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Variation in interpersonal relations in manuscript reviews with different recommendations

Betty Samraj*

Department of Linguistics and Asian/Middle Eastern Languages, San Diego State University, 5500 Campanile Drive, San Diego, CA, 92182, USA

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ABSTRACT

Studies on author identity and relations in academic writing have mostly focused on research articles and relatively few studies have attended to the construction of identity in texts where there is a more obvious unequal relationship between author and reader. This paper reports on a study of interpersonal relationships constructed in an occluded genre, the manuscript review, and compares writer–reader relations across reviews with three different reviewer recommendations: 'reject,' 'major revision,' and 'minor revision.' An analysis of select lexicogrammatical features used in the construction of recommendations and the presence of author and reader in texts reveals the construction of a more unequal relationship between author and reader in 'major revision' and 'reject' reviews than in 'minor revision' reviews. This is due to the use of strong directives, the lack of author presence in mitigating negative evaluation and recommendations given, and the more direct reference to authors through the use of the second person pronoun, especially in negative comments. This study reveals that the polite and egalitarian relationship identified in public academic genres may not always be present in private academic genres and shows that author persona can vary in response to purpose, context, and readers of a genre.

1. Introduction

Numerous studies, especially in the last two decades, have shown that academic writing is not neutral and objective as it traditionally was thought to be (Hyland & Guinda, 2012). Instead, authors of academic texts convey their attitudes towards the propositions in texts as well as their relationships with their readers through use of rhetorical strategies, such as personal pronouns, epistemic modality, and directives (e.g. Hyland, 2002a, 2005, 2012b; Giltrow, 2005; Koutsantoni, 2006). Authorial voice or identity has been explored in numerous studies of academic discourse. In an overview article on identity in written discourse, Matsuda (2015, p. 145) described the writer's discursive identity as "created by the writer's choices and the textual manifestation of those choices." He further states that a number of textual functions contribute to the construction of writer identity, including what applied linguists have discussed as stance, appraisal and evaluation, and that "identity is part of the interpersonal meaning that is negotiated through the interaction among the writer and the reader mediated by the text" (Matsuda, 2015, p. 145). In an overview of voice, Tardy (2012, p. 37) discusses author presence as one important element of

* Fax: 1(619) 594 4877
E-mail address: bsamraj@sdsu.edu.

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author identity, pointing to the close connection of voice to Ivanič's (1998) authorial self, which is the self the author projects in a text, by asserting his or her authoritativeness.

A large number of studies on author identity or voice and the interpersonal relationship writers construct with their readers have explored the use of discursive features, such as hedges and personal pronouns in academic texts (often via large corpora, as discussed below), and have pointed to evidence for variation in author identity and writer–reader relationship in academic texts from different genres and disciplines. A smaller set of studies have focused on reader response to author identity or voice in academic texts. Studies by Matsuda and Tardy (2007) and Tardy and Matsuda (2009) explored readers' construction of author identity in the activity of blind review of journal articles and the features attended to when readers construct authorial voice. A foregrounding of the dialogic nature of voice (Bakhtin, 1986) underpins a more recent study by Morton and Storch (2019) that explored readers' judgment of disoursal features that contributed to authorial voice. This study showed that a complex collection of features contributed to readers' perception of voice and the highly contextual nature of voice.

The study reported in this paper explores the construction of author identity and interpersonal relationships with readers in an academic genre (rather than an understanding of readers' construction or judgment of author identity) and, therefore, a more detailed discussion of studies on textual features of identity and author–reader relationship in academic genres is provided here. Research articles from different disciplines and different languages have been analyzed for variations in the construction of author identity or voice across different communities of practice. Hyland (2005, p. 187) states that "writers in different disciplines represent themselves, their work and their readers in different ways with those in the humanities and social sciences taking far more explicitly involved and personal positions than those in the science and engineering fields." The interpersonal relationship constructed by academic writers can also vary because of audience differences as seen in the different values in proximity constructed in research articles and popularizations (Hyland, 2010).

Special attention has also been paid to the construction of author persona in review genres such as book reviews and grant proposal reviews (Koutsantoni, 2011; Moreno & Suárez, 2008). Book reviews, with an explicitly evaluative function, have high interpersonal implications for the reviewer and the author of the book being reviewed. Studies have identified variation in this interpersonal relation in the same genre produced in different cultural and linguistic contexts. In a study comparing the use of critical evaluative comments (both positive and negative) in book reviews written in Spanish and English, the greater presence of positive comments written by the Spanish reviewers and interview comments with the two groups of writers seemed to point to the greater importance for Castilian Spanish than Anglo-American reviewers for "establishing a harmonious encounter" between reviewer and author of the book (Moreno & Suárez, 2009, p. 175).

Another set of genres that have informed our understanding of author identity are what Hyland (2012a, p. 71) refers to as representational genres, which "involve the direct assertion of identity claims and have the self-conscious assertion of self as their primary purpose." Included among such genres are academic web pages and bio statements that accompany research articles, which Hyland (2012a, p. 98) characterizes as "probably the most explicit public assertion of self-representation in scholarly life." Analyses of bio statements have indicated the central role of disciplinary affiliation and the relatively smaller roles played by gender and seniority in the field in the construction of academic identity (Hyland & Tse, 2012).

The expression of authorial self has also been explored in student writing and compared to that in published academic writing. These comparisons have shown how different choices in the construction of stance can be traced to students' neophyte roles in the academy and their perceived sense of lack of authority. In a study of the use of the first person pronoun, Hyland (2002a, p. 1109) states that the L2 students he studied see "self-reference as a marker of self-assurance and individuality which they did not feel when composing." In another study comparing the use of hedges by graduate students in their theses and by published research article authors, Koutsantoni (2006, p. 33) points to student awareness of "power asymmetries between themselves and examiners, of their status in the community and of their status in the particular situation" as possible motivation for their greater use and choice of hedges.

