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## Book Review: Álvarez-Gil, Francisco J. (2022). *Stance devices in tourism related research articles: A corpus-based study*. Peter Lang.

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*Stance devices in tourism related research articles*, authored by Francisco Álvarez-Gil, is a recent corpus-based publication that aims to evaluate the presence and function of stance markers in research articles in the field of tourism. ‘Stance’ in academic writing tends to refer to the author’s position or point of view of a topic in question. The term refers to the author’s ideas, attitudes, and justifications for those ideas, as well as the support and arguments to back up any made claims. Having a strong and well-defined perspective is crucial in the writing of research articles as it establishes the author’s authority, adopted position, opposing viewpoints and arguments, which in turn contribute to promoting further academic discussions and debates. The interest in stance clearly stems from viewing language as a system of functions; one that emphasizes the purposes for which language is used.

The study reported in this book aims to contribute to the rather scarce language inquiry into tourism discourse, and it is motivated by the importance of empirical research in tourism as an industry. Understanding the use of stance devices is not only of interest to the study of language pragmatics and research papers as a genre, but it has much to offer tourism professionals as well. How stance is formed could help professionals adjust their language to reflect their organizations’ commitment to certain issues and values, for example, to aspects of responsible tourism (e.g., sustainability and cultural sensitivity) as well as to the needs of their customers and stakeholders.

After an introductory chapter that gives an overview of the book and its structure, the body of the content is organized into four chapters, these are: The notion of ‘stance’ and the target devices (in chapter 2), the rhetoric structure of the research article in the field of tourism (chapter 3), perspectivizing stance in tourism-related research articles (chapter 4), and a final concluding chapter (chapter 5).

Álvarez-Gil dedicates chapter 2 to displaying a range of definitions of ‘stance’ by Biber *et al.* (1999), Hyland (2005), Johnstone (2009), and Dzung Pho (2013), among others. In the absence of a unified academic definition for ‘stance’, which is attributed to the reflexive nature between the quotidian and academic uses of the term (Englebreston, 2007), it was central that this issue be addressed head on. After a discussion of these definitions, the author words ‘stance’ as a complex attitudinal notion with a broad variety of forms that need to be understood in relation to the context and text in which they appear. In the specific case of

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tourism research articles, he stresses that the genres and registers are inseparable from the way in which stancetaking forms appear. The target stance devices hypothesized to appear are then presented. As explained in the book, the target devices were drawn partially from the author's previous studies on the topic concerned with modality. Skillful writers manipulate different types of modal verbs, including epistemic and effective modals, to construe their identity as members of the discourse community, whether as tourism professionals or researchers, while they adequately express advice and necessity for action. In addition to modals, the author drew on stance devices reported by other scholars that are frequently used in research articles to establish views and perspectives (Gotti, 2009, 2012); namely, tenses, intensifiers and downtoners, passives, conditionals, and that-complement clauses, all of which except downtoners are eventually confirmed to be significantly present in the analyzed studies.

In chapter 3, Álvarez-Gil gives an overview of the similarities and differences between the three schools of genres, New Rhetoric, English for Specific Purposes, and Systemic Functional Linguistics. He then centers on the methods used for exploring the rhetorical macrostructure of his corpus, which was composed of 74 research articles that were published in journals between 2015 and 2018. Influenced by the work of Biber (1988) and Swales (1990), and several systematic functional linguists as Halliday and Martin (1993), he demonstrates ways in which stance devices are used by the writers in this field to relay their perspectives and persuade their readers. He also shows that despite the wide variety of purposes and styles in tourism research articles, these are unified by linguistic cues that repeat and have an identifiable textual structure of six stages. Though both two findings are unsurprising, the details of the analysis are interesting for language and tourism researchers alike given the absence of previous studies on tourism research articles and because tourism texts can be highly unstandardized. An important point made in this chapter is the relational correlation between the authorial involvement of the authors in some stages of the research article and the length of text.

In chapter 4 and 5, the author focuses on the perspectivizing strategies in the corpus in relation to the stages of the analysed research articles, which were found to vary from stage to another. The results also show that the explored devices serve a mixture of communicative functions. For example, modal verbs help express the necessity for particular measures to improve the tourism market, in light of the facts shown by the research carried out, which in turn contribute to setting future directions in the sector. The tenses contribute to the overall epistemic credibility of the research, and the use of conditionals gives the readers a space to form their own opinions and decrease the authors' imposition of personal perspectives.

At the end of the book, the author refers to research limitations to be taken up in future studies. The first limitation concerns identifying further micro-structures within the genre of tourism research articles and the other concerns the language native-ness of the research writers.

Álvarez-Gil makes it a point to refer to the teaching and learning of stance devices as a salient aspect in the linguistic elaboration of scientific papers. Though appreciated, learners of this genre and of tourism would benefit more if this point were given more emphasis and space. Stance-taking is present within the folds of the goals and objectives of Tourism English for Specific and Academic Purposes (ESAP) curricula, yet teaching it can be limited to attention to register and modal forms with the general purpose of adequate, polite, language use. Though the book targets tourism professionals, not only researchers, an explicit call to incorporate specific aspects of stancetaking into teaching repertoires was somewhat expected. Nonetheless, teachers and teacher-researchers can still use this book to distill research-based data to acquaint tourism and business students with stancetaking devices.

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