



Ann-Charlotte Lindeberg

# Promotion and Politeness

Conflicting Scholarly Rhetoric in Three Disciplines

## **Ann-Charlotte Lindeberg**

Until her recent retirement, Ann-Charlotte Lindeberg was senior lecturer of English at the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration, Helsinki, where she taught academic writing to undergraduates, postgraduates and faculty. Her early research interest focused on applying textlinguistic methods to the analysis of student writing in EFL, and she was a member of the research group 'Style and Text' at the Research Institute of the Åbo Akademi Foundation and of the Nordic project NORDWRITE. After obtaining her Licenciate of Philosophy, Lindeberg turned to examining professional scholarly writing in business disciplines, using tools from genre analysis and discourse analysis. She was a founding member and member of the organizing committees of the Nordic research networks NORDTEXT and NORDDISC.

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## PROMOTION AND POLITENESS



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My interest in scholarly rhetoric was initially aroused by the fact that I was teaching students of Economics and Business Administration, both undergraduates and postgraduates, how to write academic papers and articles in English as a foreign language. The focus of interest was thus a very practical one: What are the rhetorical and linguistic conventions involved in writing convincing abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusions in the various disciplines my students represented? Writing manuals gave some guidelines, but the best answers were to be found, I thought, by examining the texts written by esteemed scholars in the respective fields, using the tools provided by research in genre analysis and discourse analysis, and trying to develop these tools further when the need arose. The present work is a report on what I learnt in the process, one valuable lesson being that it is only when we strive to describe reality systematically and consistently that we learn how many of our representations are based on impressions. Admittedly, a powerful impression or metaphor may have a rhetorical impact that cannot be verified by numerical data on frequencies of occurrence, which therefore only have limited explanatory power in descriptions of style. Yet, for teaching purposes, it feels reassuring to be able to say in a particular context: 'This convention appears to be quite common in your discipline.' or conversely: 'This convention does not appear to occur frequently in your discipline, but pay attention when you read publications in your own field.'

A large number of people have been helpful to me during the arduous course of this work. First I would like to thank my two supervisors, Professor Eleanor Wikborg of Stockholm University and Professor Håkan Ringbom of Åbo Akademi University, for not giving up on me. I am especially grateful to Eleanor for taking time to read the draft of my manuscript at a time which was crucial to her and to me, although for different reasons. The two external examiners of my manuscript, Professor Ulla Connor of Indiana University and Dr. Philip Shaw of Stockholm University, I want to thank for their instructive and illuminating comments, which helped me carry out a considerable number of improvements on the manuscript.

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Thanks are due to my students at the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration, undergraduates, postgraduates as well as professors, for sharing their questions and insights with me over many years of rewarding teaching. To all my students I therefore dedicate this work. It has been an instructive experience for a writing instructor to realize that, despite my extensive knowledge of the theories of good academic writing, the actual writing process of the dissertation has not been easy.

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When the material was being collected, the journals were not yet available on the Internet, as they are now. A great job in the meticulous and time-consuming work of scanning the articles into electronic form was done by Monica Jansson-Olenius – many thanks. Invaluable assistance in every aspect of word processing was rendered by my son Robin, whose patience never failed, even when faced with the most stupid questions over and over again. With her invariable good sense and good humour, my daughter Carin helped me keep my sense of proportion, when problems seemed to become overwhelming. With her steady sympathy and her exquisite singing, my daughter-in-law Tuuli has provided great moments of solace and delight. My sister, Dr. Margaretha Hickley, was kind enough to painstakingly proofread the text; any errors that remain are my own. Last but not least, I want to thank my husband Tom for gradually taking over and beautifully managing all household chores and for putting up with an absentminded wife for so many years.

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November, 2003

Ann-Charlotte Lindeberg



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

A necessary prerequisite for both students and researchers who wish to participate effectively in the increasingly international world of scholarship today is competence in English for academic purposes (EAP). Studies and postgraduate work abroad, collaboration with foreign colleagues and publication in international journals all presuppose proficiency in academic English, which has been claimed to be the predominant *lingua franca* of present-day research and scholarship (Swales 1990, Bhatia 1993, Duszak 1994). A growing number of European universities provide not only courses in text comprehension but also in writing academic papers in English. In Finnish universities the language centers provide these courses, and at the schools of business and administration academic writing in English is offered by English departments.

While for many years there has been a large number of course books and manuals for writing essays and research reports, primarily in science and technology but also in the humanities, there are no corresponding texts addressing the varied fields of the disciplines taught at business schools. Similarly, whereas there is extensive research on academic English in science and technology, and some research on academic English in economics, there are few studies of scholarly writing in other major business sciences such as Finance, Management and Organization, and Marketing. Many intelligent writers can no doubt extrapolate certain general principles of style and rhetoric from other disciplines, and check their findings against the conventions in their own disciplines, but this is a laborious and time-consuming activity, especially if the writer is a novice scholar or is operating in English as a foreign language (EFL). Few students and scholars reflect much on the rhetorical effect of, for example, choosing one reporting verb rather than another in citations or on the hedging of knowledge claims, unless their attention is drawn to it by supervisors, peer readers, reviewers or journal editors. However, few of these readers have or take the time to give really systematic feedback.

The present study was triggered by a postgraduate seminar on how to write introductions to research papers in English organized by the Research Institute of the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration (SSEBA) in Helsinki. The participants, representing a variety of disciplines: Economics, Finance, Management and Organization, Marketing, and Political Science, were asked in advance to submit to the instructor (the present writer) a representative example of an introduction published in English from a journal that was central to their own field of research. On examining these samples, an immediate finding was that, although there were similarities in rhetorical structure and phrasing, there were also major differences between the disciplines. The conclusion was that in order to be able to efficiently assist students and researchers to see the specific characteristics of their own disciplines and to become proficient writers in academic English in their specific fields, it was necessary to conduct a study of the differing rhetorical and linguistic characteristics of research papers in the major business disciplines and journals.

The original aim of the study was to provide a straightforward description and analysis of rhetorical structures, i.e. sequences of rhetorical moves and steps (cf. Dudley-Evans 1989, Swales 1990), and their linguistic realizations in three major business disciplines: Finance, Management and Organization (henceforth Management) and Marketing. These disciplines were chosen because they are major research disciplines, not only in the Swedish School of Economics but also on the basis of the overall prestige of the top journals in these disciplines (cf. Section 1.3.2). In contrast to the popularly held myth of the factuality and objectivity of science, the pilot studies revealed at an early stage a striking characteristic that seemed worth examining in depth: a surprising amount of explicit promotion of the writers' own contribution (Lindeberg 1994b, 1996b, cf. also Huckin 1987/1993 in Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). This led to the present focus on the linguistic manifestations of promotion in the three disciplines.

Given the potentially face-threatening effect of promoting a writer's own contribution, the next question was to what extent promotion might be counterbalanced by politeness devices (cf. Myers 1989, 1992). Another follow-up question was to what extent possible differences between the three disciplines might be linked with their epistemology, i.e. the way the discourse communities viewed what knowledge is, how it is generated, and how it is presented. The conditions of getting published were another possible factor



which might affect the promotion of contributions. In other words, in addition to presenting the specific linguistic theories and models that are used in the rhetorical and linguistic analyses of the present material, I found it relevant to examine how the disciplines/publications view themselves and their activities, i.e. what the social constraints and exigencies are (cf. Miller 1984/1994, Bazerman 1981, 1988, Barton 2002 on 'rich' descriptions).

The ultimate aim of the study is to provide models and tools that can be used in teaching academic writing to students and scholars in business sciences, both native speakers of English who are novice scholarly writers and novice and more experienced academics writing in English as a foreign language. All these categories of learners face not only the task of learning appropriate linguistic expressions and rhetorical structures but also the task of learning what these signals mean in the target discourse community. They also need to become aware of the proper context for using various alternatives. Therefore, one purpose is to try to link linguistic and rhetorical characteristics to conceptions of the targeted audience and to how the generation and representation of knowledge is conceived of in the three disciplines studied here. Additionally, the purpose is to describe how the three disciplines handle the reporting of research as a social activity: the major interpersonal markers of interaction, i.e. the promotion of the writers' own contribution and the use of politeness signals. Both self-reference and politeness devices have been found to vary in different discourse communities, disciplines, and language cultures (e.g. Mauranen 1993a, 1993b, Andersson and Gunnarsson 1995, Fredrickson and Swales 1994, Hyland 1998b, 2000) and also over time in the same disciplines (Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995, Hyland 2000). Therefore, for novice native writers as well as writers in EFL it is important to become sensitized to the linguistic signals and rhetorical effects of different conventions.

The theoretical framework used in the study builds on models from three major directions in applied linguistics: genre analysis, rhetoric, and discourse analysis. On the superordinate level (hyperlevel), use is made of theories of science, genre analysis and rhetoric (cf. for example Kuhn 1962/1996, Bazerman 1981, 1988, Whitley 1984a, 1984b, McCloskey 1986, Miller 1984/1994, Gross 1990/1996, Swales 1990, Bhatia 1993, 1995, Freedman and Medway 1994, MacDonald 1994, Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). The middle level (macrolevel) is concerned with genre analysis and rhetorical

structure focusing on rhetorical moves and steps in terms of emphasis and sequencing (cf. for example Dudley-Evans 1989, Swales 1990). On the lowest level (microlevel), the analysis is based on linguistic markers. These are linked to moves/steps, rhetorical effect and genre (cf. for example Hunston 1989, 1993, 1994, Swales 1990, Hyland 1996a, 1998c, 1999b). In other words, the aim is to make explicit the tools of effective textual structuring and linguistic signaling in the three business disciplines, with a special focus on promotion and politeness signals.

The theoretical contribution of the study is aimed at providing a descriptive model for analytic and pedagogical application in various disciplines as well as providing empirical findings on the rhetorical and linguistic characteristics of the three disciplines of Finance, Management and Organization, and Marketing. Between them these disciplines seem to illustrate features that have been found to characterize what has been generalized as hard sciences (empiricist, factive, quantitative) on the one hand and as soft sciences (contingent, interpretive, qualitative) on the other hand (cf. Wignell 1998, Hyland 1999). The aim is not to provide prescriptive norms but to show prevailing propensities, and above all, to draw academic writers' attention to features that are variable and may have different rhetorical and interpersonal effects in different contexts and different discourse communities.

## **1.2 Research questions**

The basic hypothesis of this study is that the three disciplines under study differ in certain respects in their use of rhetorical strategies and in the structuring of those sections in which authorial presence is most discernible, i.e. in abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusions. I have assumed that these rhetorical strategies can most effectively be studied by examining samples from the most prestigious journals in the three disciplines. American journals were chosen because these were considered to be the most important by subject experts. I deem it necessary to have one cultural 'benchmark' before going into cross-cultural comparisons of different languages or cultures (e.g. American vs. British scholarly style). Many academic writing scholars speak about the Anglo-American academic rhetoric, but although convenient in my view this is a misnomer. The fact is that American and British academic rhetorics are different, and the rhetorics of different disciplines/subdisciplines vary even within the

same national cultures (Bazerman 1981, 1988, MacDonald 1994 on point-first vs. point-last organization in subdisciplines).

As will be described in Chapter 4, the focus on the explicit manifestations of promotion and politeness was triggered by two observations made during the pilot studies (Lindeberg 1994b, 1994c, 1996, 1998). Firstly, all these sections of the articles contained a surprising amount of explicit evaluation that seemed to have a promotional function, and secondly, they also contained mitigating signals which appeared to counterbalance the possible face-threatening effect of promotion, i.e. mitigation was used for politeness purposes (cf. Myers 1989). Against this background, which will be further detailed in the chapter presenting the theoretical framework, the following research questions evolved:

1. How frequent is explicit promotion in abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusion sections, and what are its rhetorical manifestations?
2. How frequent is mitigation of promotion, and what are the signals of mitigation?
3. In what ways are the three disciplines similar and/or different in their use of promotion and the types of promotion used?
4. In what ways are the three disciplines similar and/or different in their mitigation of promotion?
5. How can the possible similarities/differences be linked to the ways the three disciplines view the construction of knowledge?

Seeing how influential Swales' CARS (Creating a Research Space) model of rhetorical structure has been in both research and teaching (Swales 1990, Weissberg and Buker 1990, Swales and Feak 1994, May 1997), it was further of interest to study to what extent the rhetorical/promotional structures in the present material followed Swales' model. Moving to a more specific level, the additional questions posed were the following:

- To what extent does the placement of promotional steps in the three disciplines follow the CARS model?
- How do writers in the three disciplines choose to initiate abstracts, introductions and discussion/conclusion sections, and do the initial strategies predict the general strategies?
- Do the promotional strategies of the disciplines show a consistency across abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusion sections?

- What types of appeals do writers use to justify their claim of centrality of the research area or topic?
- Can the promotional strategies be linked with the targeted readership of the journals?

The rationale for these questions and for the framework chosen for the analysis of the material will be presented in Chapters 2 to 8. However, here two further points need to be made in the context of promotion. First, when I began this investigation I was not aware of the work on the ‘marketization’ of academia done by Bhatia (1993), Fairclough (1995) and further developed by Hyland (2000). Therefore, my decision to focus on promotion was not called forth by these researchers but by the characteristics emerging in the material itself. However, in later sections I shall link my work to the observations made in these works (see Chapters 3 and 13).

Secondly, it is necessary to examine the possible overlaps between the term persuasive and the term promotional. In American textbooks of rhetoric, e.g. a classic such as Brooks and Warren (1972/1979), persuasion is distinguished from argument in the following way:

Both persuasion and argument aim to convince somebody. The difference is in the methods used. In persuasion, the intention is to use emotional appeals, involving the necessary minimum of logic and emphasizing the sense of common ground, to bring about a change of attitude, point of view, or feelings. In argument, the main intention is to use logic as means of bringing about the change. (Brooks and Warren 1979: 40)

The final effect of promotion may well be persuasion, but the perspective is different: persuasion may be based on irrational arguments whereas promotion, as it is conceived here, is based on rational grounds and an explicit addition of evaluation. In a further attempt to clarify the difference, Brooks and Warren propose that the end of argument strictly conceived is truth, i.e. truth as determined by the operation of reason, whereas the end of persuasion is assent, assent to the will of the persuader (1979:109). However, the borderline is often difficult to draw, as the numerous debates on the ‘objectivity’ and ‘rationality’ of science show. Without wishing to go into the debate of truth and science or to discuss the possible pervasiveness of argumentation in scholarly discourse in general (see for example Hunston 1989, Gross 1990/1996, Hunston and Thompson 2000), this study focuses on overt evaluation and promotion only.

### 1.3 Material and procedure

The genre of the present material can be characterized in terms of Swales' description of research articles (RAs): they refer to written texts, usually limited to a few thousand words, which report on some investigation carried out by its author(s) and may in addition examine theoretical or methodological issues; they usually relate the current findings to those of others; they are intended to appear/have appeared in a research journal (Swales 1990).

I am aware that by examining published articles, the object of study is narrowly focused on the end product of a long process of knowledge creation, presentation, drafting, revision, and negotiation between authors and peers as well as reviewers and editors. This is a conscious choice, as the objective was to describe characteristics of texts that have reached the stage of acceptance, rather than the process leading up to the final product. Nevertheless, I endorse the view that a published paper is the concerted product of negotiation between the authors and the audience, whether concretely realized in the peer response process or the journal review and editing process (cf. for example Myers 1990, 1992, Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995 for descriptions of these processes).

#### 1.3.1 Data collection

On the basis of expert advice (faculty at SSEBA) and external rankings, the six journals listed below were chosen for study (see Table 1; the titles of specific articles are listed in Appendix 4). They have all repeatedly been ranked among the top five research journals of their fields, using a variety of measures not only the commonly used SSCI (Social Science Citation Index), which has been criticized for not showing whether a citation was positive or negative (cf. Mizruchi and Fein 1999). Thus *The Journal of Finance* and *Journal of Financial Economics* have been ranked among the top three journals in the discipline (Zivney and Bertin 1992, cf. Schwert 1993), *Academy of Management Journal* and *Administrative Science Quarterly* as the top two journals (Coe and Weinstock 1984), and *Journal of Marketing* and *Journal of Marketing Research* among the top five journals (Dembkowski, Diamantopoulos, and Schlegelmilch 1993, cf. also Pierce and Garven 1995 on all six journals). The journals can thus be seen to reflect the same level of quality and are comparable in this respect. The question has been asked whether the study material would be jeopardized if some of the included authors are not

native speakers of English. The high quality demands (80-90% of submitted MSs are rejected) and the vigorous review processes make it irrelevant whether the RAs were written by native speakers of English or not.

**Table 1. Journals chosen for the study**

<i>The Journal of Finance</i>	(henceforth JF)
<i>Journal of Financial Economics</i>	(henceforth JFE)
<i>Academy of Management Journal</i>	(henceforth AMJ)
<i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i>	(henceforth ASQ)
<i>Journal of Marketing</i>	(henceforth JM)
<i>Journal of Marketing Research</i>	(henceforth JMR)

Swales (1990) among others has questioned the use of the writing of top scholars as material and models of analysis, since these can easily deviate from conventions and still be accepted (cf. also Myers 1990). However, since even top scholars are known to have had their manuscripts refused (Gans and Shepherd 1994), they too seem to be subjected to the usual requirements of acceptance. The very low acceptance rate of these journals, only 10-20% of submitted manuscripts, and the repeated review processes before publication, should guarantee a fairly high standard of the general quality of writing, not only of the top scholars.

From each of the journals twenty articles which include empirical research were taken randomly, i.e. the criterion for inclusion was that the articles present a theoretical model, framework or hypothesis and report empirical findings on the testing of the model, framework or hypothesis. This criterion was used to ensure comparability between the subcorpora. The articles on the whole follow the now classical macrostructure of experimental research reports: IMRD (*Introduction-Method-Results-Discussion*). These major IMRD sections are frequently subdivided into subsections with varying internal order, and subtitles may reflect content (informative headings) rather than rhetorical function (descriptive headings). Because the present study focuses on the explicit signaling of promotion and politeness, only those sections that can be assumed to contain the largest share of authorial presence were included, i.e. abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusions (cf. Butler 1990, Hunston 1994a, Hyland 1994, 1996a). The number of articles totaled 120, which yielded a total of 360 texts of the three categories of sections. The time of collecting the material spanned 1992-1994, and the material was scanned into digitalized form. Since then, these journals have all

become electronically available, which saves future researchers a considerable amount of time and provides a convenient sample for checking the findings of the present study against current publications, a possible direction for further study.

### *1.3.2 Description of data*

The sample size of the material can always be debated in terms of whether it can be considered representative and hence to what extent the findings can be considered valid and generalizable. As the objective of this study is not to prescribe general rules of rhetoric or style, but to extend knowledge about forms that scholarly rhetoric and style may take in the three disciplines under study, in-depth statistical calculations have not been attempted. Although use will be made of frequencies in the analysis of the empirical findings, the aim is to find major tendencies and patterns rather than irrefutable evidence. The focus of interest is primarily on what a cluster of features may indicate about conventions, i.e. on their rhetorical function or effect, rather than on their high or low numbers of occurrence as such.

Table 2 below presents numerical data on the size of the abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusion sections in terms of the total number of sentences, the average number of sentences per text, the total number of paragraphs, the average number of paragraphs per text, and the average number of sentences per paragraph. In all cases except one, sections were delimited by graphic means (empty lines) and descriptive subheadings. In the anomalous introduction, all text up to and including the announcement of present research was included.

As the study focuses on rhetorical steps and structures rather than on the use of linguistic signals in general, it was felt not to be relevant to offer figures on number of words (e.g. per 1000 words as is commonly done). Comparing the number or proportion of promotional steps in relation to the total number of sentences in a section, and the proportion of promotional steps that include mitigation, would appear to give a clearer picture of the degree of promotion and politeness than would comparing steps with promotion and mitigation with the number of words. Admittedly, one sentence often contained more than one promotional step (polypragmatic), so even the present measure represents an idealization, as averages do. A more accurate measure would be to use the total number of rhetorical steps as a point of comparison. However, as those who have

attempted it know, the chunking of any sizeable text into propositions, some of which are not even at clause level in the surface representation, is an enormously time-consuming project. It was therefore concluded that for the present purpose, the sentence was an adequate enough measure. The sentence here is a unit which begins after a full stop; it includes main clauses separated by semicolons. It is to be noted that a single sentence may include several different types of rhetorical function. The drawback in not using number of words as the touchstone is that the results are less easy to compare with studies using this measure, for example Hyland (1996a, 1998c, 2000), who examined the frequencies of certain hedging signals per 1,000 words. On the other hand, the latter approach leads to discussions of items in terms of rates of occurrence in the order of 4.9 per 1,000 words or 10.8 or less per 10,000 words (Hyland 1996a).

At first glance, it may appear that the figures in Table 2 do not have a great deal to do with promotion. However, in the light of Berkenkotter and Huckin's (1995) observations on the increasing importance of certain sections in the research article in terms of length and inclusion of principal findings, some comments on Table 2 are relevant for the coming presentation of findings. Firstly, it is interesting to note that the length of abstracts in the three disciplines do not seem to differ to any great extent, the average number of sentences ranging from about four and a half sentences in JFE (Column 1) to about five and a half sentences in ASQ (Column 4). Naturally, the difference of one whole sentence may somewhat affect the types of rhetorical steps included. On the other hand, as one sentence may contain several rhetorical steps simultaneously, the number of sentences is only a limited indication.

Secondly, and more importantly, there appears to be a major difference in the size of the introduction vs. the size of the discussion/conclusion between Finance on the one hand and Management and Marketing on the other hand. Thus the introductions of the two Finance journals are on average more than one and a half times the length of the introductions in the other two disciplines. This is largely due to the fact that rhetorical functions which are normally part of the discussion/conclusion, such as presentation of principal results and implications, assessment of contribution, and comparison to previous research (positioning), are included in the introductions of the Finance articles. This is in accordance with the trend observed by Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) for the natural sciences. In contrast, the discussion/conclusion sections in Finance are on



average less than half the length of the Finance introductions, and they are only a quarter of the length of the discussion/conclusion sections in Management and Marketing. These differences would seem to entail differences in the frequency and sequencing of rhetorical steps, which will be elaborated in the findings sections (Chapters 9-11).

**Table 2. Total and average length of sections in each journal (no. sentences and paragraphs, N=20 texts/journal)**

	Finance		Management		Marketing	
	JFE	JF	AMJ	ASQ	JMR	JM
<b>Abstracts</b>	N=20	N=20	N=20	N=20	N=20	N=20
No. sentences	88	94	98	112	104	98
Aver. sentences/text	4.4	4.7	4.9	5.6	5.2	4.9
No. paragraphs	20	20	20	20	20	20
Aver. paragraphs/text	1	1	1	1	1	1
Aver. sentences/paragraph	4.4	4.7	4.9	5.6	5.2	4.9
<b>Introductions</b>	N=20	N=20	N=20	N=20	N=20	N=20
No. sentences	721	673	398	423	420	413
Aver. sentences/text	36.1	33.7	19.9	21.2	21	20.7
No. paragraphs	146	136	84	85	101	112
Aver. paragraphs/text	7.3	6.8	4.2	4.3	5.1	5.6
Aver. sentences/paragraph	4.9	4.9	4.7	5.0	4.2	3.9
<b>Conclusions</b>	N=20	N=20	N=20	N=20	N=20	N=20
No. sentences	397	325	1527	1193	1281	1139
Aver. sentences/text	16.4	16.3	76.4	59.7	64	57
No. paragraphs	92	67	288	234	238	256
Aver. paragraphs/text	4.6	3.4	14.4	11.7	11.9	12.8
Aver. sentences/paragraph	3.5	4.9	5.3	5.1	5.4	4.4

*Legend: JFE= Journal of Financial Economics, JF= The Journal of Finance, AMJ=Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly, JM= Journal of Marketing, JMR= Journal of Marketing Research*

A few more features of the material need to be addressed, because they have frequently attracted questions during presentations of parts of the study. Firstly, as mentioned above no attention has been paid as to whether the writers are native speakers of English or not. Secondly, the gender of the writers has not been taken into account, though this perspective might offer interesting data of various kinds for another study. Finally, since articles were picked randomly, the only criterion being that they contained both theory and empirical data, the proportion of co-authored vs. single-author articles was not monitored. However, as Table 3 below shows, there was a clear tendency in all journals for articles to be co-authored.

**Table 3. Co-authored vs. single-author articles**

	Co-authored	Single-author
<i>Journal of Financial Economics</i>	12	8
<i>Journal of Finance</i>	14	6
<b><i>Finance</i></b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14</b>
<i>Academy of Management Journal</i>	14	6
<i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i>	13	7
<b><i>Management</i></b>	<b>27</b>	<b>13</b>
<i>Journal of Marketing Research</i>	16	4
<i>Journal of Marketing</i>	17	3
<b><i>Marketing</i></b>	<b>33</b>	<b>7</b>
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>86</b>	<b>34</b>

### 1.3.3 Procedure of analysis

Before presenting the theoretical background, the analytical frameworks and the categorization of linguistic signaling used to identify promotional steps, I will here briefly summarize the concrete procedure. After the digitalization of the material, the various rhetorical steps of the sections under study were determined, and the overt promotional steps were identified and coded on the basis of the explicit linguistic signaling of evaluation. In the first phase, pilot studies were conducted on part of the material: JFE, AMJ and JMR (see Table 2 for abbreviations). These pilot studies were

reported in Lindeberg 1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1998. The findings on linguistic signals are not reported in the present study but will be applied as tools in a coming study using the software WordSmith (Mike Scott and Oxford University Press 1997) to pick out possible promotional steps on the basis of linguistic markers. As mentioned previously, this can now be done on a larger material, because the journals are routinely available in electronic form.

#### *1.3.4 Structure of the presentation*

The aim of the theoretical chapters (2-8) that follow next is to show the evolution of the analytic framework used in the present study as well as to illustrate the concepts used. Thus I shall first review relevant theories and models in previous research that offered the starting-points of the study (Chapters 2-6), and subsequently present the current models along with illustrating examples (Chapters 7-8). In the presentation of the empirical findings, I shall begin by examining promotion in abstracts (Chapter 9), continue by looking at introductions (Chapter 10), and finally examine the discussion/conclusions (Chapter 11). The mitigation of promotion in all three sections, respectively, is presented in Chapter 12.

It is worth noting at this point that each chapter reporting on empirical findings follows a general pattern in first examining direct promotion and then indirect promotion. However, as will be seen, on the more detailed level each journal section examined showed its own characteristic weighting of promotional steps as well as positioning and signaling of promotion. Therefore each chapter will show slightly differing approaches to characterizing the sections, reflecting the attempt to provide a just description of the strategies used.

The final chapter will summarize the principal findings and discuss them in light of the initial questions and previous research. Further, the findings will be discussed from the point of view of some of the disciplines' own conceptions of the role of scholarly writing and from the proposed perspective of the 'marketization' of academic discourse (cf. Bhatia 1993, Fairclough 1995, Hyland 2000). Finally, I will suggest some pedagogical implications and possible directions for future research.

## **2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

This chapter presents some of the theoretical ideas in those works that have been most influential in shaping the analytical framework of the present study. These works can be roughly grouped along two levels of generality: the basically sociological, socio-rhetorical or socio-cognitive approaches presented in this chapter, and secondly, the more linguistically based genre studies, to be presented in Chapters 3-6.

### **2.1 General overview of the literature**

In the last few decades the view of scientific writing has changed substantially. With studies on the philosophy and rhetoric of science such as those of Kuhn (1962/1996) and Gross (1990/1996), on the sociology and rhetoric of science such as those of Bazerman (1981, 1988), McCloskey (1986), and the work of linguists and genre scholars such as Hunston (1989, 1993, 1994), Crismore and Farnsworth (1990), Myers (1989, 1990, 1992), Swales (1990), Nash (1990), Bhatia (1993, 1995), Salmi-Tolonen (1993), Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), Luukka (1992, 1994, 1995), Hyland (1996a, 1996b, 1998c, 2000) and Valle (1999), to mention but a few, the conception of scientific writing as purely 'objective' and 'impersonal' has gradually been eroded, and the role of language and rhetoric in the construction and dissemination of scholarly knowledge has become more widely acknowledged.

Here I will summarize the basically sociological and socio-rhetorical approaches to scholarly rhetoric exemplified by Bazerman (1981, 1988), and then briefly examine McCloskey (1986). These works provide a perspective on scholarly writing as a social activity. In a later chapter (Chapter 4) I will present two models which were important starting-points for the present study, namely Swales' seminal CARS (Creating a research space) model for analyzing the rhetorical structure of article introductions (Swales 1990) and Dudley-Evans' model of article discussion/conclusion sections (Dudley-Evans 1989).

I will present Bazerman's early observations on the characteristics of scholarly writing in the natural sciences vs. those of the social sciences (1981) as well as his observations on the evolution of scientific writing in English (1988) at some length, because they are

of central importance to the present study. Early on I formed the hypothesis that the scholarly rhetoric in Finance resembles that of the natural sciences whereas the scholarly rhetoric in Management and Marketing resembles that of the social sciences. The first clue to this emerged in the predominant use of the present tense in Finance for various rhetorical functions while in Management and Marketing the tense use varied. Business disciplines are usually seen as belonging to the social sciences, which are often treated as a fairly homogenous group. However, the concept includes a wide variety of disciplines, rhetorics, and styles of writing. It can be claimed that all the three business disciplines under study here have originated in the science of economics, and therefore I will also briefly examine McCloskey's (1986) observations on the rhetoric of economics, followed by Backhouse, Dudley-Evans and Henderson's (1993) critique.

While Bazerman's 1981 study of contrastive rhetoric in three different disciplines was a very early exemplar of this type of interdisciplinary study, the contrastive or cross-cultural studies of academic rhetoric in different languages, even when operating with a limited material, have also been influential in shedding light on the specific characteristics of scholarly rhetoric in English, for example in the work of Clyne (1981, 1987), Oldenburg (1992), Mauranen (1993a, 1993b), Fredrickson and Swales (1994), Busch-Lauer (1994), Andersson and Gunnarsson (1995), and Melander, Swales and Fredrickson (1997).

In the analysis of rhetorical structures from the perspective of evaluation and linguistic signaling, the following works have been central for the present study: firstly, Myers' work on the pragmatics of politeness (1989) and on the relation between rhetorical acts and knowledge claims (1992); secondly, Hunston's work on evaluation (1989) and on the managing of conflict and argumentation (1993, 1994); and thirdly, Hyland's work on hedging (1996a, 1998c, 1999b, 2000). Other useful sources will be mentioned in context.

The concepts of convincingness and persuasion figure centrally in these writings on scholarly rhetoric, essentially seen not as an attached cosmetic but as an inherent characteristic. It is these inherent promotional elements that this study endeavors to identify and make visible, with a special focus on the possible differences between the three disciplines.

## **2.2      Disciplinary culture and scholarly rhetoric**

Of Bazerman's observations (1981, reprinted in 1988) on the different scholarly writing conventions reflected in three articles from three different disciplines: natural sciences (molecular biology), social sciences (sociology of science), and the humanities (literary stylistics), those on the two former have relevance for the present study: some of the conventions they outline seem to hold for writing in Finance, and make the discipline more akin to natural or 'hard' sciences, while others seem to hold for Management and Marketing, and make these more akin to interpretive or 'soft' sciences.

To start at a fairly general level, according to Bazerman the essential question asked by a scholarly writer is the following:

Against the background of accumulated knowledge of the discipline, how can I present an original claim about a phenomenon to the appropriate audience convincingly so that thinking and behavior will be modified accordingly? (Bazerman 1981:363f.)

Thus Bazerman's basic position is that scholarly writing is interactive and persuasive, and that its function is to 'serve specific functions within historical and social situations to continue, add to, and transform a group interaction' (Bazerman 1981:361, cf. also Swales 1990, Hyland 1999b). He examines the articles in relation to four different parameters: the object under study, the literature of the field, the anticipated audience, and the author's own self, in order to uncover the intentions and meanings available in the text, i.e. the signals of potential authors' intentions and readers' interpretations. This is done in order to see what constitutes a statement of knowledge in the respective disciplines, and to what extent textual realizations are different. Table 4 below summarizes Bazerman's observations on the two disciplines relevant here, natural sciences and social sciences:

**Table 4. Characteristics of scholarly writing in natural sciences vs. social sciences (summarized from Bazerman 1981)**

Types of objects/ methods	Types of literatures studied	Homogeneity of audience	Authorial presence
<b>Natural sciences</b>			
Discrete and robust objects Repeated observations Highly directed scan Codified knowledge	Rationale: closeness of fit between observed phenomena and claims Immediate relevance Grounding in accepted frameworks	Well-established frame of reference Consensus Little guidance needed on implications of claims	Weak author presence: Scholar is merely a vehicle for discovering and describing actual structures Credibility based on strong correspondence between data and claim
<b>Social sciences</b>			
Discrete phenomena not universally recognized Topic needs identification and description	No generally recognized framework Univocal reference rare Territory needs to be established Revalidation of literature	Criteria not clear-cut and universal Persuasion needed that topic exists and that framework is valid Positioning of claims is important	Strong author presence: Scholar challenges while maintaining readers' goodwill, establishes solidarity but also original viewpoint, interprets rather than represents evidence

Bazerman's example of the natural sciences is the famous article in which Watson and Crick first published their discovery of the DNA structure, the importance of which they knew would immediately strike the relevant readers (an article which has since generated a number of rhetorical analyses, e.g. Myers 1989, Gross 1990/1996, Swales 1999). He comments on the 'implied humility' of the two authors' opening statement: *we wish to suggest a ...*, and more specifically on the mitigating effect of the verb *suggest* and the indefinite article. He sees this as being caused, not by any tentativeness of the claim or politeness towards the research community, but as an expression of humility before the facticity of the object, while at the same time conveying a boldness in the authors' presumption that their claim will be confirmed by nature. In other words, the claim will gain its force from the enormity of its status in the order of things, not needing a forceful rhetoric for its recognition.

Bazerman further draws attention to instances where the two authors do explicitly comment on the importance of their contribution, but he points out that these brief mentions are sufficient for the knowledgeable audience to see the scientific impact of the discovery:

This structure has **novel** features which are **of considerable** biological **interest**. . . . **It has not escaped our notice** that the specific pairing we have postulated **immediately suggests** a copying

mechanism for the genetic material. (Watson and Crick as quoted in Bazerman 1981:367, my emphasis)

To sum up, Bazerman (1981) sees the natural science article as exemplifying the foregrounding of the *representation of nature*, while society, self, and received knowledge are backgrounded. The ultimate criterion for assessing the contribution is the correspondence ('fit') between the claim and the object (cf. also discussions in Myers 1989 and Hunston 1989 on 'fit').

By contrast, the social science article illustrates the establishment of a *perception of reality*, including the establishment of a discourse and a frame of knowledge enabling the representation of the perception. The criterion for assessing the contribution, then, is the convincingness of the vision, or 'school of thinking'. To put it differently: whereas the paper on molecular biology relies on the prior existence of the phenomenon in the real world and on a well-established framework of reference (in modern terms 'high-paradigm', cf. Kuhn 1962/1996, Sutton and Staw 1995, Weick 1995), the paper on sociology has to spend considerable effort in order to establish the existence of the phenomenon as well as to (re)construct the framework ('low-paradigm'). Secondly, whereas in the assessment of the contribution the biology paper trusts that the closeness of fit between the observed phenomena and the claims will be obvious to the intended readers and therefore leaves the drawing of conclusions to the readers, the sociology paper needs to take the readers every step of the way to persuade them of the convincingness of the reasoning. Except for a few observations on the use of first person pronouns and the use of hedging verbs and the indefinite article, Bazerman does not go into the linguistic features of these two scholarly styles of writing. However, his work gives illuminating insights into some of the different characteristics of natural sciences vs. social sciences.

A similar distinction between disciplines/subdisciplines on the basis of 'patterned variation' has been proposed by MacDonald (1994). Depending on the degree of particularism vs. generalization, MacDonald divides disciplines into data-driven (high degree of particularism) vs. conceptually driven (high level of abstraction). The former, for example disciplines in the humanities, have less clearly defined problems (more 'diffuse'), whereas the latter contain more 'compact' problem definitions. The two strands also display different citation patterns and conceptions of 'agency': 'whether and how "evidence" exists outside its construction by the writer' (MacDonald 1994:149),



which is signaled by the grammatical subject (humans vs. data or nominalizations). As will be shown later, these observations also throw some light on the differences between the Finance research articles on the one hand and the Management and Marketing articles on the other hand.

### **2.3 The evolution of scientific rhetoric**

Bazerman's probably most influential work on scholarly rhetoric is his study of the development of the experimental research article in science (Bazerman 1988). His examination of the evolution of the rhetoric and style of scientific writing in English as evidenced by *The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* follows Miller's (1984/1994) view of genre as social action. Bazerman's definition of genre is crystallized in the following formulation:

Genre, then, is not simply a linguistic category defined by a structural arrangement of textual features. Genre is a socio-psychological category which we use to recognize and construct typified actions within typified situations. It is a way of creating order in the ever-fluid symbolic world. (Bazerman 1988:319)

According to Bazerman, the rhetorical problem facing the scientist is how to present empirical evidence as more than brute fact, as a mediated statement of inquiry and knowledge. He points out that there are variations over time and variations due to place, situation, and idiosyncratic traits, but also regularities due to the historical presence of the genre. As new features are accepted and modified in repeated use, they become institutionalized, and become the context of future instances of the genre. In tracing the evolution of the experimental article from the early beginnings of the Royal Society in 1665 through 1800, Bazerman shows how its form and rhetoric changed in answer to the changing epistemology and changing social exigencies.

Bazerman's analyses illustrate how over time the representation became more investigative, corroborative, and argumentative. There was a growing need to establish general claims and the meaning of these claims for the field. As the likelihood of personal witnessing receded, it became increasingly important to attend to the specificity, detail, and plausibility of the account (credibility), in order to offer the reader a vicarious experience of the reported experiment and the reasoning process.

Examining the evolution of experimental reports in physics over the recent century, Bazerman bemoans the fact that linguistic studies of scientific language before Swales'

study of introductions (1981) treated scientific prose as divorced from the needs of the social situation in which it was produced. Having showed that major aspects of scientific rhetoric developed in answer to an agonistic social situation, he points out that in contrast to linguists, sociologists of science have emphasized the agonistic force of language in the competition over claims, power, and the satisfaction of interests (citations include among others, Latour and Woolgar 1979, Knorr-Cetina 1981, and Gilbert and Mulkay 1984):

These studies have established that authors control the language and presentations of their papers **so as to present their work in the most favorable light, so as to advance the acceptance of their own work, and to further their interests as scientists.** Most aspects of the article, even the presentation of data, are open to forms of literary control, with the writers particularly concerned with **persuading readers of the validity and importance of their work.** (Bazerman 1988:156, my emphasis)

However, according to Bazerman in emphasizing persuasion and competition these studies have ignored the historical evolution of rhetorical structure in scientific prose (cf. the study of changing conventions in Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995) and the use of citation to *define* the current work rather than solely as a persuasive resource validating the work (cf. Hyland 2000 stressing the latter function). This point will be taken up again in the discussion of my findings.

Examining the relationships between the organization, argument, and epistemology of the scientific article, Bazerman proposes that rhetorical structure and argument relate closely to epistemology, i.e. ‘beliefs about what can be known, how it can be known, in what form it can be expressed and how it should be argued.’ (Bazerman 1988:174) Observing the changing conventions, he concludes that the evolution of the argumentation had direct epistemological implications, as arguments became more theory-based and ultimately self-conscious about their constructed theoretical character. In the last phase of development, *the modeling approach*, which sees a split between nature and theory since theory is seen as a human construction, a paper cannot propose a test of theory (implying that the truth or falsity of a claim are provable) but only a model that accounts for the data better than other available models. Thus, in terms of argumentative structure, Bazerman suggests that a modeling article does not present an initial claim to be explained, supported, and discussed in light of experimental data. Instead the article locates a problem in the relevant theory and presents appropriate data, and only then offers a model or claim about what apparently occurred in the experiment.

This change also affected social relations: the tentativeness of the modeling type of arguments ‘mitigated the confrontational conflict of theoretical dispute by recognizing that each contribution was only part of a process.’ (Bazerman 1988:183)

In his examination of how the evolving system of scientific communication shapes the purposes, processes, and norms of statement production and the role of empirical experience, Bazerman suggests that formulations are influenced by the dialectic nature of the process:

In this writing-up stage, the scientist writer must put the pieces of argument together so as to make his purposes clear and so as to satisfy the criteria of judgment he anticipates will be imposed by his audience. Final wrestlings with the applied theories, the continuity of the argument, and the data may lead to basic reformulations even at this stage. Even if no major changes occur, **the author in controlling the words for the final formulation must manage the impression of the prior literature, the experimental design, the laboratory happenings, the data and its relation to the phenomenon investigated, the conclusions, and the conclusions’ certainty. The scientist-writer must fine-tune the language to reveal the proper levels of precision and uncertainty.** Yet the writer must also project a hypothesized world in which his findings are true. (Bazerman 1988:202, my emphasis)

Bazerman points out that not only is this ‘impression management’ to be done by taking into account possible conflicts with prospective readers but also that the stylistic conventions and preferences of editors and the audience are to be attended to.

It is especially the basic *positioning* of the contribution, the nature of the challenges to prior formulation of theory, that is found to provide the persuasive force, rather than the ‘narrower manipulation of language’ (Bazerman 1988:223). Part of the persuasion is seen to rely on the skillful management of conflict (cf. Myers 1989, 1992, Hunston 1993, 1994). Bazerman also sees the actual formulation, the precision, accuracy, and clarity, as serving the persuasive intention, by identifying the tightness of fit between the claim, experimental procedures, and observed nature. The scientific writer is seen as maintaining the confidence of his readers, not only by accomplishing the last point, but also by carefully controlling the epistemic level, authorial voice, and authorial judgments.

However, Bazerman formulates a number of cautions to be taken into account when processing scientific language, the perhaps strongest of them being expressed as follows:

Within the community, scientific language serves the *competitive interests* of separate individuals and research groups. The language is **partisan, argumentative, and manipulated for individual**

**gain** rather than an objective, dispassionate representation of things as they are. (Bazerman 1988: 294, my emphasis)

As will be shown in the discussion in Chapters 3 and 13, these points are echoed in the work of Bhatia (1993) and Hyland (1999b, 2000) and the Management scholars Locke and Golden-Biddle (1997).

## **2.4 The rhetoric of economics**

When a well-known scholar and historian of economics such as Donald McCloskey in the mid 1980s published his provocative article claiming that the scholarly writing style of economists is of poor quality (McCloskey 1985), he must have created quite a stir. Nevertheless, although at times sarcastic the advice he gives is considered as constructive, as proved by the fact that a prestigious scholarly journal such as *The Journal of Financial Economics* distributes McCloskey's article to submitters of manuscripts accepted for revision (Schwert 1993). However, the most frequently cited of McCloskey's rhetorical works is probably *The Rhetoric of Economics* (1986). The book is concerned with raising the economists' awareness of the role of rhetoric and of the fact that economics as a discipline is different from the disciplines of natural sciences:

The credo of scientific methodology, known to its critics as the Received View, is roughly speaking "positivism". It argues that knowledge is to be modeled on the early twentieth century's understanding of certain pieces of nineteenth-century and eventually seventeenth century physics. (McCloskey 1986:5, cf. Bazerman 1988)

Launching heavy criticism against the school of 'modernism' in economics, McCloskey presents a critical list of its basic tenets. These emphasize the centrality of prediction and control, observability and objectivity/reproducibility of experiments, and disqualify introspection and value judgments in the pursuit of knowledge. In opposition to this positivist and definitive view of 'good science', McCloskey argues that scientists should take into account the fact that science is a social activity, carried out by human beings and thus subjected to the powers of presentation, i.e. the scholarly discourse which creates and disseminates knowledge. Subheadings such as 'Good Science is Good Conversation', 'Rhetoric is a Better Way to Understand Science' give some indication of the drift of his reasoning.

It is obvious that McCloskey sees persuasion as being inherent in scientific reasoning, even in pure mathematics, because persuasion is part of the human reasoning process.

He argues that attributes such as interest, usefulness, appeal, and acceptability are more relevant in assessing reasoning than the concept of Truth. According to McCloskey, a scientist may have other motives than the pursuit of 'truth', for example the resolution of puzzlement, the conquest of recalcitrant details, the feeling of a job well done, and the honor and income of office, and the readers should be aware of this hidden agenda (cf. Bazerman's (1988) list of cautions referred to above, and Bhatia 1993, Hyland 2000). He points out that the purpose of the study of scientific rhetoric is to make scholarly writers more aware of what they actually do, what seems to persuade them and why, and although many of his arguments are difficult to endorse, this basic tenet seems reasonable.

Without a doubt, those of McCloskey's arguments are useful which question those rhetorical conventions of economics writing that uncritically reflect the rhetoric of natural sciences. However, his own rhetorical style, which is often very lively and entertaining, seems frequently to go overboard in its attempts to persuade, and is therefore likely to put off a number of economics and other scholars with serious intentions of improving their writing. Pointing out the powerful influence of McCloskey's *The Rhetoric of Economics* (1986), Henderson and Dudley-Evans (1990) take a rather critical stance, observing that the book is not entirely satisfactory, nor directly relevant to linguists interested in economics texts. They further note that McCloskey's conception of the role of rhetoric and 'his desire to replace conventional epistemology, concerned with establishing what constitutes good economic argument, with rhetoric, which is concerned with persuasion.' has been widely criticized (Henderson and Dudley-Evans 1990: 3). Acknowledging the importance of the fact that McCloskey, 'a significant economic historian and economist', has highlighted the role of language and rhetoric and the use of literary techniques such as metaphor and narrative in scholarly writing in economics, they question the lack of explicitness and clarity of his analytic procedure. This lack of detail is criticized in even harsher terms in the introduction to *Economics and Language* (Backhouse, Dudley-Evans and Henderson, 1993):

'The weaknesses of his approach (---) include a tendency to explain too much in terms of persuasion, without going into detail on why certain arguments are more persuasive than others; and a tendency to reach broad, general conclusions on the basis of a relatively limited analysis of specific texts.' (Backhouse, Dudley-Evans and Henderson, 1993: 8)

According to Backhouse et al. this is where the work of the applied linguist and genre analyst comes in: examining how the communicative purposes of the writers are reflected in the rhetorical structure, what the conventions are ‘that pertain to different genres, and how these shape the discourse, influencing and constraining the choice and ordering of content.’ (Ibid.)

After this overview of the thinking on scholarly rhetoric that has informed some of the present work, I shall move on to a more specific presentation of the theories of promotion and politeness, and the conceptualization of evaluation in scholarly rhetoric.