Most of the work on the interpersonal relationship constructed in academic writing has focused on research articles, where the relationship has been shown to be more egalitarian than that in less prestigious academic genres such as the textbook (Kuhi & Behnam, 2011, p. 121). The dialogism in prestigious academic genres such as research articles is a manifestation of positive politeness and communality. Hyland (2001a, p. 565) describes this relationship as the "conventional fiction of democratic peer relationships diligently cultivated in published research writing." However, it has also been pointed out that writers of research articles have to signal that they are "less powerful than the elite section of the academic community" (Kuhi & Behnam, 2011, p. 119). Studies of writing where the relationship between reader and writer is *unequal* have been mostly limited to student or disciplinary novice writing produced for more powerful readers, such as instructors or disciplinary gatekeepers (Koutsantoni, 2006), although a few have considered writer–reader relations in introductory textbooks (Kuhi & Behnam, 2011). Much less is known about the sort of interpersonal relationships constructed in occluded genres where the author is more powerful than the reader(s) of a text. One study which does explore interpersonal relations in occluded genres of unequal power is Chen and Hyon (2007), which focuses on the strategies employed to construct interpersonality in retention-promotion-and-tenure (RPT) reports written at an American university. They discuss a number of strategies used by authors (with power), such as humor and indirect speech acts, to mitigate the damage potentially caused to interpersonal relationships when authors comment negatively on the evaluatees' performance.

Another occluded genre produced by gatekeepers in an academic community is the referee report or manuscript review. Manuscript reviews are produced by those who play an important gatekeeping role and, hence, are in a position of power in relation to the main addressee or recipient of the review (Englander & López-Bonilla, 2011, p. 396). Unlike the RPT reports

analyzed in Chen and Hyon (2007) where the author, readers (gatekeepers from different levels of the university) and addressee (the candidate being reviewed) are identified, the manuscript review is covered by "a veil of anonymity" since the identities of the author and recipient, who is also the author of the manuscript being reviewed, are unknown in double-blind reviews (Bromwich, 2009, p. 353).[1] The social context in which this genre is produced is also unique as it has a limited audience: the author whose manuscript is being reviewed, the editor and, secondarily, the other reviewer(s) of the same manuscript.

A growing number of studies in recent years have explored manuscript reviews, discussing the presence of evaluation, speech acts, recommendations and requests in this genre as well as its overall organization (for example, Fortanet, 2008; Gosden, 2003; Hewings, 2004; Kourilova, 1998; Paltridge, 2013, 2017, 2019; Samraj, 2010, 2014, 2016). As discussed earlier, Matsuda and Tardy (2007) and Tardy and Matsuda (2009) have explored the construction of the identity of the manuscript author by review writers through their (the review writers') evaluation of a number of discursive and non-discursive features in the manuscript being reviewed. These studies explored the discursive (including content and formal features) and non-discursive features (for example, formatting) in the papers being reviewed that led reviewers to construct a particular identity of a paper's author. In sum, the goal of these studies was to explore the construction of author identity from the reader's (reviewer's) perspective. The focus of these two studies was not understanding the construction of the author–reader relationship by the review authors in the reviews produced. As such, an analysis of the interpersonal relation constructed by reviewers in occluded manuscript reviews can add to what is already known about writer–reader relationships in written academic genres.

Although some of the studies of manuscript reviews have considered features of these texts that contribute to the dialogic dimension of this genre, such as the use of direct and indirect speech acts (Paltridge, 2013, 2017), the primary focus of very few studies has been the construction of participant relationships in this genre. One such study (Englander & López-Bonilla, 2011), acknowledging the privileged and powerful position of reviewers, focused on five reviewer reports of two manuscripts written by non-native speakers of English to understand the reviewers' interaction with the editor and author in the reviews, manifested through choices in syntactic structures such as the use of questions, directives, and personal pronouns. Analyses of these linguistic features led the authors to conclude that different reviewers in this case study construct for themselves the identities of Guardian, Ally, and Ringleader in their interactions with the authors of the two reviewed manuscripts. According to this study, the Ringmaster manages the performance of the reviewed author, points out the good in the text and directs the author to others in the discourse community for help. The Ally is the most helpful and engages with the author directly without showing any scorn for the author. The Guardian guards community standards and does not engage directly with the author through questions or directives and provides no help. Analysis of a larger number of manuscript reviews, not just limited to those reviewing manuscripts produced by non-native speakers, can help us further explore the sort of interpersonal relation created between author and reader in this occluded genre and add to what is already known about author identity and voice in public academic genres by both published authors and student writers.

The overarching purpose of this study is to understand the nature of the interpersonal relationship constructed in an occluded genre, where the author purportedly has greater power than the primary reader. Researchers have pointed to the manuscript reviewer's gatekeeping function (Starfield & Paltridge, 2019) while also referring to the review as a request for improvement, with a tutorial or directive function (Belcher, 2007; Bromwich, 2009; Fortanet, 2008; Giannoni, 2001). For a genre with a directive (or tutorial) function, an analysis of the construction of impositions made on the primary reader (whose manuscript is being evaluated) in terms of recommendations and directives is an important means to understand the nature of interpersonal relations created in it. In addition to an analysis of the recommendations and directives, features of authorial presence and references to the reader in the genre were also analyzed to understand the writer–reader relationship constructed (Hyland, 2001a, 2002a). Undoubtedly, a number of features could be analyzed in a study of writer–reader relationships ranging from the author's construction of his or her attitude towards the truth value of propositions to the type and extent of negative and positive evaluation in these reviews. Given the centrality of the purpose of recommending change to this genre, the focus in this paper will be the linguistic choices employed in constructing recommendations. In addition, the nature of author and reader presence in these texts will also be explored as references to the author and reader are key components for establishing the writer–reader relationship in this occluded genre.

Specifically, this paper compares the nature of interpersonal relationships in manuscript reviews with three different reviewer recommendations, 'minor revision,' 'major revision,' and 'reject,' produced for the journal *English for Specific Purposes*. To this end, linguistic features associated with the construction of recommendations (ranging from deontic modality to imperatives) were systematically analyzed to explore similarities and differences in the interpersonal relationship negotiated in reviews with different recommendations. In addition, the explicit presence of author and reader as important components in the relationships negotiated in this genre was also explored through an analysis of the use of the first and second person pronouns as well as third person author references (such as 'the author'). Importantly,

[1] The identities of the author and recipient of the review are only known to the editor(s) of the journal.

comparing sets of manuscript reviews with different reviewer recommendations such as 'reject' and 'minor revision' can indicate if manuscript reviewers construct different author identities and relationships with readers when reviewing manuscripts that they deem suitable for eventual publication, on the one hand, in comparison to those that they judge to be unpublishable, on the other. It might be expected that the interpersonal relation constructed would be different across these sets of reviews, especially between the reviews with the outcome of 'reject,' which position the primary reader and author of the evaluated manuscript as an outsider in response to the present bid to join the disciplinary community represented by the journal and those with the outcome of 'minor revision,' where the recipient is being acknowledged as a member or potential member of the disciplinary community, needing only to make some minor revisions to his, her or their manuscript before gaining membership.

