbiriyle uyumlu olduğu görülmektedir.

*(It is seen that the results of this study **we have conducted** and the results of Erdost's study are compatible with each other.)*

(Example 5) Araştırmamızda Batum Şota Rustaveli Devlet Üniversitesinde Türkoloji bölümünde Temel ve Orta Türkçe düzeylerde eğitim görmekte olan 43 Gürcü öğrencinin yazılı kâğıtlarını **inceledik**.

*(In our research, **we examined** the written papers of 43 Georgian students studying at the Department of Turcology at Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University at Basic and Intermediate Turkish levels.)*

(Example 6) Yabancı dil öğrenme gereksiniminin nasıl ve nerden başladığı konusunda verdiğimiz öz bilgiden yola çıkarak sözcük öğretiminin üzerinde durulması gereken elzem bir konu olduğunu **belirttik**.

*(Based on the self-knowledge we gave about how and where the need to learn a foreign language starts, **we stated** that vocabulary teaching is an essential issue that needs to be emphasized)*

## Discussion

The tables and graphs in this paper clearly show that thesis writers in TTFL make use of self-mention markers in suffix forms attached to variety of nouns and verbs in their academic writing. While self-mention devices in academic discourse are demonstrations of authorial voice and portrayal of expertise and membership of a particular disciplinary community, they can also function as significant features to persuade readers and create a positive self-representation of authorship (Mur-Duenas, 2007, p.144). In support with this opinion, it can therefore be assumed that theses writers investigated in this study wanted to

be visible in their texts and project their presence to their readers with the help of self-mention suffixes.

The first question in this study sought to find out whether writers coded their authorial presence into more nouns or verbs by the help of first person pronoun suffixes. The results showed that nouns were slightly more objected to conjugation of first person pronoun suffixes that verbs. Even though very little was found in the literature on this question investigation self-mention devices in Turkish academic discourse, findings of several previous studies of other languages may help comparison indirectly. Considering the results of studies analysing self-mention devices in terms of first person pronoun and possessive adjective counts can make this study's findings more meaningful as pronouns are used with verbs and possessive adjectives are used with nouns. Comparing hard and soft science research articles, Hyland (2001) found that scholars made use of more pronouns than possessive adjectives in both fields while writing in English. Hyland (2002) also produced similar results while investigating undergraduate theses written in English in hard and soft science, which favoured more uses of pronouns rather than possessive adjectives. These results reflect those of Mur Duenas' (2007) study exploring self-mentions in Spanish and English research articles. However the findings in this study have been unable to support previous research. The outcome of the analysis is contradictory to that of the studies mentioned above in which the use of pronouns with verbs as self-mention is more than possessive adjectives with nouns.

The second question in this study aimed to discover the self-mention marked noun and verb distribution across chapters. The findings favoured more uses of nouns in abstract, introduction, methodology and discussion, conclusion and suggestion chapters. However, verbs suffixed with self-mention overweighed the nouns in literature and results sections. As literature review and results sections are purely based on empirical findings of previous and present research, more uses of verbs in these chapters may not be surprising as Frels et al. (2010, p. XX) underlines the significant role of verbs in empirical research writing in which precise use of language is crucial.

The last objective of this study was to discover mostly used verbs and nouns suffixed by a personal pronoun as self-mention. Overall results show that self-mention markers in suffix forms are slightly more attached to nouns than they are to verbs. Among all the nouns, *study* (çalışma) is the most dominant one marked with a self-mention suffix followed by *research* (araştırma) and *thesis* (tez). Especially, *study* (çalışma) has the biggest share in all chapters. When it comes to verbs, while *try* (yapmak) is repeated the most, *examine* (incelemek) and *state* (belirtmek) is also following most frequent with self-mention inflected verbs.

Of all the nouns most frequently found in this study, several are among *metadiscoursive nouns* which Jiang and Hyland describe as "[…] *a critical resource in academic interactions, offering writers a way of organizing discourse into a cohesive flow of logical and coherent information and of constructing a stance towards material*" (2016, p.20). Predominating the nouns marked with a self-mention suffix in this study, items of *study, research, thesis* and *document* refer to metatext by reflecting the judgement of the writer. Jiang and Hyland (2017, p.7) and Yuvayapan (2019, p.82) maintain that such

metadiscoursive nouns when used with self-mention markers can be considered as promotion of writer's research. An implication of this finding may be that writers wanted to underline that their claims were novel and worthy as they associated these metadiscoursive nouns with self-mention markers.

Another group of nouns in this study also matches Jiang's (2017) metadiscoursive cognition nouns which […] "concern beliefs, attitudes and elements of mental reasoning, such as *decision*, *idea*, *assumption* and *doubt*" (p. 91). The related items in this study are *view*, *purpose*, *analysis* and *belief*. Hence, the connection between these nouns and self-mention suffixes may imply that writers coded their presence into these nouns of cognition to build trustworthiness as Hyland (2011, p. 204) states "personal credibility, getting behind your arguments, plays an important part in creating a convincing discourse in the humanities and social sciences."