### **3 THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF PROMOTION AND POLITENESS IN SCHOLARLY RHETORIC**

#### **3.1 Promotion in scholarly rhetoric**

It is now some considerable time since the myth of the ‘impersonal and objective’ style of scholarly writing was revised. Since the late 1980s there has been substantial work on the interactive and interpersonal markers as well as authorial presence and signals of evaluation in academic discourse. However, to my knowledge the concept of promotion in scientific writing was first introduced by Huckin in his paper ‘Surprise value in scientific discourse’ cited in Dudley-Evans 1989, presented in Uppsala in 1993, and printed in Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) under the heading ‘News value in scientific journal articles’. Citing Bazerman (1988:308) as noting that ‘scientific communities are by their nature committed to new formulations, new knowledge’, Berkenkotter and Huckin hypothesize parallels between scientific journal reports and newspaper reports: the article title corresponds to the newspaper headline, the abstract to the lead, and the presentation of major findings to the main event reported. Examining the evolution of twelve scientific journals over 45 years, they found that the genre conventions had changed towards an increased foregrounding of the most important findings, i.e. an increased promotion of the news value. This was reflected in more informative titles, longer and more informative abstracts containing an increasing number of results statements, and introductions increasingly including statements of the main findings. Berkenkotter and Huckin suggest that these features ‘serve to foreground important, newsworthy information by bringing it closer to the beginning of the article.’ (1995:39)

Noting the essentially promotional rhetorical structure of Swales’ (1990) model of introductions, Berkenkotter and Huckin call attention to the absence of studies on the corresponding function and importance of discussion sections (cf. however, Dudley-Evans 1989, 1994, Hewings 1993, Lindeberg 1994c, and Holmes 1997). According to their study, many scholars in fact read the discussion before reading the introduction, a finding that accords with the reading habits of Finance scholars (Palepu 1993, personal communication). Their suggestion of the reverse sequence (the mirror image) of

rhetorical steps of the discussion compared to the structure of the introduction will be further examined in Chapter 4.

On the basis of their findings of the rhetorical changes in scientific journals, Berkenkotter and Huckin conclude that the title, abstract, introduction, and discussion are the most promotional parts. This is further corroborated by Rymer's finding that, when articles are co-authored, these are the parts that are written by the senior scientist (Rymer 1988, as cited by Berkenkotter and Huckin). Their final observation is that the scientific article seems to be increasingly evolving into a promotional genre:

...it is not so much the **amount** of news value that is remarkable in today's scientific journal articles as it is the promoting of it. Today's scientists seem to be **promoting** their work to a degree never seen before. (Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995:43, original emphasis)

Drawing on Fairclough (1993), Berkenkotter and Huckin suggest that one main reason for the increase in promotion is the current promotional culture that is changing discursive practices and creating hybrid genres. Another reason is the increased competitiveness of modern science, due to the sheer volume as well as the increasing dependence of scientific research on external funding. Thus it is increasingly important for scientists to have their research published, not only frequently but also in the most prestigious journals. Therefore, in order to get their manuscripts accepted by the most prestigious journals, it is necessary for scholars to become aware of the variable conventions of presenting their research. This was one of the incentives for the present study.

The concept of promotion in academic discourse was given an even more commercially connected designation by Fairclough, who introduced the concept of the *marketisation* (original British spelling) of academia. In his papers on critical discourse analysis and the marketization of public discourse, with a special reference to the universities, (1993, 1995, 1997), Fairclough suggests that the marketization is the result of the fact that universities are required to operate as businesses, selling their products to consumers. Examining a number of texts from different genres within academia, he observed that a great deal of effort was being invested in the construction of more entrepreneurial identities for academics and institutions and that self-promotion had become foregrounded. In his view a hybridization of discourses is taking place, with academic discourses increasingly taking on features from 'selling' rather than 'telling' (Fairclough



1995). He further observes that this marketization of discourse has spread to other domains in the public services, professions, and the arts, generating a form of quasi-advertising discourse, which mixes commodity advertising with other genres. In his view publicly addressed discourse is increasingly designed ‘to sell’, a phenomenon which Fairclough calls ‘the commodification of language’:

Commodities are increasingly cultural, semiotic, and therefore linguistic in nature; accordingly language is increasingly commodified and shaped by economic calculation and intervention. Linguistic commodities include the products of the culture industries.... (Fairclough 1997:8)

The last few words in the quote recall Swales’ early phrase for academia as the ‘knowledge manufacturing industry’ (Swales 1983). Fairclough points out that language design is not a new phenomenon, since this is what traditional rhetoric is all about, but that the commodification of language is currently ‘unprecedented in its institutionalization, its systematicity, and its social reach’. (Fairclough 1997:8) He also notes that discursive practices as commodities are increasingly circulated internationally, both as finished goods and as means of production. In an increasingly international research community, this observation seems especially pertinent to scholarly rhetoric, and more specifically to scholarly rhetoric in English, the subject of the present study.

The concept of **selling** research contributions has been made even more explicit by Bhatia (1993), who examined genre and language use in a variety of professional settings:

In research articles, it is important to establish field, because authors invariably look for a larger readership than do students, and therefore have to ‘sell’ their research reports. (Bhatia 1993: 98)

While the use of the emphatic ‘invariably’ may sound somewhat categorical, even without it the idea of scholars peddling their commodity is put quite forcefully here. What is interesting in his analysis for the present context is the parallel he sees between the academic writer of research articles and the writer of sales promotion letters. Both are described as starting out by ‘establishing their credentials’, the one by establishing the field and summarizing previous research (i.e. showing knowledge of the field), and the other by referring to the company’s past achievements and good track record (i.e. experience and competence). Further, while the scholar prepares for present research by pointing to a knowledge gap, implying or pointing out the need for research, the sales

promoter refers to the needs of prospective customers. In both cases the readers are given to understand that the writers possess the solution to the problem. Bhatia's argument, albeit not explicitly stated in these terms, appears to be that both are exemplars of promotional writing. The parallels between Bhatia's observations and the findings of the present study will be further elaborated in Section 13.6.

The importance of establishing 'credentials' and the element of self-promotion in scholarly writing strongly permeate Hyland's analyses of research article abstracts:

The research and the writer are therefore under close scrutiny in the abstracts and, because of this, writers have carefully, and increasingly, tended to foreground their main claims and **present themselves as competent community members**. To gain readers' attention and persuade them to read on, writers need to demonstrate that they not only have something new and worthwhile to say, but that they also **have the professional credibility to address the topic as an insider**. (Hyland 2000: 63, my emphasis)

According to Hyland, in addition to persuading the reader to read on, a major function of the abstract is thus to 'demonstrate legitimacy': the central promotional issue at stake in abstracts seems to be the issue of claiming insider credibility. Hyland observes that there are numerous ways to project an insider ethos, for example by demonstrating the ability to identify a discipline-relevant issue and by showing familiarity with the discipline's literature. This he judges to be 'an element of rhetorical promotion of oneself and one's paper', comparing it to Fairclough's idea of hybrid discourses (entrepreneurial discourses, Fairclough 1995). However, it seems to me that while this may well be true of scholars starting out on their academic writing careers, it would seem to be less of an issue for established scholars, and thus it could be misleading to generalize as strongly as Hyland appears to be doing. Also, it may be that Hyland adopted the importance of claiming insider credibility from Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), but their description of abstracts was based on conference abstracts, which have somewhat different purposes than RA abstracts (cf. also Gläser 1991, Swales 1995a).

In the use of promotion as well as other conventions, disciplines and even journals within disciplines show different predilections, which naturally may change over time, as the discipline or field progresses and new exigencies develop. Hyland (2000) compared abstracts from 1980 with abstracts from 1997 and found an increase in the use of the rhetorical moves he calls Introductions and Conclusions (cf. further discussion in Section 4.3 and Chapter 13), especially in the sciences, philosophy and marketing. He concludes that these 'essentially contextualizing moves' have perhaps become more

important, because of the need to situate research activity in fields that are rapidly expanding or becoming increasingly subdivided into ever more specialized units, taking marketing as a pertinent example. Hyland also suggests the ‘increasingly competitive market situation’ of academics seeking to publish their research as another explanation for the increase in the use of promotional features.

The competitive market explanation for the move structure of introductions has also been suggested by Fredrickson and Swales (1994), who compared the introductions of linguistics scholars in a major American journal with introductions written in a minor language journal (Swedish). Whereas the American journal articles almost all followed Swales’ model of introductions, almost half of the Swedish material were missing one or more of the rhetorical moves. Fredrickson and Swales conclude that one reason may be less competition for journal space in the Swedish linguistics journals.

What this section aimed to show was that the prevalence of promotion in scholarly rhetoric has been fairly widely demonstrated, although the actual linguistic manifestations have not been studied systematically. Before presenting the evolution of the analytic framework used in this study for examining promotion, however, it is necessary to present the theoretical background for the assumption that promotion is balanced by politeness.

### **3.2 Politeness in scientific articles**

To my knowledge, the first study suggesting that the concept of politeness is central to scholarly writing was ‘The pragmatics of politeness in scientific articles’ by Myers (1989), which has been widely cited. Another article by Myers also relevant for the present study deals with the conventions of expressing scientific knowledge claims (1992). Here I shall briefly summarize the theories proposed in the two articles.

Myers’ two basic tenets are, firstly, that the writing of scientific articles is a social action, involving politeness concerns for the ‘face’ of other researchers in the scholarly community, and that therefore many of the linguistic features taken as characteristic of scientific style can be explained by the pragmatics of politeness. Secondly, Myers subscribes to the view that knowledge is socially constructed and therefore proposes that

it is through acceptance by the research community that speech acts expressing knowledge claims in scientific articles become scientific facts.

Myers' (1989) main point is that the impersonal style of scientific articles does not necessarily reflect the impersonality of science or some arbitrary conventions, but rather reflects a pragmatic solution to the problem of how to express the 'face-threatening acts' (FTAs, cf. Brown and Levinson 1987/1994) of knowledge claims and denials of knowledge claims, which are fundamental to scientific writing. Because every scientific report has to make a contribution of new knowledge, and necessarily builds on research that has gone before, it needs to deny or supersede the knowledge claims of previous researchers. These FTAs can be accomplished in various ways, but in Myers' material (60 experimental research reports in molecular biology), bald statements of claims or bald denials of claims appeared to be the exception. In fact, Myers suggests that '... if an important statement seems to be made without modification, one can probably assume that it is not the main claim of the article, not the statement that is to be taken as new knowledge.' (Myers 1989:21).

The 'face' of two kinds of audience has to be taken into account: that of the wider (exoteric) scientific community and that of the immediate (esoteric) audience of individual researchers doing similar or related work. Politeness involves an awareness of the expectations of each audience, and skilled scientific writers are conscious of the reading habits of each audience (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). Moreover, individual researchers need to address the two communities with the proper deference. Thus Myers proposes that the use of 'hedging' does not necessarily reflect the degree of probability of a claim but rather the appropriate attitude for offering the claim to the scientific community, because '... one researcher must always humble himself or herself before the community as a whole.' (Myers 1989:4) In writing up his research for publication, a scholar assumes two different author roles: author as writer and author as researcher, and while the writer sets out to be clear and convincing, the researcher has to show suitable humility. Therefore, Myers suggests, claims and denials of claims need to be redressed by politeness devices showing the magnitude of the imposition. The use of impersonal constructions: passives, nominalizations, the scarce use of personal pronouns, and the use of hedging and acknowledgements are explained in terms of

politeness concerns in the social interaction of the scientific community rather than as being due to purely stylistic norms.

As for the linguistic signaling of politeness, Myers points out that politeness is not necessarily signaled by specific words or phrases but, citing Brown and Levinson (1987:22) is 'implicated by the semantic structure of the whole utterance' (Myers 1989:6). However, following Brown and Levinson he singles out two kinds of 'politeness strategies': *positive politeness*, showing solidarity, and *negative politeness*, showing avoidance of imposition. Positive politeness devices comprise the use of first person pronouns (referring to the writers or the discipline as a whole); modifiers assuming common ground, and emotional responses assumed to be shared by the community: surprise at a new discovery, satisfaction at the progress of the discipline, or disappointment at the failure of a received idea. Moreover, positive politeness can be shown by acknowledging simultaneous claims by other researchers and by giving credit in the form of citations.

Negative politeness strategies assure the readers that 'the writers do not intend to infringe on their wants, their freedom to act' (Myers 1989:12), and devices include hedging, the use of personal and impersonal constructions, and the assertion of general rules. Myers proposes that hedging can be interpreted as a politeness device 'when it marks a claim, or any other statement, as being provisional, pending acceptance in the literature, acceptance by the community - in other words, acceptance by the readers.' (Myers 1989:12) As mentioned above, he argues that a sentence that looks like a claim but has no hedging is probably not a major statement of new knowledge (Myers 1989:13, cf. also Bloor and Bloor 1993 on field-central versus substantive claims). Hedging devices include modal verbs, adverbial modifiers, indefinite forms (which leave open the possibility of other alternatives), and 'framing', i.e. an initial statement marking the writer's commitment to or rejection of a statement, leaving open the possibility for other interpretations (e.g. *It is likely/unlikely that. . .*).

According to Myers, the use of first person pronouns in knowledge claims or denials of claims has important politeness implications, as it weakens the imposition by indicating a personal attribution rather than a universal claim. In other words, the use of *I* or *we* in the writer's own claims or in denials of claims does not reflect the degree of probability of the statement but rather politeness concerns. Thus, Myers proposes that personal

attribution is used to indicate either a hedge on the writer's own claims or on denials of claims, in order to mitigate the imposition. Hedging by personal attribution (*we believe, in our opinion*) allows the readers to judge for themselves. For the same reason *be*-verbs are generally avoided in making claims, and more tentative verbs or framing statements are used instead. In my view, however, personal pronouns on their own do not indicate hedging but do so in combination with other mitigating signals (cf. Section 7.2)

Myers points out that criticism is perceived as less face-threatening if a general rule is invoked, and that while scientists must be careful to acknowledge all possible rivals, they must try to avoid attributing the views they attack to any one researcher. Thus 'bald' criticisms of rivals are exceptions, and criticism is usually redressed by mitigating signals. Rival claims can be denied but it is not acceptable to explicitly question other researchers' motivations, their reasoning, or their openness to new paradigms. Myers observes that criticism is stated in forms that suggest views rather than facts, i.e. the activity of explanation rather than the explanation itself (signaled by expressions such as *are often assigned; are considered; are thought of*).

Myers further suggests that, by proposing that his claim should be subjected to further testing, a scholar indicates deference towards the community, leaving the claim to the reader's judgment, and allowing further work by others who can prove or disclaim the claim and share part of the credit. However, in my experience this device as well as the others presented above may be also used routinely, in a 'lip-serving' capacity, which indeed sometimes is the impression a reader gets rather than of genuine scholarly humility. In the present material this appeared to be the case, when caveats were expressed briefly and in very general terms (cf. Sections 8.3.2 and 8.3.3).

In the 1989 article, politeness concerns seem to come up mainly in three types of context: the statement of new knowledge claims, the denials of previous claims, and in citations. In his 1992 article, "In this paper we report. . . .": Speech acts and scientific facts', Myers goes more in detail into the formulations of knowledge claims. He presents some linguistic markers characterizing what he terms the **main knowledge claim** in a research report:

**Table 5. Markers of main knowledge claims (Myers 1992)**

1. a first person pronoun
2. a verb of reporting
3. in the present tense
4. with a complement and
5. an adverbial referring deictically to the present (*here* or *now*) or the paper itself

In Myers' material (research reports in molecular biology), most of the articles contained claims with some of these characteristics, frequently including the verb *report*, and a 'surprising' number (about a quarter) followed the stereotypical form described above. According to Myers, the main point is that the claim must be formulated in such a way that the reader recognizes it easily and will interpret it as an indication of potential fact, i.e. as the contribution that the writers do not attribute to anyone else and for which they hope to be cited. The most reliable indicator of claims in his view is the use of deictic expressions such as *this paper*, the shift to the present tense of the reporting verb, and final position in the introduction. In fact, in his material the main claim was almost always at the end of the introduction, and almost never in the first two sentences, a point on which some of the present material turned out to differ (cf. Section 10.4.1).

As Myers points out, one of the difficulties in recognizing major claims is that the statement made in the claim sentence may not be the only or even the most important claim in the article. However, in the hierarchy of claims Myers suggests that the lowest-level claims, i.e. those that are closest to the experimental results, are simply asserted, without hedging. This has been corroborated in a sample of economics research articles by Bloor and Bloor (1993), who found that major 'field-central' knowledge claims (major models and interpretations) tended to be hedged, whereas 'substantive' knowledge claims (verifiable results describing the state of the world) tended to be stated baldly, i.e. without hedging. Although Bloor and Bloor acknowledge that politeness could be one reason for hedging field-central claims, they point out that caution is likely to be another. They further raise the point that it is often difficult for a non-expert to judge whether a claim is substantive or field-central, and that a research article contains a variety of different types of claims. However, they (very tentatively) suggest that

If we are right and the claims most likely to be hedged are those that are field-central, we may have provided further evidence for the theory that social relationships within discourse communities exert a powerful influence on language use. (Bloor and Bloor 1993:166)

Thus, politeness considerations towards other researchers working in the same field as well as towards the scientific community as a whole are seen as being of great importance. In fact, as Myers points out, this involves a certain balancing act in the sense that interpretations and conclusions should seem to follow definitely from observations of external facts but should at the same time retain tentativeness, in order to acknowledge that it is up to the community to attribute and evaluate the contribution. This subtle balancing is particularly difficult for novice and EFL writers, as witnessed by Swales and Feak (1994), but also experienced scholars (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995).

The great variety of reporting verbs lends different degrees and types of commitment to the claim. Thus the writer faces the problem of different rhetorical acts: the statement of fact, the act of discovery, and the act of persuasion. Myers suggests that the verb *report* is used about both factive and non-factive statements and implies the conveying of objective information. *Describe*, *demonstrate*, *find* and *show* are also suggested to carry the assumption of objective fact but are, according to Myers' informants, too strong to be used about writers' own claims in most papers. As will be seen, such qualms were not evident in the present material.

The strength of a claim may also be reflected in the choice of complement: Myers proposes that a *that*-clause expresses a very strong claim, seeming to indicate that something is to be taken as a fact, and that this explains why the *that*-clause is rarely used in major knowledge claims. In the present material, *that*-clauses in major claims were not uncommon and were usually framed by *In this paper we argue....*

Examining the use of reporting verbs in reviewing previous research, it is not always very clear in Myers' discussion when he is specifically discussing denials of claims and when he is discussing a writer's own claims. However, he observes that the verb *claim* in a citation indicates a critical attitude on the part of the writer whereas *show* indicates a positive attitude (1992:299, cf. Thompson and Ye 1990 on a more detailed study of reporting verbs). Interestingly, the phrase *present evidence* appears to be rare in Myers' corpus 'because it suggests a persuasive writer and a skeptical reader, rather than an



impersonal report of facts. '(1992:300) Again, this did not seem to be a problem in the present material.

The observations by Myers reported so far were based on research articles in molecular biology. For comparison, he also examined research articles in linguistics, for as he says, the analysis of these claims can indicate how facts are treated in the discourse of specific disciplines (Myers 1992:304). One difference between the two disciplines was that the introductions to the linguistics articles contained a formulation not found at all in the molecular genetics articles: *The aim/purpose of this article*. In addition, the statement of aim was often in the future tense rather than the present tense, apparently because it introduced an experience that the reader would have in the course of reading. According to Myers, this is because the aim is to persuade readers of the justifiability of the writer's position rather than to report on facts (cf. Bazerman 1981, 1988). This was also reflected in the choice of verbs used in the aims: *address, argue, be concerned with, consider*, and also in the finding that the force of more factive verbs, for example *show*, was mitigated by the use of modifiers. In general the verbs were found to suggest discussion and definition of the topic, not a report of research. In the biology papers the claim was treated as something established by the paper as a whole, here and now, an extension of a statement of fact (reporting). In the linguistics papers the claim was based on the experience the reader would have in the course of reading. In other words, they seek to persuade their readers of positions, rather than reporting facts. This distinction appears also to be relevant for some of the Management and the Marketing articles as opposed to those of Finance in the present material, although all three disciplines used the verb *argue*, for example, for announcing present research.

Myers' articles raise interesting questions about the possible contributions a pragmatic analysis of speech acts in research articles may have for a mapping of the ways different disciplines view politeness and the construction of knowledge. In other words: How is knowledge being constructed in the complex social context of competition and cooperation? How is a claim presented in relation to possible challenge or further development? (Myers 1992: 310). These are questions that are central for the present study and will be examined and discussed in the sections that follow. However,

As with many other pragmatic regularities, these stereotypical patterns describe what is more likely, not what is required by rules. They become visible when the expectations are broken, or when different cultures or contexts are compared. (Myers 1989:308)

Another reason for taking an interest in the appropriate hedging and modification of claims is the pedagogical application. Finding the correct note of ‘confident caution’ (cf. Swales and Feak 1994) is a notorious problem, not only for student writers but also for more experienced researchers submitting manuscripts for review (cf. Myers 1990, Bloor and Bloor 1993, Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). Caution and politeness concerns would thus seem to be central to a study examining promotion in scholarly writing, as explicit promotion is likely to have face-threatening aspects and can be expected to be redressed by mitigating devices.

Although Myers’ theories on politeness have been widely cited, to my knowledge few studies have actually applied them on empirical data. Among these, Hyland (1996a) found no clear evidence of politeness in his material (molecular biology RAs), and Varttala (2001) concluded that politeness considerations are only relevant in citations. There are, however, two studies that based their theoretical framework on Myers’ (1989) and Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theories and used reader interviews to verify perceptions of politeness/lack of politeness in scholarly articles: Meldrum (1994) and Okamura (1997). Meldrum studied applied linguistics articles participating in a controversy (N=10). She found that prominent placement and repetition of criticism appeared to increase the perception of aggravation, whereas it seemed easier for readers to accept the criticism if it was mitigated, i.e. redressed by politeness devices. ‘Aggravation by prominence’ is given the following definition:

...FTAs featuring in the parts of the text most likely (through their summary type nature) to attract the attention of the first time reader, to be memorable, and to ‘set the tone’ of the article; that is, the title, abstract, opening paragraphs and conclusion. (Meldrum 1994:81)

With the exception of the title, these are the very sections that are under scrutiny in the present study. When examining reader perceptions, however, Meldrum found that their identifications of unwarranted criticisms varied quite widely, and she concludes that in order to gauge the *actual effect* (original emphasis) of FTAs, it is necessary to consult the intended readers. Nevertheless, Varttala’s (2001) small survey of the ‘intended readers’ of his material also showed great variability in judging the need of hedging. A similar lack of consensus among subject specialists about politeness concerns was found by Okamura (1997), although in her material senior researchers seemed to be more aware of the need to address politeness than were junior researchers.

Meldrum (1994) presents a useful schematic summary of Myers' conceptions of negative and positive politeness in RAs. Below I will show Meldrum's summary but without her examples.

**Table 6. Meldrum's summary of Myers' politeness strategies commonly used with criticism/denials of claims in science RAs (Meldrum 1994:64f.)**

Negative politeness strategies	Positive politeness strategies
1) Hedging (Almost anything but a direct statement with verb 'be')	1) Strategic use of pronouns (to stress solidarity as imposition is made)
2) Hedging by personal attribution (Any implication that a belief is <u>personal</u> in scientific reporting weakens that belief)	2) Strategic use of self-citation (name) along with others being criticized
3) Impersonal constructions (Impersonal subjects and nominalizations, use of passive voice)	3) Modifiers assuming common ground/shared knowledge/desires
4) Invoke a general rule (ie (sic) it is not the author who criticizes but the general rule, accepted by the broad community)	4) Register disagreement, then go on to point out common ground
5) Strategic use of pessimism about writer's own work	5) Emotional responses to indicate solidarity (surprise/satisfaction/disappointment at failure of received idea)
6) Acknowledging the FTA and apologizing for it	6) Joking (eg (sic) title)
	Giving gifts, ie the gift of <u>credit</u>

In the present study I will examine the mitigation of all those steps that can be considered promotional, in order to build a conception of which of them might be perceived as face-threatening. Before presenting the analytic framework of mitigation, therefore, I will next present the evolution of the analytic framework of promotion, starting with previous models of rhetorical structure.

## 4 RHETORICAL STRUCTURE IN ABSTRACTS, INTRODUCTIONS AND DISCUSSION/ CONCLUSION SECTIONS: PREVIOUS MODELS

In this section I will give an overview of the evolution of the analytical frameworks used in the present study. In brief, for introductions, the starting-point was Swales' CARS model (Creating a research space, Swales 1990) and for discussion/conclusion sections the models developed by Dudley-Evans's (1989) and Huckin (1987, printed in Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). These models were also useful in constructing a framework for analyzing abstracts, complemented by the research of Salager-Meyer (1992), Tibbo (1992), Busch-Lauer (1995), and Hartley and Sydes (1995). Because familiarity with the models of introductions and discussion/conclusion sections is needed in order to follow the evolution of the analytical model for abstracts, I will present these models first.

### 4.1 Rhetorical models of introductions

Swales' models of the rhetorical structure of introductions to research articles, first presented in 1981 and later published in a revised version in 1990, completely revolutionized both the analysis and the teaching of scholarly writing. The model has been the basis for a large number of subsequent studies (see further references below) and also in a number of handbooks for teaching academic writing (e.g. Weissberg and Buker 1990, Swales and Feak 1994, May 1997). Swales proposed a rhetorical structure comprising three moves: *Establishing a territory*, *Establishing a niche*, and *Occupying the niche*. Each move further consists of a number of rhetorical steps, some of which are optional. The schematic representation of the moves and steps in Swales' model is given in Table 7 below.

Particularly interesting and relevant from a pedagogical point of view are studies that show to what extent and in what way different disciplines and cultures utilize and linguistically signal rhetorical steps (cf. for example Swales 1990; Nwogu 1991 and Bhatia 1993 use Swales 1981; Lindeberg 1994a, Fredrickson and Swales 1994). Swales' model is based on the rhetorical claiming of a research territory and niche (which is in fact a marketing term, cf. Toffler and Imber 1994), and he suggests that 'decisions have

to be made about the winsomeness of the appeal to the readership’ (Swales 1990:137). Thus the CARS model addresses the following issues, using rather combative terms:

The need to re-establish in the eyes of the discourse community the significance of the research field itself; the need to ‘situate’ the actual research in terms of that significance; and the need to show how this niche in the wider ecosystem will be occupied and defended. (Swales 1990:142)

**Table 7. Swales’ model of the rhetorical structure of introductions to research articles (CARS = Creating a Research Space, Swales 1990:141)**

<p><b>Move 1 Establishing a territory</b></p> <p>Step 1 Claiming centrality and/or  Step 2 Topic generalization and/or  Step 3 Reviewing previous research</p> <p><b>Move 2 Establishing a niche</b></p> <p>Step 1 A Counter-claiming or  Step 1 B Indicating a Gap or  Step 1 C Question-raising or  Step 1 D Continuing a tradition</p> <p><b>Move 3 Occupying the niche</b></p> <p>Step 1 A Outlining purposes or  Step 1 B Announcing present research  Step 2 Announcing principal findings  Step 3 Indicating RA structure</p>
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Legend: RA = research article

*Claims of centrality* are given the following definition: ‘appeals to the discourse community whereby members are asked to accept that the research about to be reported is part of a lively, significant or well-established research area.’ (Swales 1990: 144). Swales gives some examples of centrality claims, but he does not closely analyze the actual persuasive elements and their linguistic signaling. He gives the linguistic exponents of *Establishing a niche* and *Gap statements* a more systematic treatment on the basis of a ‘quick and dirty’ survey (Swales’ own words) but points out that they are ‘extremely interesting and have not yet received the attention they deserve either from a general or applied perspective.’ (Swales 1990: 155) He suggests that the typical introduction is a crafted rhetorical artifact and, at the textual level, the published introduction is a manifestation of rhetorical maneuver.

In an early comparison of the rhetorical structure of introductions in the disciplines of concern here (Lindeberg 1994b), I was struck by the differences in the amount of explicit promotion which seemed to manifest itself in the three disciplines: one discipline emphasized the Claims of centrality whereas another elaborated criticisms or denials of previous knowledge claims, i.e. statements of Gaps, in order to build up a convincing ‘niche’, and a third discipline stressed the positive assessments of principal findings, preempting the judgment of the research community, as it were (cf. Myers 1989). Thus my attention was drawn to ‘the surprising amount of promotion’ (Huckin 1987/1993) that was going on in the introductions and the fact that it was so explicitly signaled. This observation gave rise to a tentative model presented in Table 8, which was used in the pilot study (Lindeberg 1994b).

**Table 8. Tentative model of promotional rhetorical steps in research article introductions (Lindeberg 1994b)**

<b>Hook (Claim of centrality)</b>
<b>Foil (statement of Gap)</b>
<b>Contract (statement of aim/announcement of present research)</b>
<b>Boost (positive assessment of contribution)</b>

The labels given to the persuasive steps were motivated by their catchiness, as they highlight these steps for pedagogical use in the teaching of academic writing. The term *Hook* refers to the aim of ‘hooking’ the reader, i.e. catching the reader’s attention and showing the centrality or relevance of the research area or topic (This term was suggested by Gioia 1992, personal communication). The term *Foil* was motivated by the fact that statements of Gaps were sometimes used so extensively (viz. in Management and Marketing) that they appeared to indicate a further purpose than simply creating a niche for the current contribution. The listing of Gaps seemed more to function as an extensive background and ‘foil’, in order to emphatically foreground and enhance the current contribution by contrast, i.e. there was a more emphatic use than seemed called for logically. The following definition of ‘foil’ is given in the dictionary:

A thin layer of bright metal placed under a displayed gem or piece of jewelry to lend it brilliance. (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* 1969:509.)

The term *Contract* was chosen to express the fact that, when stating the aim/purpose of a study or even when announcing the present research in other terms, the writer does in

fact make a contract with the reader to deliver something, and the formulation of this may reflect the degree of author commitment in various ways. Swales calls this ‘a kind of promissory statement’ (Swales 1990: 159). In other words, this step can be used neutrally but it can also be used to persuade, i.e. promote. (Compare, for example, *In this paper we examine* vs. *In this paper we demonstrate*.)

The term *Boost* was, irreverently, chosen to highlight the fact that so much explicit promotion of the research contribution was to be found in the introductions studied. Of these terms only Boost was retained in the models that were further developed and which will be presented in Chapter 8. However, because of their catchiness the other terms are useful for pedagogical purposes.

## **4.2 Rhetorical models of discussion/conclusion sections**

It seems that in comparison with introductions, research on rhetorical conventions in discussion/conclusion sections in RAs has attracted considerably less interest (cf. Hewings 1993, Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995, Holmes 1997):

This is an unfortunate oversight since, if we can generalize from our interviews with scientists who read these articles most closely, the Discussion section appears to be at least as important as the Introduction. (Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995:40)

For the study of moves and steps in discussion/conclusion sections, Dudley-Evans’ model (1989) has been influential (cf. also Hewings 1993). The model is schematically presented in Table 9 below.

**Table 9. Dudley-Evans' model of the rhetorical structure of discussion/conclusion sections in research papers (Dudley-Evans 1989:74)**

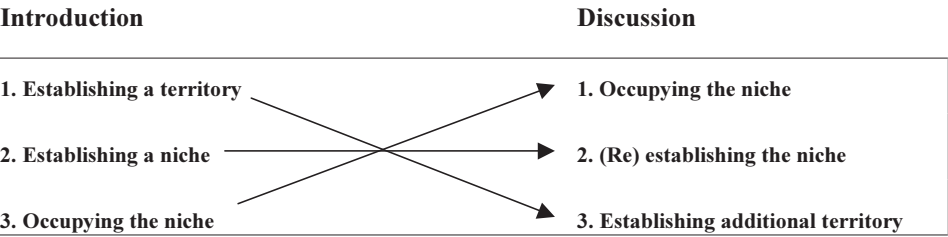
<b>Background: aims, methods, theory, previous research</b>
<b>Result</b>
<b>(Unexpected) outcome</b>
<b>Compare previous research</b>
<b>Explanation (unexpected results)</b>
<b>Deduction (generalization claim)</b>
<b>Hypothesis (on the basis of results)</b>
<b>Compare previous research (support two previous moves)</b>
<b>Recommendation for Future research</b>
<b>Justification (support for recommendation)</b>

These categories were based on papers and M Sc theses in natural sciences (medicine, chemical engineering, plant biology). I used the model as a basis for constructing a simplified model of the rhetorical structuring of discussion/conclusion sections in a pilot study carried out to examine differences between the disciplines under study here (Lindeberg 1994c). Although the model was simplified, some additional steps were needed: Re/state Gap and/or Claim of centrality, and state Limitation(s). The rhetorical steps of the model are presented in Table 11 below. In the texts the steps were not necessarily used in this order although the order reflects a common strategy. It is to be noted that, especially in longer discussion/conclusion sections, the moves and steps may be 'recycled' several times, as also pointed out by Dudley-Evans (1989).

Helpful in the global modeling of the rhetorical structure of discussion/conclusion is the observation by Huckin (orig. version 1987, published in Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995) that the global structure of discussion/conclusion sections is the mirror image of the moves of introductions (the last version based on Swales' CARS model 1990):



**Table 10. Huckin’s model of the converse global structures of introductions and conclusions**



According to this model, in introductions writers start out from a more general perspective, situating the research problem in the wider context of society or the field of research, and move towards a more narrowly focused perspective, specifying the particular problem or question to be dealt with in the current study. In discussion/conclusion sections, conversely, they start by stating the specific findings and claims of their own study and move to situating these in the field of research by comparing their results with those of others, and ‘establishing additional territory’ by showing the implications of their contribution.

Table 11 below presents the composite, modified global model, which was based on Dudley-Evans (1989), Huckin (1987) as well as emerging features in the present material, and which was used in the pilot study (Lindeberg 1994c).

**Table 11. A simplified model of rhetorical structure in discussion/conclusion sections of research articles (Lindeberg 1994c)**

<b>Restate: aim, gap, methods, purpose, theory</b>
<b>Results</b>
<b>Compare previous research</b>
<b>Implications (interpretations, applications, including application recommendations)</b>
<b>Limitations</b>
<b>Suggest (Future research)</b>

Table 12 below shows the application of the model to a discussion/conclusion in Marketing by checking each paragraph for occurrence/non-occurrence of specific steps.

**Table 12. Application of model to a Marketing conclusion (analytical unit = paragraph, x shows occurrence in paragraph, Lindeberg 1994c)**

Para No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Restate</b>	X(t,g)			X(m)						X(g)
<b>Result</b>	X(ccl)		X (c)	X	X(c)	X(as)	X(ccl)			X(sp)
<b>Previous res.</b>	X	X			X	X		X	X	
<b>Implications</b>			X(sp)	X(int)		X	X(rec)			X(sp)
<b>Limitations</b>				X		X	X	X		
<b>Suggest fut. res.</b>					X(i)				X(i)	X

*Legend: as=assessment, c=contribution, ccl=counterclaim, g=gap, i=implied, int. =interpretation, m=method, rec=recommendation, sp=speculation, t=theory, u=unexpected*

It can be seen that in the example the progression of rhetorical steps in the main follows the sequencing of the model, when moving from left to right, i.e. from paragraph 1 to paragraph 10. The section boundaries are reflected in the patterns of rhetorical steps: The first subsection headed *Theoretical implications* extended between paragraphs 1 and 5, the second subsection headed *Managerial implications* covered paragraphs 6 and 7, and the last subsection was called *Limitations and extensions*. This model was used in a study of Discussion/conclusion sections in M Sc (Econ.) theses written in EFL, and the findings showed a correlation between the utilization of these steps and the grades given by business subject teachers (Räsänen 1996).

As is the case in Swales' model of introductions and Dudley-Evans' model of discussion/conclusion sections, the model displayed above does not account specifically for the promotional functions of the extensive use of certain steps. Such extensive use of statements of Limitations and suggestions for Future research was found in the Management and Marketing discussion/conclusions of the pilot study material (Lindeberg 1994c). It seemed that there must be a rhetorical reason for the extensive emphasis on these steps in the material, and this realization led to the present focus on what the rhetorical steps of promotion in introductions, on the one hand, and in discussion/conclusion sections, on the other hand, might be. A further related question was whether explicit promotion was used in abstracts, too, and in that case to what extent?

### 4.3 Rhetorical models of abstracts

The analytic models used in the literature examining abstracts of RAs have largely been based on the empirical research schema of IMRD (Introduction-Methods-Results-Discussion), on elements of Swales' CARS model (1981, 1990), and have also, consciously or not, included categories to be found in Dudley-Evans' model of discussion/conclusions (1989). The models are schematically presented below (Table 13).

Apart from the obvious overlappings of the models, two points that can be observed in Table 13 are relevant for the present study. First, only one explicitly evaluative term is used: *Recommendation* (Salager-Meyer and Busch-Lauer), and two terms are implicitly evaluative: *new* (Salager-Meyer), *Limitation/validity* (Tibbo) and *Applications* (Salager-Meyer). Second, only Busch-Lauer's model starts with the step Purpose whereas all the others begin with some aspect of Background.

**Table 13. Previous models of rhetorical structuring in abstracts**

Tibbo 1992:55 (history)	Salager-Meyer 1992:110f. (medicine)	Busch-Lauer 1995:17 (medicine)	Hartley and Sydes 1995:3f. (psychology)
Background	Introducing topic	Purpose	Background
Purpose/Scope	Relevant literature	Background/Statem't (of problem area)	Aim
Hypotheses	Purpose	Corpus/Methods	Participants
Methodology	Primary objective	Results	Methods
Results (incl. Limitations/validity)	Addressed question	Recommendation	Results
Conclusions	Corpus/Methods	Case presentation	Conclusions
None of the above	Subjects		Comment
	Methods		
	Procedure		
	Results (principal/new)		
	Conclusions		
	Clinical applications		
	Principal conclusions (new)		
	Recommendations		
	Applications		
	Future research		

In a cross-cultural comparison of abstracts in three disciplines (biology, medicine, and linguistics, Melander, Swales and Fredrickson (1997) applied the IMRD schema in their analysis. The ‘basic rhetorical structures’ they found to be variously used were: methods-results, problem-recommendation, methods-results-conclusions, objective-methods-results-conclusions, introduction-material / methods-results-conclusion. Interestingly, of the nine subsamples studied, only those written by American linguists were found to use overt persuasive strategies, but these were not subjected to further examination.

A somewhat similar IMRD macro-structure approach was used by Hyland (2000) in order to compare abstracts in eight disciplines (ranging from philosophy to physics) and the changes in ‘move structures’ between 1980 and 1997. The components of his slightly different model were: Introduction-Purpose-Method-Product-Conclusion. One term in the model immediately stands out: *Product* in lieu of Results or Contribution. This is consistent with the basic tenet of Hyland’s reasoning, which follows Fairclough’s idea of the ‘marketization’ of academia (Fairclough 1995) and sees the abstract as an instrument of sales promotion. I will return to this viewpoint in the discussion in Chapter 13.

The ordering of rhetorical moves/steps in abstracts is a point where different disciplines and cultures have been found to differ (cf. the models in Table 13 above, Andersson and Gunnarsson 1995, Busch-Lauer 1995, Melander et al. 1997, Hyland 2000). Therefore this was another question chosen for analysis in the present study. A further point to be elaborated and studied was what rhetorical/promotional steps constitute the general terms of Background/Introduction and Comments/Conclusions, and what types of steps are used to promote present research in research article abstracts. The proposed model of promotion in abstracts building on those outlined above is presented in Chapter 8.

## **5 THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF EVALUATION IN SCHOLARLY RHETORIC**

Since the identification of promotional steps in this study is based on overt signals of evaluation, it is relevant to establish what is meant by evaluation in this context and how it is manifested linguistically. I shall first examine some studies of evaluation in research articles that have influenced the present work. Subsequently I will present the incremental model of the accumulation of evaluative signals in RA introductions which forms the basis for identifying linguistic signals of evaluation in the present study. For each promotional step, one or several evaluative signals were identified. However, since the delimitation of evaluative signaling is often difficult, the identified signals were not quantified.

### **5.1 Evaluation in research articles**

A central work for the present study in the understanding of evaluation was Hunston's (1989) detailed description of evaluation in experimental research articles (RAs). Hunston argues that every choice of lexical or grammatical item is evaluative, because it reflects what the writer thinks and is thus related to an ideological mind-set, to social and cultural values. She concludes therefore that there are no non-evaluative texts, seeing a whole text as a single realization of evaluation. Further, Hunston proposes that evaluation is essential for the coherence of a text and a necessary product of the interaction between writer and reader: it is a crucial component in signaling point of view, attitude, the monitoring of interaction and persuasion. Thus evaluation is considered an unavoidable constituent of scientific text:

It is no longer widely accepted that the scientist uses language to reflect objectively phenomena observed in the outside world. (Hunston 1989:6)

In fact, following the social constructivist view of knowledge creation (e.g. Latour and Woolgar 1979), Hunston sees persuading the reader of the validity of the writer's knowledge claim(s) as one of the primary functions of the experimental RA. On the one hand the research program is permeated by the value system of the scientific community and on the other hand the RA reflects these value systems. The features and characteristics of the RA therefore are best interpreted in terms of an argument rather

than a description (Hunston 1989:15, cf. also Bazerman 1981, 1988, Swales 1983, 1990).

However, Hunston also points out that the concept of evaluation in discourse studies is problematic, mainly for two reasons. Firstly, evaluation is accumulative, context- and register-specific, and may not be clear-cut or overtly signaled. Thus evaluation is frequently realized in language that is not attitudinal. Further, evaluation is a discoursal rather than a syntactic feature, as it may not be possible to tell from an isolated sentence whether it is evaluative or not. In other words, evaluation resides in the function of a clause or sentence in the rhetorical context. However, Hunston acknowledges that there exists an inventory of evaluative devices, some of which may be identifiable within a particular genre. Since evaluation is a social act, what is considered evaluative is what a particular discourse community holds as having value. Thus certain lexical and grammatical items can be cited as being frequently associated with the linguistic representation of evaluation. Evaluation comprises not only interaction between the writer and the text or topic but also between the writer and the reader.

The second problem is that there is as yet no definitive definition of evaluation nor a unanimous conception of its role in discourse. As a working definition Hunston suggests that evaluation is the 'assignment of quality to entities' and proposes three major parameters of evaluation with corresponding scales of value: 1) *status*: certain - uncertain; 2) *value*: good - bad; 3) *relevance*: important - unimportant.

*Status* describes the level of certainty attached to a piece of information, i.e. the writer's epistemological stance, and it can be classified in terms of nominalizations that refer anaphorically to the information as well as express the writer's assessment of it (Hunston 1989:105), for example *result*, *implication*, *interpretation*. Hunston suggests that the certain/uncertain parameter of evaluation reflects both the interaction between the reader and the writer and the recognition by the writer of institutional categories of good and bad. She proposes that within a single text there is a finite set of status categories, and that the same set will be found in other texts of the same type, register, or genre.

The status of a piece of information is expressed as the intersection of three scales or parameters: 1) the activity of the writers, 2) the source of the information, and 3) the

modification of certainty (e.g. by modality, cf. Hunston 1993 reported in Chapter 6). Activity of the writers is manifested for example in verbs such as *assess*, *assume*, *describe*, *hypothesize*, *interpret*, and *state*. Source of the information is further divided into four categories: received knowledge (signaled for example by *generally*, *common* or reference to a model/theory), citation, experimental data of the current study, and the writer's own argument, which may be based on the text (signaled by *hence*, *therefore*, *thus*) or the writer's mental processes (signaled by 1<sup>st</sup> person pronouns and/or verbs such as *extrapolate*, *infer*). In citations, the reporting verbs may reflect the current writer's attitude or the reported writer's attitude on two scales: known, certain, probable, possible (reported writer) and known, possible, unlikely (current writer) (Cf. also Thompson and Ye 1990 on reporting verbs). However, Hunston points out that there may be deliberate ambiguity in assigning the source as being the data or the writer's own argument, especially in interpreting. (Hunston 1989:118) Modification of certainty is realized by modal verbs (*may*, *must*, *could*), modal constructions (*It is possible/clear/plausible that*, *We believe that*, *gives us confidence that*, *probably*, *possibly*), modal copulas (*appear*, *seem*) and lexical items in projecting verbs (*demonstrate*, *suggest*, *claim*, *mean*, *imply*).

*Value* refers to the value of a piece of information in terms of good or bad (within a cultural ideology), even when there is no explicit attitudinal lexis. This is because the assignment of value may be implicit, context-sensitive and register-specific, for example in the scientific RA:

Some of the evaluation of value is by implication, e.g. notions of agreement and consistency between results, and between results and theory, reflect positive value and conversely disagreement and inconsistency reflect negative value. (Hunston 1989:183)

While acknowledging the positive value of agreement and consistency between results suggested by Hunston, I would also like to draw attention to the fact that disagreement between results (and results and theory) may indirectly reflect positive value, in the sense of providing a basis for counterclaims and hence possibly for valuable new knowledge (cf. e.g. Kuhn 1962/1996).

Status and value may overlap, and therefore Hunston suggests that they represent two ways of looking rather than a distinction between two types of phenomenon. Conceding that it may be difficult to distinguish evaluative from non-evaluative language, she

suggests that language that expresses achievement vs. non-achievement of goals in experimental RAs indicates positive vs. negative evaluation. However, the status of an item places restrictions on the kind of value it may subsequently be given. For example:

‘a hypothesis may be given value on the basis of its consistency with experimental results and its explanatory power; an experimental result may be given value on the basis of its generalizability, its fit with existing theory, its freedom from observed bias. ’ (Hunston 1989:208)

By noting the *grounds* on the basis of which evaluation is invoked, it is possible to study the value judgments of a particular genre, such as the RA. This is because evaluation can be signaled by expressing the grounds for an evaluation rather than the evaluation itself. The main criterion is ‘fit’ between various aspects: e.g. models and data, laboratory data and the world, models and data and other aspects of scientific knowledge. Examples given for lexical signals of positive value are for example: *accuracy, applicability, consistency, importance, simplicity, and usefulness*; and for negative value: *ambiguity, inconsistency, and discrepancy*; goal signals: *useful, allow, possible vs. difficult, problem*; status categories: *unknown, unlikely*; and comparators: *only* and *not*. (Hunston 1989:214ff.)

Hunston points out the function of value as a highlighter, i.e. an evaluation of value serves to make something important in relation to other information that is not evaluated. The goal of Hunston’s analysis is to show how a text is bound together by evaluation, and secondly, how certain motifs are highlighted. The highlighted motifs may then be used to construct (reconstruct?) the goals of the text. Another feature which may be revealed in a diagram representation of evaluation is the accumulation of value, and it may illustrate in what positions in the text structure different types of evaluation occur:

One of the tests of any method of analysis is that it should make clear observable differences between texts. (Hunston 1989:223)

*Relevance* denotes the significance of a piece of information in a metadiscoursal capacity, i.e. in relation to the rest of the text. Referring to narrative theory (for example Labov 1972), Hunston suggests that the function of evaluation is to indicate the point of a story, i.e. its relevance to the culture and the ongoing discourse. The following definitions of relevance in research articles are extrapolated (Hunston 1989:238):

- relevance to (how the information fits into) a schema of knowledge which is defined institutionally and interactively



- relevance to (how the information fits into) the argument being developed by the current writer

Hunston introduces the term relevance markers, which are sentences that explicitly assert the relevance of the information given in one or several previous sentence(s), at the same time implicitly or explicitly placing the information along an important-unimportant scale (Hunston 1989:239ff.). In the present study, the relevance markers correspond to Claims of centrality on the one hand and Boosts on the other hand, depending on which item the relevance is attributed to: the research area/topic or the authors' research contribution.