2. Methods

Manuscript reviews written for the journal *English for Specific Purposes* were selected as data because reviews produced for this journal have served as data in earlier studies of this genre (Belcher, 2007; Hewings, 2004; Paltridge, 2013, 2017, 2019). Ninety-four reviews written by reviewers for the journal who agreed to participate in the study were collected. The 94 reviews were produced by 57 different reviewers, and 25 reviewers in the data set produced more than one review. This is to be expected as members of a journal editorial board normally produce more than one review in a given year. The maximum number written by one reviewer in this period in my dataset was five, another reviewer wrote four, and seven wrote three each, leaving a degree of variety in authors in the dataset. Of the 94 reviews, 39 had the recommendation of major revision, 27, reject, 19, minor revision, and, 9, accept. Of these texts, 25 'major revision,' 25 'reject' reviews, and all 19 'minor revision' reviews were analyzed for this study. The 25 'major revision' reviews were produced by 23 different reviewers, the 25 'reject' reviews had 21 different authors, and the 19 'minor revision' reviews were written by 16 different reviewers, which ensured author variety in the analyzed data. Since one focus of this study was the construction of revision recommendations and because there were only very few 'accept' reviews, these reviews were not included in the study. In addition, the overall communicative purpose of the 'accept' reviews seems to be to positively evaluate the reviewed paper. As such, the nine 'accept' reviews did not always include recommendations. Only six of the nine reviews included recommendations for changes (excluding the final recommendation to accept the paper), and these only concerned editorial changes. Because of the small number of 'accept' texts, their relatively short lengths, and the dearth of recommendations for changes in these texts, they were not included in the comparative analysis.

The reviews were scanned and converted to electronic text files and 'reject,' 'major revision' and 'minor revision' text files were created. The 25 'major revision' texts have a total of 20,240 words, while the 25 'reject' texts have a total of 16,704 words. The 'minor revision' texts total 10,950 words (19 texts) and have an average of 576 words. 'Major revision' texts are the longest on average with 809 words and are 21% longer than the average 'reject' reviews with 668 words. It is not surprising that 'major revision' reviews are longer than the minor revision texts. On the other hand, it is somewhat surprising that the 'reject' reviews are longer than the minor revision texts. However, 'reject' reviews express both the directive function of recommending change and also that of justifying rejection using negative evaluation (Samraj, 2016), and the greater textual space is used to fulfill these functions.

The first set of words analyzed are those commonly associated with the construction of recommendations. Previous studies (such as Fortanet, 2008; Samraj, 2010, 2016) have identified a number of ways in which recommendations are made in manuscript reviews, such as with the use of imperatives, deontic modals (modals that express obligation such as 'should' and 'must'), performatives (for example, "I suggest that" and "I recommend that"), and questions ("Can more insightful conclusions be drawn?"). Other research on the use of directives (Hyland, 2002b) and imposition of obligations (Giltrow, 2005) in research articles was also consulted for lexicogrammatical features that might be used in constructing direct and indirect recommendations. The final list of lexicogrammatical items selected for analysis was determined based on multiple readings of the manuscript reviews in the data set and is given in Table 1. The modal 'would' was included because of its use in polite recommendations where a predicative adjective expressing necessity or importance or a positive attribute such as 'interesting' controls a complement to-clause, for example, "… it would be interesting to have a little bit more data on the range and frequency of … " The modal 'would' is also found in requests such as "I would like to see … "

Table 1
Lexicogrammatical features associated with recommendations.

Low modality features	Strong modality features
May	Should
Might	Has to
Would	Ought to
Can	Must
Could	N[a]ed(s) (ed)
Suggest	Necessary
Recommend[a]	Require(d)/requires
	Imperatives

[a] Excludes usage in statements that give final recommendation.

The items analyzed were sub-divided into two categories (see Table 1), with the first set of words being those used in more tentative recommendations, including those referred to as "low modality" in Starfield et al.'s (2017, p. 59) study of PhD examiners' reports. The second set of items is used in stronger requests and includes directives (Hyland, 2002b). The use of these grammatical items in making final reviewer recommendations to the editor such as "I recommend that the manuscript be substantially revised and resubmitted" was not included in the analyses. The instances of lexicogrammatical items analyzed appeared only in recommendations concerning specific revisions to the manuscript.

A more detailed analysis of the use of the modal 'should' was conducted because of the finding that this modal was used equally in 'minor revision' and 'major revision' reviews. Drawing on Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1994), an analysis of the modal 'should' in different process types was conducted to explore the sorts of experiential meanings constructed in different kinds of reviews.

A second analysis focused on explicit references to the author and reader. Use of various forms of the first person pronoun, 'I,' 'my,' 'mine,' 'we,' and 'our' was analyzed in the three sets of texts. Explicit reference to the reader was analyzed by consideration of the use of the pronouns 'you' and 'your' as well as the use of nominal references such as 'the author(s)' and 'the writer(s)' to refer to the main recipient of the review (who is also the author of the manuscript being reviewed). Previous research has revealed the use of the first person pronoun in research articles in a number of contexts such as asserting claims and referring to methods (Harwood, 2005; Hyland, 2001b; Kuo, 1999). The use of the second person pronoun, in contrast, is avoided in research articles particularly because of its rhetorical effect of creating interpersonal distance between writer and reader (Hyland, 2001a). An analysis of the presence and rhetorical functions associated with the use of pronominal and nominal references to writer and reader can help clarify the sorts of positions writers and readers fill in the interpersonal relationships constructed in this genre, especially across reviews with different reviewer recommendations.