There are also relatively frequent nouns marked with self-mention suffixes found the study. These nouns are *proposal* and *criticism* which are called discourse nouns *"describing verbal propositions and speech acts such as argument, claim and conclusion"* (Jiang & Hyland, 2017, p.8). Another frequent item is *finding* which fits into event category of Jiang and Hyland's (2017, p.9) functional classification of nouns in academic texts in which this category of nouns "[…]*refer to either occurrences of actions processes or evidential cases with examples such as change, observation and finding"* (p.8). Needless to mention that writers wanted to mark their authorial presence into these nouns, they might have also made use of these nouns to frame their discourse, guide the readers in it and prepare them for the upcoming information and how the writers interpret such information.

The results of this study also indicate that writers make use of a rich variety of verbs with first person pronoun suffixes to add their authorial voice to their discourse. A closer investigation of the top frequent verbs found in this study demonstrates that writers' verb choices fit into Frels et al.'s (2010, p. XXV-XXVII) typology of verbs for scholarly writing. By taking this typology of verbs into consideration, it is seen that writers' most frequent verb selections function as to represent their knowledge or action, some of which are data driven (*find, encounter, observe, build* and *detect*) and some are procedural (*examine, obtain, use* and *conduct*). While there are also a number of frequent verbs representing statements explicitly (*indicate, mention, discuss, state, note, pronounce* and *outline*) and implicitly (*suggest*), there is only one item of representing cognition process (*think*). Conforming Meyer (1997, as cited in Frels et al. , 2010, p. XXIII) the higher frequency of verbs representing knowledge or action in this study may be the implication of writers' desires to promote themselves as the conductor of the research process and generators of knowledge.

Further exploration of categorical use of verbs across chapters can also be compared with Frels et. al.'s (2010, p. XXIX) classification of verbs appropriate to be used in research article sections. They suggest that introduction and literature review sections of empirical research articles include verbs representing statement and cognition which is in accord with findings of this current study. In this study, most occurring verbs in introduction and literature review sections represent statement (*state, discuss* and *mention*)

and cognition (*think*). According to that classification, methods and results sections include verbs representing knowledge or action and cognition. Whereas most frequent verbs (*examine, conduct, think*) in the methodology chapter in this study are consistence with Frels et. al.'s classification, predominating type of verbs in results chapter partly differ from this classification. Although there are instances of verbs presenting knowledge or action (*examine* and *obtain*) and cognition (*think*), verbs (*state, mention* and *note*) representing statements in results chapter also have a considerable proportion. However the most striking contradiction between the findings of the current study and Frels et. al's classification of verbs occur in discussion chapter where verbs representing cognition are expected occur the most but, in this study, surpassed by verbs representing statement and knowledge or actions.

Looking at the verbs marked with self-mention suffixes from another perspective may yield interesting results. Such verbs when used with first person pronouns in academic writing may signal several authorial identities and rhetorical functions which are interrelated. *Think*, as one of mental process cognition verbs (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), may display writers' *Opinion Holder identity* "[…] *who shares an opinion, view or attitude (for example, by expressing agreement, disagreement or interest) with regard to known information or established facts*" (Tang & John, 1999, p.28) or may function as elaborating an argument (Hyland, 2002, p. 1103). Similarly, when used with self-mention, verbs such as conduct, examine, use, arrange and build can help reflect writers' *Conductor of research* identity (Sheldon, 2009, p.251) or in other words enable writers to advertise their worth as researcher by "*explaining the procedures, steps or research decisions taken*" (Lafuente Millan, 2010, p.48).  Another writer identity *Guide or Architect* (Starfield & Ravelli, 2006, p. 231) which structure the discourse may be realised by the verbs *state*, *note*, *mention* and *outline* and state the writer's purpose by *try*, *want* and *discuss*. Verbs such as *find*, *observe*, *reach* and *obtain* marked with self-mention may also perform the rhetorical function of *stating results or claims* (Hyland, 2002. p.1103).

## Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to discover verbs and nouns marked with first person pronoun suffixes as self-mention markers in master and doctorate theses written in the field of teaching Turkish as foreign language. The study has investigated the distribution of such nouns and verbs across theses chapters and listed the most frequently repeated nouns and verbs. The nouns were discussed in terms of metadiscoursive nouns and the verbs were discussed according to typology of verbs in scholarly writing and authorial identities and discourse functions realised by self-mention markers. The findings have shown that theses writers coded their authorial presence into a broad variety of nouns most of which carry their judgement of texts, event, discourses or aspects of cognition. On the other hand, the analysis of the verbs marked with self-mention suffixes has shown that writers marked their presents more frequently into verbs to embody their data driven knowledge or procedural action. Moreover, further examination of the verbs has also implied that writers' uses of some certain verbs with self-mention markers may project

their authorial identities such as conductor, opinion holder, architect or guide of their research.

## Suggestions

The findings have provided deeper insight of Turkish writers' preferences of word choices which bear their imprints of authorial presence. The insights gained from this study may be of assistance to growing body of metadiscourse research and contribute to academic writing studies. The scope of this study is limited to the discovery of individual verbs and nouns marked with self-mentions in suffix forms in theses written in the field of teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Further research should be undertaken to explore lexico-grammatical and collocational structures in self-mention sentences. Interdisciplinary and cross-cultural research approaches including various genres of academic publishing may also yield fruitful findings.

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