Hunston suggests that the relevance markers are typically used as boundary markers of text units, i.e. the relevance of a piece of discourse is typically signaled at the beginning or at the end of units:

- at the beginning of a unit, where it takes the role of Topic Sentence and the clause relational pattern within the unit is General-Particular
- at the end of a unit, where it summarizes the implications of the information in the unit

Following Hunston, the present study examines the placement of promotional steps (a form of relevance markers) in sections (introductions and conclusions) and in paragraphs (first paragraphs and abstracts).

Finally, Hunston proposes that all types of evaluation operate interactively, because value, and to a lesser extent status depend on a sharing of goals and ideologies between writer and reader, both as regards a mutually-agreed world and a mutually-agreed text. (Hunston 1989:372) Relevance acts interactively in informing the reader explicitly (through relevance markers) of the significance of the information offered to the reader's world and to the ongoing discourse. Evaluation is further interpretative, in the sense that it labels items in the world of discourse in terms of certainty, goodness, and importance.

The focus of the present study is mainly on the parameters of value (good/bad) and relevance (important/unimportant), but status (certainty/uncertainty) comes into the degree of assertion of the two former parameters, i.e. in the process of identifying bald vs. hedged statements.

In the context of examining the concept of attitudinal language, Hunston cites Sinclair (1981) on the two planes in discourse: the autonomous plane and the interactive plane (Hunston 1989: 70ff.). These two terms refer to the ‘the step by step tally of record of experience’ and the writer’s awareness of the writing/reading process and the creation of text, respectively. On somewhat similar lines, in her study of evaluation in research articles in four academic disciplines, Thetela (1997) suggests that evaluation in scholarly writing be broken down into two major categories: *topic-oriented* and *research-oriented* evaluation. Further, research-oriented evaluation can be divided into process-oriented evaluation, which refers to usefulness and control/reliability, and product-oriented evaluation, which refers to significance and certainty.

The present study is mainly research-oriented, focusing on the assignment of value and relevance to the research area or question, to previous research, and to the authors’ current research contribution. However, claiming centrality of the research topic may rely on evaluation ‘in the real world’, i.e. topic-orientation in Thetela’s terms: the scope or centrality of the phenomenon in society or in the business world. Similarly, promoting the implications/applications of a study may be based on the usefulness of the model or findings for business practice. Thus both process and product orientation may be at hand simultaneously.

## **5.2 Linguistic signaling of evaluation**

It is by examining the gradual addition of textual pointers of rhetorical structure that the pervasive nature of evaluation in research articles is most strikingly revealed. In an experiment the purpose of which was to test to what extent verb forms/tenses signaled rhetorical structure in introductions to research articles (Lindeberg 1994d), I found that by first stripping an introduction down to verb phrases only, and then incrementally adding various grammatical categories present in the text, it was possible to capture the rhetorical structure and the drift of the reasoning, without including any words referring to the actual content (substance) of the article. What the experiment also revealed was the surprising amount of evaluative items that were thus highlighted.

The stages in the experiment are illustrated in Examples 1-3 below. The first stage included only the verb phrases (Example 1); the second stage added adjectives/adjectival phrases, adverbials, connectors/conjunctions, and pronouns

(Example 2); and the third stage added nouns which did not refer to the substance of the article (Example 3). The original text is found at the end of this section.

**Example 1. Sample introduction in Management with only verb phrases given (numbers refer to sentences; underlinings indicate evaluative items; an empty line indicates a paragraph division)**

1. has gained
  2. are linked. . . is . . . should be related to
  3. have received . . . has been directed at
  4. has received . . . is
  
  5. dealing with. . . have explored
  6. has focused . . . on . . . has used . . . to test
  7. has been. . . seeking to link . . . subsumes . . . with
  
  8. has been placed on understanding. . . make sense . . . act to influence
  9. are . . . has become providing
  10. . . . has become
  11. are . . . seen . . . for influencing
  
  12. was intended to articulate . . . . investigate - to provide. . . distinguishes . . . flourish from . . . flounder
  13. tested . . . refined
  14. posed . . . are . . . linked to –
- (*Academy of Management Journal* 1993, Vol. 36, No 2:239-270)

Most readers confronting this text who are familiar with Swales' CARS model (or are otherwise aware of rhetorical structure in introductions) are able to figure out that the first three paragraphs are likely to be dealing with review of previous research whereas the last paragraph introduces the current research. This recognition of the pattern on the basis of the verb forms has been proved time and time again in the present writer's writing classes. However, giving the plain verb forms does not work in the Finance introductions (JFE and JF), because the present tense is used almost exclusively (cf. Examples 4-6 below), and there are also fewer other signals of the categories that will be illustrated below.

As the underlinings in Example 1 indicate, quite a few of the verbs carry evaluative overtones, either positive or negative, usually expressing achievement or non-achievement (cf. Hunston 1989). In fact, examining the underlined items in Example 1 above shows that as many as 11 verbs in the total of 14 sentences indicate evaluation. The majority of these are positive but the verb *flounder* is negative. Some of the verbs are not inherently evaluative but gain their evaluative load from the context: thus, *influence* on its own does not indicate whether it is positive or negative but implies evaluation somewhere in the cotext, and similarly, *articulate* is seen as positive because

it is here collocated with *intend*. (Cotext refers to the ‘surrounding linguistic elements which may need to be invoked in order to show how specific local interpretations depend on surrounding features of the text.’ Bex 1996: 79) The verb *focus* in sentence 6 is interesting in that it is usually used in a positive sense about the writer’s own research but in a critical sense about previous research, often in conjunction with an explicit or implied *only* or *mainly*, thus indicating a Gap statement.

In Examples 2 and 3 below added items are given in bold and evaluative items are underlined.

**Example 2. Sample introduction in Management with verb phrases and the addition of adjectives, adverbials, pronouns and connectives/conjunctions given (added items in bold; underlinings indicate evaluative items; an empty line indicates a paragraph division)**

1. . . . has gained increasing . . . in recent
2. If . . . are linked, **however**, it is intuitively apparent that . . . should be related to. . .
3. . . . **although** clearly important, have received considerably less . . . than . . . and the existing . . . has been directed mainly at . . .
4. **An important** . . . of concern that has received even less empirical . . . is. . .
  
5. . . . dealing with. . . have explored. . .
6. **Other relevant** . . . has focused mainly on. . . **or** has used. . . to test. . . **at an individual**. . .
7. **There** has been, **however**, a notable . . . of **empirical** . . . seeking to link . . . **which** subsumes . . . with. . .
  
8. **In the strategic**. . . , increasing . . . has been placed on understanding . . . **how** . . . make sense . . . **and how** . . . act to influence. . .
9. **Because** . . . are . . . a key . . . has become providing. . .
10. **Indeed, characterized by** . . . has become a . . . of. . .
11. . . . are often seen as critical to . . . **and even** . . . **mainly because of their** . . . for influencing. . .
  
12. **This** . . . was intended to articulate **and empirically** investigate . . . to provide . . . into **what** distinguishes . . . **that** flourish from . . . that flounder.
13. **We** tested **and refined** hypothesized. . .
14. **Overall, we** posed. . . , **How** are key . . . linked to . . . ?  
(*Academy of Management Journal* 1993, Vol. 36, No 2:239-270)

As illustrated in Example 2, it is the addition of adjectival and adverbial phrases that reveal the Claims of centrality and Gap statements. Again, counting evaluative signals, another 18 can be added to the 11 evaluative verbs found in Example 1, which gives an average of two evaluative signals per sentence (29/14).

The addition of nouns (still not referring to actual subject content) to the incremental sample in Example 3 increases the number of evaluative signals by 9, bringing up the total figure to 38 for the 14 sentences, i.e. an average of 2.7 signals per sentence.

**Example 3. Sample introduction in Management with verb phrases, adjectives, adverbials, connectives/ conjunctions, pronouns and the addition of nouns not referring to substance given (added items in bold, underlinings indicate evaluative items; an empty line indicates a paragraph division)**

1. . . . has gained increasing **prominence** . . . in recent **years**. . . .
2. If . . . are linked, however, is intuitively apparent that . . . should be related to. . . .
3. although clearly important, . . . have received considerably less **study** than . . . and the existing **work** . . . has been directed mainly at . . . .
4. An important area of **concern** that has received even less empirical **attention** is. . . .
5. . . . have explored. . . .
6. Other relevant **work** has focused mainly on . . . or has used . . . to test . . . at an individual **level**.
7. There has been, however, a notable **lack** of empirical **work** seeking to link . . . which subsumes. . . with. . . .
8. In the strategic **context**, increasing **emphasis** has been placed on understanding . . . how . . . make sense . . . and how . . . act to influence. . . .
9. Because . . . are . . . a key **role** . . . has become providing. . . .
10. Indeed, characterized by . . . has become a **hallmark** of. . . .
11. . . . are often seen as critical to the **success** and even the **survival** of . . . mainly because of their **implications** for influencing. . . .
12. This **study** was intended to articulate and empirically investigate . . . to provide **insight** into what distinguishes . . . that flourish from . . . that flounder.
13. We tested and refined hypothesized **relationships**. . . .
14. Overall, we posed the **question**, How are key . . . linked to . . . ?  
(*Academy of Management Journal* 1993, Vol. 36, No 2:239-270)

There are two interesting observations to be made from Examples 2 and 3. Firstly, the number of evaluative items is quite high, which indicates a fairly promotional text. Secondly, the rhetorical strategy of how to advance the reasoning is quite visible, even though no lexical items referring to the substance of the article have been included. The nouns given so far refer to general scholarly concepts to do with research and cognition and are not specific to any one discipline or field of research. What the incremental adding does is to illustrate beyond doubt the strong presence of evaluative and promotional elements in this sample of scholarly text. These samples (Examples 1-3 and 4-6) were randomly picked purely because of their brevity, which makes them convenient for teaching purposes.

The illustrative power of the incremental model described above applies to sections with sizeable chunks of promotional steps, such as the introductions and discussion/conclusions of the journals of Management and Marketing examined in the present study. As mentioned above, it is less applicable to illustrating the rhetorical structure of introductions of the journals in Finance studied here, as can be seen in

Examples 4-6 below, although this sample too contains a large amount of evaluation. The original of Example 4 is found at the end of this section.

**Example 4. Sample introduction in Finance with only verb phrases (with prepositions) given (numbers refer to sentences, underlinings indicate evaluative items; an empty line indicates a paragraph division)**

1. has
  2. falls...provides
  3. does not reveal...is...is...nor does...tell...benefit from
  4. To address.... study
  
  5. is...is
  6. is...makes...makes
  7. is...reveals...are decreases
  8. is...to distinguish...have
  9. is...has
  
  10. find...decreases...is
  11. has...is...understanding
  12. appears to be...falls
  
  13. need not convey
  14. can increase...by redistributing
  15. can reveal ...has become...has improved
  16. can make...create
  17. using...find...increases
- (*Journal of Financial Economics* 32, 1992: 45-60)

Whereas the 14 sentences in the Management introduction in Example 1 contained 11 evaluative verbs (78.6% of the sentences on average), the 17 sentences in the Finance introduction in Example 4 contain only 9 evaluative verbs (52.9% on average). In addition, in Example 4 it is less easy to deduce, on the basis of the verb phrases only, what rhetorical steps or moves are represented in these sentences. In the first paragraph there is some indication of a Gap statement in the negated verb forms, and the infinitive form of *address* combined with the verb *study* in Sentence 4 seems to indicate a statement of Purpose. These conjectures are confirmed, when examining the same passage in Example 5 below, where adjectives, adverbials, pronouns and connectives/conjunctions have been added.

In Example 4 the mere verbs of the second paragraph do not indicate clearly whether the sentences deal with topic generalizations or reviews of previous research; again by adding the still very limited linguistic elements shown below in Example 5, the rhetorical/promotional steps become more clearly identifiable as Claims of centrality and Gap/problem statements. In fact, there are 16 evaluative adjectives and 3 enhancing

adverbials providing cues to the reader (underlined), giving a total of 28 evaluative signals in Example 5 (28/17 sentences).

In the third paragraph in Example 4 above the verb *find* could refer either to previous research or to the current authors, since normally the present tense is used throughout in the Finance journals. In other words, Myers' observation that main knowledge claims are signaled by a shift to the present tense does not apply to Finance introductions (Myers 1992). Adding the pronouns in Example 5 reveals that the authors are in the subject position and hence the rhetorical step of reporting their own findings is identifiable in Sentence 10. In the next sentence the adjective *important* in conjunction with *in understanding* signals the positive assessment of the contribution, i.e. a Boost.

Returning to Example 4 above, the use of modals in the last paragraph could indicate various rhetorical acts: the authors might be assessing the generalizability of their findings; they might be assessing the efficacy of their model, or they might be speculating on alternative findings or interpretations of their findings. That it is the last alternative that seems likely here is revealed by the adverb *actually* in Example 5 below, although the other added elements help.

**Example 5. Sample introduction in Finance with verb phrases, and the addition of adjectives, adverbials, pronouns and connectives/conjunctions given (added items in bold, underlinings indicate evaluative items; an empty line indicates a paragraph division)**

1. **On average**, ...has a **strong** negative
2. **Presumably**, ... falls **because of** ...**and because** ...provides
3. **But**, ...does not reveal **how much of**...is...**and how much** is **nor** does it tell us **whether other**...benefit from
4. To address **these**...we study
  
5. **An oft-repeated** is **that**...is **contagious**
6. **The common**... is **that** ...makes...**wary** ...irrespective of... **and hence** makes **them worse off**
7. **An alternative**, **more benign**... is **that**...reveals...**that** are **common to all**... **and, consequently**, decreases
8. **From an empirical**...it is **difficult** to distinguish between these ... **but**...they have **strongly different**
9. **If**...is **only**...it has **no social**
  
10. **We find that, on average**,...decreases **by 1% at the time of**... **and** ...is **statistically significant**.
11. has a **moderate**...is **important in** understanding
12. appears to be **greater**...falls **by almost 3% on average**.

13. need not convey **only bad**
14. can **potentially** increase...by redistributing
15. **First**, ...can reveal **that**...has become **less efficient and that the competitive**...has improved
16. **Second, indirect** ...can make...**less efficient and hence profitable**... create
17. Using... **imperfect** ...we find **that**...**actually** increases by **2.2% in more concentrated.... with low**  
(*Journal of Financial Economics* 32, 1992: 45-60)

In Example 6 below, nouns that do not specifically refer to the substance of the article have been added.

**Example 6. Introduction with only verb phrases, adjectives, adverbials, connectives/ conjunctions, pronouns and nouns not referring to substance given (JFE, added items in bold, underlinings indicate evaluative items; an empty line indicates a paragraph division)**

1. On average, the **announcement** of...has a strong negative **effect**
2. Presumably, ... falls because of ...and because the **announcement**...provides information
3. But a **look at**, ...does not reveal how much of the **information**...is...and how much is nor does it tell us whether other...benefit from the difficulties
4. To address these **issues**, we study the **effect** of ...**announcements** on
5. An oft-repeated **concern** is that...is contagious
6. The common **view** is that ...makes...wary ...irrespective of... and hence makes them worse off
7. An alternative, more benign **view** is that the **announcement** reveals...that are common to all.... and, consequently, decreases
8. From an empirical **perspective**, it is difficult to distinguish between these two **views**... but...they have strongly different implications
9. If...is only an **effect**, it has no social
10. We find that, on average,...decreases by 1% at the time of the **announcement**... and ...is statistically significant.
11. The **conclusion** that... has a moderate **effect**...is important in understanding the...**effects**
12. The **effect** appears to be greater...falls by almost 3% on average.
13. The...**announcement** need not convey only bad **news**
14. can potentially increase...by redistributing
15. First, the ...**announcement**...can reveal that...has become less efficient and that the competitive...has improved
16. Second, indirect ...can make...less efficient and hence create profitable opportunities...
17. Using...as a **proxy** for ...imperfect...we find that...actually increases by 2.2% in more concentrated.... with low  
(*Journal of Financial Economics* 32, 1992: 45-60)

Of the additions, only 5 nouns are evaluative, and two of these are not inherently evaluative but acquire an evaluative value in collocation with the attached verbs or adjectives: *provides information* (S2), and *have (strongly different) implications* (S8). The final total of evaluative signals in Example 6 is thus 33 for 17 sentences, which gives an average of just under two signals per sentence (1.9) whereas the total average in Example 3 (Management) was 2.7.



To sum up, the incremental addition of linguistic elements showed, firstly, how much of the rhetorical structuring and the representation of the progression of reasoning in introductions relies on linguistic elements that do not refer to the actual substance (contents) of the article. Having repeatedly used this method to present scholarly rhetoric in teaching, I have found that the effect on students is invariably one of great surprise. Secondly, the identification of evaluative signals showed the surprising amount of evaluation in both these text samples, which led to a closer examination of evaluative signaling in a larger sample (pilot study reported in Lindeberg 1998). Examples 3 and 6 above illustrate the frequent occurrence of several evaluative signals in the same sentence. The incremental analysis of the two sample introductions above also showed that the Management journal introduction followed Swales' CARS model more closely and also made considerably more use of evaluative signals than did the sample from the Finance journal. Table 14 below gives an overview and examples of the evaluative signals identified in the larger sample (cf. Lindeberg 1998).

**Table 14. Taxonomy of linguistic signals of evaluation: positive and negative (examples)**

<b><u>Lexical signals</u></b>	<b>Verbs</b> allow improve bias fail	<b>Nouns</b> advantage interest lack limitation	<b>Adjectives</b> better crucial mixed conflicting	<b>Adverbials</b> wisely reliably adequately insufficiently
<b>Pronouns</b>	many several few			
<b>Numerical</b>	70% 749 (institutional investors)			
<b>Adjectival/adverbial phrases</b>		of concern in depth		
<b><u>Syntactic structures:</u></b>				
<b>Emphatic verbal structures</b>		did allow is attracting (progressive form)		
<b>Emphatic conjunctions</b>		not only - but also, both - and		
<b>Double negatives</b>		not unusual		
<b>Parallel structures (repeated)</b>		NN focused (only) on - we examined (both - and)		
<b><u>Discourse signals:</u></b>				
<b>Sentence adverbials</b>		Interestingly, Clearly,		
<b>Fronted concessive clauses</b>		Despite. . . ., . . . . Although. . . ., . . . .		

The taxonomy and illustrative examples presented in Table 14 give a simplified version of reality, as models generally do. It is to be noted that most of the examples here are

inherently evaluative but this is not always the case. In fact, it is sometimes difficult to draw a clear-cut line between evaluative items that are inherently evaluative and those that derive their evaluative load from the context (cf. Hunston 1989). As the examples above and the pilot study showed (Lindeberg 1998), evaluative signals often occur together, in clusters. This is illustrated below by a sequence of parallel structures following the announcement of the extension of the model: it is the repetition of the syntactic structures producing contrastive emphasis as well as the other evaluative signals that together produce evaluation:

### Example 7

Like BH, we explore organizational consequences and marketing ethics. However, though we use one version of two of their scenarios, **our study diverges from theirs**. Whereas **BH focus only on** deontologically unethical behaviors, **we also examine** deontologically ethical behaviors. **They explore** the effects of no consequences and negative consequences; **we examine** the effects of positive consequences **and** negative consequences. **They allowed** respondents **only** the opportunity to reprimand the salesperson or to choose the "no action" option; **we add** to these options the alternative of rewarding the salesperson (**thus not prejudging** for the respondent the issue of the appropriateness of rewards vs. punishments). **They grounded** their study in the organizational behavior literature; **we ground** ours in the ethics literature and therefore "ethical judgments," a construct **not explored by BH, plays a key role** in our study. (JMR Vol. XXX (February 1993): 78-90)

Another example of contextual influence is provided by verbs such as *grow* or *increase*. They may be used to make factual statements about economic trends or they may be used to signal a Claim of centrality, as in *A growing body of research has focused on. . . . In recent years the number of studies on. . . . has increased. . . .* (cf. Swales' (1990) definition). It seems that there is a symbiotic relationship here: It is the function of the statement that determines whether an item that is not inherently evaluative is used in an evaluative capacity, but at the same time it is the potentially evaluative item that may alert the reader to the evaluative function of the statement. For each identification of a promotional step, it is necessary to identify the linguistic item(s) that justify the identification. Not being a subject expert but a linguist, I have focused on those that are overtly identifiable, but it is clear that for the subject expert there are large numbers of signals that only they understand the significance of. Thus it can be assumed that linguistic signals of evaluation in fact form a continuum: at one end are items that are undisputably evaluative (e.g. *good/bad, important/unimportant*) and at the other end are items that are only contextually evaluative. In Example 8 below, it is the combination of items in *about 70% of the trading volume on the NYSE* (New York Stock Exchange) that indicates importance and (along with *increasingly dominated* in the preceding

sentence) claims centrality, rather than the individual items. Similarly, in Example 9 below the verb *concentrate* is not necessarily inherently evaluative but becomes so in the context.

Examples 8 – 11 below illustrate the variety and clustering of grammatical categories (given in parentheses) used to signal evaluation. Lexical signals include adjectives and attributive phrases (below given as ADJ for short), adverbs and adverbial phrases (ADV), nouns and nominal phrases (NOUN), verbs and verb phrases (VERB), pronominals expressing amounts (e.g. *many*, *several*, PRON), and numerical phrases (NUM). Syntactic signals include emphatic structures (EMPH. STR) like for example emphatic verb forms (*'did allow'*), emphatic conjunctions (CONJ. e.g. *both - and*, *not only - but also*) and double negative evaluations (DN: *minimized the risk for errors*). Discourse signals of emphasis and evaluation include sentence adverbials in thematic position (SENT. ADV. *Clearly*, these results . . . *Interestingly*, these findings ...) as well as fronted concessive clauses (FR. CONC.) highlighting evaluation in the matrix clause.

#### Example 8. Claim of centrality

Trading in equity markets is **increasingly dominated** by institutional investors. Schwartz and Shapiro (1990) estimate that in 1989 **about 70% of the trading volume on the NYSE** was accounted for by member firms and institutional investors. **In light of the importance** of institutional traders, their impact on stock prices has received **increased attention**. (ADV, VERB, NUM., NOUN; ADV., NOUN, ADJ., NOUN, (JFE 33 (1993): 173-199.)

#### Example 9. Statement of knowledge Gap

Previous studies in bargaining **have concentrated on** negotiation strategy **rather than** looking at **both** the antecedents **and** consequences of various negotiation strategies. (VERB, EMPH. CONJ, EMPH. CONJ., (JMR Vol. XXX (May 1993): 183-203.)

#### Example 10. Boosting own contribution

The results of this study **not only support** this **insight but, more important, provide guidance** into how this task might **wisely be achieved**. (EMPH. STR. /CONJ., VERB, NOUN, ADJ., VERB, ADV., VERB (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 3: 502-526)

In Example 11 below, as was frequently the case in Gap statements, the positive concessive clause expresses a mitigation of the Gap statement, but it simultaneously foregrounds the negative evaluation in the main clause:

#### Example 11. Statement of knowledge Gap

**Although** those three traditional approaches to socialization have made **some important contributions**, they are **limited in three respects**. (FR. CONC. PRON., ADJ., NOUN, ADJ., NUM. *AMJ*, 1993, Vol. 36, No. 3: 557-589)

To sum up, these examples illustrate the fact that linguistic signals of evaluation include lexical as well as syntactic and discourse signals. The abstracts, introductions, and conclusions were digitalized and manually coded for rhetorical steps and for linguistic signals of evaluation. This study focuses on identifying overt, explicitly evaluative statements, but I acknowledge with Bazerman (1988), Hunston (1989) and others that evaluation pervades the rhetoric of research articles, and that the linguistic signaling is a matter of accumulation, gradation and context, and frequently is not clear-cut. For example, as observed above the nouns *information* and *implications* in Example 6 are not necessarily inherently evaluative, but in the context of *provide information* and *have implications*, they carry an evaluative load. The analysis included not only a mapping of the statements of relevance and value (cf. Hunston 1989) but also the identification of hedges/mitigating expressions. As Myers (1989) has pointed out, knowledge claims and positive or negative evaluation in scholarly writing may be experienced by the scholarly community working in the same area as a face-threatening act, and it is therefore of interest to see to what extent the promotional statements in the material were counter-balanced by hedges/mitigation. Hedging and mitigation are the topics of the next chapter.

### **Original text of Example 1 (introduction)**

*Academy of Management Journal* 1993, Vol. 36, No. 2, 239-270.

#### **STRATEGIC SENSEMAKING AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE: LINKAGES AMONG SCANNING, INTERPRETATION, ACTION, AND OUTCOMES**

**JAMES B. THOMAS, SHAWN M. CLARK and DENNIS A. GIOIA**

The exploration of relationships between cognition and action has gained increasing prominence in organizational studies in recent years. If cognition and action are linked, however, it is intuitively apparent that both should be related to performance. Performance linkages to cognition and action, although clearly important, have received considerably less study than those between cognition and action, and the existing work in this domain has been directed mainly at individual and group-level outcomes. An important area of concern that has received even less empirical attention is the investigation of the relationships among cognition, action, and organizational performance.

Studies dealing with cognitive processes have explored the effects of antecedent and contextual factors on decision makers' interpretations of information (e. g., Bateman & Zeithaml, 1989; Thomas & McDaniel, 1990) and the effects of strategic interpretation on organizational action (e. g., Meyer, 1982; Smart & Vertinsky, 1984). Other relevant work has focused mainly on the relationship between group schemas and decision makers' attributions of causality and their subsequent decisions (e. g., Clapham & Schwenk, 1991) or has used laboratory settings to test hypothesized interpretation-outcome linkages at an individual level (e. g., Fredrickson, 1985; Gioia & Sims, 1986; Walsh, Henderson, & Deighton, 1988). There has been, however, a notable lack of empirical work seeking to link "sensemaking" - which subsumes the key cognition-action processes of environmental scanning, interpretation, and associated responses (Gioia & Chitipeddi, 1991; Weick, 1979) - with organizational performance.

In the strategic context, increasing emphasis has been placed on understanding the link between how top managers make sense of information and how they act to influence organizational outcomes (Dutton, Fahey, & Narayanan, 1983; Dutton & Jackson, 1987; Nystrom & Starbuck, 1984). Because modern organizational environments are complex and dynamic, a key role of top management has become providing meaningful interpretations for patterns of ambiguous information. Indeed, the imposition of meaning on issues characterized by ambiguity has become a hallmark of the modern top manager (cf. Smircich & Stubbart, 1985; Weick, 1979). Those interpretations are often seen as critical to the success and even the survival of organizations, mainly because of their implications for influencing action alternatives and subsequent outcomes (Dutton & Duncan, 1987).

This study was intended to articulate and empirically investigate linkages between sense-making processes and organizational performance in the strategic arena to provide insight into what distinguishes organizations that flourish from those that flounder within the same competitive environment. We tested and refined hypothesized relationships among scanning, interpretation, action, and organizational performance. Overall, we posed the question, How are key cognitive processes and the associated actions of top managers linked to organizational performance?

### **Original text of Example 4 (introduction)**

*Journal of Financial Economics* 32 (1992) 45-60.

#### **Contagion and competitive intra-industry effects of bankruptcy announcements**

##### **An empirical analysis**

**Larry H. P Lang and René M. Stulz**

##### **1. Introduction**

On average, the announcement of a Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing has a strong negative effect on the value of the filing firm's stock. <sup>1</sup> Presumably, the stock price falls because of an increase in the present value of bankruptcy costs and because the bankruptcy announcement provides information about the true value of the firm's assets and the shareholders' claim on those assets. But a look at the stock-price reaction for the bankrupt firm does not reveal how much of the information in the bankruptcy announcement is firm-

specific and how much is industry-wide, nor does it tell us whether other firms in the industry benefit from the difficulties of the bankrupt firm. To address these issues, we study the effect of bankruptcy announcements on the bankrupt firm's competitors.

An oft-repeated concern is that bankruptcy is contagious within an industry.<sup>2</sup> The common view is that one firm's bankruptcy makes customers and suppliers wary of the other firms in the same industry irrespective of their economic health and hence makes them worse off. An alternative, more benign, view of contagion is that the bankruptcy announcement reveals negative information about the components of cash flows that are common to all firms in the industry and, consequently, decreases the market's expectation of the profitability of the industry's firms. From an empirical perspective, it is difficult to distinguish between these two views of contagion, but they have strongly different implications for public policy. If contagion is only an information effect, it has no social costs.

We find that, on average, the market value of a value-weighted portfolio of the common stock of the bankrupt firm's competitors decreases by 1 % at the time of the bankruptcy announcement and the decline is statistically significant. The conclusion that the bankruptcy announcement has a moderate effect on competitors is important in understanding the economy-wide effects of bankruptcies. The effect appears to be greater for highly leveraged industries; for industries with a debt-to-asset ratio exceeding the sample median, the value of competitors' equity falls by almost 3% on average.

The bankruptcy announcement need not convey only bad news for competitors. It can potentially increase the value of the non-bankrupt firms in the industry by redistributing wealth from the bankrupt firms to their competitors.<sup>3</sup> First, the bankruptcy announcement can reveal that the bankrupt firm has become less efficient and that the competitive position of the other firms in the industry has improved. Second, indirect bankruptcy costs can make the bankrupt firm less efficient and hence create profitable opportunities for other firms in the industry. Using the Herfindahl index of industry concentration as a proxy for the degree of imperfect competition, we find that the value of competitors' equity actually increases by 2.2% in more concentrated industries with low leverage.

The paper proceeds as follows. In section 2, we discuss what determines the effect of a firm's bankruptcy on its competitors. We document the stock-price reaction of competitors to the bankruptcy announcement in section 3. In section 4, we provide evidence on how the industry effect of bankruptcy announcements differs across industries, and concluding remarks are presented in section 5.

## 6 CONCEPTIONS OF HEDGING AND MITIGATION

### 6.1 The prevalence of hedging

In order to examine to what extent and in what way promotional steps are mitigated, it was necessary to design an analytic framework for this purpose. I will start by describing the central ideas that were influential in designing this framework, and then go on to the analytic framework itself.

It has been repeatedly pointed out that the command of how to hedge knowledge claims is a crucial part of a scholarly writer's competence (Butler 1990, Bloor and Bloor 1993, Crompton 1997, Myers 1989, 1990, 1992, Hyland 1994, 1996a, 1996b, 1998c). What has also been noted is that the concept and definition of hedging is far from clear-cut and that its linguistic manifestations are polypragmatic and open-ended in form. Most previous studies have focused on research articles (RAs) in natural sciences, more specifically on biology and medicine (Butler 1990, Hyland 1994, 1996a, 1996b, 1998c, 1999, Salager-Meyer 1992).

Butler (1990) points out that disciplines are likely to vary in their use of hedging, and Hyland (1996a, 1998c) has shown differences between the use of hedging in general academic writing in LOB (the London-Oslo-Bergen corpus of written English) and other large corpora as compared to his material, research articles in biology. In some recent studies (1998a, 1999b, 2000) Hyland compares hedges and other indicators of writer stance in eight different disciplines, including Marketing. Although I am not in accord with Hyland in all aspects of his approach, his framework of linguistic manifestations of hedging has been helpful in forming the basis of the analytical model used in the present study and will therefore be presented below.

The variable distribution of hedging in different parts of the RA has also been pointed out (e.g. Butler 1990, Hunston 1994a, Hyland 1996a, 1998c, Varttala 2001). It is not surprising that hedging has been found to be most frequent in those sections which contain the largest amount of authorial presence: the Introduction and Discussion/conclusion sections. It is in these that results and knowledge claims are anticipated, interpreted, and assessed, respectively. Hyland has also found Results

sections to contain major amounts of hedging, obviously when these sections have included justifications of methods or outcomes or other discussion elements (Hyland 1996a, 1998c, cf. also Holmes 1997).

A point repeatedly emphasized is that in order to gain the acceptance of the research community the writer has to be able to express knowledge claims reflecting the appropriate levels of certainty and humility. This appropriacy thus involves both considerations of epistemic modality and of politeness, i.e. perspectives of accuracy and commitment to degree of truth as well as caution in handling potential or existing opposing claims (Myers 1989, 1992, Hunston 1993, Hyland 1996a, 1998c). The issue thus encompasses linguistic signals both of the writer's attitude to propositional content and of the writer's interactional strategy. The successful management of these two perspectives impacts on credibility.

Research examining the review process of manuscripts for publication (Myers 1990, Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995) and research concerned with pedagogical applications of studies of scholarly writing (Bloor and Bloor 1993) have pointed out the difficulty of finding an acceptable degree of epistemic modality for knowledge claims. In his study of the teaching of epistemic modality and hedging devices in course books and manuals of academic writing, Hyland (1994, 1998c) found that there was a clear deficiency in most teaching materials in this respect.

## **6.2 The functions and manifestations of hedging**

Probably the most studied aspect of hedging is epistemic modality. Among its linguistic manifestations, the modal auxiliaries have generated several studies (cf. Hyland 1998c and Varttala 2001 for more detailed overviews). One of the earliest definitions of modality, and one that is frequently cited, is the one proposed by Lyons:

Any utterance in which the speaker explicitly qualifies his commitment to the truth of the proposition expressed by the sentence he utters . . . is an epistemically modal or modalised sentence. (Lyons 1977: 797)

In *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (AHDEL, 1969), the following definitions of *hedge* (apart from those in the domains of botany and finance) are given: 'A non-committal, ambiguous statement' (n.) and 'To avoid committing oneself, as by making cautious or ambiguous statements' (vb. intr.). In contrast, a



number of researchers view hedging or modality more widely as including all indications of attitude towards the certainty and generality of a proposition (e.g. Banks 1994, Hunston 1994a). Thus the term hedging seems to be variously used by different sources, and has not been definitively defined.

One difficulty when examining the different studies on modality and hedging is thus the variability in terminology, which has also been pointed out by Hunston and Thompson (2000). Frequently it seems that the two terms *hedging* and *mitigation* are used synonymously, e.g. by Hyland (1998c) who has also stressed the indeterminacy of the term hedging (cf. also Crompton 1997). Yule (1996:130f.) makes a difference between *hedges*: ‘Cautious notes expressed about how an utterance is to be taken, e.g. “as far as I know” used when giving some information. ’ and a *mitigating device*: ‘Expression used to soften an imposition, e.g. “please”’. According to the definition given in the *AHDEL*, to *mitigate* (vb.) is ‘To moderate (a quality or condition) in force or intensity; alleviate’. As Yule’s definition of *mitigate* and the synonyms given in the *AHDEL* seem closer to the uses in focus in the present study, the term *mitigate* was chosen rather than the apparently fuzzier although more common term *hedge*. Mitigation in this study thus covers all explicit diminishing of categorical assertion or illocutionary force. This will be exemplified in the next chapter in the presentation of the framework used for identifying mitigation (Chapter 7). Another term whose functions and meanings needed to be defined more clearly is the term *approximator*. This term will here be used for linguistic items making a number or amount ‘rounded’ or ‘not precise’ (cf. Channell 1990 on precise and vague quantities in academic writing in economics).

I will start by examining Hyland’s definition of hedging, and his taxonomy of the pragmatic functions of hedging in scientific writing (Hyland 1996a, 1998c). Hyland almost exclusively uses the term hedging, although the term *mitigation* is used in describing ‘content-motivated hedges’ (see below). He proposes that ‘Hedging refers to linguistic strategies that qualify categorical commitment to express possibility rather than certainty. ’ (Hyland 1996a: 251). It will be seen that the concept of writer *commitment* as well as the concept of writer *responsibility* figure frequently in the definitions of hedging.

As to the rhetorical purpose of hedging, Hyland observes that it is a ‘means of gaining reader acceptance of claims, allowing writers to convey their attitude to the truth of their

statements and to anticipate possible objections. ' (Hyland 1996a: 251) Along with several writers, Hyland acknowledges the fact that an author may be completely committed to the truth of a claim, but may not wish to state this categorically, and he consequently gives hedging the following further definition:

A hedge is therefore any linguistic means used to indicate either (a) a lack of complete commitment to the truth of a proposition, or (b) a desire not to express that commitment categorically. (Hyland 1996a: 251)

The avoidance of categorical commitment has to do with the conception of knowledge creation as a communal effort: a knowledge claim becomes a fact when it has achieved consensus by the relevant research community, hence the individual researchers' expressions of tentativeness (cf. also Myers 1989, 1990). Hedging also expresses deference towards the judgment and work of the rest of the research community (cf. discussion of politeness in Chapter 3). In addition, Hyland suggests, hedges signal points where the author anticipates oppositions to claims (cf. also Swales 1990:175).

Hyland studied hedges in RAs in molecular biology, examining their pragmatic functions, linguistic forms, and distribution. He divides hedges into *content-motivated* hedges and *reader-motivated* hedges. Content-motivated hedges 'mitigate the relationship between what a writer says about the world and what the world is thought to be like.' (1996a: 256) These hedges are further divided into *accuracy-based* hedges, i.e. such that increase precision, and *writer-based* hedges, i.e. such that diminish writer responsibility. The main characteristics of each category are listed below (Hyland 1996a, 1998c):

**Table 15. Pragmatic functions of content-motivated hedges (Hyland 1996a, 1998c)**

**Accuracy-based hedges**

- Allow greater precision and caution
- Balance fact with judgment
- Distinguish the actual from the inferential
- Imply a proposition based on plausible reasoning rather than on reliable facts: how statements are to be understood or the writer's assessment of the certainty ('the proposition is true as far as can be determined')

### Writer-based hedges

- Anticipate possible negative consequences of being proved wrong by limiting commitment to claims
- Enable writers to refer to speculative possibilities while alluding to personal doubt

Hyland points out that the linguistic manifestations of hedging are polysemous and polypragmatic, and therefore that any analysis needs to take into account a variety of contextual factors when offering interpretations and identifications of forms and functions. These factors include disciplinary conventions, culture and ideology regarding the conception of knowledge and science, as well as social considerations of the research community, manifested in reader-motivated hedges:

**Table 16. Pragmatic functions of reader-motivated hedges (Hyland 1996a, 1998c)**

- Address the need for deference and cooperation in gaining ratification for claims
- Hedge the illocutionary force of claims of originality and criticisms of opposing views (politeness and modesty concerns, cf. Myers 1989, 1992)
- Appeal to readers as intelligent colleagues capable of deciding about the issues
- Usually involve personal attribution, which subtly hedges the universality of a writer's claim by implying that a position is an individual interpretation (e.g. *Our findings suggest...* pro *The findings suggest...*)

Content-motivated hedges specify the state of knowledge on a subject by expressing the extent of applicability (Example 1 in Table 17 below) or expressing the writer's assessment of the certainty of the claim (Example 2).

Writer-based hedges have to do with referential caution. Hyland points out that, although scientists strive to state the strongest claims they can for their evidence, they also need to insure against overstatement. Thus writer-based hedges 'reflect a writer's desire to anticipate the possible negative consequences of being proved wrong by limiting commitment to claims' (Hyland 1996a: 257), i.e. they allow the writer to limit possible damages that may result from categorical commitments. In contrast to accuracy-based hedges, these hedges do not increase the precision of claims but instead diminish the writer's presence in the text through the use of passives, existential subjects (Example 3 in Table 17), or "abstract rhetors" attributing claims to text or data (Example 4). However, to me it seems that the hedging signals in Examples 3 and 4 reside in the tentative verbs (*seems*, *indicate*) rather than the impersonal subjects. Thus

in the present study, passives and impersonal subjects alone are not considered signals of mitigation.

Reader-based hedges have to do with interactional relationships by addressing the need for deference (politeness) and cooperation in gaining the acceptance of claims. Hyland observes that although there are many devices for both writer- and reader-based hedging, the latter usually involve the use of personal attribution ‘which subtly hedges the universality of a writer’s claim by implying that a position is an individual interpretation. ‘ (Hyland 1996a: 258, cf. also Myers 1989) Thus he concludes that scientific writers use hedging predominantly as an element of persuasion, conveying both referential and affective meanings: ‘Hedging allows scientific writers to express claims with precision, caution, and humility and to meet audience expectations of accuracy and negotiation. ’ (Ibid.)

In order to provide an overview and some examples of the pragmatic functions of hedges, the following summary is included (Hyland 1996a):

**Table 17. Functions of hedges (Hyland 1996a, the examples are Hyland’s)**

<b>Content-motivated hedges</b>	<b>Reader-motivated hedges</b>
(Adequacy conditions)	(Acceptability conditions)
<b>Accuracy-based hedges</b> 1. Staining was <i>generally</i> confined. . . 2. Such a mechanism <i>might</i> serve to. . .	
<b>Writer-based hedges</b> Impersonal expressions 3. It <i>seems</i> that the stomata do not use. . 4. <i>These data indicate</i> that. . .	<b>Reader-based hedges</b> Personal attribution 5. <i>I suggest</i> here that the . . . apparatus. . . 6. <i>In our hands</i> , there was no significant. . .

Hyland among others has pointed out the problem of distinguishing between the modal meaning and the ‘root meaning ‘ of the modals *can/could*, where root meaning signifies ‘enabling conditions on a proposition’ (1996a: 262). He suggests that the hedging meaning refers to ‘the conceptually possible’ whereas the root meaning refers to ‘the experientially possible’ but concedes that there are cases which defy a definitive determination (cf. also Crompton 1997, Varttala 2001). Paraphrasing is suggested as being of some help in the determination, modal meaning being paraphrased as ‘*it is possible that*’ vs. root meaning paraphrased as ‘*it is possible to*’.

Crompton (1997) draws attention to the fact that it is not always easy to distinguish when hedging devices have indeed been used as hedges and not in their basic speech act function. He argues that with lexical verbs that are potentially epistemic but can be used to express speech acts, it is important to distinguish which of the two functions the verb expresses, as in the case of *suggest*. For example, for Crompton the following sentence is not an instance of epistemic use:

We would finally like to suggest at least one line of future research (Salager-Meyer 1994:166).

It is true that the sentence does not express the writer's degree of commitment to the truth value of the proposition, but what it does express is a high degree of tentativeness (*would like to, at least*). In order to deal with cases like these, rather than use the term 'hedging' as an umbrella term, I have chosen the term 'mitigation' to designate promotional statements that are less than categorical, which includes the speech act function of *suggest*.

Crompton discusses two major categories of hedges: approximators, which express a semantic relation to content (a rounded-off representation, cf. Channell 1990) and shields, which express the pragmatic relation between content and speaker (commitment to truth). Shields signal plausibility (relation to doubt) or attribution (relation to some other source, not the writer). As to the rhetorical function of hedging, he makes the following observation:

Academic writers need to make clear the distinction between propositions already shared by the discourse community, which have the status of facts, and propositions to be evaluated by the discourse community, which only have the status of claims. **Evaluative or tentative language is one of the signs by which claims may be distinguished from facts.** (Crompton 1997:274, emphasis added)

This important observation calls to mind Myers' suggestion that major claims that are not hedged are probably not new knowledge claims (Myers 1989), and also Bloor and Bloor's (1993) finding that field-central (theoretical) claims in economics RAs tended to be hedged whereas lower-level (substantive) claims tended to be stated baldly.

Crompton makes the further point that in sentences where there is an impersonal subject but in which the author is understood as the agent, it is the author's choice of a complete or less than complete epistemic commitment that determines whether the sentence is hedged. This seems reasonable, but his complete disqualification of approximators as hedging signals is difficult to accept, partly because the claim is being justified entirely

by constructed examples. In the present study impersonal subjects alone have not been considered sufficient signals of mitigation.

Crompton’s main point that the definition of hedging should be functionally based is easy to accept and adopt, and this has been the strategy of the present study. The distinguishing criterion here is whether the promotional signals of a clause or sentence are being mitigated by the use of explicit linguistic markers. In other words, first the rhetorical/promotional function of each sentence/clause was identified, and then the sentence/clause was checked for possible mitigating signals. The taxonomy of linguistic signals and examples of use will be presented in Chapter 7.

### 6.3      **Modal meaning**

Examining modal meaning in the structure of argumentation in experimental RAs in linguistics, Hunston (1994a) not surprisingly found the heaviest and most varied use of modalisation in the Introduction and Discussion sections. More specifically, particularly heavy modalisation was found in the following rhetorical functions: reporting literature/background knowledge; presenting the purpose of the study; presenting and interpreting results; explaining awkward results; justifying or assessing parts of the study, e.g. design, method, results; making recommendations based on the research; summarizing implications of the research; warning about limitations in the research. Since these rhetorical functions can each be given a promotional formulation and purpose, Hunston’s observations are relevant here.

Interestingly, in her study Hunston avoids the term hedging altogether. Instead of the ‘subjective’ or ‘objective’ view of modal meaning, she suggests as starting-point the presence or absence of a given **source** of judgment or evidence. Thus she proposes four types of sources in RAs:

**Table 18. Sources of modal meaning (Hunston 1994a, the examples are Hunston’s)**

Source	Example
Intertextual	<i>Halliday points out that. . .</i>
Evidence	<i>The results show that. . .</i>
Writer: explicit	<i>We propose that. . .</i>
Writer: non-explicit	<i>It is possible that. . .</i>

Hunston argues that the concept of *status* is not only applicable to knowledge claims but to all statements made in a research article (cf. also Hunston 1989 reported in Section 5.1). Similarly to Hyland's conception of hedging as polypragmatic, Hunston suggests that, depending on the context, statements realize a variety of functions, sometimes using the same linguistic signaling:

The status of a proposition is a composite of what epistemological activity the writer is engaged in (hypothesising, interpreting data etc.), the source of the proposition (intertextual, evidence, the writer) and to what extent the statement is modified (by modal auxiliaries etc.). (Hunston 1994a:621)

It is evident from Hunston's illustrations of the exponents of variable status and variable context that the same linguistic manifestation can be used in a variety of functions, as also pointed out by Hyland (1996a, 1998c). This means that the identification of a rhetorical or promotional step never hinges on just one explicit linguistic marker, but also on context, content, and cotext. Nevertheless, it is often the linguistic marker that alerts the reader to the potential function or functions, and therefore the identification of these markers is important, both in the reading/interpreting process and the presentation/rhetorical process (writing). Despite their indeterminacy, the awareness of these potential signals is especially important for novice or foreign language academic writers, and should therefore be included in academic writing course materials. This is why an examination of mitigating devices was included in the present study.