Regular expression searches in Python, a computer language, were used to extract the words and phrases being analyzed from the three files for the analyses outlined above. Regular expressions are patterns with wild cards that are used to pick out segments of text in documents, for example, the regular expression "[Rr]equir (es|ed|ing)" extracts capitalized or uncapitalized 'require,' 'required,' 'requires' and 'requiring.' Each extracted instance was examined in context. Instances of the items that were reports or quotes from the manuscript being reviewed were removed from the list of exemplars extracted. Items that did not serve the discourse functions being analyzed (that is, making recommendations for revisions or making references to author and reader) were removed from the results. For example, the modal 'would' was only included in the results if it was being used to construct a recommendation. Similarly, the word 'author' was only counted if it was used to refer to the reader, who is also the author of the article being reviewed. The results of the quantitative analysis were thus subjected to qualitative scrutiny.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. The construction of recommendations in manuscript reviews

The frequencies of the different lexicogrammatical items used to construct recommendations and impose obligations on the recipient of the texts were calculated per 1000 words. In addition, the preference for a particular lexicogrammatical item (such as 'may') in comparison to the other choices available was measured in terms of the percentage a particular item was used out of the total number of instances all the analyzed lexicogrammatical items (listed in Table 2) were used in a set of manuscript reviews. The results of these analyses for the three sets of manuscript reviews are given in Table 2. Below are some examples of sentences from the reviews containing these lexicogrammatical items:

1. Reference *could* be made here to Bourdieu's notion of habitus … (MJR 22[2])
2. In addition to pedagogical implication, I *would* like to see some research implications and some recommendations for further research. (MJR 18)
3. The title *should* make clear which sample is referred to. (MJR 7)
4. You *need* to make the role of the practitioners for the design of the study more clear in your article, or rewrite and reduce your claim. (MJR 9)
5. I *suggest* removing any reference to statistical significance. (MNR 3)
6. Rework the first paragraph. (MJR 4)

[2] The examples are labeled for the sub-category, MJR for 'major revision,' MNR for 'minor revision,' and R for 'reject.'

Table 2
Frequency of lexicogrammatical features associated with recommendations in 'minor revision,' 'major revision,' and 'reject' manuscript reviews.

	Minor Revision (10, 950 words; 19 texts)			Major Revision (20, 240 words; 25 texts)			Reject (16, 704 words; 25 texts)		
	No.	%	Per 1000 words	No.	%	Per 1000 words	No.	%	Per 1000 words
May	5	2.8	0.45	10	3.0	0.49	5	4.1	0.30
Might	10	5.6	0.91	11	3.3	0.54	7	5.8	0.42
Would	41	22.9	3.74	59	17.9	2.92	22	18.2	1.32
Can	1	0.6	0.09	17	5.2	0.84	7	5.8	0.42
Could	47	26.3	4.29	39	11.8	1.93	4	3.3	0.24
Suggest	9	5.0	0.82	14	4.2	0.69	1	0.8	0.06
Recommend[a]	1	0.6	0.09	3	0.9	0.15	6	4.9	0.36
Sub-total	**114**	**63.7**	**10.39**	**153**	**46.4**	**7.56**	**52**	**41.6**	**3.12**
Should	27	15.1	2.46	51	15.5	2.52	17	13.6	1.02
Has to	0	0	0	1	0.3	0.05	0	0	0
Ought to	0	0	0	1	0.3	0.05	0	0	0
Must	0	0	0	3	0.9	0.15	5	4.0	0.3
Need(s) (ed)	15	16.2	2.65	85	25.8	4.20	40	32	2.4
Necessary	4	2.2	0.37	5	1.5	0.25	3	2.4	0.18
Require(d)/requires	0	0	0	2	0.6	0.10	6	4.8	0.36
Imperatives	5	2.8	0.5	29	8.8	1.43	2	1.6	0.1
Sub-total	**65**	**36.3**	**5.98**	**177**	**53.6**	**8.75**	**73**	**58.4**	**4.36**
Total	**179**	**100**	**16.37**	**330**	**100**	**16.31**	**125**	**100**	**7.48**

[a] Excludes usage in statements that give final recommendation.

From Table 2, it can be seen that the frequencies of use of these lexicogrammatical features to make recommendations in both the 'minor revision' and 'major revision' reviews are almost equal at 16.37 and 16.31 instances per 1000 words, reflecting the equal importance given to making recommendations in these two sub-sets of manuscript reviews. The 'reject' reviews are different from the other two sets of reviews in the lower frequency of these lexicogrammatical choices used to make recommendations, around 7.5 per 1000 words, perhaps not surprising as these 'reject' reviews have less of a directive function and more of an evaluative and justifying function (Samraj, 2010, 2016).

What is interesting from Table 2 is that, although the frequencies of these deontic modals, verbs, and imperatives are almost similar in the 'minor revision' and 'major revision' texts, the proportion of the first sub-set of features associated with *weaker* recommendations is much larger in the 'minor revision' reviews than in the 'major revision' and 'reject' reviews: the linguistic items used to construct weaker directives and more polite requests form 63.7% of total items used in making recommendations in 'minor revision' reviews compared to about 46% in the 'major revision' reviews and 41.6% in the 'reject' reviews. The 'minor revision' and 'reject' reviews show the greatest contrast in the choices writers make in how their recommendations are constructed. What is striking is that although recommendations for change in the manuscripts being reviewed appear to be made to the same extent in both the 'minor' and 'major revision' reviews (with all the analyzed lexicogrammatical items being found 16.37 times and 16.31 times per 1000 words respectively), they are more likely to be made in a tentative fashion in the 'minor revision' texts and with much greater force in the 'major revision' texts. An example of a tentative request from a minor revision review is "I wondered if the authors could expand a little on the benefits of …. " while more robust recommendations such as "There should be a detailed discussion of the variables" are more likely to appear in 'major revision' reviews. These more forceful impositions made on the recipients of the 'major revision' reviews position the recipient as having much less authority than the author/reviewer.

The most striking difference across the three sub-sets is in the use of the modal 'could,' which is used 4.29 times per 1000 words in the 'minor revision' reviews and 1.93 times per 1000 words in 'major revision' reviews, and only 0.24 times per 1000 words in the 'reject' reviews. Not only is 'could' used fairly frequently in 'minor revision' reviews, this deontic modal that expresses a tentative recommendation constitutes more than a quarter of all uses of lexicogrammatical items (26.3%) to perform a directive function in the 'minor revision' reviews. However, it only constitutes about three percent of the possible choices for making recommendations in the 'reject' reviews. This difference in usage helps to construct a different relationship between the reviewers and those being reviewed and being instructed to make changes to their manuscripts, depending on the final outcome of the reviewer recommendation. The directions being given to the recipients of reviews with the reviewer recommendation of 'minor revision' are presented in a much more tentative fashion than those being given to the other review recipients. The following are two examples of these tentative recommendations:

6. The discussion *could* focus on how there are general purpose medical words … (MNR 8)
7. The author *could* explain why they did not select … (MNR 4)

The passive voice is often used with the modal 'could' in making recommendations for changes, backgrounding the reader as the agent of the action being requested, as in example 8 below:

8. More concrete recommendations *could* be based around the main findings of the study … (MNR 13)

The passive voice is used more or less to the same extent with the recommendations using the modal 'could' in the 'minor' and 'major revision' reviews (the reject reviews have too few instances to justify further analysis). 42.5% of the sentences with 'could' functioning as recommendations use the passive voice in the 'minor revision' reviews and 43.6% of the same kinds of sentences in the 'major revision' texts use passive voice. Some of the sentences expressing recommendations with the modal 'could' are also questions, increasing the level of politeness of the act of advocating change. Interestingly, a larger proportion of recommendations using the modal 'could' are constructed as questions in the 'minor revision' texts, 25.5%, in contrast to 12.8% in the 'major revision' texts, such as in example 9 below. So not only is 'could' used more frequently in 'minor revision' reviews in making recommendations, a greater proportion of the uses appear in questions, amplifying the level of tentativeness and politeness in such requests.