## **7 PROPOSED MODEL OF MITIGATION**

### **7.1 Categorization of mitigation signals**

Below I shall present and briefly comment the taxonomy of linguistic markers of mitigation proposed for the present study. The categories are essentially based on Hyland's work (1996a, 1996b, 1998c), but have been modified on the basis of the needs and findings of the present material. One difficulty in categorizing also acknowledged by Hyland derives from the fact that modality may not be easily isolated into classes of formal items and that it is therefore difficult to quantify (cf. also Hunston 1989, 1994, Varttala 2001). However, for pedagogical purposes it is interesting to examine whether there are characteristic propensities of use in the three disciplines.

The present study is not concerned with hedging in knowledge claims as such. More precisely, only those knowledge claims that also contain an explicit evaluation of the claim have been included. In other words, the study of mitigation here focuses on those rhetorical steps that in the presentation of the promotional model are argued to be promotional and thus potentially face-threatening acts (FTAs).

From the point of view of the strength of imposition, boosts, gap statements, and counterclaims can perhaps be seen as the most face-threatening: the first category because the writers explicitly claim superiority for their own contribution, the two latter because the writers explicitly criticize or oppose claims made in previous research. Also, suggestions for future research may be perceived as face-threatening, because the writer could be seen as possibly invading a territory already being occupied by another researcher or perhaps indicating a possessive or arrogant attitude to what should be researched next and how. Further, Myers (1989) has pointed out that a writer's knowledge claim may limit what other researchers can do subsequently, and can thus be perceived as an imposition. Claims of centrality for the research area, research topic or the implications of the contribution could be seen as potentially face-threatening to researchers working in the same area, but on the other hand by definition these claims are based on justifications from a research, societal or business point of view, and thus appeal to more generally accepted criteria. Of the promotional steps, only statements of the reported study's own limitations and caveats seem to be non-threatening to the



research community but are instead at first sight face-threatening to the writer, by diminishing the possible generalizability, reliability and validity of the contribution by pointing out shortcomings. On the other hand, they increase accuracy and credibility, and act as face-savers by showing the writer's awareness and anticipation of possible criticism.

On the basis of these observations and Myers' observations on politeness in research articles (1989), it was hypothesized that the promotional steps that were more face-threatening to the research community would be combined with more mitigation, whereas the less face-threatening steps would show less mitigation. In this section I shall present and illustrate the taxonomy of linguistic signals of mitigation used in the present study.

As in making any stylistic observation, for a given linguistic feature to be a signal or a marker, there has to be a choice for the writer (cf. Enkvist 1964). In other words, by not using a given marker, the writer has the possibility of expressing the same semantic content, plus or minus a certain value: in this case promotion and/or mitigation. However, the same linguistic signal may acquire different values in different contexts. For example, in the use of personal attribution a claim referring to *our results* is seen as less bald because of indicating less universal applicability (acknowledging human intervention) than a claim impersonally referring to *the results* (Myers 1989, Hyland 1996a, 1996b, 1998c), and the mitigation results in a positive value. In contrast, in gap statements which are denials or criticisms of previous knowledge claims, personal attribution to individual researchers may exacerbate the FTA, and in this case leaving it out can be seen as a mitigating device. Thus Myers (1989) noted that the scientists in his material avoided criticizing individual researchers (cf. Section 3.2).

In all essentials the framework to be presented here is similar to Hyland's approach (1996a, 1996b, 1998c), but because the scope of my study is narrower in focusing on mitigation of promotional steps only, some of his categories were found not to be relevant, unless combined with other markers. The excluded categories were the following: IF-clauses, question forms, passivization, impersonalization, and time reference. The hedging functions of passivization and impersonalization have also been questioned by some researchers (see e.g. Swales 1990, Varttala 2001). Instead, other linguistic signals of mitigation emerged in the material, and therefore the following

categories were added: *Fronted concessive subclauses*, *Approximating pronouns*, and *Indefinite articles* and *numerals*. Also, Hyland's categories of clause initial and periphrastic adjectives were combined and divided into modal and other adjectivals, on the one hand, and modal and applicability adverbials, on the other hand. Table 19 below presents the categories of mitigating signals identified in the present material and some illustrating examples. The material showed a great variety of different mitigating devices, which have been categorized under the following headings:

**Table 19. Types of mitigation signals examined in the present study**

Categories	Examples
1. Copulas other than <i>be</i>	<i>appear, seem</i>
2. Modal auxiliaries	<i>can, could, may, might, should, would</i>
3. Lexical verbs	<i>attempt, believe, help, hope, know, realize, suggest, think, try</i>
4. Lexical nominals	<i>possibility, potential</i>
5. Modal and other adjectivals	<i>likely, possible, potential, preliminary, unlikely</i>
6. Modal and applicability adverbials	<i>apparently, generally, largely, perhaps, relatively</i>
7. Adverbial expressions	<i>among the first, at a minimum, to (the best of) my/our knowledge, with some exceptions</i>
8. Fronted concessive clauses	<i>Although. . . . . Despite. . . . . While. . . . .</i>
9. Personal attribution signals (but not alone)	<i>The author/s, I, my, we, our</i>
10. Approximating pronouns	<i>some, many, most of</i>
11. Indefinite articles and numerals	<i>One of the most popular approaches</i>
12. Miscellaneous (none of the above)	

## 7.2 Exemplification of mitigation signals

Next, I shall illustrate the categories of mitigating devices by presenting examples from the three disciplines and the various journals under study. In addition, the promotional steps identified in the examples are given in parentheses.

### Example 12. Category 1

Thus, it **appears** safe to assert that the social loafing findings discussed in the present study will generalize to other work group contexts in organizations. (Boosting implications, AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 2: 319-348)

The mitigating effect of the use of *appear* is immediately seen, if the verb is substituted by a verb expressing a bald statement of fact, for example *be*.

### Example 13. Category 2

Because the search process represents a vendor's "window of opportunity" during which buyers are likely to be most susceptible to marketing efforts, our findings **may** be useful to firms that provide information and sell into such markets. (Boosting implications, JMR 1993, Vol. XXX: 232)

Here the writers are downplaying their boosting of the application of their contribution in business practice. Modal auxiliaries have often been found to be the most frequently used signals of mitigation (cf. Butler 1990, see Hyland 1998c for an overview of modal auxiliaries in hedging). In his study of collocations of modals in scientific articles, Hyland observed that *may* is most often collocated with *be*, as it is in Example 13.

### Example 14. Category 3

Despite this trend, **we believe** future research would benefit from identifying and testing other individual characteristics that may affect trust levels. (Boosting suggestion for future research, JM, Vol. 57 (January 1993): 81-101)

Lexical verbs expressing mental processes assume a human agent, often signaled also by a personal pronoun or a noun (e.g. *the author/s*). However, they can also be used in the passive without an agent, and this has been claimed to signal further distance and less writer responsibility (writer-based hedging: *It was realized that...*). Nevertheless, by acknowledging the part played by the human agent (the writer by default), these verbs in themselves mitigate the claim of universality and objectivity (cf. Myers 1989). In Example 14 it is worth noting that there are a number of concurrent signals of mitigation: *we*, *believe*, *would*, and *may*. Several researchers have observed that mitigation signals tend to cluster (e.g. Butler 1990, Banks 1994, Hyland 1996a, 1998c). Banks (1994) speaks of 'fertilising hedges' and 'trimming hedges', depending on whether the interrelationships of simultaneous hedging signals are mutually strengthening or not. In the category of mitigating lexical verbs, the multifunctionality of *suggest* was already commented on earlier (Section 6.2), and I decided not to distinguish between its use as a speech act and its modal use because both uses are forms of mitigation. Another verb worth commenting on is *indicate*, whose useful

ambiguity has been pointed out e.g. by Tibbo (1992). It is useful, because it may mean ‘show’ or it may mean ‘suggest’, and therefore it can be used by writers who do not want to commit themselves to one meaning or the other. In this study *indicate* is thus counted as a mitigating signal.

#### Example 15. Category 4

The high control system in particular has not been proposed in the control literature; however, our findings suggest that it has the **potential** to lead to the most interesting effects. (Boosting implications, JM, Vol. 57 (January 1993): 57-69)

The example of Category 4 further illustrates the fact that there are frequently several signals of mitigation in the same sentence, here exemplified by the personal attribution (*our*) and the use of the mitigating verb *suggest* in addition to the modal noun *potential*. Modal adjectivals (Category 5) are also common signals of mitigation, as are modal adverbials (Category 6) and other adverbials expressing scope of applicability (Category 7).

#### Example 16. Category 5

This research sheds light on the **relative** importance of a number of organizational factors that are posited to help or hinder a market orientation, as well as the nature of the impact of the orientation on employees and business performance. (Boost contribution, JM Vol. 57 (July 1993): 53-71)

#### Example 17. Category 6

Corporate takeovers became **perhaps** the most significant events on the organizational landscape during the 1980s. (Claim of centrality, ASQ, 1992, No. 37: 605)

#### Example 18. Category 7

The methods I used relied on previous definitions of unique geographic regions of the world. **To the best of my knowledge**, there has been no attempt to verify whether these regions are truly unique in important ways. (Statement of gap, AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 1, 28-57)

The mitigation in Example 18 can be seen as both writer-based (hedging against being wrong) and reader-based (hedging against a possible upset in case of oversight).

#### Example 19. Category 8

**Although** most conceptual treatments of power **acknowledge** both the macro-structural and micro-behavioral approaches, empirical research **has tended** to focus on one or the other approach. (Statement of gap, AMJ, 1993, Vol. 36: 442)

The fronted concessive clause acknowledging or even commending contributions of previous research before pointing out the shortcoming or Gap, which the current study intends to fill, is a fairly common device in the present material. As far as I know, this type of mitigating signal has not been specifically studied earlier. Interestingly, the

fronted concessive clause seems to carry out two conflicting functions simultaneously: firstly, showing positive politeness by giving credit to previous research in the area (Myers 1989, Brown and Levinson 1987/1994), but secondly, and perhaps more importantly, highlighting and enhancing the niche being created for the current contribution.

### Example 20. Category 9

Finally, **our** results highlight the commonalities across markets that **we expect** to find in a rational economy in equilibrium. (Boosting contribution, JF, Vol. XLVIII, No. 2 June 1993: 555-573)

Personal attribution by the use of pronouns to bring down the claim from a claim of general universality to a more personal level can be used in different ways and with different effects, as illustrated by Example 20. Whereas the first item *our* here refers to the authors of the article, the pronoun *we* refers to the community involved in this type of research, the ‘inclusive we’ with a more general appeal to solidarity. However, the use of inclusive *we* is successful only if the reader is willing to be included (cf. Brown and Levinson 1987/1994, Myers 1989). It is necessary to note, however, that *we* can also be used in an assertive capacity, as a marker of power or authority (cf. Andersson and Gunnarsson 1995, Kaplan et al. 1994 on writer visibility, Berry 1997). The first person pronoun is certainly assertive in a context such as *In this paper we argue that. . .* . Therefore, in the present study, personal attribution only in combination with other mitigating signals has been counted as mitigating.

### Example 21. Category 10

Our results on the price impact of institutional trades provide **some** insight into the cost of executing trades. (Boosting results, JFE, 1993, No. 33:173-199)

One effect of approximating pronouns is to make the claim less all-inclusive, as in Example 21. Whereas *some* is usually a mitigator rather than an enhancer, pronouns such as *many* and *most of* have an intrinsic enhancing function, but depending on the context they can also be used in a non-inclusive sense, i.e. in contrast to *all* or *every*. In the analysis here the context has been taken into consideration when identifying the effect of these markers. (Incidentally an automatic search might not pick up the changed effect in negative constructions, if not locatable by collocation.)

### Example 22. Category 11.

We expressly assessed the effects of procedural justice and the attitudes it generates on subsidiary top managers' compliance, tested the role of subsidiary industry type in moderating those effects, used two-stage longitudinal data for tests, and provided evidence supporting the value of procedural justice to strategy implementation by addressing **one** of the most compelling questions outstanding in the field of international management: How can a multinational motivate subsidiary top managers to comply with its corporate strategic decisions? (Boosting contribution, AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 3, 502-526.)

In the example of Category 11, the numeral *one* (presumably by implying *one of several*) mitigates the subsequent superlative. A more categorical formulation would be: *by addressing the most compelling question. . . .* As Myers (1989) has pointed out, the indefinite article can sometimes be used in a similar way, to signal that an answer or a solution is not necessarily *the* solution but merely *a* solution.

After this presentation of the linguistic signals of evaluation (cf. Section 5.2.) and categories of mitigation, I shall now move on to presenting the proposed model of promotion and provide examples of the analytical categories of promotional steps from each discipline and journal.

## **8 PROPOSED MODELS OF PROMOTION IN ABSTRACTS, INTRODUCTIONS, AND DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION SECTIONS**

In principle it can be argued that the whole of a research article is promotional. That is, it is formulated in order to bring about the acceptance of a new claim of knowledge by seeking to present and substantiate the claim in as convincing a manner as possible. However, this study focuses on those rhetorical steps and moves that can be seen as overtly promotional in that they make use of explicit linguistic signaling of evaluation. In this section I will present the analytical framework which evolved from the models presented in the previous chapters, the observations made on the basis of the material when applying these models, and the subsequent modifications or refinements of the models.

### **8.1 Categorization of promotional steps**

When comparing the proposed models for abstracts, introductions and discussion/conclusions, the first point to be made is that, although some of the terms of categories are the same, their rhetorical purposes and therefore placement in the sections may differ. Secondly, the promotional steps should be divided into those that signal direct promotion and those that signal indirect promotion. The latter category is of course not a clear-cut one, because a large number of factors can be included as being indirectly promotional, in the extreme case comprising all possible factors that increase or support credibility. However, here the aim of the study is to focus on such rhetorical steps as can reasonably be seen as being explicitly used to increase credibility and convincingness. No doubt cases are possible where the evaluation is not unequivocally clear-cut, since evaluations form a cline of degrees and what is valued can be culture-specific, discipline-specific or even subdiscipline-specific (cf. MacDonald 1994).

Direct promotion in this study refers to rhetorical steps that are overtly promotional whereas indirect promotion refers to Counterclaims and suggestions for Future research that at first glance seem face-threatening with regard to other researchers or, as in the case of Caveats and Limitations, face-threatening with regard to the current authors (Capitalization is here used to highlight central terms in the proposed models.). In the present study, direct promotional steps comprise the categories defined below in Table

20. Their purpose is mainly to enhance the current authors' contribution by indicating the centrality of the research topic or area, the need for the current contribution by pointing out knowledge gaps or problems, and finally by drawing attention to the merits of the research contribution or its implications. Examples of these categories will be provided in Section 8.2.

**Table 20. Taxonomy of direct promotional steps**

<p>1) <b>Claims of centrality</b> point out the importance, relevance, or topicality of the topic, problem area, or specific problem in academic research or business practice, or the prevalence/magnitude of the phenomenon in business life or society.</p> <p>2) <b>Statements of knowledge Gaps</b> may not only build up a powerful foil or niche for the prospective contribution but can be used also to indicate the writers' knowledge of the state of the art of the field in focus and thus increase credibility. Here the term Gaps includes questions, problems, or conflicting prior approaches or findings.</p> <p>3) <b>Boosts</b> of the writers' own contribution are explicit positive evaluations of the material, methods, findings or implications of findings (theoretical and/or practical).</p>
---

Claims of centrality have slightly differing uses depending on their placement in introductions and discussion/conclusions. In both sections they may occur near the beginning of the section, in introductions usually focused on the research area to be presented and in discussion/conclusions offering a restatement of this. Towards the end of introductions and discussion/conclusions, however, they are more focused on the implications of the contribution, pointing out the relevance or significance of the research for business practitioners or society (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995).

A point of interest here is what type of *appeal* is used to justify the claims of centrality. If the strategies of appeal show certain tendencies or patterns, these may throw light on how the different disciplines or journals strive to provoke the readers' interest, i.e. what is considered a convincing attention-getter or 'hook'. This may also illuminate the type of audience that is addressed in the articles as well as what is considered important in the research area/discipline. Table 21 below shows a rough categorization of types of appeals in the claims of centrality and their definitions.



**Table 21. Categories of appeal in Claims of centrality**

<p><b>Authority</b> refers to a direct appeal to a named authority (integral citation), either from the research field or from the business world or society.</p> <p><b>Economy</b> refers to an appeal to the magnitude or importance of the phenomenon in financial terms, often including the mention of numbers.</p> <p><b>Practitioner</b> refers to an appeal to the usefulness of the research topic for business practitioners, e.g. financial analysts, business and/or marketing managers.</p> <p><b>Research</b> refers to an appeal to the importance of the research topic for the theoretical advancement of the field. The research appeal may be based on the pointing out of a long tradition, an extensive or growing or lively research area, or on a reference to the projected contribution.</p> <p><b>Scope</b> refers to the prevalence or magnitude of the phenomenon in business life, society or the community.</p> <p><b>Topicality</b> refers to an appeal that includes a marker of the recency or novelty or timeliness of the research topic or the phenomenon.</p>
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Gap statements are commonly found in introductions, where they function to establish a niche for the research to be presented (Swales 1990). In discussion/conclusion sections they are often used to create a niche for a rich array of suggestions for Future research, although these are more commonly prepared for by Limitations. It is to be noted that the pointing out of Gaps in previous research in discussion/conclusion sections differs in function from statements of Gaps in introductions: whereas in introductions Gap statements are used to *create* a niche and thus a *need* for the current research question, in the discussion/conclusion section they are used to *enhance* the magnitude of the current contribution. This is done by restating the original Gaps described in the introduction. Gaps may also refer to questions still remaining in current research and may thus be used as a platform for suggesting further research, or to show the authors' awareness of the state of knowledge in the (sub) field, thus increasing credibility.

In Table 22 below the taxonomy of indirect promotional steps is presented. The first category Thesis/Claim is only seen as promotional when initial in abstracts, because this placement makes it highly prominent. In the body of RAs, theses and claims are conventional steps in the argumentation.

**Table 22. Taxonomy of indirect promotional steps**

1) <b>Thesis/Claim</b> is a promotional step when it is used as the initial step in abstracts (following Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995 on the promotional effect of early Results presentation).
2) <b>Counterclaims</b> are promotional because they indicate a novelty claim.
3) <b>Statements of Limitations</b> in the current contribution, when these are used to increase credibility (validity and reliability) and/or to set the stage for suggestions for further research.
4) <b>Caveats</b> in discussion/conclusion sections have the same rhetorical purpose and effect as statements of Limitations but are phrased more generally.
5) <b>Suggestions for Future research</b> can be seen as promotional in the sense that they demonstrate to what extent the current contribution enables or inspires interesting directions for further research.

Counterclaims are clearly face-threatening, because they deny and invalidate claims made by previous researchers (cf. Myers 1989). On the other hand, it is in the nature of scholarship and knowledge development to overthrow or invalidate previous models or paradigms (cf. Kuhn 1962/1996, Gross 1990/1996), and from that point of view a counterclaim is an original (new) contribution and thus has positive promotional value.

At first glance, extensive statements of Limitations may seem counterproductive, by drawing the reader's attention to sometimes even a large number of shortcomings in the current contribution. However, they can also be seen as showing the writer's awareness of the generalizability of the contribution and indicate a careful positioning of the contribution, thus making the accuracy and reliability more precise, and thereby increasing credibility. The stating of Caveats in discussion/conclusion sections has the same rhetorical effect as statements of Limitations. However, if there is only a Caveat without concretizations in the form of Limitations, as occasionally happens, this runs the risk of being interpreted as merely paying lip-service to politeness conventions, which require the individual researcher to show his humility in relation to the research community (cf. Myers 1989). Indeed, sometimes there is only a single Caveat, with no further specification. The two different categories are illustrated below; the criterion of differentiation is the level of generality. In Example 23 the Caveat without the following Limitations would hardly be convincing.

**Example 23**

**Several limitations** to this study need to be noted. (Caveat) **Ideally** we **would have** employed a multidimensional measure of performance. (Limitation) Such a measure **probably would have** yielded a **more accurate** measure of performance. (Limitation). (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 1: 80-105)

The formulations of Caveats and Limitations will be exemplified and examined in more detail in section 8.3, but it is of interest here to note the mitigated wording: a speculative depiction of the ideal state of affairs which did not materialize (note the damage-limiting use of *probably*).

As for recommendations for Future research, it has been pointed out that many fields are so competitive that they jealously guard any interesting research ideas, and therefore do not make many (any) suggestions for Future research (Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). In the present study, this seemed to hold for the articles in Finance to some extent whereas the opposite was true of the journals in Management and Marketing, as will be shown in Section 11.5.

Below in Table 23 is an overview of the direct and indirect promotional rhetorical steps used in the analyses of the present study:

**Table 23. Overview of promotional steps in abstracts, introductions, and discussion/ conclusion sections**

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Discussion/conclusion</b>
Claim of centrality (in previous research, business or society)	Claim of centrality (in previous research, business or society)	Claim of centrality (restatement)
Statement of gap in knowledge (create niche)	Statement of gap in knowledge (create niche)	Statement of gap in knowledge (restatement or state remaining gap)
Thesis/Claim (initial placement)		Caveat
Assess reliability	(Statement of Limitations: focus and scope)	Statement of Limitations (generalizability, validity and reliability)
Statement of counterclaim (niche)	Statement of counterclaim (niche)	Statement of counterclaim (contribution)
Boost of own research contribution/implications	Boost of own research contribution/implications	Boost of own research contribution/ implications
		Suggestion for future research
		Claim of centrality /relevance (extended business and/or societal application)

The order of steps in the table above does not reflect a canonical order of presentation, as there are variations and in longer sections a recycling of steps. Thus for example in articles in Marketing or Management the discussion/conclusion section may occasionally begin with a presentation of Limitations.

## **8.2 Exemplification of the categorization of direct promotion**

To make the categorization of promotional steps clearer, I will present some illustrative examples of each type of promotional steps from the three disciplines. I will start with the directly promotional steps and their use in the three sections being studied here. Linguistic signals of promotion are shown in boldface.

### *8.2.1 Claims of centrality*

Claims of centrality or importance occurred in all three sections: abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusion sections, but as will be shown in Chapters 9-11 the extent and manner of utilization differed between the sections and the disciplines/journals. For example, the only instance of a centrality claim in a Finance abstract was Example 24 below.

#### **Claims of centrality in abstracts**

##### **Example 24. Finance**

An **important** issue in applications of multifactor models of asset returns is the appropriate number of factors. (JF Vol. XLVIII, No. 4, September 1993: 1263-1291)

##### **Example 25. Management**

Assigning credit and blame to others for their successful and unsuccessful performances is a **ubiquitous**, yet relatively unstudied, process in organizations. (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36. No. 1: 7)

##### **Example 26. Marketing**

Relationship management **is rapidly becoming** a **central** research paradigm in the marketing channels literature. (JM January 1994, Vol. 58: 71-85)

#### **Claims of centrality in introductions**

Introductions are locations for the main thrust of the Claims of centrality, as this is where the writer traditionally makes use of the opportunity to establish the relevance or importance of the research area or problem area to be presented, in his effort to ‘hook’

the reader. In an early study, Swales observes that many article introductions ‘are essentially exercises in public relations....*pleas* for acceptance and designed accordingly.’ (Swales 1983:195f.) In the journals studied here, the plea appears to be for attention rather than acceptance, however. Sometimes the Claims of centrality extended over a whole paragraph or even more, as illustrated in the following examples. The example from Finance shows appeals to both the magnitude of the phenomenon and the research interest. (Types of appeal will be further examined in Section 10.4.3)

### Example 27. Finance

Trading in equity markets **is increasingly dominated** by institutional investors. Schwartz and Shapiro (1990) estimate that in 1989 **about 70%** of the trading volume on **the NYSE** was accounted for by member firms and institutional investors. **In light of the importance** of institutional traders, their impact on stock prices has received **increased attention**. Some have suggested, for example, that the greater concentration of trading increases intraday price swings [Report of the New York Stock Exchange’s Panel on Market Volatility and Investor confidence (1990)].

**Numerous studies** document portfolio managers’ inability to outperform various passive benchmarks, despite considerable effort to analyze and select stocks [Brinson, Singer, and Beebower (1991), Fama (1991), and Lakonishok, Shleifer, and Vishny (1992)]. This ‘implementation shortfall’ may be due to the costliness of actually executing trades [Perold (1988)]. **Indeed**, the heavy expenditure of resources by institutions on trading facilities and personnel suggests that execution costs **may not be negligible** and, moreover, that they are potentially controllable [Bodurtha and Quinn (1990)]. There is, accordingly, **great interest** in comparing the execution performance of different money management firms. In evaluating the profitability of various trading rules, researchers also find it necessary to adjust for the costs of trading. (JFE No. 33 (1993): 173-199)

The following excerpt from Management illustrates the appeal to the authority of previous research (cf. Hunston 1989, 1994a) as well as the research interest in the problem area by diverse disciplines. In addition appeal is made to the practical, financial consequences for an organization.

### Example 28. Management

Who controls the process of chief executive succession? **Sociologists, political scientists, and organization theorists have been interested** in studying executive succession precisely because the succession event **can offer** a fairly public indication of the underlying power structure of the organization (Pfeffer, 1981). How the succession event occurs and who is appointed as the successor **can influence both** the subsequent **direction of the organization and how** organizational **resources will be allocated** in the future (Allen, 1981). As Zald (1965: 53) observed, "at the very least the choosing of a successor has to reflect the power balance of the organization. "

**Not all** succession events **are equally interesting** to theorists, however. Executive successions that are the result of voluntary departure or a mandatory retirement policy are fairly easy to understand and explain (Fredrickson, Hambrick, and Baumrin, 1988). **Zald (1965) noted** that the succession events **of greatest theoretical interest** involve the dismissal of the chief executive, since it is in this case that power and influence are more likely to be exercised. (ASQ 1992, No. 37: 400-421)

Also in the example from Marketing below, the appeal is made to both the research interest and the importance of the research topic for practitioners (retailers and vendors). In fact, the practical benefits of a solution to the problem outlined is given primary weight in this excerpt:

### Example 29. Marketing

Conflict management in channels of distribution **continues to be a major** theme in the marketing literature. In a retailing context, conflicts between retailers and vendors occur over **numerous** issues such as markup and gross margin, terms of payment, transportation costs, delivery, advertising allowances, and markdown money. A retailer's (vendor's) **profitability is affected** by the quality and effectiveness of mechanisms employed to resolve such conflicts. Further, a **satisfactory resolution** of conflicts **can help** a retailer develop a **long-term** relationship with **critical** vendors. Retailers with a long-term vendor relationship **can achieve a sustainable competitive advantage** by receiving merchandise in short supply, information on **new** and **best selling** products, information on **competitive** activity, **best** allowable prices, and advertising and markdown **allowances**. Similarly, vendors with **long-term** relationships **can obtain** information on **best selling** products and **competitive** activity, **better** cooperative advertising, and **special** displays for their merchandise. Thus, both retailers and vendors **can benefit** from **long-term** relationships. (JMR Vol. XXX (May 1993): 183-203)

These examples illustrate how extensive the promotion in terms of Claims of centrality may be in the introductions of the prestigious scholarly journals studied here.

### Claims of centrality in discussion/conclusion sections

Claims of centrality in discussion/conclusion sections that are restatements and are presented at the beginning of the section are very similar in form to Claims of centrality in introductions but are usually shorter (Examples 30-31). The objective is to remind the reader of the point made earlier and to set the scene for the assessment of the research contribution. Thus in Example 30 the Claim of centrality is followed by a Boost of the writers' own contribution and a Counterclaim.

### Example 30. Finance

**Considerable attention** in previous research has focused on the effects of market capitalization and relative trade size as determinants of the market impact of a trade. We find that the impact is indeed related to these influences, although we find a much smaller effect than previous work on block trades. (JFE 1993, No. 33: 173-199)

### Example 31. Management

**Considerable research in the past ten years** has investigated the role of cognitive processes in performance evaluation. However, researchers **have called for more research** on social and situational influences on the performance-rating process (citations). (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 1: 80-105)

### Example 32. Marketing

This point is **particularly important** because managers in firms that believe they are doing an excellent job of being customer oriented might stop doing the kinds of things necessary to improve in that area. Hence, such customer evaluations of customer orientation **should be institutionalized** as part of a regular tracking mechanism. (JM January 1993, Vol. 57: 23-37)

Sentence 2 in Example 31 illustrates how the Claim of centrality can sometimes at the same time be a restatement of the Gap that the current study set out to fill. Even shorter, but frequently more direct and more wide-ranging, is the Claim of centrality/relevance at the end of the discussion/conclusion, and it usually points out the value of the contribution for business practice, followed by a recommendation (Example 32).

#### 8.2.2 *Statements of knowledge gaps*

The purpose of the statement of knowledge Gap is to build up a ‘demand’ for the current contribution, a ‘niche’ for the projected contribution, to use Swales’ term (Swales 1990), and a background against which the magnitude or relevance of the current contribution stands out clearly (cf. the term ‘foil’ in Section 4.1). Another purpose is to show the writers’ knowledge of ‘the state of the art’ of their field, i.e. where the research frontier might be (cf. Bazerman 1988). The Gap may be presented as a lack or shortcoming, a problem, as a set of conflicting evidence or a question. Essentially the Gap represents an unresolved question that the current contribution seeks to solve.

### Statements of Gaps in abstracts

#### Example 33. Finance

An important issue in applications of multifactor models of asset returns is the appropriate number of factors. Most extant tests for the number of factors are **valid only** for strict factor models, in which diversifiable returns are uncorrelated across assets. (JF September 1993, Vol. XLVIII, No. 4: 1263-1291)

#### Example 34. Management

The role of social and situational influences in the performance-rating process has received **relatively little research attention** yet merits increased attention. Although there has been acknowledgment of the role of social and situational factors in shaping rater cognition and evaluation, research has typically proceeded **in a piecemeal fashion**, isolating a **single variable at a time**. Such an approach **fails to recognize** that performance rating is a process with multiple social and situational facets that **need to be considered** simultaneously. (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 1: 80-105)

### Example 35. Marketing

Recently, researchers have identified **several gaps** in the literature in this area, including (1) **substantial variability** in results across studies and (2) **lack** of studies that conceptualize (and operationalize) role ambiguity as a multifaceted construct. (JM April 1993, Vol. 57: 11-31)

Perhaps surprisingly, even in a short text such as the abstract, knowledge Gaps may occasionally be elaborated, as in Example 34 above, but more commonly Gaps are expressed in single statements, as in Example 35. Gap statements are frequently combined with Claims of centrality, as seen in Examples 33-34. However, in the Finance abstracts there was only one instance of a Gap statement (Example 33), as there was only one Claim of centrality, incidentally both occurring in the same abstract. The use of these steps thus seems to indicate a personal style rather than a disciplinary convention.

### Statements of Gaps in introductions

As is to be expected, elaborations of Gaps in introductions are fairly common and much more extensive than in abstracts. This is where the main establishment of the niche is usually carried out, as pointed out and demonstrated by Swales (1990, cf. Bhatia 1993). In Management and Marketing there are extensive elaborations of Gaps, presumably to build up the need ('niche') for the current contribution but possibly also to show the writers' awareness of the 'state of the art' in the problem area. The extent of Gap statements is illustrated in the examples below.

### Example 36. Finance

Friedman (1960, 1991) proposes a uniform price auction, which he refers to as a 'Dutch Auction', as a way to combat collusion, but he **provides no** equilibrium model of bidding behavior.

Cammack (1991) examines U. S. T-bill auctions, while Hendricks and Porter (1989) and Hendricks, Porter, and Boudreau (1987) examine OCS oil-lease auctions. The results in this paper should be viewed as complementary to theirs. Cammack **lacks the necessary** data to analyze bidder-specific profits. Also, she is **unable to compare** uniform and discriminatory pricing as there is no regime change during her sampling period. Hendricks and Porter as well as Hendricks, Porter, and Boudreau document information asymmetries and collusion, but their institutional setting **differs dramatically** from that of the Mexican T-bill auction. (JFE No. 33 (1993): 313-340)

Interestingly, in this example of pointing out shortcomings in previous research, there is personal attribution, which according to Myers (1989) is not common in denials of prior claims. However, as Myers also found, it is notable that the attributed limitations are here presented as being out of the reported researchers' control and do not thus



necessarily constitute a face-threatening act, being due to different material or different conditions.

A fairly typical feature of Gap statements in longer introductions is that they tend to occur in several different places, being reintroduced as another aspect of the current research question is elaborated. Thus the instances in Example 37 below are by no means the only Gap statements in the introduction they are taken from. To be noted are the uses of mitigators to soften the negative impact of Gap statements: *With few exceptions, has sometimes been weak, Although* (fronted concessive clause)...., *have tended to restrict, To our knowledge, no one has investigated.* . .

### Example 37. Management

With few exceptions, though, studies investigating normative pressures on more substantial structural change operationalize these pressures indirectly, **failing to measure** the professional training and social network connections of organizational decision makers. Perhaps for this reason, quantitative empirical evidence of normative pressures on structural change has sometimes been **weak** (Dobbin et al., 1988, Edelman, 1990). The exceptions include the very recent work of Davis (1991), who found that interlocking directorates among large corporations influenced adoption of takeover defenses, and Sutton and Dobbin (1992), who found that retention of labor relations professionals by private firms influenced adoption of grievance procedures and employment-at-will clauses. Although studies exploring coercive pressures are more precise and their results more impressive, they **have tended to restrict** their attention to the local or nation state as the dominant organization imposing preferences on those dependent on it for resources or legitimation (Tolbert and Zucker, 1983; Baron, Dobbin, and Jennings, 1986; Baron, Jennings, and Dobbin, 1988; Dobbin et al., 1988; Edelman, 1990; Mezas, 1990; Sutton and Dobbin, 1992). To our knowledge, **no one** has investigated normative or coercive pressures in connection with MDF adoption. (ASQ 1993, No. 38: 100-131)

### Example 38. Marketing

Despite the quantity and significance of role ambiguity research, **critical gaps** are evident (Fisher and Gitelson 1983; King and King 1990). Though a complete discussion of these gaps is beyond the scope of this article, two **gaps that appear germane** to the literature in marketing are addressed here. First, in their meta-analysis, Jackson and Schuler (1985) found a significant portion of **"unaccounted" variance** in studies that used role ambiguity as an antecedent of several dependent variables (e. g., satisfaction, performance). Second, in their **critique** of role ambiguity literature, King and King (1990) assert that because most studies view role ambiguity as a global, unidimensional construct, they **fail to capture** the "breadth" of uncertainties faced by boundary spanners. This **problem is serious** because Jackson and Schuler report that **more than 85%** of all studies they reviewed had assessed **only global** role ambiguity by using some variation of the unidimensional scale developed by Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970).<sup>1</sup> (JM April 1993, Vol. 57:11-31)

Example 38 is interesting in the sense that here the Gaps are all **reported**, i.e. presented as having been found by previous (other) researchers. In other words, the current writer does not point out the shortcomings but merely reports them second-hand, relying on

previous authorities, presumably a less face-threatening act. However, the Gap statements are still used to establish the current writer's niche and serve as the platform for a brief announcement of present research, but in this case even more for a long list of Boosts of the current contribution which follows subsequently (not shown here).

### Statements of Gaps in discussion/conclusion sections

Gap statements in discussion/conclusion sections take on different functions depending on whether they are **restatements of Gaps** presented at the beginning of discussion/conclusion sections to enhance the current contribution ('Foil') or **suggestions of Gaps remaining** even after the present contribution. The former have the function of strengthening the value of the present contribution, as illustrated by the first example in each pair from the three disciplines (Examples 39, 41 and 43). In the latter examples in each pair, Gap statements are used to establish the niche for suggestions of Future research, a more central function in discussion/conclusions (Examples 40, 42 and 44). Note the personal attribution and the 'strong' negative verb *fail* used in criticizing two of the most influential scholars in Finance in Example 39:

#### Example 39. Finance

Myers and Majluf **fail to pick up** the 'good' news associated with this announcement because they assume the project facing the firm has a nonnegative NPV. (----) This paper refines the Myers and Majluf model by (realistically) allowing for the possibility that the project facing the firm can have either a positive or a negative NPV. (JFE 1993, No. 33: 149-172)

In Example 39 the writers are restating the niche for the contribution. This use of restated Gap statements was the type most commonly used in the Finance discussion/conclusions. However, there was no clear example of remaining Gaps in the Finance material.

#### Example 40. Finance

A number of factors relevant to ownership structure choice were **beyond the scope of this paper**. Perhaps the most salient example is the demand for stock market liquidity. Although this paper has addressed the impact of such liquidity on monitoring under a contingent liability regime, Huddart (1992) shows that the ability to trade anonymously may also have a negative effect on large shareholder monitoring under a zero liability regime. On the other hand, increased liquidity (possibly linked to wider ownership of shares) has benefits as well; these **need to be modeled explicitly**, so that tradeoffs between liquidity and monitoring **can be more fully examined**. (JF 1993, Vol. XLVIII: 487-512)

Example 40 shows an implied remaining Gap due to the limitations of the current study and points to the need for further research. The use of Limitations to build up a niche for suggestions of Future research will be further illustrated in Examples 42-44.

### Example 41. Marketing

The traditional view of trust adopted in marketing has been based on a **purely** psychological approach. Our research complements and extends that view to include sociological theories. (JM January 1993, Vol. 57: 81-101)

In Example 41 the Gap is a restatement, recreating the niche for the contribution/Boost.

### Example 42. Marketing

Besides the **need to improve** previous classification schemes of buyer behavior, however, taxonomic work is **needed** for other reasons. Perreault (1982) argues, for instance, that **many of the** sampling, measurement, and specification **problems** facing industrial marketing researchers are due to the **lack** of a descriptive foundation. Take the sampling **problem**, for example. Industrial marketing research commonly is based on **subjective** sampling decisions - researchers focus on a specific theoretical problem but then must select the industries and firms for the sample. Samples are often homogeneous in terms of particular product/markets and the sampling frames are based on the researcher's **implicit** notions of what characteristics define a homogeneous (or heterogeneous) sample. **In fact**, it has been shown that decisions within a particular product/market **may vary widely** and decisions across product/markets **may be quite similar**. The data reported here support these observations. Though researchers **implicitly** consider these issues in selecting samples, they **need a clearer** classification scheme on which to base sampling frame decisions. Hence, researchers **might consider** sampling either within buying decision approaches (when homogeneous samples are desired) or across buying decision approaches (for heterogeneous samples). (JM January 1993, Vol. 57: 38-56)

The Gap statements in Example 42 are enhancing the present contribution and creating a niche for suggesting further research. They are grounded on external evidence (citation: *Perreault (1982) argues, for instance, . . .*), and the reader is addressed directly: *Take the sampling problem, for example*. These direct addresses were fairly unusual in the present material and occurred to any extent only in Marketing. The author's presence is quite strong in this excerpt, signaled for example by the emphatic *In fact,....* and the density of evaluative signals.

### Example 43. Management

Organizational culture has emerged as one of the dominant themes in management studies during the past decade. Although researchers have made theoretical and methodological advances in understanding the development of cultural values in organizations, there has been **less progress** in comparing cultural effects on employee behavior across organizations. This study demonstrated that cultural values varied significantly across six public accounting firms with offices located in the same city. (AMJ 1992, Vol. 35, No. 5: 1036-1056)

### Example 44. Management

Research on justice has **primarily focused** on decisions surrounding grievances and other processes, **often ignoring** the people who represent or deliver the justice on a daily basis. Thus the present study, along with other recent works (e.g. Cobb&Frey, 1991), suggests that researchers **should begin to focus** on the leader's role in the justice process. (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 3: 527-556)

The Gap statement in Example 43 is a restatement creating a foil to enhance the contribution, and those in Example 44 are used to create a niche for suggesting further research.

#### 8.2.3 *Boosting the research contribution*

The most obvious and direct promotional statement is the Boost, which is here defined as the explicit statement of the value or relevance of the current contribution for research or business practice, whether it refers to the material or methods used, to the model, the findings or the implications of the model/findings. A Boost contains an explicit evaluative linguistic signal, usually several signals simultaneously. The signaling may be contextually dependent, in the sense that the positive value of a signal may not be inherent but takes its value from the textual context (or cotext). Boosting may occur in all the three sections under study here, but to different extents. A notable characteristic of Boosts is also that, in addition to the boosting signals, they also frequently contain mitigating signals, an observation which led to the second major research question of this study: the extent and forms of mitigation in promotion.

#### Boosting in abstracts

The boosting in abstracts usually addresses the contribution (Examples 47 and 48), frequently by explicitly pointing out the *efficacy* of the proposed model (Examples 46, 49 and 50). However, some Boosts concern the *novelty* or *magnitude* of the database of the study (Example 45).

### Example 45. Finance

This paper uses **new** data on the holdings of **769** tax-exempt (predominantly pension) funds, to evaluate the potential effect of their trading on stock prices. (JFE 1992, No. 32: 23-43)

### Example 46. Finance

The **refined model predicts** positive **as well as** negative stock price responses, **consistent with recent empirical evidence** concerning the stock price effects of new stock issues (JFE 33 (1993) 149-172).

### Example 47. Management

In a **more general** sense, the research represents an attempt to **provide insight not only** into relationships between cognition and action, **but also** into the links between those fundamental processes and organizational performance outcomes. (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 2: 239-270)

### Example 48. Management

The findings show how an ecological approach to competition that incorporates intrapopulation variation **can provide a more detailed understanding** of the competitive dynamics and evolution of organizational populations. (ASQ 1992, No. 37: 580-604)

A characteristic of the last two examples is that they appeal to ‘softer’ values: *provide insight/understanding*, and also hedge the claim with modal markers: *attempt/can (provide)*. Not surprisingly for a discipline studying promotion, Marketing abstracts may contain a large amount of Boosting, as demonstrated in Example 49 below, which illustrates how the use of Boosting signals may permeate the whole abstract. However, in abstracts this large amount seems to be the exception rather than the rule. A more common extent of use is shown in Example 50.

### Example 49. Marketing

**To enhance** the utility of meta-analysis as an integrative tool for marketing research, heteroscedastic MLE (HMLE), a maximum-likelihood-based estimation procedure, is proposed as a method that **overcomes** heteroscedasticity, a problem known to impair OLS estimates and threaten the validity of meta-analytic findings. The results of a Monte Carlo simulation experiment reveal that, **under a wide range** of heteroscedastic conditions, HMLE is **more efficient and powerful** than OLS and **achieves these performance advantages without inflating type I error**. Further, the relative performance of HMLE **increases** as heteroscedasticity becomes more severe. An empirical analysis of a meta-analytic dataset in marketing **confirmed and extended** these findings by illustrating how the **enhanced efficiency and power** of HMLE **improve the ability to detect** moderator variables and **by demonstrating** how the theoretical generalizations emerging from a meta-analysis are affected by the choice of the analytic procedure. (JMR May 1993, Vol. XXX: 246-255)

### Example 50. Marketing

The results **not only provide insights** into entry-mode choice by service firms **but also** indicate how the transaction-cost framework **can be broadened to develop a more comprehensive model for understanding** entry-mode choice. (JM July 1993, Vol. 57: 19-38)

### Boosting in introductions

The use of Boosting in introductions varied widely in extent within the disciplines and journals and appears to be due more to the authors’ predilections than to discipline or journal conventions, as will be shown in Chapter 10. However, some general trends were discernible, for example that, in each pair of journals, one journal consistently

showed a more frequent use of Boosting. Below are given fairly typical examples of extensive use of Boosting in the three disciplines, but it needs to be noted that extensive use was not more common than limited use (see ranges of occurrence in Table 39). These long examples are presented here for illustrative purposes. The two examples in each discipline are taken from two different journals.

### Example 51. Finance

Although exchange members certainly have an interest in promoting this view of the market, **our analysis demonstrates** that these claims **may be more** than self-interested attempts to maintain the status quo. **We show, in fact**, that the specialist system **can be viewed** as a market mechanism that **improves both** the welfare of exchange members **and** the terms of trade for public customers by reducing the incentives to exploit informational asymmetries.

**Unlike** Glosten's results, **ours apply to both** specialist **and** competitive market-making mechanisms **and suggest an alternative explanation** for claims that the specialist system is a superior form of market organization.

**We extend** Gammill's analysis **by showing** that in addition to a 'carrot' in the form of compensation for private information, the specialist's ability to sanction brokers **provides a 'stick'** that can be used **to further mitigate** the specialist's adverse selection problem. **In addition**, the dependence of our results on repeated trade among a small contingent of identifiable trading partners **provides a more satisfying explanation** for the existence of floor exchange mechanisms. (JFE 1992, No. 32: 61-86)

### Example 52. Finance

In short, the **main contribution** of this paper is to **identify** a pricing kernel that prices **all** securities (including derivative securities), **depends only on a few** economy-wide factors, and **satisfies** the restriction of no arbitrage. Hence, this pricing kernel **embodies** in it **all** the restrictions of interest and **provides a simple way** to test the theory. Further, this pricing kernel is **capable** of pricing dynamic trading strategies.

In our approach, the **only** deep parameter **of interest** is the pricing kernel, restricted by no arbitrage and low dimensionality. Since the exact form of this nonlinear pricing kernel is unknown, we use the semi-nonparametric estimation (SNP) approach developed by Gallant and Tauchen (1989) to estimate the nonlinear pricing kernel. This approach to estimation **allows us to embed a large class** of parametric asset-pricing models including the linear APT, the CAPM, the discrete time ICAPM and the RCAPM. The embedding of these asset-pricing models **allows us to test** them as nested models. In addition, The SNP approach **allows** the imposition of the restriction of nonnegativity implied by no arbitrage. In estimation, we use the Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) (Hansen (1982)) **to avoid making** distributional **assumptions** and **identify** the number of factors using a likelihood ratio type test. (JF September 1993, Vol. XLVIII, No. 4: 1231-1262)

In Example 51 the boosting of the implications of the contribution is followed by the boosting of the material and method/model. It is notable that the Boosts are here explicitly anchored in two personal attributions of shortcomings in previous research. The Boosts in Example 52 address the superiority of the model.

### Example 53. Management

We show how agency theory **can be applied** to university faculties through tests of 12 hypotheses on faculty pay derived from an agency theory framework. This process **improves** conceptual **understanding** of the determinants of faculty pay; it **also provides some interesting extensions** of agency theory to the study of intra-organizational pay allocations.

The present investigation was based on **a national sample** of management professors spread **across 90** universities, so that the results are **not institution-specific**. This research strategy **also allowed** us to examine the effect of changes in institutional affiliations on faculty pay and the conditions under which the financial returns for such moves are **greatest**.