9. On … , *could* you give examples about … comments? (MNR 18)

The 'minor revision' reviews also contain instances of the use of 'could' in recommendations that are both passive constructions and questions as in example 10 below. This sort of tentativeness coupled with the backgrounding of the recipient's agency is absent in the uses of 'could' in recommendation sentences in the 'major revision' reviews:

10. *Could* further clarification be made? (MNR 9)

Among the lexicogrammatical features used in the construction of stronger recommendations in the manuscript reviews, the use of the verb 'need' differs considerably in frequency across reviews with a minor or major revision recommendation. In fact, a form of the verb 'need' is used 4.20 times per 1000 words in the 'major revision' reviews, a frequency similar to the use of 'could' in 'minor revision' reviews (4.29 times per 1000 words). Therefore, authors are as likely to find the following recommendation type (examples 11 and 12), which conveys strong obligation, in a 'major revision' review as they are to find constructions such as those given in examples 8 through 10 with the use of 'could' in 'minor revision' reviews:

11. The writer *needs* to specify the type of writing examined … (MJR 12)
12. The whole of this section *needs* to be broken down into shorter paragraphs … (MJR 21)

Whether the issue is paragraph structure (or deletion) or providing clarification, these results point to a greater urgency and forcefulness in how these changes are advocated in the 'major revision' reviews, although both 'major' and 'minor revision' reviews have the overall communicative purpose of recommending change.

Imperatives, another form of directives, are also significantly more frequent in the 'major revision' than the 'minor revision' texts (1.43 times versus 0.5 times per 1000 words), although infrequent in the 'reject' reviews. (Imperatives are probably infrequent in 'reject' reviews because such strong and urgent recommendations for change would not be in line with the reviews' purpose of rejection and justification for the rejection.) Consider the imperatives below, which give direct instruction to the recipient regarding an action to be performed. These are not usually textual acts (Hyland, 2002b, p. 217) directing readers to another part of the text or to another text (such as "See Borg (2006) on this") but acts surrounding revision of a paper, more akin to what Hyland (2002b) labels physical acts and thus convey direct impositions on the reader.

13. *Rework* the first paragraph. (MJR 4)
14. For example, *provide* concrete examples of possible strategies and tactics for dealing with critical episodes involving … (MJR 5)

Use of these imperatives indicates authority on the part of the writer and positions the reader as a neophyte in need of instruction, like readers of textbooks, where learning is constructed as a "one-way transfer of knowledge from primary-knower to neophyte" (Hyland, 2002b, p. 223). Kuhi and Behnam (2011) also point to the heavier use of directives and reduced use of hedging in introductory academic textbooks in creating a powerful writer ethos. As Strauss et al. (2019, p. 223) state, the use of unmitigated imperatives can be "face threatening, depending on the context and relationship between participants." The frequency of imperatives in major revision reviews (1.43 times per 1000 words) is higher than that found in research articles (1.26 times per 1000 words) but lower than the frequency in textbooks (2.06 times per 1000 words) in the Hyland (2002b) study of directives in three genres. Hyland (2002b) shows that the most frequent directives in textbooks and research articles are what he labels cognitive acts such as one where the writer seeks to mold the understanding of the reader in a preferred way and are deemed to be the most face-threatening function. Swales et al. (1998, p.103) indicate that research articles from disciplines with high frequencies of imperatives such as statistics tend to use them for citational and text management purposes because of the presence of mathematical, experimental and illustrative elements in these research articles. Unlike the directives in research articles, whether they be cognitive, citational or text management acts, those in manuscript reviews are somewhat more intrusive and face-threatening, because they communicate corrective actions.

Although some lexicogrammatical features used in the construction of recommendations are found with different frequencies across the 'minor' and 'major revision' reviews, the deontic modal 'should' appears with similar frequencies in these two sets of reviews, both as a percentage of all items analyzed and in frequency per 1000 words, as shown in Table 2. However,

a more detailed analysis of the use of the deontic modal 'should' in the two sets of reviews reveals that the interpersonal relationship constructed between writer and reader can be affected not just by the choice of lexicogrammatical feature in sentences that serve as recommendations but also more subtly through the sorts of grammatical structures the modal appears in.

Studies using Systemic Functional Grammar (Halliday, 1994) have uncovered the construction of different representations of reality through analyses of transitivity choices in terms of process types and participant roles in clauses. In one study of newspaper discourse (out of a number of useful ones), Lukin (2005, pp. 139–155) showed that different perspectives can be constructed through choices in process types and participants in her analysis of two newspaper reports of the Iraq war. In a similar way, an analysis of process types of the clauses (Halliday, 1994) in which the deontic 'should' appeared revealed somewhat different sorts of experiential meanings constructed with this modal of obligation. Each clause with deontic 'should' was categorized as being existential, relational, material, mental, or verbal (Eggins, 2004). The results from this analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Process types used with *should* in recommendations.

Processes	Minor Revision		Major Revision	
Existential	2	7.4%	3	5.8%
Relational	12	44.4%	8	15.4%
Material/mental/verbal: Active voice	4	14.8%	18	34.6%
Material/mental/verbal: Passive voice	9	33.3%	23	44.2%
Total	27	100%	52	100%

Existential processes where events are expressed as simply existing (example 15) and relational processes "where things are stated to exist in relation to other things" (Eggins, 2004, pp. 237–238) present a state of affairs (examples 16 and 17). In these processes, agentive participants are absent:

15. There *should* be commas after introductory phrases (MJR 6)
16. Also, on page 6, … "little" *should* be "few." (MNR 2)
17. These differences *should* be the main focus of the results … (MJR 20)

Although 'should' is a deontic modal with a strong degree of obligation, it is often used in relational and existential processes where changes are advocated in 'minor revision' reviews (see Table 3), which reduces the threat to face that use of such a strong modal often conveys. In contrast, material, mental or verbal processes in active voice with the modal 'should' result in much stronger directives as the author ('you,' 'the author,' 'the writer' etc.) is pointedly being instructed to engage in an action (material process), cognitive process (mental process), or process of saying (verbal process) and often fills the actor role in these processes as in the examples below. (In some cases, inanimate objects such as 'the paper' can fulfill the role of actor.)

18. You *should* instead expand on your reliance on studies .. (MJR 9)
19. … the author *should*: 1. Decide on the focus of his … (MJR 3)
20. Secondly, the author *should* discuss more in the body of the … (MJR 2)

Such clauses in active voice only form around 15% of the total clauses with the deontic modal 'should' in 'minor revision' reviews but constitute nearly 35% of deontic 'should' in 'major revision' reviews. In both 'major revision' and 'minor revision' reviews material, mental and verbal processes in passive voice, such as examples 21 and 22 below, are preferred over constructions with the use of active voice. However, this preference is more marked in the 'minor revision' reviews (33.3% versus 14.8%) than with the 'major revision' reviews (44.2% versus 34.6%), as shown in Table 3. Comparing the use of passive voice alone across 'major revision' and 'minor revision' reviews is misleading, as explained below. Over twice the number of material/mental/verbal processes are in passive voice rather than in active voice in the 'minor revision' reviews.

21. In addition, the term "regrammaticises" *should* be explained and exemplified. (MJR 5)
22. The manuscript *should* be carefully proofread … (MNR 16)

Obligations imposed on the recipient through use of passive constructions as well as existential and relational processes have the effect of reducing the distance between the gatekeeper imposing revisions and the author of the manuscript receiving these revisions. In these constructions, the primary reader (the author of the manuscript) is not foregrounded as the actor needing to perform the changes. Such constructions form 85.1% of the total uses of 'should' in recommendations in "minor revision" reviews while they only constitute 65.4% of uses of 'should' in 'major revision' reviews. Therefore, even if the modal 'should' is being used almost to the same extent in clauses making recommendations in 'major' and 'minor revision'

reviews, an analysis of transitivity choices in these clauses reveals the construction of different author stance in the two sets of reviews through use of different grammatical structures.

In summary, the lexicogrammatical choices used in the construction of recommendations contribute to the variation in author–reader relationship constructed in manuscript reviews with different reviewer recommendations. The difference is perhaps most obvious across the two sets of reviews that recommend revision. The lexicogrammatical choices used more frequently in the construction of recommendations in 'major revision' texts help to build an author identity of authority and distance in relation to the reader-recipient of the reviews. A somewhat different interpersonal relationship between author and reader is constructed with the more frequent use of lexicogrammatical features that signal more tentative and polite requests for change in the 'minor revision' reviews. The grammatical structures in which a particular modal appears can also contribute to author identity and reader presence in the reviews as shown with the analysis of uses of 'should.' These lexicogrammatical choices contribute to the construction of a social relationship in 'minor revision' reviews similar to the polite relationship established between the writer and readers of research articles (Myers, 1989).

3.2. Authorial presence in reviews

The explicit presence of the author in academic discourse through use of the first person pronoun is another important aspect of author–reader relationship in academic writing (Hyland, 2001b) although traditional rhetorical advice has proscribed the use of the first person pronoun. Use of the first person has varying effects in academic writing. In some cases, use of the first person pronoun where the author clearly identifies him or herself as responsible for the claims being made has been described as a "powerful means by which writers express an identity by asserting their claim to speak as an authority" (Hyland, 2002a, pp.1093–1094). In other cases, personal attribution has been interpreted as an expression of tentativeness in claims being made by foregrounding the personal role played by the writer, especially in negative evaluation in review genres such as book reviews (Hyland, 2000). In a study of identity construction focusing on two key applied linguists, Hyland (2015, p. 41) includes the use of the first person pronoun among rhetorical choices one of the applied linguists, John Swales, employs to achieve the persona of a "cautious and inquiring colleague rather than a combative advocate" and to build "a strong *interpersonal* (original italics) connection to readers."

I will first discuss the use of the singular first person pronoun before discussing the plural pronoun in the reviews. In manuscript reviews, the use of 'I' as subject is often coupled with verbs such as 'believe,' 'think' and 'feel' as in examples 23 and 24 below, helping to create tentativeness in the claims being made. As Halliday (1994, p. 58) has stated, phrases such as 'I think' and 'I feel' express interpersonal meaning and are analyzed as instances of the interpersonal modal theme in his theme-rheme framework.

23. *I* feel this paper needs to give many more details of a possible micro-framework … (MJR 7)
24. *I* think there's a mislabelled sub-heading in Table 5. (MNR 12)

The subjectivity of the opinion being expressed can also be conveyed with the use of the possessive pronoun or object pronoun:

25. *My* main concern regarding the paper is that the findings seem to be not especially striking … (MJR 11)
26. The author's figure 1 … seems to *me* rather confusing. (MJR 22)

The first person pronoun is also used with mental processes such as "I did not understand" in example 27 and relational processes where the attribute is from the domain of cognition as in example 28, "I wasn't sure …," which present problematic aspects of the manuscript as perhaps being the result of the reviewers' own shortcomings. Here expressions of puzzlement rather than outright criticism convey negative evaluation. As such, negative evaluation of the manuscript is presented as being tied strongly to the reviewer and hence, subjective, instead of as an objective claim, given in an authoritarian fashion.

27. *I* did not understand the display … (MNR 3)
28. *I* wasn't sure how English would be taught using … (MJR 19)

The first person pronoun is used not just to hedge negative evaluations and recommendations in all three sets of manuscript reviews, but also accompany verbs 'suggest' and 'recommend,' in constructing weaker recommendations. The first singular person pronoun is also used in statements expressing writer discoursal goals, such as in example 29, where the first person pronoun serves a metadiscoursal function:

29. *I* will describe some of these, then make a few comments (MNR 3)

The results of the analysis of the use of various forms of the first person pronoun in the three sets of reviews are given in Table 4. What is striking in the results is the much greater use of the first person pronoun in the 'minor revision' reviews compared to its use in the 'major revision' and 'reject' reviews. In the 'reject' reviews, the reviewer is less visible in the texts,

resulting in less personal engagement with the audience, which includes the writer of the reviewed manuscript. Recommendations and negative evaluations, both face threatening acts, are much more likely to be presented without the softening presence of the author's qualification that this is just one reviewer's opinion, a positive politeness device, in the 'reject' reviews.