This study **shows that very different results can be obtained** when publication outlet quality is taken into account. (GAP: Other studies have relied exclusively on counts of citations to a person's work as a proxy for research performance (e. g., Diamond, 1986).) In the present study, we **used both** a measure of the quality of publications, as judged by the outlets in which they have appeared, **and** citation counts. Using these two measures **permitted a more comprehensive and accurate assessment** of faculty research productivity. It also **allowed for** testing some **interesting** hypotheses concerning the conditions under which quality of publications, sheer quantity of publications, and citation count are the **most significant** determinants of faculty pay. (AMJ 1992, Vol. 35, No. 5: 921-955)

Example 53 exemplifies the Boosting of method and material as well as the contribution in terms of findings. Although a few instances of extensive Boosting did occur in ASQ introductions, extensive Boosting in introductions seemed less characteristic in this journal, and therefore a shorter example which is more typical of ASQ is presented here. This example extols the superiority of the proposed model:

### Example 54. Management

In this paper we attempt **to broaden and expand** the structural inertia model. Following Hannan and Freeman (1984), we define organizations as structured systems of routines embedded in a network of interactions with the external environment. We then **go beyond** their model **to incorporate** theories of organizational learning and innovation **not found in the original** formulation of structural inertia. The result is a **broadier** model of inertia and momentum in organizations. (ASQ 1993, No. 38: 51-73)

In a science studying promotion, it is perhaps to be expected that promoting the author's own contribution is given a considerable amount of space. However, the extent of Boosting contributions in Marketing introductions varied widely, as will be shown in Section 10.2. The following example shows an extensive use of Boosting, but it is to be noted that almost half the number of introduction samples in both Marketing journals did not contain any Boosting at all. Example 55 addresses several merits of the contribution: the model and its application, the database and the novelty (a 'first') of this type of empirical study, the theoretical development in combining different streams of research, and finally the interest for practitioners. The second example below illustrates the Boosting of the study's contribution in terms of material.

## Example 55. Marketing

Consequently, we develop a method of analysis based on our structural process model that **controls for** (removes) all unobserved, individual-specific information affecting the customer's expectations and perceptions (the actual service being one such factor) while **still allowing** estimation of two **key** parameters of our process model. Such a technique **should have broad applicability** to service firms that want to measure the relative influences of the two different expectations and the delivered service (despite the fact that it is unmeasured) on the customer's perceptions of the firm's service quality

**In addition to** postulating and testing a **new** dynamic model of expectations and perceptions, **and providing an analytic approach** for estimating **major** portions of this model with **multiple-measures** data obtained at only one point in time, we **add** to the service quality literature **in several other ways**. Though other researchers have postulated the existence of different expectations, our study is the **first empirical** demonstration of the joint influence of our two postulated expectations in a service quality setting. We **also link** the satisfaction and service quality literature by showing our dynamic model of service quality to be **compatible** with the **currently accepted** definition of transaction-specific satisfaction. **Further**, because the **major current** empirical paradigm for assessing service quality (the Gaps model proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) and our model are a subset of a more general model, we are **able to estimate and test** the validity of these alternative conceptualizations. **Finally**, ours is **one of the first** published field studies in which individual-level data are used to examine empirically the impact of consumers' perceptions of service quality on a set of intended behaviors **of strategic interest** to the firm. (JMR February 1993, Vol. XXX: 7-27)

## Example 56. Marketing

This study focuses on the choice of entry modes in the *service* sector and **includes a broad range** of service industries, **spanning both** business **and** consumer services. It **covers** choice among wholly owned operations, joint ventures, and contractual transfers but not export modes of entry, because the theory employed, transaction-cost analysis (TCA), is not appropriate for comparing exports with foreign direct investment methods (Hennart 1989). <sup>1</sup> **Unlike previous** entry-mode investigations, which were generally confined to the activities of large multinational corporations, it **includes** small and medium-sized firms **as well**. (JM July 1993, Vol. 57: 19-38)

To sum up, the purpose of this section was to illustrate the use and linguistic signaling of direct promotional steps (Claims of centrality, Gap statements, and Boosts) in the three sections under study here: the abstracts, the introductions, and the discussion/conclusion sections in the three disciplines. However, since the discussion/conclusion sections contained significantly more Boosting, in order to save space here, the reader is referred to the examples of Boosts presented in Appendix 3. In terms of formulation and signaling, these Boosts are very similar to those to be found in introductions, but with more elaboration of theoretical and/or practical implications and applications. The examples above already give an indication of the extent of promotion but the similarities and differences between the sections and the disciplines/journals will become apparent only in the presentation and discussion of findings. Before the presentation of these findings, a few examples and comments on the indirect promotional rhetorical steps are called for.



### 8.3 Exemplification of the categorization of indirect promotion

To recapitulate briefly, the indirectly promotional steps examined in this study comprise statements of Counterclaims, Caveats, Limitations and suggestions for Future research (in abstracts initial Theses/Claims are also included, cf. Table 22). These steps are considered indirect promotion because their immediate promotional value may be perceived as negative rather than positive, as being potentially face-threatening either to the immediate research community or to the contribution of the writers of the research article. It is easier to see how an enumeration of knowledge gaps in previous research may help make the current contribution seem more relevant and weighty, than to see how enumerating the limitations of the current contribution and the number of questions still left unanswered and thus suggested for Future research can enhance the current contribution. Nevertheless, the extensive use of these steps in the discussion/conclusion sections led to the conclusion that they may be used deliberately to enhance the credibility and convincingness of the current contribution by increasing precision and focus of applicability.

#### 8.3.1 *Counterclaims*

The promotional power of counterclaims resides in their indication of novelty or further refinement of a model or theory, i.e. advancement of knowledge. Their potentially negative impact resides in their face-threatening effect on the claims or research/ers being questioned or refuted. However, the negative effect can be offset by mitigating signals, as was shown in Chapter 7. Overall, the number of Counterclaims was relatively small (cf. Chapters 10.3 and 11.5).

#### **Counterclaims in abstracts**

In the present material Counterclaims seemed to be rarely used in abstracts: only a few instances were found in each discipline, but the interesting observation is that they were practically all unmitigated (only one instance out of a total of 10).

#### **Example 57. Finance**

**In contrast** to standard constructs of the APr, **we do not assume** a linear factor structure on the payoffs. (JF September 1993, Vol. XLVIII, No. 4: 1231-1262)

### Example 58. Management

We argue that theory about organizations and environments has been premised on an assumption of managerialism that is **no longer tenable** and that it **must adjust** to the financial model of the corporation that now dominates economic and policy discourse. (ASQ 1992, No. 37: 605-633)

### Example 59. Marketing

The results show that almost half of market pioneers fail and their mean market share is **much lower than** that found in other studies. (JMR May 1993, Vol. XXX: 158-179)

In Example 57 the counterclaim addresses assumptions, in Example 58 it states the major Thesis/Claim of the article, and in Example 59 the Counterclaim refers to the findings.

### Counterclaims in introductions

In the material Counterclaims were also rarely used in introductions, although those in Finance showed slightly more frequent use, probably because introductions in Finance as a rule included statements of principal findings.

### Example 60. Finance

We find precisely the **opposite** relation between discounts and managerial stock ownership in our sample of closed-end funds between 1979 and 1989. (JFE 1993, No. 33: 263-291)

### Example 61. Finance

**In contrast our results indicate** that members of the incumbent senior management team incur significant personal losses when their firms are financially distressed. (JF June 1993, Vol. XLVIII, No2 (Gilson & Vetsuypens))

### Example 62. Management

Theorists usually consider these views to be mutually exclusive alternatives (e. g., Scott 1987). (----) Because there are important differences between the two perspectives, there is value in searching for boundary conditions between them, but we believe that these views are **not in opposition**: An organizational change **can be both** disruptive **and** adaptive, and organizational inertia **can actually increase** the likelihood of organizational change. (ASQ 1993: No. 38:51-73)

### Example 63. Marketing

In their classical article, Wilkie and Ferris (1975) proposed that, in general, comparative advertisements will be more persuasive than their non-comparative counterparts. However, the bulk of empirical evidence **has not supported** this proposition. (JMR August 1993, Vol. XXX: 315-330)

In the Management example above, the writers' counterclaim concerns the questioning of prior assumptions and similarly in the Marketing example, but in the latter the counterclaim is reported, not the writers' own. In both cases the counterclaims are used

as points of departure rather than forming the major claim (cf. Gruber 1993 on reported evaluation).

### Counterclaims in discussion/conclusion sections

Because conclusions are where the principal findings are mainly discussed and assessed, the use of counterclaims was more frequent and more elaborate in this section. Only one example of elaboration of Counterclaims is presented below (Example 65). It is noteworthy that the counterclaim is addressed to a named scholar (personal attribution) in an integral citation (cf. Swales 1990) and is thus fairly face-threatening (cf. Hunston 1989, Myers 1989).

#### Example 64. Finance

In particular, we argue that the usual linearity assumptions on the payoff structure that are used to derive linear APT models **are unnecessary** and provide conditions under which a low-dimensional nonnegative nonlinear pricing kernel exists. (JF (Sept. 1993) Vol. XLVIII, No. 4: 1231-1262)

#### Example 65. Finance

The above results are in **direct contrast to those reported by Pound (1988)**. For the full sample of takeovers, the announcement-month results lend support to the information hypothesis and lead us to conclude that potential synergistic gains are **not the sole** reason for the favorable stock price reaction to takeover announcements, although we cannot determine whether the favorable information conveyed by the takeover announcement relates to prior undervaluation of the target or to the expectation that target management will follow a higher-valued strategy. Further, knowledge of target management resistance by itself **has no effect** on analysts' announcement-month earnings forecast revisions. For resisted takeovers, the neutral resistance period revisions in earnings forecasts **are more in line with** the previously documented neutral or slightly negative effect of takeover resistance **than are** the significant negative revisions **reported in Pound**. Our results also suggest that successful resistance **does not destroy** value, and we conclude that the outcome of resisted takeover contests **does not allow us** to make any inference regarding managerial motivation for resistance. (JFE (1993) No. 33: 201-225.)

In Example 66 below the Counterclaim is addressed to a group of scholars rather than an individual and the mode of citation is non-integral (cf. Swales 1990), i.e. less face-threatening.

#### Example 66. Management

Although previous research (Brass 1984; Kravchardt 1990) has found that betweenness centrality is significantly related to power, our research **did not confirm** this finding. (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 3: 441-470)

The last example of Counterclaim below is the one displaying most distance from personal attribution, as it is targeted at models, without providing citations.

## Example 67. Marketing

However, **an unexpected finding** was the lack of dilution effects for quality beliefs, even for brand extensions perceived to be moderately typical of the family brand. These results **support neither** the book-keeping model **nor** the typicality-based model. (JM July 1993, Vol. 57:71-84)

### 8.3.2 *Caveats and limitations in introductions*

The difference between a Caveat and a statement of Limitation is illustrated in Examples 68 and 69 below: the first statement in each example is a Caveat (more general) and the subsequent statement/s is/are Limitations (more specific). Caveats and Limitations are not a feature of abstracts, probably because they would be too prominently positioned there and would put the reader off in the very beginning. Neither do they occur very frequently in introductions, except a few times in Finance where the introductions have largely taken on the functions of the discussion/conclusion sections. The following two examples are from Finance introductions:

## Example 68. Finance

**Our conclusions must be tempered** by the restrictive nature of the assumptions. For example, **we do not consider** the advantage of the mutual fund in overcoming problems of information resale and externality in use. (JF, June 1993, Vol. XLVIII, No. 2: 425-258)

## Example 69. Finance

There are **some perplexing aspects** of closed-end funds that **we do not address** in this paper. We **focus primarily on** the cross-sectional variation in the discounts, **rather than** on the time-series variation. In addition, **we do not attempt to explain** why discounts typically increase after initial public offerings, or why some funds sell at premiums. Our evidence indicates, however, that regardless of the cause of the time-series variation in the discounts, there is a stable and significant cross-sectional relation between the discounts and the concentration of stock ownership. (JFE 1993, Vol. 33: 263-291)

### 8.3.3 *Caveats, limitations and suggestions for future research in discussion/conclusions*

It was the extensiveness of the Limitations presented in the discussion/conclusion sections of Management and Marketing journals that seemed to indicate that there was another promotional purpose at work than merely increasing credibility by showing the writer's awareness of the scope of the current contribution: by displaying the writer's knowledge of the state of the field (cf. Bazerman 1988). In Marketing and Management, the Limitations were often given a lengthy section of their own, which was even sometimes placed first, i.e. given prominence, in the discussion/conclusion section.

Another striking purpose of Limitations seemed to be to create a niche for suggestions of Future research. The following examples are taken from discussion/conclusion sections in Management and Marketing, respectively, and the subtitles frequently preceding each section are included. In Finance discussion/conclusion sections, statements of Limitations were the exception rather than the rule.

### Example 70. Management

#### Limitations of the Study

The study is **not without its limitations**. We have noted the **potential impact** of the setting on the results. The average age and the jobs of the survey respondents **would seem to limit the generalizability** of the results. The findings of the present study do, however, fit with the findings of the growing literature supporting the positive impact of monitoring in the workplace (Chalykoff & Kochan, 1989; Komaki, 1986; Larson & Callahan, 1990). **More research is needed** to test the present model on other populations. **At a basic level**, the present results can be generalized to industries in which teenage workers are prevalent, such as fast-food restaurants, grocery chains, and retail businesses.

Also, the correlational data **prevent** the inference of causal direction. Although the hypothesized model suggests such causal direction, **we recognize** that causality **cannot be shown without further study**. The intent of the present study was to examine the relationships between methods of monitoring, justice dimensions, and OCB dimensions, and the model **merely depicts** the framework in which **we believe** the relationships exist. It is **entirely possible** that the relationships found in the data **result from a reversal** of causal direction. For example, the negative relationship between observation and OCB **may actually indicate** that general managers are more likely to observe employees who are not good citizens. **Obviously, future research needs to focus on** the causal directions of the links between variables (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36: 527-556)

### Example 71. Marketing

#### Limitations

**The many difficulties** associated with cross-national research have long been recognized (Albaum and Peterson 1984) and **some of these problems** are present in our study. For example, **one of the key challenges** in cross-cultural data collection is the attainment of measurement equivalency (Hui and Triandis 1985). In other words, the data collection is **valid only to the extent that** the researchers can demonstrate that the constructs and measures are conceptually and operationally equivalent across the various cultures studied.

In our study, we devoted extreme effort to ensuring that the coders clearly understood the constructs and categories and could demonstrate the ability to make judgments as we intended. Nevertheless, cultural **biases** inherent in the coders **could have somewhat influenced** the results **and accounted for some** of the variance between countries. The differences observed, however, were on culturally sensitive measures (e. g., individualism-collectivism) and were typically very large. Therefore it is unlikely that all of the meaningful variance in categories is attributable to coder biases. Second, the coders were all extremely well trained and exhibited high interrater agreement.

We also recognize that the samples studied represent **only a portion** of the ads that appear on television in the respective countries. **Future research** employing larger numbers of ads **is needed to verify** our findings. Finally, we examined **only one** medium (i.e., television). **Future research should examine** humorous appeals in other media as well because the cultures studied differ in terms of exposure to ads in the various media. For example, in Germany, print advertising (in

particular magazines, newspapers, and billboards) plays a more significant advertising role than it does in the U. S. (Toyne and Walters 1989). (JM April 1993, Vol. 57: 64-75)

What Example 71 above also illustrates is how the limitations elaborated on are simultaneously mitigated and justified in various ways: *some of these problems, could have somewhat influenced and accounted for some of the...* (cf. Chapter 7 on mitigation signals). It is to be noted that, as in the latter example, the statements of Limitations and suggestions for Future research in discussion/conclusion sections are not limited to the subsection specifically devoted to these steps, but occur in various places throughout the discussion/conclusion, i.e. they are recycled.

An interesting aspect about suggestions for Future research is that, as findings will show, these are often expressed in an explicitly promotional manner by using evaluative linguistic signals. In other words, many suggestions for Future research contain an enhancing positive evaluation or emphatic. Further, it is frequently either implied or explicitly noted that the Future research suggested has been made possible or has been generated by the current contribution. Detailed suggestions for Future research can bear witness of the fruitfulness and inspirational value of the current research, but they can also be perceived as limiting what other researchers can do subsequently (cf. Myers 1989) by staking out the writers' future territory. Example 72 shows a Boosting of results used as platform for suggesting Future research:

#### **Example 72. Marketing**

The results of this study should provide **a useful guide** for the development of **more precise** operationalizations. (---) It would be **interesting** to contrast these findings with those of studies of channel relationships within the Japanese culture. (---) **Just as important** is the reverse situation, which would involve an examination of how the Japanese exercise and view power when they are the seller/supplier importing to U. S. channels. (JM Vol. 57 (April 1993), 1-10)

To sum up, this chapter has presented the proposed models for identifying and analyzing direct and indirect promotion in abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusions. The examples provided here have offered some indications of possible similarities and differences in use between the three disciplines, but a more detailed presentation of these similarities and differences is provided in the next three chapters presenting the empirical findings.

## 9 STRATEGIES OF PROMOTION IN ABSTRACTS

Abstracts of research articles are generally recognized as being of crucial importance for the dissemination of new scholarly work, since they often determine whether the reader will go on to read the article. Therefore, it is necessary especially for the foreign or novice scholarly writer to achieve an awareness of the conventions of well-formedness and convincingness of a specific discipline or journal. This chapter will present the findings on the strategies of promotion used in the abstracts of the three disciplines. Examples of abstracts from each journal are provided in Appendix 1.

The central questions to be addressed here are to what extent and in what way the writers used direct and indirect promotion and the associated rhetorical steps. Because abstracts are relatively short, and space thus is at a premium, and because their position and role in the readers' processing of the RA are prominent, I will also examine some more detailed features that may affect promotion in abstracts. I have chosen to call them 'potential signals of promotion'. These are the rhetorical steps used in initial sentences, deictic references to the current authors' work, the use of verbs and tenses introducing present research and the placement of this step in the abstracts. Since personal attribution can be seen either as a hedging or an assertive signal (cf. Hunston 1989, Myers 1989, Kaplan et al. 1994, Andersson and Gunnarsson 1995, Melander et al. 1997, Chang and Swales 1999, Hyland 1999b, 2000) I will examine how authors deal with self-reference and personal attribution, especially in the context of assertive vs. non-assertive verbs. This leads to a further examination of verbs from the point of view of goal-achievement. In the linguistic signaling of promotional steps, I will only report on the signaling of Boosts, since the other promotional steps occurred too sparsely to provide comparable figures. Before reporting on promotion in abstracts, I will give a brief general characterization of the abstracts in the three disciplines.

### 9.1 General presentation of the abstracts

The Finance abstracts are characterized by being very much *results-oriented*, which is reflected in the fact that less than 10% of the sentences contained background information, such as references to previous research or theories, topic generalizations, claims of centrality or gap statements, and only about 13% describing methods and

materials (Lindeberg 1996a). In contrast, the Management abstracts showed 27% and the Marketing abstracts as much as 41% of the sentences as containing background information, and about 20% each containing descriptions of methods and materials. Thus there was more *orientation* into the research topic provided in Management and Marketing. On the other hand, the Marketing abstracts contained the largest share of *comments* on results, such as evaluating the contribution (Boosting) and pointing out implications/conclusions or offering a preview of these: about 40% in Marketing vs. 32% in Finance and about 23% in Management.

The style in the Finance abstracts is factual, constative, stating findings without much mitigation but not devoid of personal pronouns or of argumentative or assertive phrasing (*we argue that, we provide evidence, we show*). In the two Management journals the styles differed considerably from each other in that the ASQ abstracts seem more information dense and wordy. Both journals use personal pronouns and argumentative phrasing to some extent (*We examined, We argue, This study demonstrates, The results challenge*) but ASQ showed a higher amount of these. The Marketing abstracts are characterized by a more impersonal style: more use of the third person (*the authors*) and the passive, but also more explicit evaluation and descriptive previews of implications. However, both the Management and the Marketing abstracts reflect a more tentative and interpretive style than Finance by using more mitigating expressions.

## **9.2 Range of promotion**

By range of promotion is here meant the number of abstracts containing different amounts of promotion, i.e. no promotion, one promotional step, two promotional steps, etc up to six promotional steps (the highest frequency of occurrence). The range of promotion thus provides an overview of the promotional characteristics of the disciplines/journals (see Table 24).



**Table 24. Range of promotion in abstracts (No. abstracts containing 0-6 promotional steps)**

No. promotional steps	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
<b>Finance</b>								
JFE	9	8	3					20
JF	13	2	4		1			20
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>1</b>			<b>40</b>
<b>Management</b>								
AMJ	6	7	2	3	1		1	20
ASQ	7	10	3					20
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Marketing</b>								
JMR	5	5	3	4		3		20
JM	5	6	5	2	1		1	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>

*Legend: JFE= Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ=Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

What the overview shows is that while in Finance just less than half the number of abstracts contained overt promotion, in Management and Marketing promotion occurred in as many as three quarters of the abstracts. These figures include both direct and indirect promotion (see further Sections 9.3 and 9.4). When there was promotion, in all disciplines the most likely number of promotional steps in an abstract was one or two, and interestingly this tendency was fairly similar in all three disciplines: 17 abstracts in Finance vs. 22 in Management and 19 in Marketing. The major differences between the disciplines were revealed in the number of abstracts containing more than two promotional steps: while there was only one such abstract in Finance, there were five in Management and as many as eleven in Marketing. The overview thus shows that while in Finance a multitude of promotional steps may be due to personal style, in Marketing it is more likely to be due to disciplinary convention.

### **9.3 Direct promotion**

Examining the use of direct promotion (Table 25 below), what is immediately obvious is that the three disciplines differed considerably. Finance showed the least and Marketing the most use of direct promotion, while Management seemed to fall in between, although this was true of only one of the two journals. Largely focusing on

models and methods but also sometimes on data or applications, the promotional emphasis in the journals was on Boosting the writers' own contribution. This can be expected in RA abstracts where presenting findings is the major object (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995, Hyland 2000), but regarding the use of the other promotional steps, the disciplines/journals showed different strategies.

**Table 25. Direct promotional steps in abstracts (N=20/journal, no. occurrences, percentage of total no. sentences)**

Promotional steps	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
Claims of centrality		1	1	5		5	3	8	11
Gaps		1	1	4	1	5	6	5	11
Boosts	7	6	13	8	2	10	19	15	34
Total	7	8	15	17	3	20	28	28	56
No. sentences	88	94	182	98	113	211	104	98	202
% promotion	7.9	8.5	8.2	17.3	2.7	9.5	26.9	28.6	27.7

*Legend: JFE= Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ=Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

While direct promotion in Finance almost solely focused on Boosting, a quarter of the Marketing abstracts in addition claimed the centrality of the research area/topic and/or stated Gaps of knowledge. Below is an example of Claiming centrality in an abstract in Marketing which is unusually long. Normally the centrality claim consisted of only one clause or sentence. In JM the linguistic signals of centrality were adjectives (*central, critical, growing, important, recent*) or adverbials (*commonly (used), interestingly, radically (different), rapidly (becoming), recently*). Because of the sparseness of claims of centrality in the other abstracts, linguistic signaling was not further analyzed. Neither were there sufficient data for examining types of appeal (cf. Sections 8.1 and 10.4.3).

### **Example 73. Claim of centrality in a Marketing abstract**

Relationship management **rapidly is becoming a central** research paradigm in the marketing channels literature. A **growing body** of conceptual and empirical literature addresses different aspects of interfirm relationships, building in part on **recent** theoretical developments in organization theory, law, and economics. **Interestingly**, however, some of these theoretical frameworks make **radically different** assumptions about the nature of interfirm relationships, though these differences to date have not been examined systematically in the marketing literature. (JM Vol. 58 (1994): 71-85)

In introductions, Gap statements are one of the steps in the move *Establishing a niche*, and can thus be seen as a major device in persuading the reader of the relevance of the current contribution (cf. Swales 1990, Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997). In abstracts, however, the use of gap statements was not a major strategy (see Table 25). Pointing out the shortcomings of previous research in as prominent a position as the abstract can be seen as aggressive and extremely risky from a politeness perspective, which may be a good reason for refraining from them. However, in accordance with politeness principles (Myers 1989), the Gaps that did occur in abstracts were not personally attributed. Below is an excerpt showing three of the four Gap statements in AMJ abstracts (which can thus be attributable to personal style):

#### Example 74. Gap statements in a Management abstract

The role of social and situational influences in the performance-rating process has received **relatively little** research **attention** yet merits increased attention. Although there has been acknowledgment of the role of social and situational factors in shaping rater cognition and evaluation, research has typically proceeded **in a piecemeal fashion, isolating a single variable at a time**. Such an approach **fails to recognize** that performance rating is a process with multiple social and situational facets that need to be considered simultaneously. (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 1, 80-105.)

Although the major direct promotional step in the abstracts was Boosting the writers' own contribution, in Finance these were only used in 25% (10/40, see Table 26 below) and in Management in only 22.5% (9/40) of the abstracts, but heavily skewed between the two journals. In the Marketing abstracts, however, Boosts occurred in almost half the abstracts (19/40), and many of these contained several Boosts (see Examples 77 and 79 below).

**Table 26. No. abstracts containing Boosts (N=20/journal)**

Finance				Management				Marketing			
JFE	JF	Total	%	AMJ	ASQ	Total	%	JMR	JM	Total	%
6	4	10	25	7	2	9	22.5	10	9	19	47.5

*Legend: JFE= Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ=Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

The provision of a new or more refined model or method for examining a phenomenon was the most common contribution which was boosted. Example 75 shows one of the fairly rare examples of Boosting which explicitly builds on attributed previous research,

in this case the well-known model of two of the most frequently cited scholars in the discipline. Citations like these only occurred in the Finance abstracts.

#### **Example 75. Boosting model in a Finance abstract**

**Refining the Myers and Majluf model, by allowing for** the realistic possibility of potential projects having negative net present values, **leads to different predictions. The refined model** predicts positive **as well as** negative stock price responses, **consistent with recent empirical evidence** concerning the stock price effects of new stock issues. (JFE 33 (1993) 149-172)

In this example, further enhancement of credibility is sought by referring to consistency with previous research, albeit without a personal attribution of source (cf. Hunston 1989, 1994a). The next example illustrates a Boost of data, based on the appeal of uniqueness and of scope (for a more extended presentation of types of appeal see Section 10.4.3).

#### **Example 76. Boosting data in a Finance abstract**

This paper examines the price effect of institutional stock trading, using **a unique data set** that reports the transactions (large and small) of 37 **large** institutional money management firms. (JFE 33 (1993) 173-199)

Example 77 from Marketing shows the Boosting of a model and its applications in both research and business practice, followed by an example of Boosting data (Example 78).

#### **Example 77. Boosting model and application in a Marketing abstract**

The **extended model generates new** managerial **insights** into positioning and marketing planning effectiveness, **can be used to simulate** the effects of changes in positioning strategy on consideration and choice, and **provides more detailed** information about why consumers consider or reject a new brand. (JM Vol. 57 (April 1993), 47-63)

#### **Example 78. Boosting data in a Marketing abstract**

In a **large-scale national study**, the authors evaluated the effectiveness of **several** preference elicitation techniques for predicting choices. (JMR Vol. XXX (February 1993), 105-114)

Example 79 below illustrates how almost an entire abstract in Marketing can be overtly promotional, with explicit evaluation (here Boosting) built into each sentence. There were only a couple of instances of such extensive Boosting, however, even in the Marketing abstracts. This example in fact covers almost the whole abstract; what is missing below are the first two sentences, the first Announcing present research and the second describing the ‘conventional approach’ which provides the theoretical background.

### Example 79. Extensive Boosting in a Marketing abstract

The authors describe an **extended** BTL model, a simultaneous segmentation and estimation procedure for paired comparisons that **can also accommodate** descriptor variables, if available. The procedure **extends** methods for analyzing paired comparisons **in two important ways**. First, **recognizing** that individuals may be heterogeneous in their preference structure, the model attempts to group individuals into segments, where individuals belonging to the same segment **can be characterized adequately** by a segment-specific set of scale values. Second, the model **allows** descriptor variables **to be incorporated** into the analysis. Though incorporating descriptor variables in the analysis of paired comparisons entails some additional estimation issues, the **ability to calibrate** stimulus scale values for different market segments **and to understand** the potential reasons why the relative locations of the stimuli as perceived by persons making the judgments vary according to the latent segment to which an individual belongs **appears to be an extremely useful feature** of the proposed method. (JMR, Vol. XXX (February 1993), 42-51)

To sum up, not surprisingly, the Marketing abstracts showed the largest amount of direct promotion, but an interesting finding was that the average degree of promotion in Management was similar to that of Finance. This may be due to the fact that the two Management journals differed considerably from each other, a point to be further examined below.

#### 9.4 Indirect promotion

To recapitulate, indirect promotional steps are rhetorical steps that at first glance seem to have a negative effect, either by being face-threatening to the reader/community of scholars/the writer or by detracting from the value of the present contribution, but in fact they increase novelty value or credibility and hence promote the contribution. The taxonomy of indirect promotional steps presented in Section 8.3. comprised the following steps: Counterclaims, Statements of Limitations, Caveats, and Suggestions for Future research. However, although these categories are useful for analyzing introductions and discussion/conclusion sections, they are not easily applied to abstracts, because abstracts have different rhetorical functions to fulfill. In the abstracts studied here it seemed important to make clear what distinguished each particular study from other (similar?) studies. Thus it was necessary for the analysis to add such rhetorical steps that occurred in the abstracts and that seemed to have a promotional effect. In the body of an article, these steps can be seen as routine rhetorical acts but when they are placed in abstracts, they are given such prominence that the effect is promotional. These steps were: Assess reliability (Example 80 below; comparable to statements of Limitations and Caveats), Compare to previous research (in order to show support, Example 81 below), Support hypothesis or model (Example 82), and Thesis, a novel claim or hypothesis presented as the initial statement (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin

1995; Example 83 below). It is recalled that initial placement is a foregrounded position in American rhetoric (cf. e.g. Brooks and Warren 1972/1979, Axelrod and Cooper 1985).

#### **Example 80. Assessment of reliability in abstract**

In general, relationships involving job satisfaction were **robust** across study contexts. (JMR Vol. XXX, February 1993: 63-77)

#### **Example 81. Compare results to previous research for support in abstract**

These results are **consistent with Jensen's (1989) argument** that higher prestress leverage increases the speed with which a firm reacts to poor performance. (JFE No. 34, 1993: 3-30)

#### **Example 82. Support of hypothesis/model in abstract**

The study **finds support** for an increasing rate of CEO succession during the first decade of tenure, **consistent with the model** of circulation, followed by a slow decline afterward, **consistent with** institutionalization. (ASQ No. 39, 1994:285-312)

#### **Example 83. Initial thesis statement in abstract**

**We argue that** arbitrage-pricing theories (APT) imply the existence of a low-dimensional non-negative non-linear pricing kernel. (JF Vol. XLVIII, No. 4, 1993: 1231-1262)

Except for initial thesis statements and the support of hypotheses, these steps were very infrequent in the material. There was one single case of promotion in a Preview of implications (a purely *descriptive* statement, cf. Gibson 1993), a rhetorical step typical of the Marketing abstracts, and this was coded as a Boost:

#### **Example 84. Boosted preview of implications in abstract**

**Several directions for enriching theory** about the role ambiguity phenomenon **are provided** and implications for practitioners are discussed. (JM Vol. 57, April 1993: 11-31)

The findings on the frequency of indirect promotional steps are presented in Table 27 below. As mentioned above, instead of the indirect promotional steps used in the other two sections, steps such as Assess reliability, Compare previous research (for support) and Support hypothesis were used in analyzing abstracts, because in abstracts they acquired a prominent position.

Table 27 below shows that the employment of indirect promotion is consistently distributed within the disciplines. As the number of occurrences was fairly low, it is difficult to generalize, except to say that the Management abstracts seem to have a higher degree of highlighting the support of hypotheses. However, these weak tendencies need to be tested in a larger material for any generalizations to be made. Here

they are presented as part of my effort to provide a more accurate picture of the strategies of promotion than is offered by merely examining direct promotional steps.

**Table 27. Indirect promotional steps in abstracts (N=20/journal, no. occurrences)**

Indirect prom. steps	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
Assess reliability	1		1	1		1	2	4	6
Compare prev. research	2	2	4						
Counterclaim	2	1	3		4	4	2	1	3
Support hypothesis	2	2	4	8	7	15	4		4
Thesis	2	5	7	3	4	7		2	2
Total	8	8	16	12	15	27	8	7	15
Total no. sentences	88	94	182	98	112	210	104	98	202
% of total no. sent's	9.1	8.5	8.8	12.2	13.4	12.9	7.7	7.1	7.4

*Legend: JFE= Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing*

Also, mere frequencies do not reveal the whole story of promotional effect. Some promotional steps may be more 'memorable' than others, even if they are not frequent. For example, Meldrum (1994) suggests that Counterclaims can be considered memorable, and it is reasonable to assume that Boosts are likely to be remembered, too.

Adding up both direct and indirect promotional steps yields the following figures for the journals (Table 28) and provides a fuller picture of the overall use of promotion in the abstracts of each journal in each discipline.

**Table 28. Summing up direct and indirect promotion in abstracts (No. occurrences and percentage of total no. sentences)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
Total no. prom. steps	15	16	31	29	18	47	36	35	71
Total no. sentences	88	94	182	98	112	210	104	98	202
% promotion	17.0	17.0	17.0	29.6	16.1	22.4	34.6	35.7	35.1

*Legend: JFE= Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ=Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

In terms of averages, the most striking difference was between the Finance and Management abstracts on the one hand and the Marketing abstracts on the other hand,

but Table 28 also shows that averages can be somewhat misleading. In the Finance and Marketing abstracts the percentages were of roughly the same level of magnitude in both journals, but the two Management journals displayed very different profiles: in AMJ promotion was close to Marketing percentages whereas ASQ showed a very low degree of overt promotion. With the objective of pinpointing further possible devices of promotion in abstracts, I also studied some linguistic markers that could be considered as potential signals of promotion.

## **9.5 Potential signals of promotion**

Among the elements that have been found to signal both assertiveness and tentativeness are the use of self-reference and personal attribution. Self-reference has been seen as a mitigating signal in the context of major knowledge claims (cf. Myers 1989, Bloor and Bloor 1993) but on the other hand in abstracts it has also been seen as a signal of assertiveness (Kaplan et al. 1994, Andersson and Gunnarsson 1995, Melander et al. 1997, Chang and Swales 1999). Further, the use of tenses, especially to announce present research, has been suggested as indicating closer vs. more distant immediacy and hence degree of relevance (cf. Swales 1990, Swales and Feak 1994). Another signal of emphasis in American composition rhetoric is initial placement in paragraphs (cf. Axelrod and Cooper 1985, Hunston 1989). Thus an interesting aspect is how writers in different disciplines choose to initiate their abstracts and whether this reflects a more general rhetorical strategy. In the present study it seemed relevant to examine the abstracts regarding these more subtle aspects of promotion, since the limited amount of space makes even subtle signals more prominent. Furthermore, learning to perceive and use these signals is important to novice and EFL scholars.

### *9.5.1 Initial sentences*

The overall rhetorical strategies of emphasis on findings vs. orientation into the topic can to some extent be discerned in the introductory sentences (See summary in Table 30 below). The rhetorical steps in these can be roughly divided into three categories: Orientation (including Topic generalization, Claim of centrality, Previous research, Theory, and Gap statement), Announcing present research (APR, including Purpose statements and Hypotheses) and reporting/commenting on findings (Boosts, Theses, Results, and Claims). Table 29 presents the occurrences of rhetorical steps (promotional



steps in bold) in the initial sentences of abstracts. It is to be noted that, because of the concise nature of abstracts, each sentence is likely to contain more than one type of step.

**Table 29. Rhetorical steps in initial sentences in abstracts (N=20/journal, promotional steps in boldface)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Tot.	AMJ	ASQ	Tot.	JMR	JM	Tot.
Topic gener.	1		1	1		1	1	2	3
<b>Claim centr.</b>				<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>
Prev. res.	1		1	1		1	1	2	3
Theory				3	1	4	1	1	2
<b>Gap</b>				<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
Subtotal 1	2		2	9	2	11	9	13	22
Purpose	2	3	5		2	2	3	2	5
APR	14	9	23	10	11	21	7	7	14
Hypothesis	1		1	1	2	3			
Method	2	2	4	3	4	7	7	1	8
Subtotal 2	19	14	33	14	19	33	17	10	27
<b>Boost</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Thesis</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>			
Result	5	5	10				1	1	2
Claim	1	4	5		5	5			
<b>C. claim</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>						
Subtotal 3	10	13	23	4	12	16	3	4	7
Total	31	27	58	27	33	60	29	27	54
<b>Promotional</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>19</b>

*Legend: JFE= Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing (APR= Announcing present research)*

*Note: One sentence is likely to contain several rhetorical steps simultaneously.*

What is interesting in the figures is the fact that the first sentence seems to be a good indication of the general rhetorical strategy. While announcing present research/purpose was fairly equally represented in the three disciplines (Subtotal 2), in Finance the general emphasis on findings/contribution comes out clearly (Subtotal 3), and equally clear is the general emphasis on orientation in Marketing (Subtotal 1). In Management the two journals differed: AMJ emphasized orientation whereas ASQ emphasized findings/contribution. Although there was a clear emphasis on contribution/announcing present research (APR) in the Finance and Management abstracts and a clear emphasis on orientation/APR in the Marketing abstracts (see Table 30 for a summary), the first

sentences of the abstracts do not give a clear indication of the degrees of promotion in each discipline. In terms of the number of promotional initial sentences (Table 29), both Management and Marketing abstracts contained about twice as much promotion as did those of Finance, whereas in terms of overall promotion Management was closer to Finance (cf. Table 28).

**Table 30. Summary of rhetorical steps in initial sentences in abstracts (N=40/discipline)**

	<b>Orientation (incl. Gap)</b>	<b>Announcing present research (not incl. Method)</b>	<b>Contribution (incl. Claims, Theses, Results, and Boosts)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Finance</b>	2	29	23	54
<b>Management</b>	11	26	16	53
<b>Marketing</b>	22	19	7	48

*Note: One sentence may contain several steps.*

#### 9.5.2 *Announcing present research: deictic references and the use of tense*

Researchers frequently ask the language consultant how they should refer to their own study in introducing their research and whether they can use first person pronouns in the abstracts. A third question concerns whether they should use the present or the past tense in introducing research/purpose. Regarding deictic reference (i.e. reference to the current study or article) or reference to self in abstracts, there is little guidance in manuals, presumably because these conventions are not generalizable or have not been widely studied. As for the use of tenses, a distinction is typically made between ‘research-driven’ and ‘report-driven’ formulations: in the former either the present or the past tense can be used and in the latter the present tense is used. For example, Swales (1990) suggests that, when the deictic refers to the genre (*paper, report, note, review*), tense is restricted to the present, but when the deictic refers to the type of inquiry (*investigation, study, experiment*), it is possible to choose between the present and the past (cf. also Weissberg and Buker 1990, Swales and Feak 1994). However, Swales further points out that currently there seems to be a distinct preference for the present tense, possibly because it gives a stronger impression of contemporary relevance (Swales 1990, Swales and Feak 1994). Consequently, the present tense would seem to be the more promotional of the two tenses (cf. Examples 85 and 86 below). In the

current material there were no instances of the present perfect or the future tense in these functions.

### Example 85. Introducing present research (present tense)

**In this paper we develop** a test statistic **to determine** the number of factors in an approximate factor model of asset returns, which does not require that diversifiable components of returns be uncorrelated across assets. (JF, Vol. XLVIII, No. 4 September 1993: 1263-1291))

### Example 86. Introducing present research (past tense)

**This study examined** relationships among three methods of leader monitoring, employee perceptions of workplace justice, and employee citizenship behavior. (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 3, 527-556)

Table 31 below shows the findings on the use of deictics, reference to self and tenses in the three disciplines. The data support Swales' suggestion of a strong preference for the present tense: only one journal (AMJ) seemed fairly consistently to prefer the past tense, whereas in the Finance journals all, and in the Marketing journals (and in ASQ) the majority, used the present tense.

**Table 31. Use of deictic/self reference and tenses in statements introducing present research/purpose in abstracts (N=20/journal)**

	Finance				Management				Marketing			
Deictic/ Self ref.	JFE Pres.	JFE Past	JF Pres.	JF Past	AMJ Pres.	AMJ Past	ASQ Pres.	ASQ Past	JMR Pres.	JMR Past	JM Pres.	JM Past
I			1									
We	4		6			4		1				
The author(s)									10	1	9	1
This paper	10		4				14		1		3	
This study					2	9	2		1		1	
This research						1	1	1			1	
This article							1					
None	6		9		4		-		-		1	
(The passive)									4	3	2	1
Total	20		20		6	14	18	2	16	4	18	2

*Legend: JFE= Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing*

As regards preferences for deictic reference, the three disciplines showed some distinct tendencies, which are useful for alerting learners to the forms available or preferred by target journals. Finance abstracts seemed to prefer *This paper* and/or the first person plural pronouns, but interestingly, 15 instances (37.5%) contained no deictic. These were instances when the present research was introduced directly in the beginning in terms of a Thesis/Claim or Result. In Management the two journals had different profiles: abstracts in AMJ seemed to be more inquiry-oriented and used *This study*, whereas in ASQ they seemed more report-oriented and preferred *The/This paper*. A striking difference in Marketing was that the most frequently used deictic reference was *The authors* (21/40), which did not occur at all in the abstracts of the two other disciplines (nor in the Marketing introductions). This is an interesting way of acquiring greater authorial distance while still using the active verb form instead of the impersonal passive. In fact, the passive was only used in Marketing Announcements of present research (10/40), and *The/This paper* and *This study* were hardly used at all in Marketing abstracts. Thus the three disciplines showed distinct preferences in how to introduce present research. The statements of purpose were expressed by using infinitives. There was no use of the terms *purpose/aim* and only one occurrence of the term *objective*.

The question that now presents itself is to what extent the features described above enhance promotion. It seems reasonable that where there is a choice between the use of the past and the present tense, the latter indicates more immediacy and topicality, as suggested by Swales (1990) and Swales and Feak (1994). This would then apply to the instances where Management and Marketing authors have chosen the present rather than the past tense, but not to abstracts in Finance, because these use the present tense throughout their abstracts and entire papers, except when referring to real-world events with a past time reference (Example 87).

#### **Example 87. Example of the use of the past tense in Finance abstracts**

This paper studies senior management policy in 77 publicly traded firms that **filed** for bankruptcy or privately **restructured** their debt during 1981 to 1987. (JF Vol. XLVIII, No. 2, June 1993: 425-458)

As mentioned above, only AMJ used the past tense to any larger extent for announcing present research. Regarding tenses, AMJ would then seem to be less promotional than ASQ, whereas the two Marketing journals seemed fairly similar in these respects.

As for the use of deictic reference, it is difficult to judge which type would be the most promotional kind, since what ‘sells’ is to a large extent likely to be due to what is expected and accepted in the discourse community. In the Finance abstracts, 25% were happy to use the personal pronoun *we* (35% were single-authored), whereas Management did this to a much lesser extent (32.5% single-authored), and the Marketing abstracts not at all, instead employing the semi-impersonal reference to ‘*the author/s*’ (17.5% single-authored). Today the use of the third person is in fact explicitly required by both the Marketing journals’ style instructions for abstracts, although this was not the case at the time of writing these articles (see Appendix 5). Even in single-author articles the pronoun *I* was used only once in the abstracts.

Since the use of first person pronouns can be seen as either mitigating or assertive, I decided to try to identify the assertive vs. non-assertive use of pronouns in abstracts by examining the verbs they collocated with.

### 9.5.3 *Non-assertive vs. assertive use of self-reference*

As mentioned previously, Myers’ (1989) proposal that personal attribution mitigates the FTA (face-threatening act) involved in major knowledge claims has been countered by later suggestions that the use of the first person pronoun may increase the writers’ visibility and be used assertively (Bazerman 1988, Kaplan et al. 1994, Andersson and Gunnarsson 1995, Chang and Swales 1999, Hyland 1999b). The latter use could thus be seen as an enhancement of overt persuasion rather than a hedge. In fact, Myers observes that in scientific articles ‘such sentences occur rarely, but occur at crucial points in the introduction and discussion, where the authors state their main claims.’ (1994:185) In order to shed some light on the non-assertive vs. assertive use of personal attribution, it is necessary to identify the rhetorical steps in which the pronouns/attributions occur and the immediate cotext, namely the following performative/reporting verb. In Table 32 below the use of the attributions was classified into assertive (vs. non-assertive) on the basis of collocating with the following assertive verbs, verbs that claim an accomplishment (cf Hunston 1989 on ‘goal-achievement’):

*argue, augment, confirm, demonstrate, develop (a model), elucidate, extend, find, identify, provide evidence, show, support, validate*

For the sake of comparison, non-assertive verbs are for example research procedural verbs such as *analyze, describe, examine, investigate, present*.

**Table 32. Non-assertive (NA) vs. assertive (A) use of self-reference in abstracts (No. occurrences and percentages, N=20/journal)**

	Finance					Management					Marketing				
	JFE	%	JF	%	Tot.	AMJ	%	ASQ	%	Tot.	JMR	%	JM	%	Tot.
A	12	52.2	20	71.4	<b>62.7</b>	4	25	7	30.4	<b>28.2</b>	6	27.3	9	36	<b>31.9</b>
NA	11	47.8	8	28.6	<b>37.3</b>	12	75	16	69.6	<b>71.8</b>	16	72.7	16	64	<b>69.1</b>
<b>Tot.</b>	23	100	28	100	<b>100</b>	16	100	23	100	<b>100</b>	22	100	25	100	<b>100</b>

Note: First person pronouns were used in Finance and Management abstracts, but there was only one instance in Marketing. Thus personal attribution in Marketing refers to 'the author/s' and third person pronouns.

Legend: JFE= *Journal of Financial Economics*, JF= *Journal of Finance*; AMJ= *Academy of Management Journal*, ASQ= *Administrative Science Quarterly*; JMR= *Journal of Marketing Research*, JM= *Journal of Marketing*.

In the majority of cases the Finance abstracts appeared to use first person pronouns with assertive verbs and did this considerably more frequently than the Management and Marketing abstracts: in two thirds vs. one third of the cases. The following expressions show instances that were typically classified as assertive due to the verbs: *We show that, Our results support, We find that, We provide evidence that, We argue that. . . .* The largest numbers of occurrence were not unexpectedly found in the presentation of Theses/Findings/Implications. Overall, the Finance abstracts made a greater use of self-reference, especially in assertive functions, than did the Management and Marketing abstracts.

#### 9.5.4 *Announcing present research: placement and use of verbs*

Most studies of the rhetorical structure of abstracts have been based on the IMRD macrostructure of research articles (Introduction – Method – Results – Discussion, cf. Section 4.3), and few have questioned this sequencing of rhetorical moves/steps (cf. however, variant models in Andersson and Gunnarsson 1995, Busch-Lauer 1995, Melander et al. 1997, Hyland 2000). In my material, instead of 'Introduction/Background', the most frequent type of initial step in the abstracts turned

out to be the announcement of present research/purpose, but this was expressed in a variety of forms: Hypothesis, Boost, Thesis, Claim/Counterclaim, Result (cf. Table 29). The early placement seems to indicate the importance of an early ‘problematization’ (cf. Barton 2002, Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995) and may be related to the fact that first position in a paragraph is traditionally a foregrounded position in American composition theory (cf. the concept of the topic sentence, e.g. in Axelrod and Cooper 1985, cf. also Hunston 1989).

In fact, an overview of the placement of announcing present research/purpose/contribution in the abstracts showed an overwhelming emphasis on initial placement (see Table 33 below). Initial position seemed to be the norm in the Finance and in most Management abstracts, but in contrast only half of the Marketing abstracts were initiated by announcing present research in any form. Instead the initial statement was frequently a Claim of centrality or Gap statement or some other ‘background’ step (cf. Table 29).

**Table 33. Initial placement of announcements of present research/purpose/contribution in abstracts (percentages of abstracts)**

Finance	Management	Marketing
90	80	50

Even when not in initial position, the announcement of present research in abstracts may have an important promotional impact. Of interest here are the types of rhetorical or performative verbs used in announcing present research. These reflect the types of ‘contract’ made with the reader, i.e. the promise or commitment to type of delivery that the writers express in their announcement of present research (cf. Swales 1990:159 on ‘promissory statement’). The types of verbs used in the abstracts studied here were divided into three major categories: **Research activity** (Example 88 below), argumentative rhetorical activity: **Claims or Theses** (Example 89), and **Neutral descriptive** acts (Example 90). Of these Claims and Theses can be seen as more promotional than the other two categories. Reporting and performative verbs vary widely in terms of author commitment and illocutionary force (cf. Hunston 1989, 1993, 1994a, Myers 1989, 1992, Thompson and Ye 1990). At one end of the cline are strongly assertive verbs such as *argue*, *claim*, *contend*, *postulate* and at the other end are neutral

(open-ended) or tentative verbs such as *examine*, *explore*, *present*, *suggest*. Other mitigating signals, such as modal auxiliaries, modal lexical verbs and adjectives/adverbials or nouns may also be used to indicate degree of argumentation/promotion (cf. Chapter 7).

#### **Example 88. Research activity verbs announcing present research**

The authors **develop and test** a theory how public service advertisements function to induce helping responses. (JM Vol. 58 (1994): 5-70)

#### **Example 89. Argumentative verb expressing thesis/claim when announcing present research**

This paper **argues** that corporations may use convertible bonds as an indirect way to get equity into their capital structures when adverse-selection problems make a conventional stock issue unattractive. (JFE No. 32 (1992): 3-21)

#### **Example 90. Neutral descriptive verb announcing present research**

This paper **examines** whether organizations with different collectivized agency arrangements have different survival prospects. (ASQ No. 37 (1992): 448-470)

Table 34 below displays the findings on the three classes of ‘contract’ verbs. The most common strategy for announcing present research was by describing the research activity, which is hardly surprising in research articles (RAs). This strategy was used in almost 50% of the abstracts in all the disciplines. However, the more argumentative strategy, the first mention of the current research in the form of a Thesis or a Claim, also occurred fairly frequently and this was where the disciplines differed most. The Finance abstracts showed the strongest tendency to use verbs expressing claims/theses in announcing present research and a weaker tendency to use neutral descriptive verbs, such as *examine* (the most frequently used verb overall). Major knowledge claims are to be expected in RA abstracts, but perhaps not to introduce the present research, and this foregrounded positioning makes it promotional. The third option, neutral description, by definition shows little commitment to goal achievement. In Marketing the clearly preferred verb type referred to research activity, whereas in Management the use of the different types of verbs seemed more evenly distributed.



**Table 34. Types of verbs used in announcing present research in abstracts (N=20/journal)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing			Total
	JFE	JF	Tot.	AMJ	ASQ	Tot.	JMR	JM	Tot.	
Research activity	7	9	16	8	7	15	13	10	23	54
Claim	8	9	17	5(+2H)	6	13	3	4	7	35
Neutral descriptive	5	2	7	5	7	12	4	6	10	29

*Legend: JFE= Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ=Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing. (H=Hypothesis.)*

To sum up, the findings in Table 34 indicate that, although verbs describing research activity were overall the most frequent strategy in announcing present research, in the abstracts of the prestigious scholarly publications studied here, the Finance abstracts, and to some extent the Management abstracts, used the more assertive Claims/Theses equally frequently. Interestingly, overall verbs expressing claims were slightly more frequent than were neutral descriptive verbs. It appeared to be rare to explicitly express aim or purpose, except occasionally by using the infinitive (only 12 infinitives in a total of 120 abstracts, and a single occurrence of a noun: *objective*). This may be an important point where professional articles differ from student papers.

Although Boosting was the most frequent promotional step overall in abstracts (see Table 25), it was quite rare in introducing the research. Boosting was more commonly to be found towards the middle or end of the abstracts. However, the immediate introduction of claims (Thesis) or Results, even those which are not direct Boosts, seems a more aggressive promotional strategy (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995, Hyland 2000) than the softer approach of first describing research activity (*The author reviews these theoretical perspectives and develops a formal typology of approaches...*) or a neutral description of research area or topic. On the whole, Finance seemed more oriented towards an early placement of Boosts, Theses, Claims and Results (23 instances) than did Management (16 instances) and Marketing (7 instances, cf. Table 29). In other words, the Finance abstracts appeared to be somewhat more **front-weighted** and the Management and Marketing abstracts more **end-weighted** in terms of contribution placement.

A perhaps more important finding in terms of abstract structure in general was that Swales' (1990) category of Announcing present research (APR), i.e. introducing the current research topic in any other way except in terms of explicit aim or purpose, needs to be distinguished from the various subcategories suggested here, in order to give a more accurate picture of writers' rhetorical strategies in abstracts: Boost (claim of contribution value), Hypothesis presentation, Thesis or major knowledge Claim (Counterclaim), or Results presentation (cf. Table 29). Announcing present research (APR) as used here thus refers only to those cases that do not fall into any of the other categories whereas in Swales' model of introductions it seems to refer to all categories that are not explicit aim or purpose statements. As to the traditional IMRD model, only the Marketing abstracts seemed to follow that to any larger extent, whereas the Finance and the Management abstracts favored an early introduction of present research/purpose or indeed contribution in the various forms listed above.

#### 9.5.5 *Goal-achievement verbs*

While in the main the disciplines largely showed fairly consistent characteristics in terms of promotion in the abstracts of both journals, ASQ presented an anomaly in having much fewer direct promotional steps (cf. Table 25). This generated the question whether the analytic tools used so far ignored something that would capture the analyst's impressionistic image of ASQ abstracts as being fairly assertive and promotional. With this end in mind, I examined the overall use of verbs in order to identify those verbs that expressed 'goal-achievement' of some kind (cf. Hunston 1989, 2000). Table 35 below presents the findings on these goal-achievement verbs (including the verbs used to signal promotion), of which there were thirty-five different types.

The four most frequently used verbs of achievement were: *find*, *show*, *provide*, and *support*. In the case of *provide*, it is to be noted that the collocations in different disciplines differed: Finance preferred the strong claim *provide evidence* (in some disciplines perceived as too strong, cf. Myers 1992), Management preferred the softer claim *provide insight/support*, whereas Marketing used a mixture of strong and soft claims: *provide evidence/information/insight/support/a tool*. It can be discussed whether *argue* can be considered a verb of achievement. However, when it is followed by a *that*-clause the verb clearly signals a claim, i.e. the statement is presented as an achievement.

Myers (1992) suggests that *that*-clauses following a verb of claim indicate very strong claims, i.e. claims indicating a ‘fact’ (cf. Section 3.2).

**Table 35. Use of verbs expressing goal achievement in abstracts (no. occurrences)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing			Total
	JFE	JF	Tot.	AMJ	ASQ	Tot.	JMR	JM	Tot.	
accommodate							1			
account for	1	1	2		2	2		1		5
afford								1	1	
allow		1	1				1	1	2	3
argue that	2	1	3		4	4		1	1	8
augment								1		1
be consistent	1	3	4							4
broaden								1	1	
challenge					1	1				1
confirm		1	1		1	1				2
demonstrate				1	3	1	1	1	2	6
develop								1	1	1
distinguish								1	1	1
document	2		1							2
elucidate	1		1							1
enable		1	1				1		1	2
enrich								1	1	2
explain							1		1	1
extend				1		1	2	2	4	5
facilitate								1	1	1
find	6	10	16	5	8	13	5	2	7	36
generate								1	1	1
highlight	1		1							1
identify	1	3	4		1	1	1	1	2	7
improve							1		1	
increase							1		1	
postulate								1	1	1
predict				1	1	2	1	1	2	4
provide	2	5	7	3	1	4	3	4	7	18
refine	1		1							1
resolve							1			1
show	3	4		2	7		6	3		25
support	3	2		7	2		2			16
uncover								1		1
(can be) used								1	1	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>56</b>	
No. sentences	88	94	182	98	112	210	104	98	202	
%	27.2	34	30.8	20.4	27.7	24.3	26.9	28.6	27.7	

*Legend:* JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.

Table 35 shows that in the Finance and Management abstracts there was some difference between the two journals in each discipline regarding the percentage of verbs expressing claims of goal achievement. It is to be noted here that these verbs do not

necessarily indicate Results, Implications, or Boosts, although they frequently do so. They may also announce present research, Thesis, Assess reliability, Support hypothesis, or Support previous research. Regarding these verbs, the findings for Finance and Management abstracts tallied with the analyst's impressionistic image of JF and ASQ as being the more promotional of the two journals in each discipline. However, in Marketing the figures for the two journals were fairly similar, which did not accord with the impression of JM as being more promotional. The conclusion appears to be that still other signals of promotion need to be taken into account for the total picture to emerge. Promotion can be a subtle phenomenon.

## **9.6 Linguistic signaling of Boosts**

Since Boosting was the most frequently used promotional step in abstracts, a closer examination of the linguistic signaling seemed relevant. Notably, Table 36 shows that in Finance and Management abstracts the Boosts were marked by single signaling whereas in Marketing they tended to be multiply signaled (see the ratio of steps/signals). Due to the low frequencies, there is little overlap in the linguistic signaling of Boosts between the disciplines or journals: among verbs only *allow*, *extend*, *identify*, and *provide* reoccur, and among adjectives only *new*, *refined* and *useful*. However, it is interesting that verbs were used to signal Boost much more frequently than were adjectives or other linguistic signals. This is an important point to take up in teaching abstract writing, especially with EFL writers.

**Table 36. Linguistic signaling of Boosts in abstracts (N=20 texts/journal)**

	VERB	ADJ	ADV	NOUN	EMPH. STR.
<b>JFE</b>	elucidate identify highlight refine	new refined unique			<u>Total: Steps 7 Signals 7</u>
<b>JF</b>	allow enable	easy first more capable		advantage power	<u>Total: Steps 6 Signals 7</u>
<b>AMJ</b>	employ (several) extend predict provide insight/support (3) trace beyond	(substantially) stronger		usefulness	not only - but also  <u>Total: Steps 8 Signals 10</u>
<b>ASQ</b>	provide understanding	more detailed refined			<u>Total : Steps 2 Signals 3</u>
<b>JMR</b>	accommodate allow confirm and extend enable explain (a significant) extend (2) identify (key) improve increase provide insight/support (2) resolve	consistent (across) (far more) efficient and powerful enhanced extended good important key large-scale national (far more) sensitive significant (extremely) useful	easily	efficiency power	<u>Total: Steps 19 Signals: 31</u>
<b>JM</b>	account for (more) afford (fresh) allow for augment broaden develop enrich extend (2) facilitate generate insights provide info. /insight (4) uncover (can be) used to	adaptive (more) comprehensive (more) detailed extensive fresh new (2) rich useful		advantage extension insight opportunity	not only - but also Unlike previous. . .  <u>Total: Steps 15 Signals: 33</u>

Note: Figures in brackets refer to number of occurrences.

Legend: JFE= *Journal of Financial Economics*, JF= *Journal of Finance*; AMJ= *Academy of Management Journal*, ASQ= *Administrative Science Quarterly*; JMR= *Journal of Marketing Research*, JM= *Journal of Marketing*.

## 9.7 Summary

On the discipline level, the largest overall amount of overt promotion in abstracts occurred in Marketing whereas a considerably lower amount was displayed by Finance and Management. The most common type of promotional step in all disciplines was Boosting the contribution, but while these occurred in only about a quarter of the Finance and Management abstracts, about 50% of the Marketing abstracts contained Boosts and a quarter used Claims of centrality and/or Gap statements as well. In terms of prominent (initial) placement, the Finance abstracts favored an early announcement of the present research or contribution (front-weight), as did the Management abstracts, whereas the Marketing abstracts preferred an initial orientation before presenting the contribution (end-weight). However, in terms of explicit promotion, only 20% of the initial sentences in Finance abstracts contained promotion, compared to 40% in Management and almost 50% in Marketing (cf. Table 29).

In Marketing abstracts the emphasis was clearly on direct promotion, whereas in Finance the weighting was more evenly shared between direct and indirect promotion. In Management the two journals showed opposite tendencies, with AMJ more in line with the Marketing abstracts. However, as demonstrated above, ASQ abstracts contained a higher percentage of goal-achievement verbs, which may indicate that there are other ways of persuading than merely by explicit promotion. Also, if the present tense in introducing present research is considered more promotional than the past tense (cf. Swales 1990, Swales and Feak 1994), then ASQ appeared to make more use of this promotional device than did AMJ. The Finance and the Marketing abstracts also preferred the present tense.

One way of indicating an attempt to persuade the reader is the use of verbs expressing a strong claim in introducing present research, although depending on discourse community conventions, a more neutral verb might be considered more convincing. Generally, the disciplines were similar in preferring verbs describing research activity when introducing present research. However, the Finance and the Management writers used assertive verbs expressing knowledge claims to introduce their research almost equally frequently. Although the two journals in each discipline differed, as shown by the findings on the assertive use of self-reference (by definition followed by an assertive verb), the Finance abstracts on average showed a distinctly higher proportion of

assertive self-reference (around 50-70%) than did Marketing (around 25-35%) and Management (around 25-30%).

The next chapter will examine the strategies of direct and indirect promotion in introductions, to see whether there are any consistent similarities or differences between the strategies of the disciplines/journals.

## 10 STRATEGIES OF PROMOTION IN INTRODUCTIONS

As indicated by Swales' heading for his model 'Creating a research space' (CARS, see Section 4.1), the introduction is the major locus for convincing the reader of the need for the writer's research contribution. Although Swales' CARS model is generally based on his view of the introduction as being 'a crafted rhetorical artifact' and 'a manifestation of rhetorical maneuver' (Swales 1990:157), in his categorization of rhetorical steps Swales appears to specifically highlight the promotional aspect of only one component in his model: the Claim of centrality. This is defined as follows: 'appeals to the discourse community whereby members are asked to accept that the research about to be reported is part of a *lively, significant or well-established* research area.' (Swales 1990:144, my emphasis). Although the rhetorical function of the move *Establishing a niche* is to justify the occupation of the niche, Swales does not explicitly associate the various steps with more or less promotion. The contribution of the present work, then, is the definition and mapping of the use of explicitly promotional steps.

This section presents findings on the use of direct and indirect promotional steps in introductions. First, it is of interest to know how common the use of promotional steps is in introductions and also which types of promotional steps are most frequent in each discipline/journal. Secondly, as the CARS model (the 1990 as well as the 1981 version) has been so influential in both the research and teaching of academic writing (e.g. Dudley-Evans and Henderson 1990, Nwogu 1991, Bhatia 1993, Fredrickson and Swales 1994, Lindeberg 1994a, 1994b, 1994d, 1996b; Weissberg and Buker 1990, Swales and Feak 1994, Björk and Räisänen 1996, May 1997), it is of interest to see to what extent the placement of promotional steps in the material of this study follows the CARS model. In this context, the initial sentence of the introductions is examined, i.e. how the writers choose to begin the introductions. Thirdly, a relevant question is how writers strive to 'hook' the reader, i.e. when claiming the centrality or importance of their research area/question, what types of appeals do they use? All these questions assume that there will be similarities but also differences between the disciplines/journals.

The chapter will end with an overview of the characteristics of promotion in the three disciplines, and a brief comparison of the introductions and the abstracts. Examples of



complete introductions from the three disciplines illustrating the coding of promotion are provided in Appendix 2.

### **10.1 General presentation of the introductions**

When comparing the introductions of the three disciplines on a general level, one of the first features that strikes the reader is the fact that the length of the Finance introductions is on average more than one and a half times the length of those of Management and Marketing: about 35 vs. about 20 sentences (cf. Table 2 in Section 1.3.2). Secondly, when analysing the rhetorical steps used in the Finance introductions, it soon became clear that the steps included in Swales' CARS model (Swales 1990) were not sufficient for describing these sections, since much more emphasis was given functions that usually occur in discussion/conclusion sections (cf. Dudley-Evans 1989, Lindeberg 1994c). Thus the Finance introductions were clearly result-oriented, explicitly pointing out to the reader what the writers' contribution was (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). This involved not only assessing and discussing the findings, but also positioning them very clearly by taking care to point to relevant studies in related areas. Thus citations were used, not only to offer a framework for the current topic but also to seek support for the findings in related research. This was done by primarily using integral, author-prominent citations, which lend the citations an impression of more immediate relevance in comparison to the use of non-integral (e.g. parenthetical), subject-prominent citations (cf. Swales 1990, Swales and Feak 1994). Also, frequently the same citations reoccurred in different articles, giving the impression that the current field of interest to researchers is a fairly narrow one (cf. Bazerman 1981 on the natural sciences, MacDonald 1994 on 'compact' sub/disciplines, Weick 1995 on high-paradigm research fields).

The style of writing in Finance was factual, constative using the present tense throughout, except when referring to past real events in the business world or in society. Assertive rather than tentative or speculative verb forms were used, and there was a clear preference for using personal pronouns to announce present research and principal findings (*we argue, we document, we examine, we find/find evidence/show that*). Thus the Finance scholars seemed to prefer writer visibility (cf. Kaplan et al. 1994). The sequencing of steps of the CARS model was not strictly followed, since not only was there a great deal of recycling but the Announcement of present research (APR)

frequently occurred as early as the first or second paragraph. In fact, in about a quarter of the introductions the APR was presented in the initial sentence, thus foregrounding the present contribution at an early point rather than introducing it towards the end of the introduction. The Finance introductions regularly ended in a preview of the RA structure, often expressed in similar, rather standardized terms (see Example 94 in Section 10.4.4).

In contrast to Finance, the Management introductions were more dedicated to providing background orientation, i.e. establishing the territory and establishing the niche, before introducing the present research. The main part of the introduction was given to pointing out the importance of the research topic and to elaborating shortcomings in previous research. Thus the Management introductions generally followed the CARS model reasonably closely, although a few introductions did display an early announcement of gaps or APR. The establishing of the niche often took the form of contrasting two or more conflicting research streams, and then offering a richer approach by suggesting how to combine the two streams (cf. Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997). In fact, as Locke and Golden Biddle suggest, most introductions showed a simultaneous appeal to continuity/coherence and the creation of conflict. Predominantly results were not presented or discussed, but Boosts of the contribution or even of the APR did occur in more than half the introductions, possibly more due to personal style than to disciplinary convention.

Another difference from Finance concerned the style, which included somewhat more tentative and speculative expressions. For example, both knowledge claims and APRs sometimes included mitigating verb forms, for example *we hope to provide*, *we seek to trace*. Writer visibility was preferred, since only about a quarter of the introductions were impersonal. In contrast to Finance, the majority of citations were subject-prominent, parenthetical, which is consistent with providing overviews, while the few author-prominent citations were mainly used in justifying present research or research design. The majority of citations in connection with gaps were used as sources rather than targets of criticism (integral or non-integral citations), and Gap statements were frequently mitigated or unattributed. In ASQ Gaps were often expressed as questions, a strategy that has been seen as more reciprocal (Wignell 1998). There was some overlap in sources cited, but not as much as in Finance. The variety of sources in combination

with definitions and elaborations of theories indicate a wider audience to be addressed and/or a wider less well-defined field, which corresponds with Bazerman's description of the social sciences (Bazerman 1981, 1988), MacDonald (1994) on 'diffuse' sub/disciplines, and Weick's description of low-paradigm fields (Weick 1995). The claim of importance was usually anchored both in research interest and in usefulness or prevalence in business practice; only in five (5/40) introductions was the appeal made to research interest only.

It is noteworthy that, while the ASQ introductions showed a clearer rhetorical patterning than AMJ introductions, they also showed another interesting feature when abstracts and introductions were compared. Whereas the ASQ abstracts showed little direct promotion in comparison with AMJ abstracts, the ASQ introductions did contain a great deal of promotion, as will be demonstrated in Table 39. Indications of RA structure were rare.

Of the three disciplines, the Marketing introductions followed the CARS model most closely. Only in a couple of introductions was the APR placed in the first paragraph. The structure and use of moves and steps was thus mostly geared to providing background orientation and justification: Topic generalizations (definitions)/Claims of centrality followed by a report of Gaps (often relying on outside authorities), leading to the APR and a preview of RA structure. The last step seemed to be *de rigueur* in JM but occurred only in half of the JMR introductions. In JM there was usually little recycling of steps, which made the rhetorical structure very clear and the reasoning easy to follow (reader-friendly). Thus both Claims of centrality and Gap statements were usually elaborated, before moving on to the APRs, which were also frequently elaborated. These elaborations effected a lower level of concretization (cf. MacDonald 1994 on 'particularism' vs. generalization). It seemed important to Marketing scholars to carefully build up the case for the relevance of the topic as well as for the need of the research to be reported. Similarly to the Management introductions, the proposed approach or model often strived to combine diverse streams or research approaches. Frequently, the value of the contribution was explicitly expressed as well.

Similarly to Management introductions, citations were mostly parenthetical while author-prominent citations were used mainly to justify the chosen approach or research design. There was some overlap in citations (i.e. some works seemed to be central to the field), and several cases of self-citation, where writers referred to their own previous

studies in a critical manner (solidarity, cf. Myers 1989, Meldrum 1994). The promotional effect of referring to outside sources as having pointed out the gap is that the present writers' claim of a gap is supported by other researchers working in the same problem area (cf. Hunston 1994a) and this presumably makes the criticism less confrontational. The level of concretization, the early definitions of central terms, and the explicit appeals of interest to both practitioners and researchers indicate a wider audience being addressed; indeed, only one appeal was made solely to research interest (JMR).

There was a preference for using personal pronouns in APRs but, similarly to Management, impersonal introductions occurred in a quarter of the cases. An interesting finding was that, although *the authors* was frequently used in the Marketing abstracts, it occurred only once in the introductions. As in the Management introductions, in Marketing there were more tentative and speculative forms than in the Finance introductions. The use of mitigation specifically in connection with promotion will be further detailed in Chapter 12.

## **10.2 Direct promotion**

In terms of the CARS model, it was interesting to find that both Claims of centrality and Gap statements occurred in the large majority of the introductions, ranging from about 70-90% of introductions in Finance to 90-100% in Management and Marketing (Table 37 below). In contrast, Boosts occurred in more than three quarters of the Finance introductions, but only in about half of one journal each in Management and Marketing. On the other hand the other two journals each showed high percentages (70% in ASQ and 85% in JM). Perhaps the convention of Boosting the writer's contribution in introductions should not be seen as a characteristic of these disciplines but rather as a characteristic of each journal, or even of individual writers. In Finance, the convention of Boosts seems fairly strong, however, and this is explained by the fact that Finance introductions include the presentations and assessments of findings, elaborating on them here to a much larger extent than in the discussion/conclusions (cf. Section 11.4).

**Table 37. Number and percentage of introductions containing direct promotional steps (N=20 in each journal, % rounded)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
Claim c.	14	17	31	18	20	38	20	20	40
%	<b>70</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Gap	16	18	34	18	19	37	18	19	37
%	<b>80</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>90</b>
Boost	15	17	32	11	14	25	11	17	28
%	<b>75</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>70</b>

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

The figures in most categories in Table 37 above indicate a high likelihood that promotion is a strong convention, as on average each introduction contained one or more promotional steps. However, in each pair of journals, there was one that consistently showed more direct promotion in introductions (JF, ASQ, and JM).

The number of occurrences of each promotional step in the journals mostly showed a wide variance, ranging from a single occurrence to as many as fifteen in a couple of introductions (Table 38 below).

**Table 38. Range of variance in occurrences of direct promotional steps in introductions**

	Finance		Management		Marketing	
	JFE	JF	AMJ	ASQ	JMR	JM
Claim c.	1-10	1-6	1-7	1-8	1-5	2-14
Gap	1-5	1-13	1-12	1-10	2-15	1-15
Boost	1-7	1-12	1-7	1-13	1-10	1-8

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

The largest variance overall was found in Marketing, and in JF and AMJ Gaps as well as JF and ASQ Boosts. However, these were extremes and the more usual patterns ranged around the medians of these. The reason for presenting these figures here is that they should be taken into account when examining the averages in the tables that follow presently. The figures show that there was a large amount of individual variation.

In order to provide an overview of similarities and differences in the frequencies of specific promotional steps in the three disciplines and the six publications, Table 39 below presents the total number of occurrences of each step as well as the percentages of each step in the introductions of each journal/discipline in relation to the total number of sentences. The figures are averages, and thus necessarily an abstraction, as the ranges of occurrence were wide, and also because a single sentence sometimes contained two or more promotional steps simultaneously.

**Table 39. Direct promotional steps in research article introductions (N=20 introductions/journal, no. occurrences and average promotion in percentages of total no. sentences)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
No. Claim centrality	49	41	90	78	82	160	67	117	184
<b>% Claim centrality</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>22.0</b>
No. Gaps	41	66	107	93	101	194	87	100	187
<b>% Gaps</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>22.4</b>
No. Boosts	55	77	132	36	53	89	37	56	93
<b>% Boosts</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>11.2</b>
Total no. prom. steps	145	184	329	207	236	443	191	273	464
Total no. sent's	721	673	1394	398	423	821	420	413	833
<b>Total % prom. steps</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>52.0</b>	<b>55.8</b>	<b>53.9</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>66.1</b>	<b>55.7</b>

Legend: JFE=*Journal of Financial Economics*, JF= *Journal of Finance*; AMJ= *Academy of Management Journal*, ASQ= *Administrative Science Quarterly*; JMR= *Journal of Marketing Research*, JM= *Journal of Marketing*.

The most striking characteristic in Table 39 above is the total *amount* of direct promotion: in Management and Marketing on average more than half and in Finance almost a quarter of the sentences contained directly promotional steps (bottom line). This seems to strongly support Swales' (1990) suggestion that the introduction is the locus where a large amount of rhetorical work is done (cf. however, the findings on discussion/conclusions in Chapter 11). The second notable observation is that there seems to be a major difference between the Finance introductions on the one hand and the Management and Marketing introductions on the other hand: in the latter disciplines the proportion of promotional steps was more than double that of Finance. This may partly be due to the fact that the Management and Marketing introductions were considerably shorter than those in Finance, about two thirds in terms of number of sentences, and thus had a higher concentration of promotion. However, it is worth

noting that within the disciplines the journals, especially those in Finance and Marketing, showed somewhat differing tendencies regarding promotion: JF, ASQ, and JM displayed more direct promotion than their counterparts, albeit ASQ only slightly. The amounts of promotion and the question of targeted audience will be discussed in Section 13.2.

When examining which promotional step seemed to predominate in each discipline, the figures in Table 39 show the following tendencies: the Finance introductions placed the largest emphasis on Boosting the writers' own contribution (9.5% of sentences on average) whereas in contrast Management and Marketing seemed to emphasize Claiming centrality and stating Gaps almost equally (averaging about 22% each, i.e. about one fifth of the sentences). In other words, the Finance introductions seem to be more contribution oriented whereas the Management and Marketing introductions appear to focus more on establishing the research territory and justifying the niche before presenting the current research question. However, it will be recalled that some introductions had many promotional steps in a given category whereas others had only one or two, which therefore seems to indicate that there are variations due to personal style.

### **10.3 Indirect promotion**

The impact of Caveats and Limitations, Counterclaims, and Suggestions for Future research will be more fully dealt with in reporting findings in the Discussion/Conclusion sections, where they are more prominent (Chapter 11). However, since in the Finance journals the introduction seems to have taken over many of the functions of conclusions, an examination of the use of indirect promotional steps in introductions was warranted. Table 40 below shows that the Finance introductions indeed differed from the other two disciplines by showing higher frequencies of indirect promotion.

**Table 40. Indirect promotional steps in introductions (N=20 introductions/journal, no. of occurrences)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
Assess reliability	4	1	5						
Caveat	1		1	1		1	1		1
Limitation	9	3	12		2	2	3	2	5
Comp. prev. res. (support)	10	9	19	3		3			
Counterclaim	18	7	25		2	2		1	1
Suggest. fut. research		1	1				3		3
Total no.	42	21	63	4	4	8	7	3	10
Total no. sentences	721	673	1394	398	423	821	420	413	833
<b>% indirect promotion</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>1.2</b>

Legend: JFE=*Journal of Financial Economics*, JF= *Journal of Finance*; AMJ= *Academy of Management Journal*, ASQ= *Administrative Science Quarterly*;; JMR= *Journal of Marketing Research*, JM= *Journal of Marketing*.

Overall, there was considerably less indirect than direct promotion in introductions. However, the Finance introductions utilized all of the indirect promotional steps that will be shown to be typical of Discussion/conclusions, i.e. Caveats, Limitations, Counterclaims, and suggestions for Future research (as well as Assessing reliability and comparisons to previous research), whereas neither Management nor Marketing introductions did this to any great extent. Interestingly, when comparing the findings in Table 39 with those in Table 40, JFE and JF showed converse degrees of use. Thus use of indirect promotion seemed to complement their strategies of direct promotion: whereas JF contained more direct promotion, JFE contained more indirect promotion, and vice versa. In the two other disciplines, indirect promotion in introductions was negligible. There the main emphasis was on establishing the research territory and establishing a niche.

#### 10.4 Promotional structures

By promotional structure is here meant the sequence of promotional steps, whereas promotional strategy refers to types of promotion that are emphasized. It was hypothesized that not only are the emphases on particular promotional steps different in the three disciplines/six journals (as shown above) but also that the sequencing of steps is likely to show variety. This section studies the sequencing of promotional steps, i.e.



the promotional structures of introductions, in order to compare them with each other and with Swales' CARS model.

#### *10.4.1 Promotional structures with reference to Swales' CARS model*

Each promotional step was located in one of six positions: first paragraph, second paragraph, third paragraph, middle paragraphs, penultimate paragraph, and final paragraph. In short introductions some of these categories overlapped, for example the second paragraph was the final one. In this case the final position was counted. Table 41 below displays the number of occurrences of each step in terms of paragraph positioning. It can be seen that the disciplines had somewhat different patterns of emphasis whereas the two journals in each discipline tended to show similar patterns of sequencing. In other words, promotional structures (the ordering of steps) seemed to be largely discipline-specific, and thus the disciplines showed differing degrees of adherence to the CARS model.

Although in the Finance introductions the first two paragraphs each contained about one fifth of the promotion, most of the promotion occurred in the middle paragraphs. This is explained by the fact that this is where the results and assessment of results were generally presented, and therefore also the Boosting of the writers' own contribution, the major promotional step in Finance introductions. As mentioned previously, the main presentation of results takes place here rather than in the discussion/conclusion sections (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995 on this tendency in the natural sciences).

In the Management journals, most of the promotion was placed in the first paragraph, with the emphasis on Claims of centrality and statements of Gaps. The pattern was much the same in the second paragraph but in the middle paragraphs there was less promotion than in Finance, largely because the Management introductions were shorter (i.e. middle paragraphs were few). The penultimate and final paragraphs showed some more promotion, as this was where Boosting the contribution mainly occurred, if at all (in only 55% of AMJ introductions).

**Table 41. Placement of direct promotional steps in introductions (in terms of paragraph position, N=20 texts/journal)**

Paragraph	First	Second	Third	Middle	Penult.	Final	Total	Total no.	%para's
							prom.	para's	cont.
<b>JFE</b>									prom.
Claim c.	9	7	2	4			22		15.1
Gap	6	7	4	10	6	1	34		23.3
Boost	4	3	3	11	4	2	27		18.5
Total no.	19	17	9	25	10	3	83	146	56.8
%	22.9	20.5	10.8	30.1	12	3.6			

<b>JF</b>									
Claim c	10	7	4	4			25		18.4
Gap	5	5	1	7	3	1	22		16.2
Boost	3	2	4	12	4	4	29		21.3
Total no.	18	14	9	23	7	5	76	136	55.9
%	23.7	18.4	11.8	30.3	9.2	6.5			

<b>AMJ</b>									
Claim c.	12	7	5	3	4	3	34		40.5
Gap	10	10	7	7	7	7	48		57.1
Boost	4	2	3	2	1	12	24		28.6
Total no.	26	19	15	12	12	22	106	84	126.2
%	24.5	17.9	14.2	11.3	11.3	20.8			

<b>ASQ</b>									
Claim c.	18	12	4	4	5	5	48		56.5
Gap	12	11	8	3	7	7	48		56.5
Boost	2	4	4	5	5	12	32		37.6
Total no.	32	27	16	12	17	24	128	85	150.6
%	25	21.1	12.5	9.4	13.3	18.8			

<b>JMR</b>									
Claim c.	17	7	3	1	2	2	32		31.7
Gap	9	7	6	5	4	9	40		39.6
Boost	3	4	2	1	7	5	22		21.8
Total no.	29	18	11	7	13	16	94	101	93.1
%	30.9	19.1	11.7	7.4	13.8	17			

<b>JM</b>									
Claim c.	20	13	11	8	9	4	65		58
Gap	7	14	6	7	6	2	42		37.5
Boost		2	4	6	8	5	25		22.3
Total no.	27	29	21	21	23	11	132	112	117.9
%	20.5	22	15.9	15.9	17.4	8.3			

In Marketing, the heaviest promotional emphasis in JMR was on the first paragraph (on Claiming centrality), whereas in JM there was slightly more emphasis on the second paragraph (Gap statements). Conversely, the second strongest promotional emphasis in each journal was on the second and first paragraphs, respectively. It is striking that in contrast to the other journals, where the patterning of emphasis was more easily discernible, JM seems to have a fairly even distribution of direct promotion throughout the introductions, except in the final metatextual paragraph (a preview of RA structure).

As for the predominance of specific promotional steps, generally Claims of centrality and Gap statements seemed to predominate in the first two paragraphs, which is more or less in accordance with the CARS model, although the CARS model makes a clearer distinction between the sequential order of the two steps as belonging to two different moves (*Establishing a territory/Establishing a niche*, respectively). Boosting the writers' own contribution, not specifically included in the CARS model (*Stating principal findings*), seemed mostly to take the middle position in the Finance introductions and the final position in the Management introductions, whereas the penultimate position seemed to predominate in the Marketing journals, preceding the preview of RA structure.

The column on the extreme right in Table 41 shows the percentages of paragraphs containing direct promotion. In the Finance introductions promotion occurred on average in about half the total number of paragraphs, whereas in Management and Marketing the figure was about twice as high or more. However, in both Management and Marketing the two journals showed a marked difference of almost 25%, respectively. The figures exceeding 100% of course indicate that on average there was more than one promotional step per paragraph.

#### 10.4.2 Initial sentences

Taking into account the foregrounding effect of initial placement and also in order to see to what extent sequencing and promotional strategy could be predicted from the initial sentences of introductions, Table 42 below was constructed. It presents the frequencies of the different types of steps used to initiate introductions in the three disciplines and the six journals, respectively. It is recalled that in the CARS model there are three options for initiating the introduction: *Claiming centrality* and/or *Topic generalizations*

and/or *Reviewing previous research* (Swales 1990). In abstracts, too, the different disciplines showed different initial rhetorical steps (Section 9.5.1).

**Table 42. Initial sentences in introductions (No. occurrences, N=20/journal, promotional steps in bold)**

Steps	Finance			Management			Marketing			Total
	JFE	JF	Tot.	AMJ	ASQ	Tot.	JMR	JM	Tot.	
<b>Claim cent.</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>71</b>
Topic g.	2	5	7	5	3	8	4	2	6	21
<b>Gap</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>
Ann. pres. r.	7	3	10		1	1	1	1	2	13
Hypo/Claim	1/1	1/1	4							4
Prev. res.	1	2	3	1		1				4
Definition							1		1	1
Quotation							1	1	2	2
<b>Boost</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>					<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Purpose	1		1							1

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

*Note: Sometimes one sentence contained several steps simultaneously and therefore the total sum in a column may exceed 20.*

Table 42 above shows that the major strategy used for the initial sentence in introductions in all three disciplines was to Claim centrality, as suggested in the CARS model, but that in Finance (JFE) Announcing present research (APR) was the second most popular initial step, occurring in 25% of the introductions. Adding APR to statements of purpose, hypotheses or major claims, and Boosts, indicates that the emphasis on an early introduction of the present research in the Finance introductions was almost as frequent as on Claiming centrality (a total of 16 vs. 18). In contrast in the Management introductions, after Claiming centrality the emphasis was on Topic generalizations and Gap statements (some in the form of questions) indicating a more gradual orientation into the research topic. In the Marketing introductions, Claiming centrality was most consistently the function of the first sentence, i.e. in 75% of the cases.

To sum up, initial sentences in Finance seemed to indicate a nearly equal propensity to begin introductions directly with the current research as with Claims of centrality. In

contrast, Management and Marketing predominantly initiated introductions by Claims of centrality (Marketing in 75% of the cases) or Topic generalizations, in accordance with the CARS model (Swales 1990), thus providing readers with more orientation into the research area and topic, before announcing present research. Thus it can be concluded that the promotional initiation of the introductions indeed takes different forms in Finance, on the one hand, and Management and Marketing, on the other hand, and gives an indication of their general rhetorical strategies. However, notably almost one fifth (7/40) of the Management introductions began with a Gap statement, which could be seen as a rather aggressive beginning, as for example in the following initial sentence:

### Example 91

A careful reading of several distinct bodies of research dealing with social groups and diversity **reveals a puzzling omission and a serious contradiction.** (ASQ No. 37, 1992: 549-579)

In this case the first paragraph continues with four claims of centrality and then reverts to stating Gaps in another four sentences in the same paragraph. This strategy of several Gaps in the initial paragraph was not unique in the Management introductions, occurring mainly in ASQ, however, thus perhaps indicating an in-house style. ASQ is the only journal explicitly including the government in its addressees (Pierce and Garven 1995), and this may explain the attention-getting use of Gaps.

#### 10.4.3 *Types of appeal*

As illustrated above, the major strategy for initiating introductions turned out to be by Claiming centrality, i.e. ‘hooking’ the reader by pointing out the magnitude, relevance, topicality or importance of the research area or topic. Swales (1990: 144) gives the following examples of appeals as grounds for centrality claims: *interest* or *importance*; references to the *classic*, *favorite* or *central* character of the issue; claims that research in the area is *active* or *widespread*. When examining how the writers build up and justify these claims, it is relevant to examine what types of phenomena or sources the appeal of interest or importance is based on (cf. Hunston 1989, 1994 on intertextual evidence, consensus, or writer as source). I will first present some examples of the various categories of appeal and subsequently comment on the frequencies of occurrence of each type in each discipline/journal (for types of appeal, see Table 21 in Section 8.1).

## Example 92. Examples of types of appeals in claim of centrality in introduction (Management)

**Understanding** how people respond to the outcomes of allocation decisions is **critical to interpreting** the role of reward in organizations. While the perceived fairness of procedures and outcomes affects the evaluation of allocations, interpersonal comparisons **may be even more important**. How do my outcomes compare to the outcomes of others? **Adams (1963, 1965) and Homans (1961), among others, long ago postulated** that interpersonal comparisons are **critical** to how people make sense of social exchange situations. **Recent research has shown** that people can be **so concerned** about interpersonal comparisons that they will often prefer outcomes that reduce their own and other parties' payoffs in an effort to avoid inequalities (Loewenstein, Thompson, and Bazerman, 1989). In organizations, dysfunctional interpersonal comparisons of how scarce resources are distributed **can result in** motivational **problems** and organizational **inefficiency**. Yet inequitable resource allocations are **often unavoidable** across individuals, departments, and divisions (Mahoney, 1979; Paron and Pfeffer, 1990) due to budget decreases, staff layoffs, and salary compression, which are **common organizational maladies of the 1990s**. This paper takes a cognitive approach in exploring the negative impact of interpersonal comparisons in organizations. In particular, we examine a systematic inconsistency in how people apply interpersonal comparisons when evaluating allocations. (ASQ 1992, No. 37: 220)

Example 92 shows a large variety of appeals being used in a single paragraph: *practitioner* usefulness, a long *research* history (from *long ago* to *Recent research*), *authority* (citations), *topicality*, and *scope* (prevalence of the problem in the business world). This introduction appears to be heavily practitioner-oriented, in accordance with ASQ audience (the government and practitioners as well as academics, cf. Pierce and Garven 1995).

## Example 93.

**During the last few years**, the study of high technology markets **has emerged as an important research area** in the marketing literature (Gatignon and Robertson 1989; Glazer 1991; Norton and Bass 1987). (---) To a large extent, **the emerging stream of research** on such markets is a response to two particular problems, a historical bias in the marketing literature toward low technology products (Robertson and Gatignon 1986) and **a growing recognition** that high technology contexts impose **unique** demands on market participants (Glazer 1991). (JMR Vol. XXX, (May 1993): 220-233)

The second example (Example 93) makes an appeal to the topicality of the research area (*During the last few years, the emerging stream*) and the growing importance of the area for theory as well as for business practitioners, again relying on citations as sources (but not sentence-integral citations). Non-integral citations as such (in parentheses or in footnotes) have not here been counted as promotional, as at least minimal references to previous research are seen as routine procedure in RA introductions (Swales 1990).

A mapping of the types of appeals used by the different disciplines/journals showed that there were indeed differences. Table 43 below displays the findings on types of appeals. The total number of appeals in each discipline showed a trend roughly correlating with

the total amounts of promotion, although the differences were less striking. On average, Finance introductions each contained about two appeals, Management introductions about 2.7 and Marketing about 3.3 appeals per introduction, which is in line with their general emphases on direct promotion (cf. Section 10.2).

**Table 43. Types of appeals made in Claims of centrality in introductions (N=20/journal, no. of occurrences)**

	Authority	Economy	Practitioner	Research	Scope	Topicality	Total	Aver.
JFE	2	7	4	6	15	7	41	2.1
JF	3	3	6	13	9	4	38	1.9
<b>FIN</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>2</b>
AMJ	2	1	23	6	11	7	50	2.5
ASQ	2	3	8	27	8	8	56	2.8
<b>MGT</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>2.7</b>
JMR	3	1	12	13	12	1	42	2.1
JM	15	18	18	13	14	10	88	4.4
<b>MKT</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>3.3</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>37</b>		

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

*Note: Several appeals may occur simultaneously in the same sentence.*

Overall, the most frequent appeals were based on research interest (78) but this category was closely followed by appeals to practitioner interest (71) and scope (69). Direct appeal to authority (integral citation of another source) was least often used to claim centrality, but significantly more so in Marketing (JM, which overall showed the largest use of appeals). Naturally non-integral citations were widely used as ‘back-up’, though mainly in Management and Marketing.

In addition to these differences between the disciplines, the two journals within each discipline also varied in their use of appeals. The Finance introductions seemed above all to emphasize the prevalence or scope (magnitude) of the phenomenon and secondly the theoretical importance of the research topic, but the two journals differed in terms of which of these two types of appeal was stressed, respectively. Thus JFE introductions mainly appealed to the scope of the phenomenon whereas JF mainly appealed to the theoretical importance. This is consistent with the alleged audiences addressed: JF is

addressed to academics whereas JFE addresses both academics and practitioners (cf. survey by Pierce and Garven 1995).

Taken together the two Management journals seemed to emphasize research and practitioner interest almost equally, but again the emphases were reversed for the two journals. AMJ appeared mainly to appeal to practitioners whereas ASQ appealed mainly to the research interest. In contrast to the Finance journals, these appeals do not seem consistent with the alleged audiences: AMJ is targeted at academics, albeit ‘with wide interests’, whereas ASQ is not only targeted at academics, as the main appeal to research interest might indicate, but at practitioners as well as the government (Pierce and Garven 1995). Myers (1995) suggests that writing conventions may be influenced by a variety of factors, out of which the relevant factors in ASQ’s case might be the dependency of researchers on practitioners outside academia as audience or even as sources of funding and prestige (cf. also Whitley 1984a).

Marketing introductions differed from the other two disciplines in showing a more even distribution of emphasis between practitioner, research, and scope appeals in both journals. Where the two journals differed, however, was the amount of appeal: JM had more than twice the amount of appeals of JMR, and seemed to utilize the whole range of types, whereas JMR had few appeals to authority, economy, and topicality. Both JMR and JM are allegedly addressed to both academics and practitioners (Pierce and Garven 1995), although JMR is considered the more technical of the two (cf. Kerin 1996).

An interesting point in Table 43 is that topicality or novelty was not appealed to very frequently in the Claims of centrality, although these qualities are emphasized in guidelines to submitters of manuscripts (see Appendix 5, cf. also Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995 on ‘news value’). The likely explanation is that the news value refers to the research contribution, which is usually introduced at a later stage. At this point of the rhetorical build-up, it seems more important to fit the writer’s research topic into the larger context of society, business life, or the research field than to deviate from the field when credibility is being built up (cf. Whitley 1984b on ‘consensus’, Myers 1989 on the tension between conformity and novelty, also Bazerman 1988, Swales 1990, Bhatia 1993, Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997).



#### 10.4.4 *Previews of research article structure*

In the present material previews of RA structure, one of the optional steps at the end of the CARS model, seemed fairly formulaic in expression and rarely contained promotional steps. However, since another point in which the introductions differed in the different disciplines was whether a preview of the RA structure was included at the end of the introduction or not, the possible promotional effects of previews of RA structure is worth considering. Both journals in Finance as well as the majority of introductions in Marketing (JMR 10/20, JM 19/20) routinely seemed to contain a preview, indeed using almost set expressions (see examples below), whereas the Management journals contained none. Thus a preview of RA structure seemed to be *de rigueur* in both JFE and JF, as only one article out of forty did not contain this step.

Because of the great predictability of information content, it is questionable whether previews of RA structure can be considered promotional. On the other hand, they do facilitate the information processing for those readers who only want to read a specific section by telling them in which part the relevant information is to be found. In addition, they provide a quick ‘table of contents’ listing of the main components of the article, albeit this may vary greatly in terms of information content. The examples below are provided in order to give an idea of the typical characteristics of previews of RA structure. It is noteworthy that in the Finance journals, the expressions were more formulaic than those in the Marketing journals.