Table 4
Frequency of the first person singular pronoun.

	Minor Revision (10, 950 words; 19 texts)		Major Revision (20, 240 words; 25 texts)		Reject (16, 704 words; 25 texts)	
	Number	Per 1000 words	Number	Per 1000 words	Number	Per 1000 words
I	110	10.05	116	5.7	82	4.9
Me	6	0.55	13	0.6	12	0.7
My	13	1.2	13	0.6	12	0.7
Total	129	11.8	142	7.0	106	6.3

Also noteworthy is that 19% of the uses of first person pronoun in 'reject' reviews are used in sentences where the final evaluation or recommendation is given (see example 30) compared to only 7.8% in 'major revision' and 9.1% in 'minor revision' reviews. What this means is that only around 80% of the already lower frequency uses of 'I' are used in the main comments made in the review.

30. For these reasons, *I* do not think it is suitable for publication in an international, refereed journal. (R 14)

A couple more features of the use of 'I' in the three sub-sets of reviews are also noteworthy. We find personal expressions of appreciation for the opportunity to review the manuscript in the 'minor revision' reviews (example 31). In addition, the first person pronoun is also used by the review author to explicitly express agreement with the manuscript author, who is the audience (example 32).

31. Finally, *I* enjoyed reading and thinking about the paper … (MNR 1)
32. *I* wholeheartedly agree that professors need … and, like the authors, *I* am not convinced that most students … (MNR 2)

We turn now to the use of the first person plural pronoun.[3] In contrast to the use of the first person singular pronoun, the first person plural pronoun is found most frequently in the 'reject' reviews, although it is not used frequently on the whole (see Table 5). Examples 33 and 34 illustrate a common use of the plural pronoun. Instead of presenting the inadequacies of the manuscript being reviewed and the recommendations requested as subjective and arising from one reviewer, the use of the first person plural pronoun constructs these lacks as not particularly tied to the reviewer.

Table 5
Frequency of the first person plural pronoun.

	Minor Revision (10, 950 words; 19 texts)		Major Revision (20, 240 words; 25 texts)		Reject (16, 704 words; 25 texts)	
	Number	Per 1000 words	Number	Per 1000 words	Number	Per 1000 words
We	10	0.9	22	1.08	34	2.04
Our	1		2		1	
Total	11		24		35	

33. The authors talk about adapting texts to "the conventions of academic writing" as if *we* knew what those were. (R 13)
34. This is never explained and *we* are expected to accept this refers to a coherent and self-contained category. (R 14)

The plural pronoun is used exclusively (without including the reader) and appears to include the field and other reviewers (and possibly the editor), who are cast in opposition to the author(s) of the paper, thereby casting the reader of the review, also the author of the article, as an outsider. Interestingly, the plural first person pronoun is never used in making recommendations or even negative evaluations in 'minor revision' reviews but is used to convey the larger field's agreement with and approval of the claims in the reviewed manuscript.

[3] One review was reviewed jointly by two reviewers and this is stated as the reason for the use of the first person plural pronoun. The numbers from this review were not included in the results given in Table 5.

35. Yet, as the authors suggest, it is in the scaffolding of the tasks, as well as in the expectations and evaluation that *we* can give students the space actually to learn. (MNR 2)

Different author stances are created through the varied uses of the first person pronoun in different reviews. In the 'reject' reviews, the reviewer is not as visible in the criticisms and recommendations made because of the low use of the first person singular pronoun. In the case of the 'minor revision' texts, the high use of the first person pronoun, together with explicit expressions of agreement with the claims of the manuscript author and appreciation for engaging with the manuscript, helps create a reviewer author stance of not just politeness but also of solidarity, creating a relationship of inclusiveness. Eschewing the use of the plural pronoun, which broadens the source and increases the strength of negative evaluation and recommendations made, further reinforces this collegial relationship. In contrast, in the 'reject' reviews, the field at large or reviewers as a group seem to be standing in judgment of the manuscript being reviewed and its author, producing an air of inevitability to the claims being made. The joint effect is one of distancing the reviewing author from the reviewed reader. An author that is not as remote as the ones of 'reject' reviews is constructed in the 'major revision' reviews. However, this author–reader relationship is not as collegial as the one constructed in the 'minor revision' reviews.

3.3. Reader presence in reviews

In addition to the use of 'you' and the possessive form 'your,' I also analyzed the use of the nouns 'author' and 'writer' (including the plural and possessive uses) as they were the most frequent ways used to refer to the primary reader of these reviews. According to Table 6, the reader is referred to either through a nominal or second person quite frequently in the three sets of manuscript reviews, with over 10 instances per 1000 words. The noun, 'author,' appears to be the preferred way to refer to the primary reader of the review, constituting more than 60% of all references to this reader. The reader being addressed directly through use of the second person pronoun 'you' or 'your' is much more frequent in the 'major revision' reviews (3.01 per 1000 words) than either the 'minor revision' (1.37 per 1000 words) or 'reject' reviews (1.32 per 1000 words). In all three sub-categories, the pronoun 'you' or 'your' is used when the reviewer is making a recommendation (or a clarification request as part of a recommendation) or an evaluative comment as in the following examples:

36. What do *you* mean by "knowledge equipment"? (R 12)
37. However, *you* do not fully manage to make it clear to the reader in what way the present study actually is based on "collaboration" and "alliance" with the practitioners. (MJR 9)
38. *You* should instead expand on your reliance on studies of intercultural communication and on studies of mono- and multilingual workplace discourse. (MJR 9)
39. … *you* have made some excellent comments and the insights from the data are very interesting. (MJR 4)
40. Could *you* rephrase them? (MNR 8)

It is not the case that review authors use the second person pronoun or the third person references, such as 'the author' or 'the writer,' consistently in one review. Instead, it is not uncommon to position the author of the reviewed manuscript as both a second person addressee and a third person reference in a single review. Even so, the frequency with which the authors of the reviewed manuscript are put in a direct relationship with the reviewer through use of the second person pronoun ('you' or 'your') does affect the sort of interpersonal relationship constructed between writer and reader. Using the second person pronoun in negative evaluation of the reviewed manuscript and in obligations imposed on the reader increases their directness (see examples 37 and 38). The second person pronoun is not usually employed with positive evaluation as in example 39 because positive evaluative comments are fairly uncommon in 'major revision' reviews where the use of the pronoun is most frequent. Although a greater use of the second person pronoun can promote a greater level of engagement with the reader, in this case, it ties the reader and recipient of the review more firmly with the (often) negative evaluation and recommendations for change being advocated. From Table 6, it seems that this directness and ensuing threat to face and hierarchical distance is much more prevalent in the 'major revision' reviews than in 'minor revision' reviews. Surprisingly, the frequency in the 'reject' reviews is close to that in the 'minor revision' reviews and the second person pronoun is not employed frequently as a means to create distance in these reviews. Perhaps, because the 'reject' reviewers position the readers as outsiders to the disciplinary community, any engagement, even an unequal one, is minimized.