#### **Example 94. Preview of research article structure in Finance**

In the next section of this paper, we discuss some differing views of the impact of institutional investors on stock prices and review relevant research. Section 3 describes our data in more detail. In section 4 we examine the issue of herding, and section 5 deals with feedback trading strategies. Section 6 presents direct evidence on the correlation between institutional demand and stock prices; section 7 concludes the paper. (JFE 32 (1992): 23-43)

#### **Example 95. Preview of research article structure in Marketing**

The purpose of our research therefore is to examine the use and subsequent effects of combinations of control mechanisms within marketing departments. We first review the control combination concept and subsequently develop a typology of four alternative control combinations or "systems". Next, we discuss how selected SBU characteristics and task variables are likely to predict the type of system in use. In turn, we discuss how these control systems affect the responses of marketing managers. We then review the research design and research results. Finally, we conclude with a discussion of research implications. (JM Vol. 57, January 1993:57-69)

If previews of RA structure are considered reader-friendly and thus aiding promotion, then the Finance and Marketing introductions can be considered more promotional than the Management introductions. However, the answer hinges on reader expectations and discourse community conventions. Many of the previews are so standardized that the information value seems rather low.

## 10.5 Summary

To sum up, it was found that overall the introductions showed a fair to large amount of promotion, ranging from more than a quarter (Finance) to more than half the total number of sentences (Management and Marketing, see Table 44). The emphasis was on direct rather than indirect promotion, as defined here, but the Finance introductions contained more indirect promotion than the other two disciplines, due to the fact that they have taken on many of the functions of discussion/conclusion sections. In terms of specific steps, the majority of introductions contained manifestations of each of the three direct promotional steps, but there were some variations in emphasis between the journals in each discipline.

As in abstracts, the Finance introductions showed the least amount of direct promotion, and the Marketing introductions showed the highest amount. Thus these seemed to be consistent strategies. A notable difference of strategies of promotion in abstracts and in introductions was displayed by Management whose abstracts showed more similarity with Finance whereas the introductions were more similar to those of Marketing. Thus in introductions the Management and Marketing journals showed very similar degrees of promotion whereas in abstracts there was a considerable difference (cf. Sections 9.3 and 9.4).

**Table 44. Direct and indirect promotion in research article introductions (N=20 introductions/journal, promotion in percentages of total no. sentences)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
% Direct promotion	20.1	27.3	23.6	52.0	55.8	53.9	45.5	66.1	55.7
% Indirect promotion	5.8	3.1	4.5	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.6	0.7	1.2
% Total promotion	25.9	30.4	28.1	53.0	56.7	54.9	47.1	66.8	56.9

*Legend: JFE= Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

As to the emphasis on specific promotional steps, the Finance introductions placed the main weight on Boosts whereas the Management introductions mainly elaborated Gap statements. Similarly to Management, both journals in Marketing elaborated Gaps but in JM Claims of centrality were given even more emphasis. Overall, the Finance introductions were contribution-oriented in their promotional strategy whereas the Management and the Marketing introductions were more concerned with establishing the justifications for the projected contribution, i.e. were more territory- and niche-oriented.

In relation to the CARS model, the Finance introductions showed considerable deviation in so far as they often initiated the introduction by announcements of present research/purpose or by stating Claims/Hypotheses or even Results/Boosts. The Management introductions largely followed the CARS model but sometimes began the introduction by stating Gaps, i.e. Establishing the niche rather than Establishing the territory. The closest followers of the CARS model seemed to be the Marketing introductions, which usually (90%) initiated introductions by Claiming centrality or presenting Topic generalizations. The initial sentences were found to give a good indication of the general strategy of each discipline: concern for orientation and justification or emphasis on contribution.

An examination of the appeals used in Claiming centrality showed that all the disciplines emphasized the theoretical importance of the research, but in addition the Finance introductions appealed to the scope (magnitude or prevalence) of the phenomena whereas the Management introductions appealed to interest for practitioners. The Marketing introductions stressed all three of these appeals. However, within the disciplines each journal showed a slightly different emphasis compared to the other, which was not always consistent with the targeted audience. Nevertheless, since the samples are not very large, it is not reasonable to draw any wide-ranging conclusions on the relation of appeals strategies and audience. For learners, however, it is of value to be made aware of the different possibilities, with a view to studying the specific conventions of their target journals.

## **11 STRATEGIES OF PROMOTION IN DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION SECTIONS**

The major purpose of the discussion/conclusion section in research articles has traditionally been to discuss the findings and to assess the significance and implications of the research contribution (cf. Swales 1990, Dudley-Evans 1989, Hewings 1993, Lindeberg 1994c, Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995, Holmes 1997). This usually involves positioning the contribution in relation to previous research, stating possible caveats or limitations, attempting to explain unexpected results, speculating on possible explanations, and suggesting directions for further research (cf. Chapter 8). However, as pointed out in the section presenting promotion in the introductions, in the Finance journals many of these functions are primarily to be found in the introductions and the discussion/conclusion sections are severely curtailed. Thus the Finance discussion/conclusions often consisted of a single or two to three paragraphs; in other words, they were substantially shorter than the discussion/conclusions of the Management and Marketing journals studied here (cf. Table 2 in Section 1.3.2. on section lengths). Often the Finance conclusions were like somewhat longer versions of abstracts and even carried the heading *Summary*. However, for all the disciplines largely the same types of promotional steps as occurred in abstracts and introductions were to be found in discussion/conclusion sections, although with radically different emphases, some different functions, and in the case of Management and Marketing much more elaboration.

### **11.1 General presentation of the discussion/conclusion sections**

The discussion/conclusions in Finance focused almost exclusively on presenting and assessing Results and implications and knowledge claims based on the results, and did this in a very compact form. No wonder, then, that Finance scholars frequently read the discussion/conclusion before reading the introduction or the rest of the paper (Palepu, personal communication). Another important rhetorical step, which, however, was given more emphasis in the introductions, was positioning the contribution by comparing it to previous research, with the purpose of seeking support or proposing counterclaims. A small number of explanations and justifications of findings were also offered. However,

there was little discussion of limitations and hardly any suggestions for future research: only 3 out of 40 texts contained the latter. The style was factual, constative, assertive, using verb phrases such as *find evidence* and *show*. The present tense was used consistently, except for real-world events historically placed in the past. However, the style was not impersonal as the first person pronouns were commonly used (usually *we*, rarely *I*) but often in assertive uses rather than as mitigating signals: *we show*, *we produce evidence*. These characteristics were consistent with those found in the introductions and abstracts.

In terms of the number of sentences, the discussion/conclusion sections in the Management journals were about four times longer than those in Finance: 68.1 sentences vs. 16.4 in Finance (cf. Table 2). Not surprisingly, then, the Management sections contained a larger array of rhetorical steps and more elaboration and recycling of each step. As will be shown in more detail below, a major difference in comparison to Finance was that, in addition to presenting findings, offering explanations, and pointing out implications, a major emphasis was placed on offering alternative explanations, on describing limitations in the current study, and on offering suggestions for future research. These were frequently given lengthy subsections of their own, with subsection headings often naming their functions (cf. Section 11.2). The space devoted to alternative explanations seems to tally with Hunston's suggestion that some disciplines have a higher tolerance of heterogeneity than others (e.g. humanities vs. physical sciences: linguistics vs. biochemistry, Hunston 1993). This point is supported by the following observations in a discussion/conclusion from ASQ:

Ambiguities in the interpretation of results such as these are endemic to social science. This is partly because our attempt to describe social organization succinctly with compact theories is at odds with the complexity of that organization. Further, competing theories often purport to explain different but equally important dimensions of the same social reality. (ASQ No. 38 (1993): 100-131)

On the other hand, there seemed to be a great need to show consistency with previous research, as well as to present counterclaims ('news value'), and to justify limitations. One major aim of Management scholarship is to try to 'bridge' competing theories or approaches, as demonstrated by Locke and Golden-Biddle (1997, see Section 13.6). At the very least, then, Management scholars seem to strive to demonstrate their awareness of competing approaches. It also seemed to be important to elaborate on practical implications, as illustrated by such headings as *Implications for Practitioners* or

*Organizational Implications.* Compare the explicit instructions to include practical implications given in the guidelines for contributors (Appendix 5).

The most remarkable difference compared to Finance discussion/conclusion sections was, however, the large amount and variety of promotion, as will be shown below. Not only did most first and last paragraphs contain promotion, but as a rule promotional steps occurred at more or less regular intervals. In the manual coding, different colors were used for each type of promotional step, and the discussion/conclusion sections in the Management journals present a truly colorful picture.

The Marketing discussion/conclusion sections, which are about 10% shorter on average (60.5 sentences vs. 68.1 sentences in Management) appear to share many of the rhetorical characteristics of the Management conclusions, but with different emphases. Similarly to Management, the Marketing discussion/conclusions contained a large variety of rhetorical steps which were recycled, but the emphasis on promotional steps was even stronger, as will be shown below. In other words, after the manual coding the texts were even more ‘colorful’ than those in Management. More often than not both initial and final paragraphs contained a considerable amount of promotion, sometimes in almost every sentence. Also like the Management conclusions, those in Marketing often had long subsections dedicated to describing and often justifying limitations in the current study and also to suggesting directions for future research. There was only one text out of 40 that contained neither of these two steps. In contrast to Finance, and like Management, the Marketing discussion/conclusion sections contained a considerable number of explicit recommendations for practitioners, frequently in subsections of their own (e.g. *Managerial and Market Implications* or *Implications for Pricing Bundle Offers*). The macrolevel sectioning characteristics will be dealt with in more detail below.

## **11.2 Macrolevel structuring of discussion/conclusion sections**

The division into subsections and the provision of subheadings facilitate the reader’s processing of a text, and can therefore be considered a promotional device. Like the preview of RA structure at the end of an introduction, subheadings provide signposts for the economical reader scanning for information on where to find the relevant points.

The major difference again was found between Finance on the one hand, and Management and Marketing on the other hand. Out of the 40 journals in Finance, only one (in JF) used subsections in discussion/conclusions: *descriptive* subheadings indicating the function (*Implication, Conclusion*) and *informative* (also called indicative, cf. Busch-Lauer 1995) sub/subheadings indicating the contents (*LBO Performance, The Transition from Private to Public Ownership, Related Problems*). The general lack of subheadings/sections in the Finance conclusions is explained by their brevity.

In contrast, almost half of the Management journals (18/40) and almost two thirds of the Marketing journals (28/40) contained subsections with subheadings as aids in the processing of these rather long sections. The number of subheadings per discussion/conclusion ranged from two to four in Management and two to eight in Marketing. The total numbers of subheadings/sections are displayed in Table 45 below. What is immediately seen is that descriptive subheadings were used more than three times as often as informative subheadings.

**Table 45. The use of subheadings in discussion/conclusion sections (No. occurrences, N= 20/journal)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing			Total
	JFE	JF	Tot	AMJ	ASQ	Tot	JMR	JM	Tot	
Descriptive	-	2*	2	25	20	45	40	45	85	132
Informative	-	3*	3	3	15	18	14	5	19	40
Total	-	5*	5	28	35	63	54	50	104	172

\* one single text

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

The most noticeable difference between the disciplines is that Marketing discussion/conclusions contained a substantially larger number of subheadings than those in Management. The use of descriptive subheadings seemed consistent within the disciplines but the use of informative subheadings differed between the two journals in both Management and Marketing, and thus appeared to be journal-specific rather than discipline-specific. As to correlations with audience, it will be recalled that ASQ addresses academics and practitioners as well as the government, while JMR is more theory-oriented. Thus in ASQ the use of informative subheadings would seem to be

consistent with addressing a wider audience, whereas in JMR it is not. On the other hand, when informative subheadings occurred, they were usually found in conjunction with descriptive sub/headings (Example 97 below). Berkenkotter and Huckin's study (1995) found that informative headings had increased substantially over time and suggested that these are more promotional. In the present material descriptive subheadings (Example 96) still predominated.

**Example 96. Descriptive subheadings in discussion/conclusion sections**

Discussion  
Theoretical Implications  
Managerial Implications  
Limitations and Directions for Future Research  
(JM Vol. 57, July 1993:1-18)

**Example 97. Descriptive and informative subheadings in discussion/conclusion sections**

DISCUSSION  
Salesforce Supervision  
The Hunt-Vitell Model  
Limitations  
Future Research  
(JMR Vol. XXX, February 1993: 78-90)

**11.3 Initial sentences in discussion/conclusion sections**

As noted previously, in American composition theory the initial position in a section or paragraph is a foregrounded position, often containing a topic sentence or a thesis statement. In consistency with examining the initial sentences in abstracts and introductions (see Sections 9.5.1 and 10.4.2), I also identified the rhetorical function of the initial sentences in discussion/conclusions. In other words, I was interested in seeing how writers in the different disciplines/journals chose to begin the discussion/conclusion, to what extent they chose promotional steps, and whether they showed consistent strategies. Table 46 below shows the various strategies of beginning the discussion/conclusion sections. Because the two journals in each discipline showed such different strategies, the data were not combined into averages for the disciplines, as this would be misleading.



**Table 46. Initial sentences in discussion/conclusion sections (N= 20/journal, No. occurrences, bold indicates presenting contribution)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing			Total
	JFE	JF	Tot	AMJ	ASQ	Tot	JMR	JM	Tot	
Restate (aim/gap/hypoth.)	4	10	14	7	4	11	7	10	17	42
<b>Boost</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Major find. /claim</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>23</b>
Claim centrality	1	1	2	3	2	5	2	3	5	12
<b>Support hypo's</b>				<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>
Topic generalization		3	3							3
Previous research	2		2	1		1				3
<b>Counterclaim</b>					<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Preview structure							1	1	2	2
Caveat					1	1				1
Continue tradition				1		1				1
Refer to Table								1	1	1

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

*Note:* Sometimes there were several steps in one sentence, and therefore the sum exceeds 20 in some columns.

At first sight the most frequently used initiating strategy overall seemed to be to restate the aims/topic/ gaps or hypotheses, which can be considered a reader-friendly rhetorical act, reminding the reader of the initial research question (42 instances). However, a slightly more frequent beginning was to state major findings/claims or Boosting the contribution (totaling 48 instances). There seemed to be no consistent patterns within the disciplines of how to begin the discussion/conclusion sections: the two journals in each discipline showed entirely different emphases. JFE showed a tendency to start with presenting the contribution (major findings/claims or Boosts) whereas JF restated aims/gaps or hypotheses. AMJ also seemed to prefer preliminaries before reporting findings in various forms whereas ASQ seemed to prefer reporting the contribution: major findings/claims, Boosts, Support of hypotheses or Counterclaims. In JMR the spread was more even but with a slightly stronger preference for an early introduction of the contribution whereas JM preferred the more orientational Restatements of aims/gaps/hypotheses.

What these trends show is that there seem to be no canonical ways of beginning a discussion/conclusion section even if trends of preference seem to be apparent. One

journal in each pair seemed to prefer its own strategy: either an early statement of the contribution or a brief preliminary re-orientation. Similarly, an examination of the subsection headings did not show a canonical order of macrostructure. Interestingly, on one or two occasions the subsection Limitations initiated the discussion/conclusion, which does not seem like a very selling tactic, at least at first glance.

#### 11.4 Direct promotion

Table 47 below displays the percentages of direct promotional steps in relation to the total number of sentences in the discussion/conclusion sections of the two journals in each discipline. It is notable that the two journals in Finance and Marketing each seemed to have considerably different degrees of promotion. The amount of direct promotion ranged from roughly a fifth of the sentences (JFE, AMJ and JMR) over a fourth (ASQ) to about a third of the sentences (JF and JM). In other words, the two journals within each discipline seemed to differ more than the disciplines, respectively.

**Table 47. Direct promotion in discussion/conclusion sections (N=20/journal, percentage of total no. sentences)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
Claim c.	2.4	5.5	4.0	2.6	3.3	3.0	2.2	5.7	4.0
Gaps	2.1	5.8	4.0	3.6	5.7	4.7	4.4	5.2	4.8
Boosts	10.7	19.7	15.2	13.3	15.8	14.6	13.7	22.1	17.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>20.3</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>26.7</b>

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

In terms of emphasis on specific steps, Table 47 also shows that Boosting was the step that was given the largest weight in all disciplines and journals: Boosts were twice or more than twice as frequent as Claims of centrality and Gap statements put together. This is to be expected in the discussion/conclusion section, where the main purpose is to make the value of the contribution clear to the reader. However, in each journal about a third of the direct promotion encompassed Claims of centrality and Gap statements, so apparently these were considered of some importance as well. It is noteworthy that, although the Finance discussion/conclusions were very short, the relative proportions of

each journal's direct promotional steps were not very different from those of the other two disciplines.

### Range of occurrence of direct promotional steps in discussion/conclusions

Since introductions showed a number of instances in which one or other of the direct promotional steps was missing, it seemed relevant to examine the discussion/conclusion sections for the ranges of occurrence. Table 48 below shows the number/percentages of discussion/conclusions in which a given direct promotional step occurred.

**Table 48. Number and percentage of discussion/conclusion sections containing different types of direct promotion (N=20/journal)**

	Finance					Management					Marketing				
	JFE	%	JF	%	Total	AMJ	%	ASQ	%	Total	JMR	%	JM	%	Total
Claim c.	6	30	10	50	40	16	80	16	80	80	10	50	18	90	70
Gap	8	40	10	50	45	15	75	14	70	72.5	16	80	17	85	82.5
Boost	15	75	16	80	77.5	20	100	20	100	100	20	100	20	100	100

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.*

The main difference in comparison to introductions (cf. Table 37) is that the overwhelming majority of discussion/conclusion sections contained an explicit Boost of the writers' own contribution, and in the case of Management and Marketing this was true of all the conclusions in the material, whereas in Management and Marketing introductions the number containing Boosts was considerably lower. In Finance, discussion/conclusion sections generally contained only one or two Boosts each, whereas most of the Management and Marketing discussion/conclusions contained several Boosts each, even whole paragraphs, as illustrated in Appendix 3.

Regarding Claims of centrality, these occurred in the majority of the Management discussion/conclusions as well as those of JM, but only in half of JMR and JF, and were even fewer in JFE. Claims of centrality here mostly refer to initial restatements of Claims of centrality, e.g. *This paper has examined the important role of interpersonal comparisons on decision making in organizational allocation contexts.* (ASQ, No. 37, 1992: 220-240), and in only a few cases to a statement, often at the end of the section, to point out the general relevance or the importance of the contribution for the field, the

business world, or society, e.g. *Organization theory of all varieties would be well served by greater attention to history dependence in both failure rates and rates of organizational changes*. (ASQ No. 38 (1993): 51-73, cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995 on the converse patterns of rhetorical moves in introductions and conclusions, cf. Section 4.2).

In contrast to introductions, Gap statements here refer to restatements of Gaps in previous research to enhance the significance of the contribution (Example 98). Alternatively, they are statements of *remaining gaps* in previous research (Example 99) in order to show how the current contribution highlights directions for future research, and this was the most common use of gaps in discussion/conclusion sections.

#### **Example 98. Restatement of Gap in discussion/conclusion**

Traditional entry-mode investigations **have tended to concentrate on** the behavior of manufacturing multinational corporations. This study focuses on the entry-mode choice by firms from a wide range of service industries and includes very small to very large organizations. Some effects **hitherto not empirically investigated** in the entry-mode context, such as inseparability and capital intensity, are tested. Furthermore, because of **some unduly restrictive assumptions** associated with conventional TCA, a framework is developed that extends the TCA model. The conventional TCA approach **actually represents a special case** of this paradigm, dealing with situations wherein internal organization costs are high *and* non-TCA incentives to integrate are low. (JM Vol. 57 (July 1993): 19-38)

#### **Example 99. Statements of remaining Gaps in discussion/conclusion**

The preceding discussion suggests a number of additional avenues for further research. First a number of the governance dimensions, such as initiation and enforcement, **to date have been subject to only limited empirical inquiry**. Furthermore, the determinants of plural governance structures and the performance implications of different governance strategies **are virtually unexplored in the existing literature** (JM, Vol. 58 (January 1994): 71-85).

A different category of gaps altogether were the knowledge gaps that were presented as due to the limitations of the current research, which have here been coded under Limitations. Like remaining Gaps, Limitations were usually presented as a basis for the suggestions of Future research (Example 100). Both these categories will be dealt with in more detail in connection with the section on indirect promotion below. Example 100 illustrates how the current contribution is enhanced by pointing out potential gaps in future research, if the contribution is ignored. The example is unusually explicit and assertive, e.g. in the use of the modal *will* which rarely occurred in claims:

### **Example 100. Claims of centrality of the current contribution and potential Gaps in future research**

**(The results of this study are important for several reasons. Our findings have strong implications for future research on both organizational failure and organization change. Our results suggest strong history dependence in organizational failure rates.) Research that does not include information on the prior history of organizational changes will provide an incomplete and potentially misleading picture of organizations. (The implications for research on organizational change are equally strong. We also found a distinct pattern of history dependence in change rates.) Research that focuses on the external environment and neglects the effects of organizational history and experience with change will also be incomplete and misleading. (ASQ No. 38 (1993): 51-73)**

#### **11.5 Indirect promotion**

It was the large amount of space given to the rhetorical steps Limitations and suggestions for Future research in the discussion/conclusion sections of the Management and Marketing journals that appeared to signal that these steps were not included only as a fulfillment of genre conventions, because for that purpose less would seem to suffice. It seemed that they were largely there for promotional purposes: to increase credibility and legitimacy, as in a considerable number of discussion/conclusion sections they were given their own substantial subsection. For this reason it seemed sensible to divide promotional steps into direct promotion and indirect promotion. At first glance the latter seemed to detract from the value of the contribution (Caveats and Limitations) or to threaten the face of scholars working in the same or adjacent fields (Counterclaims and suggestions for Future research). However, I would like to argue that these steps enhance the credibility, novelty, or interest/fruitfulness, respectively, of the writers' contribution.

The purpose of Caveats and Limitations seems to be to show the extent of the writers' awareness of extant problems and shortcomings not only of their own study but also those in the research area, i.e. the state of the art: what can be legitimately taken as given and what cannot, to what extent the current results can be generalized, and what the value is of the contribution for research/business theory and/or practice. Suggestions for future research indicate an awareness of what needs to be done to extend knowledge in relevant ways and to what extent the current contribution has made this possible or desirable, i.e. has opened up fruitful new avenues of inquiry. Sometimes these purposes are stated explicitly (Example 101 below) but for the most part the sheer mass of statements of Limitations or suggestions for Future research appears to speak for itself.

A notable fact also illustrated by the excerpt below is that usually the suggestions for Future research are marked by positive evaluation (here coded by underlining).

### Example 101

As in any single study, the limitations map fruitful avenues for future research. Our conclusions derive from just one durable product class, refrigerators, for which the incentive for respondents to make careful choices is unknown. An important extension would be to use product classes for which respondents face the consequences of their choices or, better yet, for which the criterion is actual purchase behavior. Further, because our tests compared only main-effect preference models, it would be useful to compare models that include attribute interaction effects. Finally, the comparisons of relative accuracy should be expanded to assess relative efficiency, the gain in accuracy relative to respondent time and effort. Multiple tasks may result in greater accuracy, but an important practical question is whether that increase in accuracy is worth the additional respondent burden. (JMR, Vol. XXX (February 1993), 105-114)

However, having presented this argument that Limitations and suggestions for Future research have a promotional function, I would like to qualify the point somewhat. I do not agree with Hyland (2000) in what appears to be his claim that all academic rhetoric is driven by ‘marketization’ or ‘commodification’ or the writers’ need to legitimize their membership in the research community. Following Bazerman (1988), I believe that one distinct purpose of the statements of Limitations and the suggestions of Future research is to promote knowledge, not solely the reputation of the scholar (see also Appendix 5 for explicit instructions to contributors to present limitations). After all, the sometimes rather detailed presentation and substantiation put a rather heavy burden on the reader’s processing. A major reason must be the honest attempt to push forward the frontiers into unmapped territory, although suggestions for Future research could also be seen as a preliminary staking out of further territory, thus limiting what other researchers can do in the area.

The claim that there is a considerable amount of indirect promotion, particularly in terms of statements of Limitations and suggestions for Future research, is substantiated by the findings displayed in Table 49 below. Finance is an exception here for reasons of brevity and perhaps also because it is a high-paradigm field (cf. Kuhn 1962/1990, Weick 1995). Just as there seems to be little need to establish the territory or a niche in Finance, there seems to be little need to acknowledge Caveats and Limitations. The sparseness of suggestions for Future research may also be due to competition among researchers (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995).

**Table 49. Indirect promotional steps in discussion/conclusion sections (percentage of total no. sentences, N= 20/journal)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AM	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
Caveat	0.6	0.3	0.5	1.6	2	1.8	1.7	1.3	1.5
Limitation	1.8	2.8	2.3	7.1	5.9	6.5	6.5	7.8	7.2
Counterclaim	6.1	0.3	3.2	2.9	3	3.0	0.8	1.7	1.3
Future research	0.9	2.8	1.9	8.8	7.6	8.2	12.3	12.1	12.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>21.3</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>22.1</b>

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing*

It is noteworthy that the overall amount of indirect promotion showed a different division between the disciplines than was the case for direct promotion (cf. Table 47). Thus Finance discussion/conclusions contained less than half the amount of indirect promotion (in relation to total number of sentences) displayed by Management and Marketing. Moreover, although the total share of promotion in the two journals in each discipline seemed to show similar tendencies, in Finance there were different emphases in the two journals regarding specific steps: JFE discussion/conclusions seemed to have a noticeably larger share of Counterclaims than did JF discussion/conclusions. In Management and Marketing, both Limitations and suggestions for Future research had substantial shares in both pairs of journals, the latter step getting the heavier emphasis in both disciplines. Thus in both the Management and the Marketing discussion/conclusions it seemed important to show a) the writers' detailed awareness of variables and factors that could be taken into account but were not included in the current research design (thus limiting generalizability and anticipating possible criticism), and b) to demonstrate what a fruitful avenue of future research the current contribution opened up, by including a rich array of suggestions for future research which were stimulated by the current contribution.

Like the Finance introductions, which showed more of the steps usually included in the discussion/conclusions, the discussion/conclusions contained relatively few statements of Limitations and suggestions for Future research, but Counterclaims were given some emphasis in both sections in JFE. In Management and Marketing introductions indirect

promotion was negligible, but in discussion/conclusions Limitations and suggestions for Future research proved to be major strategies.

## 11.6 Summary

The overall impression of discussion/conclusion sections in these prestigious journals is that there is a considerable amount of explicit promotion. Table 50 below shows the percentages of both direct and indirect promotion, providing a picture of the total amount of promotion. When both types of promotion are taken into account, it is notable that promotion in discussion/conclusion sections ranged from about 25% (JFE) to more than 50% (JM) of all sentences. The interesting point is that in the disciplines the figures of total promotion in conclusions roughly follow those of the introductions, which indicates a certain consistency in the promotional strategies of Finance on the one hand and Management and Marketing on the other hand. A second point worthy of interest is that, of the two journals in each discipline, one consistently showed more direct promotion. On the other hand, the amount of indirect promotion was more evenly distributed between the two journals.

**Table 50. Direct and indirect promotion in discussion/conclusion sections (percentages of total no. sentences, N=20/journal)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
Direct prom. steps	15.2	31.0	23.1	19.5	24.8	22.1	20.3	33.0	26.7
Indirect prom. steps	9.4	6.2	7.8	20.4	18.5	19.5	21.3	22.9	22.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.6</b>	<b>37.2</b>	<b>30.9</b>	<b>39.9</b>	<b>43.3</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>55.9</b>	<b>48.8</b>

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing*

Since there were fairly consistent differences in amount between Finance, on the one hand, and Management and Marketing, on the other hand, it seems plausible to assume that the amount of promotion is not journal-specific but discipline-specific, whereas the emphases on different steps are more journal-specific.



### 11.7 Overview of promotion in all three sections

This section presents an overview of the use of direct and indirect promotion in the three sections under study here, i.e. abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusions. The aim is to summarize the similarities and differences between the disciplines and to examine to what extent there is any consistency or specific strategy of promotion in the three sections within a discipline/journal. Table 51 below shows the overall percentages of promotion in each of the sections under study.

**Table 51. Summary of promotion in the three disciplines (average percentage of total no. sentences, cf. Tables 25, 27, 40, 41, 48 and 50)**

		FIN	MGT	MKT
<b>Direct</b>	Abstracts	8.2	9.5	27.7
	Introductions	23.6	53.9	55.7
	Conclusions	23.1	22.1	26.7
<b>Indirect</b>	Abstracts	8.8	12.9	7.4
	Introductions	4.5	1.0	1.2
	Conclusions	7.8	19.5	22.1
<b>Total</b>	Abstracts	17.0	22.4	35.1
	Introductions	28.1	54.9	56.9
	Conclusions	30.9	41.6	48.8

Examining the total amount of promotion in all three sections in Table 51, the outstanding finding is that there is a surprisingly large amount in all three disciplines, ranging from about a fifth of the sentences in the Finance and Management abstracts to more than half of the sentences in the Management and Marketing introductions. In the sections, the heaviest proportional emphasis seemed to be in the introductions but the discussion/conclusions were not far behind. Of the disciplines, Finance showed the smallest total amount of promotion whereas Marketing showed the largest amount, with Management more similar to Marketing than Finance, except in the abstracts.

Comparing the use of direct versus indirect promotion, it is obvious that the heaviest emphasis overall was on direct promotion, especially in the introductions, but in the Finance journals also in the discussion/conclusions. The Finance journals did not contain much indirect promotion in any of the sections examined. In contrast, the Management and the Marketing journals displayed fairly similar proportions of indirect and direct promotion in both the introductions and the discussion/conclusion sections.

In terms of general consistency of promotional strategies, the Finance journals put the largest emphasis on Boosts in all three sections. Management and Marketing also emphasized Boosts in the abstracts and discussion/conclusions but not in the introductions: here the major emphasis, fairly evenly distributed, was on Claims of centrality and statements of Gaps. Thus very generally speaking, the Finance sections all emphasized the direct and relatively early promotion of the *contribution*, whereas the Management and the Marketing scholars paid a great deal more attention to providing the reader with a more elaborate *orientation* regarding the importance and the various aspects of the problem area, i.e. building up the territory and the niche, before presenting and assessing the contribution.

## 12 MITIGATION OF PROMOTION

The purpose of this chapter is to examine which specific promotional steps were mitigated in each section and to ascertain whether the disciplines/journals/sections differed in terms of strategies of mitigation. Tentativeness in presenting knowledge claims can in itself be seen as promotional, in the sense of being more polite and deferential, more cautious and less assertive/aggressive, but except for abstracts (for reasons explained below) this study focuses on the mitigation of promotion only. Of special interest here are statements of Gaps, Counterclaims and Boosts, i.e. the criticism or denial of previous knowledge claims and the overt pointing out of the merits of the writers' own contribution, respectively, which can be perceived as face-threatening to the discourse community addressed. It was expected that for politeness reasons these steps would be mitigated fairly frequently. Of additional interest are those promotional steps which can be perceived as face-threatening to the writers' own face, e.g. statements of the Limitations of the study, or to scholars doing related research, e.g. suggestions for Future research.

The management of conflict in scholarly writing is difficult to handle, as shown by numerous studies (cf. Bazerman 1988, Myers 1989, 1992, Hunston 1989, 1993, Hyland 1996a, 1996b, 1998c, 2000). Thus for example, citation, especially the use of personal attribution, can support both positive claims and denials of claims, although in personal attributions direct criticism has been found to be rare:

While scientists must be careful to acknowledge all possible rivals, they must also try to avoid attributing the views they attack to any one researcher. (Myers 1989:18).

Myers suggests that criticism is formulated as suggestions of views rather than facts, i.e. addresses the activity of explanation rather than the explanation itself. While this may be true of the first statement in Example 102 below, the second critical statement is surprisingly direct. In examining critical citations, it is important to distinguish between using a citation as a *target* of criticism (Example 102) and using it as a *source* which is reported (Example 103) or is used to support the criticism presented (cf. Gruber 1993 on targets vs. sources of evaluation). Sometimes the distinction between target and source

has perhaps been left unclear on purpose, when using parenthetical (non-integral) citations.

#### **Example 102. Personal attribution as target of criticism in Gap statement (Introduction)**

But **March and Simon (1958)** did not make the pragmatic **connection** between performance and knowledge, and **they were curiously silent** on the question of how these programs are embodied or expressed in real organization. (ASQ, 37 (1992): 527-548)

#### **Example 103. Personal attribution as source of criticism in Gap statement (Introduction)**

**Other researchers** in the performance-rating area, although acknowledging that cognitive issues are important, **have argued** that social and situational factors **have been neglected** (Dipboye, 1985; Ferris & Judge, 1991; Ilgen & Fawcett, 1985; Mitchell, 1983; Wexley & Klimoski, 1984). **As Mitchell pointed out**, given that employees often work in groups, that some of their work is unobserved, and that evaluators often have various motives in evaluating performance, traditional approaches to performance appraisal **may be inadequate**. (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 1: 80-105)

If personal attributions are the targets of denials of claims and are not used as sources for reported denials of claims, there may be a grave politeness risk. In Example 102 there is no mitigation: in fact, the enhancer *curiously* makes the criticism considerably stronger. The implication seems to be that every thoughtful researcher would have made a comment on the implementation of the programs in question. In Example 103 the reported criticism in the second sentence is mitigated by the use of *may*.

Citations in general have been seen as a lessening of writer responsibility, i.e. a hedging device (e.g. Hyland 1999a). However, in this chapter only the mitigation of critical citations is examined. Mitigation was identified when the illocutionary force of the promotional step was explicitly reduced by linguistic signals. The chapter offers an overview of how frequently specific promotional steps were mitigated. In addition, I will describe the most common types of the linguistic signaling of mitigation in each discipline/journal/section, which may be useful for pedagogical purposes. Finally, I will compare the findings with some of the current theories on politeness.

### **12.1 Mitigation in abstracts**

Since abstracts have such a prominent position in promoting research articles (cf. Tibbo 1992, Meldrum 1994, Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995, Hartley et al. 1996, Hyland 2000), it is of special interest to see how baldly or tentatively promotion is expressed in the abstracts, and whether the conventions in abstracts differ from those in introductions

and discussion/conclusion sections. Myers (1989:21) suggests that baldness is acceptable in abstracts, because ‘demands of efficiency – and especially brevity – overrule other considerations’. Consistent with this the respondents in Meldrum’s (1994) study did not find bald criticism in abstracts to be unwarranted. Because overt promotion in the present abstracts turned out to be relatively scarce, I decided first to examine mitigation in abstracts in general to gain an idea of its overall frequency. For example, five instances of mitigating signals are to be found in Example 104 below, but only the last sentence is explicitly promotional (promoting reliability signaled by *robust*):

#### **Example 104. Mitigation in Marketing abstract**

This research addresses three questions: (1) Why are some organizations more market-oriented than others? (2) What effect does a market orientation have on employees and business performance? (3) Does the linkage between a market orientation and business performance depend on the environmental context? The findings from two national samples **suggest** that a market orientation **is related** to top management emphasis on the orientation, risk aversion of top managers, interdepartmental conflict and connectedness, centralization, and reward system orientation. Furthermore, the findings **suggest** that a market orientation **is related** to overall (judgmental) business performance (but not market share), employees’ organizational commitment, and esprit de corps. Finally, the linkage between a market orientation and performance **appears** to be robust across environmental contexts that are characterized by varying degrees of market turbulence, competitive intensity, and technological turbulence. (JM Vol. 57, 1993:53-71)

In addition to the tentative assessment of reliability (*appears to be robust*), four of the mitigating signals are used to play down the closeness of fit to reality of findings (*suggest, is related*). For comparison, unmitigated more assertive versions of the three claims might be expressed in the following ways: *The findings show that. . . is determined by. . . is robust*. In contrast to the analyses of introductions and discussion/conclusions, in the analysis of abstracts I first identified all mitigated rhetorical steps and the linguistic signals used for mitigation.

##### *12.1.1 Mitigation of promotion*

Table 52 below presents the range and density of mitigated steps in the abstracts. Overall the findings show that the majority (70-90%) of the abstracts contained mitigation, although the journals seemed to vary somewhat. Examining the density of mitigation, i.e. the average number of mitigated steps in those abstracts that contained mitigation revealed little variation: from about 1.5 mitigated steps/abstract in Finance to about 2 mitigated steps/abstracts in Management and Marketing.

**Table 52. No. of abstracts containing mitigation and density of mitigating steps in those abstracts (N=20/journal, no. occurrences, percentages and average density per abstract)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
No. abstracts	14	18	16	17	15	16	18	15	16.5
% of total no.	70	90	80	85	75	80	90	75	80.3
No. mitig. steps	20	27	23.5	34	31	32.5	29	32	30.5
Density of mitig.	1.4	1.5	1.5	2	2.1	2.1	1.6	2.1	1.9

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal; ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing*

*Note: Density denotes average no. mitigated steps in those abstracts that contained mitigation*

In order to assess the degree of baldness vs. mitigation of promotion, I examined which types of steps were mitigated. These findings are displayed in Table 53 below. Bold type denotes promotional steps, as proposed in the present model.

**Table 53. Types of mitigated steps in abstracts (N=20/journal, no. occurrences, ranking, bold denotes promotional steps)**

	Finance		Management		Marketing		Total
	JFE	JF	AMJ	ASQ	JMR	JM	
Claim/Findings	19	22	22	19	14	20	116
Hypothesis	-	2	5	4	2	1	14
<b>Boost</b>	-	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	-	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Gap</b>	-	-	<b>4</b>	-	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>
APR	-	-	-	4	2	2	8
<b>Thesis</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	-	<b>2</b>	-	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
Preview	-	-	1	1	2	1	5
Limit	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
<b>Assess reliability</b>	-	-	-	-	-	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Counterclaim</b>	-	-	-	<b>1</b>	-	-	<b>1</b>
Topic generalization	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Total no. mitigated steps	20	27	34	31	29	32	
Total no. sentences	88	94	98	112	104	98	
<b>% mitigated steps</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>28.7</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>27.9</b>	<b>32.7</b>	

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing*

*Note:* APR= Announcing present research. *Preview* refers to a descriptive statement predicting a rhetorical move to be presented in the article itself, e.g. *Implications will be discussed*, but not providing the actual content.

Before commenting on Table 53, I will present an overview of the degree of promotion and the mitigation of promotion in the abstracts. The most interesting finding was that when they chose overt promotion, the abstracts were generally quite bald in doing this (Table 54):

**Table 54. Promotion and mitigation of promotion in abstracts (N=20/journal, no. occurrences, cf. Tables 25, 27, and 28)**

	Finance		Management		Marketing		Total
	JFE	JF	AMJ	ASQ	JMR	JM	
No. promotional steps	15	16	29	18	36	35	149
No. mitigated prom. steps	1	3	5	3	7	8	27

*Legend:* JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing.

What Table 53 shows is that, not unexpectedly, by far the most frequently mitigated step was the one expressing a knowledge claim/findings, almost averaging one in each abstract. This was fairly consistent across the disciplines and journals. If an expression of result or major knowledge claim in abstracts is considered promotional in itself, as suggested by Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995, cf. Hyland 2000), then these are evidently largely mitigated, which would accord with Myers (1989) and Bloor and Bloor (1993) on major knowledge claims in the body of RAs. What is surprising from a face-threatening point of view is the fact that so few Boosts seemed to be mitigated: in Finance 2 out of 13 (cf. Table 25 on direct promotion); in Management 1 out of 10; and in Marketing 8 out of 34 (23.5%). Thus in Marketing abstracts, which showed a substantial number of Boosts, the mitigation was somewhat more frequent and indicated an occasional softer ‘sales strategy’. For the rest of the steps, the figures were too low to be generalizable, although in fact all of the Gaps in AMJ and half of those in Marketing were mitigated. Also, none of the Gaps contained personal attribution of target, which is understandable in this prominent position. Lack of personal attribution in criticism has not been counted as a mitigation device in the present study: mitigation here presupposes an overt linguistic signal.

### Example 105. Mitigation of Gap statement in abstract

Assigning credit and blame to others for their successful and unsuccessful performances is a ubiquitous, yet **relatively unstudied**, process. (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 1:17-27)

Not surprisingly, Counterclaims were rare in the abstracts (a total of 10 in 120 abstracts), but what was surprising was that only one of these was mitigated, as Counterclaims can easily be perceived as FTAs:

### Example 106. Mitigation of Counterclaim in abstract

These results **challenge** person-centered views about the psychology of women's same-sex work relationships and **suggest** that social identity **may** link an organization's demographic composition with individuals' workplace experiences. (ASQ 1994, No. 39: 203-238)

Notably one of the Counterclaims contained personal attribution, which seems like a very strong measure because of its prominent position in the abstract:

### Example 107. Personal attribution of Counterclaim in abstract

Our results are **in direct contrast to Pound (1988)**. (JFE 1993, No. 33: 201-225)

Another interesting observation is that none of the sparsely occurring Claims of centrality (a total of 11 in 120 abstracts) seemed to be mitigated. This is probably because Claims of centrality tend to appeal to values assumed to be more generally accepted by the discourse community, and are thus not perceived as FTAs.

To sum up, the findings showed that the large majority of the potentially face-threatening Boosts as well as the Counterclaims were stated baldly, without mitigation, whereas the more rarely occurring Gap statements tended to be more cautiously expressed. The preponderance of bald Boosts and Counterclaims may be explained by the demands of efficiency and brevity (Myers 1989), i.e. the promotion of the news value being considered more important than politeness and deference. Bald statements in abstracts have also been perceived as helpful by clearly orienting the reader as to the writers' stance (cf. Meldrum 1994). Although the data were too sparse to reveal clear disciplinary tendencies, the findings showed that the Marketing abstracts contained at least twice as much promotion and twice as much mitigation of promotion as the other two disciplines. In all disciplines it seemed that, besides Boosts and Counterclaims, on average one major knowledge claim in each abstract tended to be mitigated.



### 12.1.2 Linguistic signals of mitigation

A mapping of the use of mitigating signals in the abstracts under study here gave the following general characteristics (Table 55). Categories refer to the model presented in Chapter 7 and are here presented in order of frequency.

**Table 55. Types of mitigating signals in abstracts (no. occurrences, percentages, ranking)**

	Finance	Management	Marketing	Total	%
Lexical verbs	17	29	24	70	36.4
Adjectivals	5	16	9	31	16.3
Adverbials	13	8	6	27	14.2
Modal auxiliaries	5	12	7	24	12.6
Copulas other than <i>be</i>	5	6	7	18	9.5
Miscellaneous*	11	6	8	25	13.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100</b>

\* denotes categories that occurred only once overall

The overwhelmingly most frequently used mitigating signals in the abstracts were lexical, above all lexical verbs, and among these *indicate* (N=26) and *suggest* (N=26). The useful ambiguity of *indicate* (which can be taken to mean either *show* or *suggest*) was discussed in Section 7.2, and its frequency in the abstracts exemplifies its usefulness. In previous research on mitigation (hedging) in RAs which did not include abstracts, modal auxiliaries have been shown to be the most common mitigating signal (e.g. Butler 1990). The present findings accord better with those of Varttala (2002), who found a heavy reliance on ‘full verbs’ in economics abstracts. However, of the 24 modal auxiliaries, *may* accounted for 20 instances, which is in line with previous research (e.g. Butler 1990, Hyland 1996a).

Overall, the Management abstracts used the largest number of mitigating signals whereas the Finance abstracts used the smallest. The Management and the Marketing abstracts contained the highest number of mitigating verbs, and Management in addition showed the highest number of mitigating adjectivals whereas Finance contained the highest number of adverbials (the majority of these were in JF, especially *approximators*) and miscellaneous signals. The use of other mitigating signals than verbs in Finance abstracts may be connected to the fact that the Finance abstracts contained a large number of static verbs (*be/have*).

A notable point is that although there were 11 occurrences of *can*, none was unequivocally epistemic. Thus *can* was used to express capability/achievement (root meaning: *it is possible for* vs. epistemic meaning: *it is possible that*), as for example in the excerpt below:

**Example 108. Example of *can* expressing capability/efficacy**

The authors describe an extended BTL model, a simultaneous segmentation and estimation procedure for paired comparisons that **can also accommodate** descriptor variables, if available. The procedure extends methods for analyzing paired comparisons in two important ways. First, recognizing that individuals may be heterogeneous in their preference structure, the model attempts to group individuals into segments, where individuals belonging to the same segment **can be characterized adequately** by a segment-specific set of scale values. (JMR Vol. XXX, February 1993: 42-51)

For comparison, the following sentence from an introduction contains one of the not very frequent examples of *can* being used in the epistemic sense, although here both readings are possible: ‘A time inconsistency *can* arise when an earlier period is added to allow trading among the financial claimants. ’ (JF Vol. XLVIII, No. 2, June 1993: 513-528, my emphasis)

*12.1.3 Summary*

On the discipline level, the largest overall amount of promotion occurred in the Marketing abstracts whereas the smallest amount was displayed by the Finance abstracts. The question that followed from this was to what extent the promotion was balanced by mitigation, and to what extent the three disciplines/six journals differed in this respect. However, because of the scarcity of explicit promotion it was not possible to conduct a study of the mitigation solely of promotional steps, and therefore in order to get a picture of the general baldness of statements in abstracts, all the mitigated steps were identified. Table 56 below shows the overall extent of mitigation and the extent of promotion in the abstracts.

**Table 56. Mitigation in relation to total no. sentences (percentages) and promotion in relation to total no. sentences (percentages) in abstracts**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
% mitigated. steps	22.7	28.7	25.7	34.7	27.7	31.2	27.9	32.7	30.3
% prom. steps (dir. &indir.)	17.0	17.0	17.0	29.6	16.1	22.4	34.6	35.7	35.1

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing*

On a very general level, there seemed to be some consistency between the amount of promotion and the amount of mitigation in the Finance journals and in the Marketing journals, respectively, although the relations are converse. However, the Management abstracts differed from each other, and did not show a consistent pattern. It is thus difficult to generalize from these data, except to say that the abstracts in these journals tend to contain from one fifth to a third of both mitigation and promotion. It is thus possible to conclude that there seems to be a considerable share of both promotion and mitigation in the abstracts of these journals (with the possible exception of ASQ), and that the mitigation focused on findings and major knowledge claims. What was surprising, however, was the fact that the highly face-threatening act of Boosting, when used, was rarely mitigated: in only 10-25% of the cases. In contrast, Gap statements though scarce were mitigated in at least half the cases. However, as shown in Table 56 above, the majority of all rhetorical steps were baldly stated, which leads to the conclusion that when promotion was used in abstracts, it tended to be bald.