Table 6
Common reader references in three sub-categories of manuscript review genres.

	Minor Revision (10, 950 words; 19 texts)			Major Revision (20, 240 words; 25 texts)			Reject (16, 704 words; 25 texts)		
	Number	%	Per 1000 words	Number	%	Per 1000 words	Number	%	Per 1000 words
You/your	15	11.3	1.37	61	23.0	3.01	22	12.5	1.32
Author(s) ('s) (s')	113	85.6	10.32	174	65.7	8.6	141	80.1	8.4
Writer(s) ('s) (s')	4	3.0	0.37	30	11.3	1.5	13	7.4	0.78
Total	132	100	12.05	265	100	13.09	176	100	10.54

Comparing the usage of the first person pronoun (Table 4) to the second person pronoun (Table 6) in the 'minor' and 'major revision' reviews also presents some interesting contrasts. The first person singular pronoun, promoting colleagiality in interpersonal relation, is found 11.8 times per 1000 words in 'minor revision' reviews, while the second person pronoun that constructs hierarchical distance is only used 1.37 times per 1000 words. The first person pronoun then is used around 760% more than the face-threatening second person pronoun in 'minor revision' reviews. In contrast, the difference in use between the more collegial first person singular pronoun (7.0 times per 1000 words) and the directly challenging second person pronoun (3.01 times per 1000 words) in 'major revision' reviews of 132% is less striking. The greater divergence in the explicit presence of the author and the reader in the 'minor revision' reviews results in a more collegial reader–writer relationship than in the 'major revision' reviews.

5. Conclusion

The analyses of the reviews with three different reviewer outcomes point to variation in the sorts of author identity constructed through different usage of linguistic resources. Because these manuscript reviews are texts with a directive function, linguistic choices used in the construction of recommended actions play a crucial role in the nature of interpersonal relations constructed between author and reader. Grammatical choices, ranging from modals expressing tentativeness to imperatives, create different degrees of authoritativeness in advice giving, leading to the construction of varying identities for author and reader in these occluded review texts. Other language choices impact the rhetorical visibility of the author and the reader, who is also the author of the reviewed manuscript.

We know much about author identity in public academic genres such as academic bios that accompany research articles, web pages, and research articles as well as student writing (Hyland, 2012a). As earlier research has shown, different genres with different purposes, such as textbooks and student reports, encode different writer–reader relationships and author identities. For the most part, the relationship constructed in academic texts such as research articles has been described as polite and one of solidarity (Myers, 1989), where discursive resources are used to "galvanize support, express collegiality, resolve difficulties and avoid disputations" (Kuhi & Behnam, 2011, p. 118).

The relationship constructed in the reviews analyzed in my study, a private genre, is not always one of politeness and collegiality. Although in some cases the reviewers position themselves as allies to the readers and embrace these readers (who are authors of the reviewed manuscript) as "worthy members of the [disciplinary] community" (Englander & López-Bonilla, 2011, p. 408), in others, the review authors manufacture a distant position and remove their personal involvement in their denial of the readers' journal publication and place in the disciplinary community. The contrasts identified across individual reviewers in Englander & López-Bonilla, 2011 study are also seen in groups of reviews with different recommendations in my study. What is significant is not just the difference in author stance between the 'reject' and 'minor revision' reviews but also that between the two sets of reviews recommending some level of revision. The reviews with the recommendation of 'major revision,' that is, manuscripts that have been deemed less acceptable and hence require more extensive revision have an author identity where the 'instructive' function of the author is magnified through use of linguistic resources such as imperatives that express stronger admonitions rather than invitations to the reader to consider suggested recommendations. The less frequent presence of weaker modals such as 'could' and use of the first person pronoun to mitigate the strength of claims and recommendations help create an author identity that is not one of deference to the reader but that of a disciplinary expert with authority. This non-egalitarian relationship between the writer and reader that has also been identified in instructional academic genres such as introductory textbooks (Kuhi & Behnam, 2011, p. 121) is probably aided by the double blind reviewing process. The question remains whether writers of manuscript reviews would construct such an authoritative author ethos and non-egalitarian relationship with the reader if author identity were open and not hidden.

The results of this study have shown that writer identity and writer–reader relationships in private genres can be quite different from what is seen in public academic genres. The purpose, context, and readers of a genre influence the sorts of linguistic resources drawn on by writers in constructing their persona and that of the reader in discourse. Disciplinary identity construction in less visible discourse is important in our overall understanding of identity in written academic discourse. Further studies on variation in discursive construction of author identity in manuscript reviews due to gender and seniority of the reviewer could also enhance our understanding of identity in occluded academic genres.

The findings from this study have applications for two groups of academics. The first group is the recipients of manuscript reviews, who are authors of the manuscripts that have undergone review. This study has revealed the more direct, distant and non-egalitarian relationship found in 'major revision' and 'reject' reviews. Novice researchers may need to be made aware of the prevalence of this sort of writer identity in 'major revision' reviews so as to not allow this identity from discouraging them from attempting to revise the manuscript. One suggestion for an activity in a course on English for Research Publication Purposes would be to rewrite 'major revision' reviews using the linguistic choices found in 'minor revision' reviews (such as the use of first person pronoun and questions in making a recommendation), where possible, to reconstruct the author's identity and reader–writer relationship in the review. Reading a review with a more collegial reader–writer relation might help facilitate the revision process for novice researchers. The second set of implications stemming from this study are for review writers. It might be helpful for review writers, both novice and senior reviewers, to be made aware of important differences in identity construction seen across the 'major revision' and 'minor revision' reviews. Raising the consciousness of reviewers of the range of discursive resources available for constructing recommendations and reader and writer presence in

texts would give reviewers the option of choosing resources that construct themselves as allies facilitating the publication of a research article rather than as authorities instructing novices.

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Betty Samraj is Professor of Linguistics at San Diego State University. Her main research interests are in academic writing in different disciplines and genre analysis. She has published her research in journals such as *English for Specific Purposes*, *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, and *TEXT and TALK*.