From a politeness perspective, then, little deference/humility was shown towards the exoteric (larger) scholarly community when boosting the contribution, whereas politeness concerns were taken into account in at least half of the critical claims, which refer to the esoteric (more narrow) scholarly community engaged in similar research. Because of the positioning and brevity of abstracts, bald Boosts and knowledge claims acquire a great prominence. Boosts are risky, because they can be perceived as FTAs by scholars doing related research as well as breaking the convention of the individual's humility in front of communal acceptance. This explains why Boosts were used to such a small extent but does not explain why they were not mitigated. Even if they were seen as a signal of the increasing 'marketization' of academic work (cf. Fairclough 1993, 1995, 1997) and a direct appeal to non-academic readers, in their bald form they seem to

be ignoring communal politeness requirements. On the other hand, major knowledge claims were tentatively expressed to a large extent, which appears to attend to the humility requirements (politeness towards the audience) as well as the cautiousness requirement (reducing writer commitment and saving the face of the writers). However, since tentative language is how interpretation of findings rather than statement of substantive fact is signaled (cf. Myers 1989, 1992, Bloor and Bloor 1993, Crompton 1997) it is difficult to nail tentative phrasing unambiguously to politeness requirements. As far as explicit promotion is concerned, a risky undertaking from the politeness perspective, the abstracts clearly favored a bald strategy but, except for the Marketing abstracts, direct promotion was fairly scarce (cf. Table 25).

## **12.2 Mitigation of promotion in introductions**

### *12.2.1 Mitigation of promotion*

In contrast to abstracts, the introduction sections were more heavily promotional, the proportion of promotion ranging from about 25% to as much as 66% of the total number of sentences (cf. Section 10.5.). Therefore it is easier to examine to what extent and in which promotional steps the writers used mitigation to redress the overt promotion and possible impositions. This section offers an overview of the mitigation of direct promotional steps only, because the small amount of indirect promotion, ranging from merely 0.9 to 5.8% of the sentences (cf. Section 10.3.), did not provide sufficient data for meaningful study.

Table 57 below shows to what extent the promotional steps were mitigated in each discipline/journal. It is obvious that the average figures for the disciplines disguise notable differences between the journals within the disciplines as regards the mitigation of specific steps. Therefore I will next comment on similarities and differences in mitigation, both between the disciplines and between journals as regards individual steps. Overall, the Management introductions showed the largest degrees of mitigated promotional steps whereas the Finance and the Marketing introductions displayed more similar total degrees. However, since the Finance introductions contained considerably less promotion, the total amount of mitigated steps was lower.

The degree of mitigation of specific steps seemed to vary a great deal, from a low figure of 14.6% (JF) to a high figure of 49.1% (ASQ). On average, the promotional steps that

were mitigated most overall were statements of Gaps and Boosts. This is understandable, as Gap statements are explicitly critical of previous research and thus face-threatening to potential colleagues and the research community. Boosts explicitly express the merits or superiority of the current contribution, instead of leaving the assessment to the research community, and thus ignores the humility/deference requirements. However, within the disciplines the journals differed somewhat regarding which promotional step they considered most important to mitigate. For example, JFE and AMJ emphasized the mitigation of Boosts most and mitigated Gaps least of all promotional steps, whereas JF and JMR conversely stressed the mitigation of Gaps, and ASQ and JM mitigated both steps almost equally. Overall, ASQ had a substantially more frequent use of mitigation than the other journals: almost one in every two Gaps and Boosts was mitigated. The two Marketing journals were mutually more alike overall.

**Table 57. Mitigation of direct promotional steps in introductions (No. occurrences and percentages of mitigated/promotional steps)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
No. Claim centr. mitig.	9	6	15	25	26	51	13	28	41
Total no. Claim centr.	49	41	90	78	82	160	67	117	184
<b>% Claim centr. mitig.</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>22.3</b>
No. Gaps mitig.	7	30	37	18	48	66	28	34	62
Total no. Gaps	41	66	107	93	101	194	87	100	187
<b>% Gaps mitig.</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>47.5</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>33.2</b>
No. Boosts mitig.	19	18	37	17	26	43	8	18	26
Total no. Boosts	55	77	132	36	53	89	37	56	93
<b>% Boosts mitig.</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>47.2</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>48.3</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>28</b>
Total. No mitig. steps	35	54	89	60	100	160	49	80	129
Total no. prom. steps	145	184	329	207	236	443	191	273	464
<b>Total % mitig. prom.</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>42.4</b>	<b>36.1</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>27.8</b>
Total no. sent's	721	673	1394	398	423	821	420	413	833
<b>Total % prom. steps</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>52.0</b>	<b>55.8</b>	<b>53.9</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>66.1</b>	<b>55.7</b>

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing*

These findings indicate that it is not realistic to assume that one or other of the promotional steps would automatically be more likely to be mitigated, as the disciplines and the journals clearly differed in their preferences. However, an interesting

observation can be made concerning the mitigation of Claims of centrality. As pointed out in the section on abstracts above, Claims of centrality are presumably based on appeals of general interest/sources and should therefore not be perceived as equally face-threatening as the other two promotional steps. Consistent with this assumption, the amount of mitigation (15-25%) was not as high as in Gaps and Boosts, but notably in the two Management introductions a more cautious line was taken: one in every three Claims of centrality was mitigated. Thus there seemed to be a greater need for deference and for creating consensus in the Management journals, when claiming the centrality of the research area or topic.

On the face of it, the findings seem to show that more promotion correlates with more mitigation, since JF, ASQ and JM introductions contained more promotion as well as more mitigation than their counterparts. However, this did not hold true for specific steps, notably Boosts (see JFE vs. JF and AMJ vs. ASQ). The outstanding difference in mitigating Boosts was between Finance and Marketing on the one hand and Management on the other hand: both AMJ and ASQ mitigated almost half of the Boosts, thus showing more caution in this step as well as in Claims of centrality. More promotion entailing more mitigation would also seem to account for Gap statements in JF but not for the other disciplines/journals. The mitigation trends found in the introductions will later be compared with those found in the abstracts and discussion/conclusion sections, and these comparisons might turn up more consistent strategies in the disciplines/journals.

To sum up, on average about a quarter to a third of the direct promotional steps in introductions were mitigated, which does not seem a great deal, if these steps are considered face-threatening. Of these, Claims of centrality on average received least mitigation (except in AMJ), probably because the appeals were based on more generally accepted grounds (consensus) and therefore are likely to be perceived as less face-threatening to individual researchers or the research community. The mitigation of Gaps varied a great deal between the two journals in Finance and Management, respectively, but was more consistent in Marketing. In contrast, the two journals in Marketing varied in mitigating Boosts (as did the Finance journals), whereas Management was more consistent and considerably more cautious. This cautiousness was also evident in the Management Claims of centrality.

In terms of politeness and deference, it would seem that both Gaps and Boosts should be mitigated, being clearly face-threatening acts, but the finding that they are largely not mitigated and that the journals within disciplines seemed to differ, could be explained by different house styles or conventions, or different perceptions of deference and of what constitutes an FTA. Of the two Management journals, ASQ (which includes the government in its readership, cf. Pierce and Garven 1995) showed a considerably higher mitigation of promotion than AMJ. The overwhelmingly clear finding in introductions was that, despite their strong face-threatening potential, the large majority of both Boosts and Gaps were baldly stated, although there were sometimes notable variations between the journals in the same discipline. However, although sparsely mitigated, Gap statements did not usually make personal attributions to other researchers (but occasionally to the writers' own earlier work), thus following at least one principle of politeness. Also, as illustrated in the next section, the criticism in Gap statements in Management and Marketing was often balanced by a fronted complimentary concessive clause, thus showing positive politeness by explicitly acknowledging merits in previous research. It would be interesting to study how the bald promotional steps differ from those that are mitigated in terms of substance or other aspects, but this goes beyond the scope of the present study.

### *12.2.2 Linguistic signals of mitigation*

In addition to the frequency of mitigation and the specific promotional steps mitigated, it is of pedagogical interest to examine whether the three disciplines and each journal show predilections in using similar or different linguistic signals of mitigation. In Table 58 below only those signals that occurred five or more times in any one journal were included. The variety of signals was very large, exceeding 80 different expressions, but most were used only once or twice.

**Table 58. Most common mitigating signals in direct promotion in introductions (No. occurrences >5 in any one journal)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing			Total	Rank
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total		
may	5	5	10	12	19	31	8	14	22	63	1
although*				12	5	17	10	2	12	29	2
can	5	5	10	4	5	9	5	3	8	27	3
should	1	4	5	5	3	8	3	1	4	17	4
could					1	1	1	14	15	16	5
some	2	5	7	4	2	6		3	3	16	5
suggest	1	2	3	4	2	6		6	6	15	6
Subtotal	14	21	35	41	63	104	27	43	70		
Miscell.**	24	41	65	17	37	54	20	42	62		
Total	38	62	100	58	100	158	47	85	132		

\* 'Although' signifies the fronted concessive clause

\*\*Figures include all mitigators, even those occurring only once

Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing

Not surprisingly, modal auxiliaries were the most commonly used linguistic signals of mitigation in promotional steps in introductions (cf. however Hyland 1996a on a different ranking of hedging signals in whole articles, not including abstracts). As was reported in Section 12.1.2, abstracts showed somewhat different strategies of signaling mitigation, more frequently using lexical verbs such as *indicate* and *suggest*. This is likely to be explained by the different functions of abstracts: they are above all concerned with presenting major knowledge claims and assessments of contributions (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995, Hyland 2000) whereas the introductions are mainly concerned with 'Creating a Research Space' (Swales 1990), which only in some cases (here mainly in Finance) includes presenting and assessing major findings. Thus in abstracts knowledge claims and findings were most often mitigated, whereas in introductions, both Gaps and Boosts were frequently mitigated and to some extent even Claims of centrality. This explains the emergence of different mitigating signals. The examination of mitigation in discussion/conclusions will show yet other differing tendencies (Section 12.3).

As to variety, Finance introductions showed a wider range of mitigating signals than those in Management and Marketing: in Finance only one third (35/100) came from the



seven categories listed in Table 58 and two thirds came from the group ‘Miscellaneous’ (i.e. such that occurred less than 5 times overall). In contrast, in Management two thirds (104/158) and in Marketing more than half (70/132) of the mitigating signals came from the seven listed categories, and thus these introductions seemed more consistent in their strategies, although they were much shorter than those in Finance. However, it is to be remembered that the Finance introductions contained many of the rhetorical steps that usually occur in discussion/conclusion sections, which may account for the variety.

The most interesting finding in Table 58 is the high frequency of fronted concessive clauses, which ranked second in overall frequency but did not occur at all in Finance. To my knowledge the mitigating effect of the fronted concessive clause has not been pointed out previously, possibly because its effect on a following promotional clause has not been studied. A typical use would be in acknowledging the merits of previous research before pointing out shortcomings, such as the following example:

#### Example 109

Previous studies in bargaining have concentrated on negotiation strategy rather than looking at both the antecedents and consequences of various negotiation strategies (Day, Michaels, and Perdue 1988; Perdue and Summers 1991). **Though these studies afford interesting insights into the type of negotiation strategy employed by bargainers, they do not include** the consequences of such negotiation strategies. (JMR, Vol. XXX (May 1993): 183-203)

Of the categories listed in Table 58, the most commonly used signal of mitigation in all three disciplines was the modal *may* (cf. also Hyland 1996a). In Finance this was equaled by the modal *can*, whereas in Management fronted concessive clauses with *Although/though* ranked second (especially in AMJ). In Marketing almost equal in rank were the fronted concessive structure (almost exclusively in JMR) and the modals *can/could* (the latter almost exclusively in JM). It is again to be noted that the two journals in Management and Marketing showed different trends, respectively: ASQ preferred *may* whereas AMJ preferred the concessive structure, and JM preferred *could* and *suggest* whereas JMR preferred the concessive structure.

Some researchers have suggested that the auxiliary *can* is not used in a modal sense except in negative clauses or questions (e.g. Hyland 1998c, Varttala 2001). However, in the present study there were a number of cases when both an epistemic (*it is possible that*) and a root meaning (*it is possible for*) were plausible, and these were counted as

epistemic, i.e. mitigating. In the first example below, both readings are possible but in the second example only the epistemic reading seems plausible.

**Example 110. *Can* exemplifying both an epistemic and a root sense in mitigating a Boost**

Our work has important implications for regulatory policy, since a key rationale for bank regulation is that adverse news about an individual bank **can generate** adverse effects on other banks. (JFE No. 32 (1992): 87-101)

**Example 111. *Can* exemplifying an epistemic sense in mitigating a Gap (problem) statement**

In organizations, dysfunctional interpersonal comparisons of how scarce resources are distributed **can result** in motivational problems and organizational inefficiency. (ASQ No. 37, 1992: 220-240)

In examining the figures in Table 58, it is important to remember that it only includes those categories of linguistic signals that occurred five or more times in any one journal. The difference between these occurrences and the grand total shows that there was a great variety of signals that did not reach the magic figure of five. In other words, only seven categories of signals did this in introductions, whereas when examining the corresponding figures for discussion/conclusion sections, it will be seen that the corresponding number of categories was seventeen. In other words, there was more mitigation in discussion/conclusion sections and hence there were more patterns to be found. A comparison between mitigation in the abstracts vs. introductions vs. discussion/conclusion sections will be provided in Section 12.4.

### *12.2.3 Summary*

On a very general level, it can be stated that similar to the degrees of promotion in introductions (25-66% of the total number of sentences), there was great variation between the disciplines/journals in the degrees of mitigation (14-49% of the promotional sentences). While the amount of overt promotion may appear surprisingly high, in contrast the amount of mitigation of promotion may appear surprisingly low, if politeness concerns are kept in mind. For example, in JFE and AMJ the potentially face-threatening Gap statements were mitigated only 17-19% of the time, and in JF and JMR the deference-lacking Boosts were mitigated only 21-23% of the time. However, also fairly high degrees of mitigation were found: thus JF and ASQ mitigated almost half of the Gap statements and AMJ and ASQ almost half of the Boosts. In sum, the individual journals within the disciplines seemed to show more differences in mitigating strategies

than were found between disciplines. However, it is notable that in the majority of cases the promotional steps were not mitigated, i.e. were in fact baldly stated. Thus it seems more important in these journals to clearly create the research space using bald promotional steps than it seems to take politeness aspects into consideration.

### 12.3 Mitigation of promotion in discussion/conclusion sections

As will be recalled, discussion/conclusion sections contained different emphases on promotional steps as compared to abstracts and introductions. Direct promotional acts, such as Boosts and Gap statements, but also indirect promotional acts, such as Counterclaims and suggestions of Future research, can be seen as impinging on the territory of other researchers in the same area as well as breaking the convention of communal deference. They can therefore be expected to be mitigated for politeness reasons. However, statements of Limitations and Caveats increase credibility by showing the writer's awareness of the state of the art of the research area and degree of generalizability of his own contribution (accuracy), his honesty (credibility) and *prima facie* humility (writer's positive face). On the other hand, by listing a large number of limitations the writer may be perceived to be reducing the significance of the contribution and hedging the writer's responsibility (forestalling negative criticism). The mitigation of these acts functions as a downtoner of the shortcomings described, thereby mitigating the face-threatening effect on the writers both by showing and by diminishing writer responsibility. In other words, if mitigation of FTAs has the effect of playing down the assertiveness of the statement, the mitigation of Limitations and Caveats functions to suggest that these can be perceived merely as possible points of view, which do not necessarily detract from the value of the contribution (cf. Banks 1994 on the 'trimming and fertilizing of hedges' for similar effects):

#### Example 112

**Not unlike** those of **other** cross-sectional **studies**, the results are **subject to method artifacts** and **do not necessarily yield** evidence of causal effects. **Though** the use of multiple samples from different organizational contexts is **likely to have reduced** the impact of method artifacts, it **admittedly** results in **less control** over background variables. Finally, **less than ideal** response rates for the SME and IS samples are **likely to have introduced** systematic **bias**. (JM Vol. 57 (April 1993), 11-31)

In Example 112 the anticipated possible criticisms against the current study are acknowledged, but downplayed by appealing to the fact that other studies have operated in a similar manner (note the emphatic double negative *Not unlike* in the marked theme

position). By using mitigating signals such as *likely* and *less than ideal* (which is more positive than *not very good*), the writers remind the readers that response rates are rarely ‘ideal’ and that this is therefore understandable and acceptable. The fronted concessive clause in the second sentence acts as a mitigated Boost of method and at the same time as a downtoner of the limitation expressed in the matrix clause. The explicit author’s comment *Admittedly* is used to disarm the anticipated criticism.

### 12.3.1 Mitigation of promotion

In this section I will begin with an examination of the overall extent of mitigation and then move on to a presentation of the extent of mitigation of specific steps. The section ends with a presentation of the most frequent mitigating signals used in discussion/conclusion sections in the three disciplines. Table 59 below shows the percentages of promotion and mitigated promotion, respectively.

**Table 59. Total occurrence and extent of mitigation of direct and indirect promotion in discussion/conclusion sections (No. promotional steps and percentages: promotion related to total no. sentences, mitigation related to no. promotional steps)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing		
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total
mitigated steps	27	39	66	233	258	491	283	316	599
promotional steps	81	121	202	610	517	1127	535	638	1173
% promotion	24.8	38.1	31.9	39.9	43.2	41.7	41.8	56.0	48.9
<b>% mitigation</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>32.7</b>	<b>37.7</b>	<b>49.9</b>	<b>43.6</b>	<b>52.9</b>	<b>48.5</b>	<b>51.1</b>

*Legend: JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing*

Just as there were notable differences between the extent of promotion in the discussion/conclusion sections of the three disciplines, similarly there were notable differences regarding the degree of mitigation. The overall degrees of mitigation between the disciplines showed a fairly clear pattern of correlation with more promotion. Indeed, the proportions followed similar patterns. The same cline from an average around 30% in Finance over around 40% in Management to around 50% in Marketing appeared both in promotion and in mitigation. In other words, in Finance discussion/conclusions every third sentence contained promotion, and of these every third sentence was mitigated. By contrast, in Marketing almost every second sentence

was promotional and of these almost half were mitigated, with Management somewhat closer to Marketing.

However, when the individual journals are examined, Table 59 shows no clear patterns of more promotion entailing more mitigation, as exemplified by JF and JM. When the journals within each discipline were compared, there were great similarities in the percentages of mitigated promotional steps, except in the Management journals: ASQ conclusions showed a markedly higher percentage of mitigation, on average almost one in every two promotional steps. This pattern is similar to the one found in ASQ introductions and thus seems to indicate a journal-specific style. ASQ is the only journal that addresses a general public as well as academics and business practitioners, which may explain the caution and the concern for politeness.

The overall frequencies of mitigation as such are of interest, certainly, but what is especially relevant for the present study is the extent of mitigation of specific promotional steps in each journal/discipline, and whether different strategies are discernible there, for example whether more face-threatening acts such as Boosts were more frequently mitigated.

## **Finance**

Table 60 below displays both the overall number of occurrences of promotional steps and the number of mitigating signals in relation to individual steps. As the numbers of occurrences were very low in Finance discussion/conclusion sections, due to the limited length of these sections, it was not relevant to calculate percentages of mitigated steps for the more sparsely occurring categories, as these would appear quite skewed.

**Table 60. Mitigation of promotion in Finance discussion/conclusion sections (no. of occurrences and percentages of steps and signals)**

	CLC JFE	CLC JF	GAP JFE	GAP JF	BST JFE	BST JF	LIM JFE	LIM JF	CAV JFE	CAV JF	CCL JFE	CCL JF	FUT JFE	FUT JF
mitig.	2	11	3	3	9	17	2	1	1	0	10	0	0	7
prom.	8	18	7	19	35	64	6	9	2	1	20	1	3	9
% mitig.	<b>25</b>	<b>61.1</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>26.6</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>11.1</b>			<b>50</b>			<b>77.8</b>
% bald		38.9	57.2		74.3	73.4	66.7	88.9			50			22.2
Aver. mitig.				23.1		26.2		20						
Aver. bald		38.9		76.9		73.8		80			50			22.2

*Legend: BST=boost, LIM=limitation, GAP=gap, CAV=caveat, CCL=counterclaim, CLC=claim centrality, FUT=suggestion of future research. (JFE=Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance)*

Of primary interest here is to what extent the direct promotional steps were mitigated. Consistent with Finance introductions, the perhaps most face-threatening step Boost was mitigated in only about 26% of the cases. In other words, this finding seems to indicate a rather bald strategy of extolling the value of the writers' own contribution. On the other hand, Boosts occurred on average in only about 10% of the sentences in introductions and about 15% (JF) of the sentences in the discussion/conclusion sections, but when they did occur they thus tended to be baldly stated.

As observed earlier, Claims of centrality and Gaps were not frequent in discussion/conclusion sections. However, it is interesting that in JF, where they did occur to some extent, Claims of centrality tended to be mitigated whereas the more face-threatening Gaps tended to be baldly stated.

The second point of major interest in the Finance discussion/conclusions was the extent of mitigation of indirect promotion. A notable finding was that, though sparse, the statements of Limitations of the current study were stated baldly in the large majority of cases whereas the suggestions for Future research were mostly tentatively expressed. In the latter case, this could be seen as the unmarked case, since *should* and *would* are normal signals of speculative or hypothetical future acts or recommendations. However, since quite assertive suggestions of Future research are sometimes used in the other disciplines (signaled by for example *must* or *will* and/or boosting signals such as *necessary* or *important*), the more cautiously formulated ones can be seen as more

tentative and hence mitigated. Counterclaims were few and almost solely to be found in JF; of these half the cases were mitigated.

To sum up, on the basis of these findings it can be concluded that overall the Finance discussion/conclusions showed a rather bald promotional style, as except in Claims of centrality and suggestions for Future research the majority of promotional steps were stated without mitigation. With reference to the two journals, JFE showed fewer promotional statements overall, and only one step, counterclaiming, was mitigated to any significant degree, whereas JF showed both more promotional statements and more mitigation. Because of the sparseness of data for the Finance conclusions due to their brevity, any generalizations must necessarily be very tentative.

Being much more extensive in length, the Management and Marketing conclusions offered more data for analysis and for comparisons between journals and disciplines.

## **Management**

Table 61 below shows the total number of promotional steps and the extent of mitigation of each step in the Management discussion/conclusions. In presenting the findings, I shall first examine the similarities and then the differences between the two journals.

Although the numbers of promotional steps differed between the two journals, the extent of mitigation was similar in three of the seven categories: statements of Gaps, Counterclaims, and suggestions for Future research. Just as in Finance discussions, Gap statements were not frequently mitigated and, interestingly, Counterclaims were mitigated only in a third of the cases. In contrast, suggestions for Future research were cautiously phrased in two thirds of the cases, as they were in Finance. It is notable that suggestions for further research are tentatively formulated in the large majority of cases, although as observed in connection with the Finance findings above, they could also be phrased assertively. The difference between an assertive and a promotional step is that the latter contains a signal of evaluation. To illustrate, Example 113 below is promotional because of the inclusion of the evaluative adjective *important*, but without it the statement is merely assertive, because of the verb form *will be*.

### Example 113

Another **important** direction for future research **will be** to assess the amount and quality of information that newcomers actually obtain from seeking. (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 3, 557-589.)

The overwhelmingly frequent mitigation of suggestions for Future research seems to indicate that the step could be perceived as a strongly face-threatening act. In a sense it may stake out the potential research area of the current writer and thus intrude on what other researchers in this area might do (cf. Myers 1989), but on the other hand it may give fruitful ideas to rival researchers. Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) have pointed out that some natural sciences abstain from suggesting future research for fear of competition. However, the main persuasive power of suggestions for further research in Management seems to lie in showing how productive for the field the current contribution is, by enabling and giving rise to a multitude of potentially interesting avenues to explore further (Example 114). It may be that for deference reasons it is wise to formulate these suggestions tentatively, but on the other hand they may also be genuine speculations, and are therefore cautiously expressed.

### Example 114

Overall, the main contribution of this study is its specification of links between the cognitive tasks of scanning and interpreting and organizational actions and performance. More generally, the study established an empirical basis for exploring and understanding linkages among cognition, action, and outcomes and provided some insight into sensemaking processes that contribute to variations in organizational performance.

Although significant headway has been made in understanding sensemaking processes and their links to organizational outcomes, a significant research agenda remains. For example, the cyclical link between performance outcomes and scanning activities has been, with some exceptions (e. g., Milliken & Lant, 1991), ignored in the literature. Because cognition often begins with action (Weick, 1979), the boundaries and sequence of the sensemaking and performance constructs become blurred, especially when we consider cyclical or historical influences (cf. Cook & Campbell, 1979; Keats & Hitt, 1988). Studies that incorporate scanning, interpretation, action, and performance outcomes from previous or overlapping time periods **would** further enhance researchers' understanding of sensemaking, especially in terms of providing insights into causal directions over time. Such research **would** enable specific feedback and learning "loops" to be incorporated into the model based on the present findings (Figure 1).

Future integrative research **might** also include systematic examination of the relative impact on sensemaking of individual characteristics (Hitt & Tyler, 1991), cross-level effects such as organizational strategy (Daft & Weick, 1984) and top management team structure (Thomas & McDaniel, 1990), and multilevel constructs such as image and identity (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991). Moving beyond single-level approaches to sensemaking research and adopting methods that facilitate longitudinal observations **may help** researchers address the key question of how organizations can perform differently despite facing the same environment. (AMJ 1993, Vol. 36, No. 2: 239-270)



This example begins by stating very clearly the significance of the contribution (Boosts), and, after paying due attention to acknowledging previous work, moves on to point out a remaining Gap, which serves as a point of departure for tentatively suggesting several interesting questions for future research.

**Table 61. Mitigation of promotion in Management discussion/conclusion sections (no. of occurrences and percentages of total no. promotional steps)**

	CLC AMJ	CLC ASQ	GAP AMJ	GAP ASQ	BST AMJ	BST ASQ	LIM AMJ	LIM ASQ	CAV AMJ	CAV ASQ	CCL AMJ	CCL ASQ	FUT AMJ	FUT ASQ
mitig.	18	10	10	16	53	84	32	67	21	13	15	13	84	55
prom.	40	39	56	68	235	185	110	71	25	24	44	36	135	91
% mit.	<b>45</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>45.4</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>94.4</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>54.2</b>	<b>34.1</b>	<b>36.1</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>60.4</b>
%bald	55	74.4	82.1	76.5	77.4	54.6	70.9	5.6	16	45.8	65.9	63.9	37.8	39.8
Aver. mitig.	clc	35.3	gap	20.7	bst	34	lim	61.8	cav	69.2	ccl	35.1	fut	61.3
Aver. bald		64.7		79.3		66		38.2		30.8		64.9		38.7

*Legend: BST=boost, LIM=limitation, GAP=gap, CAV=caveat, CCL=counterclaim, CLC=claim centrality, FUT=suggestion of future research (AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly)*

In examining Table 61, I will deal with the mitigation of direct promotion first. It is noteworthy that both Management journals showed a predominantly bald strategy in the use of Claims of centrality, Gap statements, and Boosts. However, in the case of Boosts and Claims of centrality, the two journals differed quite considerably: in Boosts AMJ used a distinctly balder style whereas in Claims of centrality ASQ was the balder journal. However, as suggested earlier, Claims of centrality were not a major strategy in discussion/conclusion sections, as they were mostly either restatements or appealed to general consensus, and therefore a lack of mitigation is to be expected. The interesting point here is that even a ‘soft’ discipline, such as Management, seems to use such a bald promotional style. Indeed, less than half and mostly less than 25% of the potentially strong FTAs such as Gaps and Boosts were mitigated. The conclusion that presents itself is that the confident declaration of the merits of the contribution is paramount.

As for the indirect promotional steps, both journals seemed careful to formulate suggestions of Future research in a tentative manner in the majority (2/3) of cases. In expressing Caveats, Limitations, and Counterclaims, however, the two journals seemed to follow different strategies. Whereas AMJ tended to state Limitations baldly, ASQ almost invariably mitigated them (again due to a different target audience?). The

intriguing point about mitigating Caveats and Limitations is that the effect is to make the acknowledged shortcomings of the current research more a matter of opinion than a statement of crude fact:

### Example 115

A second **potential limitation** stems from the fact that the entire secretarial staff was not included in the study population. **One could argue that....** (....) Finally, the specific demographic configuration or unique set of circumstances of the organization studied **may limit** the generalizability of these results to other settings. (ASQ 37, 1992:422-447)

To sum up, when looking at the averages of both journals together, the Management discussion/conclusions examined here appeared to put the largest mitigating emphases on Caveats, Limitations, and suggestions for Future research (two thirds of each step), thus actually downplaying the former (writer's negative face) and observing deference and caution in the latter (tentative and speculative, attending to readers' positive face). In contrast, only about a third of the Boosts and Counterclaims were mitigated, thus ignoring the principles of deference and politeness towards the research community in explicitly promoting the writers' own contribution. In addition, the statements of Gaps were mitigated in only one fifth of the cases, possibly because the majority refers to remaining gaps in a general way, without specifying the citation as a target of criticism:

### Example 116

At present, there is **paucity of empirical work** in the general area of strategy adjustments during the business cycle (Mascarenhas & Aker, 1989) and **a specific void** on employment strategies during the cycle. (AMJ 1992, Vol. 35, No. 5: 956-984)

## Marketing

In comparison with the other two disciplines, the most remarkable finding in Marketing was that Boosts were mitigated in as many as half of the cases, i.e. to a much higher degree than in the other two disciplines (Table 62 below). This would seem to indicate a greater concern for the readers' face. The comparatively large portions of the mitigation of Boosts and Limitations (deference, credibility and anticipation of criticism) as well as suggestions for Future research (fruitfulness of contribution vs. readers' face) appear to suggest that in Marketing articles mitigated promotion is more 'selling'. However, of all steps Gaps were the least mitigated (only a fifth or less), followed by Claims of centrality, although in the latter category the two journals differed. In fact, the two

journals in Marketing showed more differences than did the Management journals, but the most similar trends were found in mitigating Boosts and Gaps, i.e. the most face-threatening steps.

**Table 62. Mitigation of promotion in Marketing discussion/conclusion sections (no. of occurrences and percentages)**

	CLC JMR	CLC JM	GAP JMR	GAP JM	BST JMR	BST JM	LIM JMR	LIM JM	CAV JMR	CAV JM	CCL JMR	CCL JM	FUT JMR	FUT JM
mitig. Prom.	7 41	24 65	10 60	13 62	92 213	120 259	59 88	40 89	10 23	10 15	21 11	5 20	84 157	104 138
% mit.	<b>17.1</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>43.2</b>	<b>46.2</b>	<b>67.0</b>	<b>44.9</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>66.7</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>53.5</b>	<b>75.4</b>
%bald	82.9	63.1	83.3	79	55.8	53.8	33	55.1	56.5	43.3	-	75	46.5	24.6
Aver. mit.	clc	27	gap	18.9	bst	44.7	Lim	55.9	cav	55.1	ccl	108	fut	64.4
Aver. bald		73		81.1		56.3		44.1		44.9				45.6

*Legend: BST=boost, LIM=limitation, GAP=gap, CAV=caveat, CCL=counterclaim, CLC=claim centrality, FUT=suggestion of future research (JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing)*

It is to be noted that more promotion did not necessarily correlate with more mitigation, as shown by for instance the statements of Limitations compared with suggestions for Future research. The highest frequency of mitigation was again found in suggesting Future research (Example 117 below) but the two journals had very different strategies. In JMR bald statements (Example 118) were almost as frequent as mitigated statements, and interestingly a few cases with the otherwise rarely used deontic (obligation) modal *must* were also found (Example 119, strong recommendations for future applications):

### Example 117

The importance of integrity to trust **suggests** several important research questions. First, given that integrity is **likely** to be important because users are unable to evaluate research quality, it **may** be interesting to assess the degree to which the importance of integrity is diminished as a user's ability to evaluate research quality increases. Furthermore, future research **might** assess the importance of individual and organizational factors to integrity. Discovering, **for example**, the types of organizational cultures, structures, and reward systems that foster integrity **would** be useful, especially given the current trend of restructuring internal market research departments and subcontracting market research to commercial research firms. Relatedly, investigating the degree to which individual and organizational factors jointly influence integrity **should suggest** ways to manage researchers and their environments to foster integrity. Finally, understanding the types of beliefs held by high integrity researchers about themselves, their roles, and their relationships with others **may** provide insight into whether low integrity is a product of opportunistic, instrumental thought processes or some other set of beliefs. (JM Vol. 57 (January 1993): 81-101)

### Example 118

Therefore, **one important issue yet to be addressed is** the extent to which different strategies (problem solving, passive and active aggressive, and compromise) are used by retailers in a particular negotiation. (JMR Vol. XXX (May 1993): 183-203)

### Example 119

These results suggest that care **must** be taken in questionnaire design to ensure that overall brand evaluations are not "artificially" influenced by previous attribute ratings. (JMR, Vol. XXX (February 1993), 2-62)

Empirical work **must** estimate the social influence pattern between consumers and collect data on *which* consumers are purchasing *which* products (JMR, Vol. XXX, (May 1993), 125-41, original italics)

The most striking difference between the journals, however, occurred in mitigating Counterclaims: this potentially face-threatening act was not often used in JMR but when used, it was mitigated by not one but several signals (Example 120 below, hence the percentage almost reached two hundred). In contrast, JM conclusions contained twice the amount of Counterclaims but only a fourth of these were mitigated.

### Example 120

The study findings show that negotiations in a channel context **may** be more complex than a bipolar integrative/distributive perspective **seems to suggest** (cf. Angelmar and Stern 1978). (JMR Vol. XXX (May 1993), 183-203)

#### 12.3.2 Linguistic signals of mitigation

From a pedagogical point of view, again, it is of interest which linguistic signals are used for mitigation in discussion/conclusions, and whether it is possible to discern any characteristic patterns of signaling in the disciplines and journals, respectively. As was done in the context of abstracts and introductions, this section reports the findings on linguistic signaling of mitigation in promotion overall and in addition regarding specific steps.

Table 63 below includes those mitigating signals that occurred five or more times in the promotional steps of the discussion/conclusion sections of any one journal. There were 17 types that occurred five or more times, compared to only 7 types in the introductions. The total variety of types of mitigating signals in the three disciplines was large: despite their brevity, Finance discussion/conclusions contained 30 different types, whereas Management discussion/conclusion sections contained 40 (AMJ) and 50 (ASQ) and Marketing 39 (JMR) and 43 (JM) types of mitigating signals, respectively. The data in Table 63 are presented in descending ranking order.

**Table 63. The most frequent mitigating signals of promotion in discussion/ conclusions in all three disciplines ( >5 occurrences in any one journal, percentages of the top ten are shown in the next table)**

	Finance			Management			Marketing			Grand total	Rank
	JFE	JF	Total	AMJ	ASQ	Total	JMR	JM	Total		
may	1	10	11	35	68	103	58	49	107	221	1
would		2	2	24	45	69	40	56	96	167	2
should	2		2	22	14	36	42	28	70	108	3
could				14	13	27	26	25	51	78	4
suggest	2	5	7	15	21	36	9	16	25	68	5
might	1	1	2	27	13	40	10	9	19	61	6
appear	2	1	3	9	4	13	13	16	29	45	7
some	5	3	8	10	6	16		13	13	37	8
can	2	1	3	4	5	9	8	11	19	31	9
Although*	2		2	5	3	8	9	10	19	29	10
indicate		1	1	5		5	11	5	16	22	
potential				7	2	9	8	5	13	22	
likely	2		2	2	4	6	7	6	13	21	
perhaps				4	2	6	1	8	9	15	
possible				4	7	11	1	2	3	14	
possibility	1		1	3	1	4	5	2	7	12	
attempt					1	1	5	1	6	7	
Subtotal	20	24	44	190	209	399	243	262	505		
Miscell.	7	14	21	39	32	71	39	52	91		
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>596</b>		

Legend: JFE= *Journal of Financial Economics*, JF= *Journal of Finance*; AMJ= *Academy of Management Journal*, ASQ= *Administrative Science Quarterly*; JMR= *Journal of Marketing Research*, JM= *Journal of Marketing* (For comparison the total number of mitigated promotional steps in Introductions is included here.)

\* 'although' refers to the fronted concessive clauses

It is immediately obvious from Table 63 that the most frequent mitigation signals in discussion/conclusion sections were verbs (cf. Hyland 1996a): above all modal auxiliaries (especially *may*, which ranked first overall) but also some lexical modal verbs such as *appear* (although less frequently), and lexical verbs such as *suggest* and *indicate*. Since discussion/conclusion sections often deal with possible worlds, speculations, suggestions and recommendations, the modals *should* and *would* showed a high frequency. Again, fronted concessive clauses introduced by *Although* were fairly common in Marketing but not so common in the other two disciplines. The approximator *some* was used in a mitigating function especially in JM but also to some extent in Management and Finance.

An examination of whether specific patterns of devices were characteristic of each discipline or journal gave the following rough characteristics: For mitigation, Finance favored modal auxiliaries (JF notably *may*) and tentative projecting verbs (*suggest*) as

well as the approximator *some* to some extent, whereas Management and Marketing had a richer array of signals, e.g. more adverbials and adjectivals. Management also tended to favor modal auxiliaries but the two journals showed some predilections: *may* (notably ASQ), *would* (notably ASQ), *might* (notably AMJ), *should* (notably AMJ), and *suggest* (notably ASQ). In contrast to the other two disciplines, a more frequent use of *could* occurred in the Marketing journals, following just after *may* (notably JMR), *would* (notably JM), and *should* (notably JMR) in rank, mostly used to suggest further research but also a few times to suggest limitations or practical applications of the contribution.

When the mitigation of promotion in discussion/conclusion sections is compared to the mitigation in introductions (see Table 58), it is noticeable that there was more mitigation in discussion/conclusions, except in Finance where the reverse was true. This is explained by the amount of mitigation correlating with section length and with the promotional functions used in each section. Due to length, the number of categories exceeding the criterion of five occurrences was much larger in the discussion/conclusion sections than in the introductions. In terms of ranking, *may*, *should*, *could* and *suggest* largely followed the same ranking as in introductions, but entirely new rankings were shown by the verbs *would*, *might*, and *appear*. The concessive introductory clause initiated by *Although* seemed to characterize both the Marketing conclusions and the introductions (cf. 12.2.2.), but was not as frequent in Management conclusions. Perhaps in Marketing the positive politeness devices, the acknowledgement of previous research and the ‘giving of gifts’ (cf. Myers 1989), before stating Gaps, is considered particularly important as being a more ‘selling’ strategy.

To sum up the most frequently used signals in the discussion/conclusion sections and to illustrate possible differences between the three disciplines, the following table was constructed. Table 64 shows the occurrences of the ten most frequent mitigating signals and their share of the total number of mitigating signals in each discipline:

**Table 64. The ten most frequent signals of mitigating promotion in discussion/conclusions (total no. occurrences and percentages of all signals)**

	Finance	%	Management	%	Marketing	%
can	3	4.5	9	1.9	19	3.2
could	-	-	27	5.7	51	8.5
may	11	16.9	103	21.9	107	17.9
might	2	3.1	40	8.5	19	3.2
should	2	3.1	36	7.6	70	11.7
would	2	3.1	69	14.7	96	16.1
appear	3	4.5	13	2.8	29	4.9
suggest	7	10.7	36	7.6	25	4.2
Although*	2	3.1	8	1.6	19	3.2
some	8	12.3	16	3.4	13	2.2
Subtotal	40	61.5	357	75.9	448	75.2
Miscellaneous	25		113		148	
Total	65	100	470	100	596	100

\* 'Although' refers to the fronted concessive clauses

The most interesting observation to be made from Table 64 above is that, despite the large number of different types, the ten most frequent mitigating signals accounted for two thirds (61.5%) of the mitigation in Finance and three quarters of the mitigation in Management (75.9%) and Marketing (75.2%). Of these *may* was by far the most frequently used signal. In addition, Finance showed a certain preference for the projecting verb *suggest* and the approximator *some*, both useful in commenting on findings, the main objective in Finance conclusions. In addition to *suggest*, Management favored the modal auxiliaries *would* and *might* while, in addition to *should* and *would*, the modal auxiliary *could* was more common in Marketing specifically. The higher proportions of these modal auxiliaries are explained by the high number of Caveats/Limitations and suggestions for Future research in Management and Marketing discussion/conclusions. The verbs *might* and *could* would naturally occur in tentative descriptions of the shortcomings of the contribution as well as suggestions and recommendations for future research or practical applications.

If the percentages of mitigated steps of direct promotion are compared with the percentages of mitigated steps of indirect promotion, two figures are derived that should reflect the total degree of promotion, i.e. bald and tentative styles, respectively. Table 65

below shows the data for the two journals in Management and Marketing. Because of the scarcity and skewness of Finance data, these were not included.

**Table 65. Mitigation vs. baldness of direct and indirect promotion in Management and Marketing discussion/conclusions (percentages of total no. promotional steps)**

	Management			Marketing		
Mitigated steps.	AMJ	ASQ	Tot. aver.	JMR	JM	Tot. aver.
<b>Direct promotion</b>						
Claim centrality	45	25.6	35.3	17.1	36.9	27
Gap	17.9	23.5	20.7	16.7	21	18.9
Boost	22.6	45.4	34	43.2	46.2	44.7
<b>Average mitigation</b>	28.5	31.5	30.0	25.7	34.7	30.2
<b>Bald</b>	<b>71.5</b>	<b>68.5</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>65.3</b>	<b>69.8</b>
<b>Indirect promotion.</b>						
Counterclaim	34.1	36.1	35.1	191	25	108
Caveat	84	54.2	69.2	43.5	66.7	55.1
Limitation	29.1	94.4	61.8	67	44.9	55.9
Suggest fut. res.	62.2	60.4	61.3	53.5	75.4	64.4
<b>Average mitigation</b>	52.4	61.3	56.9	88.6	53	70.8
<b>Bald</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>29.2</b>

*Legend: JFE= Journal of Financial Economics, JF= Journal of Finance; AMJ= Academy of Management Journal, ASQ= Administrative Science Quarterly; JMR= Journal of Marketing Research, JM= Journal of Marketing*

To sum up, in spite of the initial assumption that for politeness reasons, a high proportion of direct promotion should simultaneously show a high proportion of mitigation, both the Management and the Marketing discussion/conclusions showed an overall preponderance of bald statements in direct promotion. In contrast, on average the majority of indirect promotional steps were not stated baldly. However, as the figures indicate, there were major differences between the journals of each discipline regarding the mitigation of some of the promotional steps.

### 12.3.3 Summary

The most unexpected finding overall was the fact that such large portions of the promotional steps were unmitigated, i.e. baldly stated. However, when trying to judge whether more mitigation or less mitigation means a balder or a more tentative style, it is important to examine what specific rhetorical/promotional step is mitigated and what effect mitigation might have in a given step. More mitigation in the potentially face-threatening Boosts, statements of Gaps, Counterclaims, and in suggestions for Future



research should logically signal more tentativeness and politeness towards the research community or writers' caution, whereas more mitigation in stating the Limitations and Caveats of the writers' own study appears to play down the possible shortcomings, and thus to be more promotional, by being tentative and/or speculative.

The perhaps most surprising finding was that the most directly promotional and the potentially most face-threatening step Boost was baldly stated in the majority of cases in all three disciplines. However, the highest degree of mitigating Boosts occurred in Marketing, which also showed the largest extent of Boosting in discussion/conclusion sections. A plausible explanation for the higher amount of mitigation is that a less categorical Boost of the writers' contribution is likely to be more easily acceptable (less aggressive, more polite) and thus easier to 'sell'. After all, an important area of both research and practice in Marketing is in fact promotion and persuasion. The proportions of mitigated Gaps appeared to be of fairly similar magnitude in all three disciplines, but like Claims of centrality, these steps were not a major issue in discussion/conclusions. The majority of suggestions for Future research were tentatively formulated in all three disciplines, which seems logical when speaking of 'possible worlds' and also to avoid possible intrusions on other researchers' territory.

To sum up very general trends for each discipline, it seems that Finance discussion/conclusions used mitigation least, i.e. were most bald in using promotion. On the other hand, the Finance discussion/conclusions contained considerably less promotion overall than the other two disciplines. The Management discussion/conclusions showed the highest degree of mitigation overall, whereas the Marketing discussion/conclusions showed more caution in stating Boosts, but less mitigation in the other steps than Management.

The most obvious pedagogical implication of the findings on the mitigation of promotion seems to be that not only disciplines but also journals within the same discipline may differ in conventions, and that therefore scholarly writers need to attentively study the specific journals they might target. However, certain promotional steps such as suggestions for future research and limitations in general seem more likely to be expressed in a tentative manner rather than categorically. Although the majority of the face-threatening Gaps and Boosts were baldly stated in these prestigious journals, it

would be important to discuss with novice writers what their options and their possible effects are.

#### **12.4 Promotion, mitigation, and politeness**

The data on the mitigation of promotion in this study do not offer unequivocal evidence on what might be considered polite/impositional vs. what might be considered politic in the disciplines/journals studied. Contrary to expectations, those promotional steps that were assumed to reflect the largest imposition on the discourse communities, i.e. Boosts, Counterclaims, and Gap statements were stated baldly in the large majority of cases, although in the case of Gaps (the term including any form of conflicting or unsolved issues) personal attribution was rare. Thus it seems that in these prestigious journals (and among established scholars) it is more important/politic to clearly state the merits/news value of the contribution, than to attend to the face of the esoteric/exoteric research community. In contrast, the statements of limitations and suggestions for further research were generally mitigated, the former perhaps to preserve the face/credibility of the writer, the latter to at least pay lip-service to respecting the possible territories of researchers in related areas but also to preserve the writers' face by adopting tentative or speculative formulations. What the data showed was that disciplines, even journals, may differ significantly in their use of overt promotion and mitigation, but to what extent the use of mitigation is due to politeness or caution may be difficult to judge, even for the subject experts or the writers themselves (cf. Meldrum 1994, Okamura 1997, Hyland 2000, Varttala 2001). The role of referees and editors in these formulations would make an interesting subject for future research, as previous studies have shown that these commentators frequently suggest more tentative formulations of major knowledge claims (cf. Myers 1990, Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995).

### 13 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The impetus for the present study was that at an early stage in the analysis I was struck by the large amount of explicit promotion of the writers' own research (Lindeberg 1994b, 1996b), an impression that was confirmed by Huckin's 1987 paper on 'surprise value' (news value) in scientific writing (printed in Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). The remarkable amount of overt evaluation found in the material thus changed the focus of the present study: from examining rhetorical structure as such into examining what could be considered promotional acts, i.e. what rhetorical steps/moves seemed to have a promotional function, and how they were used. More specifically, the research questions were: to what extent and in what ways are the three disciplines/six journals similar or different in their use of promotion? A follow-up question was, how could the similarities and differences be explained; in other words: What was the rationale underlying the hypothesized different conventions of promotion? After summarizing and discussing the findings, I will try to address this question as well as examine how my contribution might be useful in teaching academic/scholarly writing.

The issue of conventions and rationale made it necessary to examine some of the principal work done in genre studies on scholarly writing. Here the work of Miller (1984/1994), Bazerman (1981, 1988), Swales (1990), and Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) highlighted a view of scholarly writing as social action, exposed to social constraints and social effects in the discourse community addressed. The aspect of social interaction was strengthened by Myers' two articles, firstly, on the conventions of politeness in scientific writing (1989) and, secondly, on the forms of presenting major knowledge claims in research articles (1992). Thus the question of politeness and the concept of possible face-threatening acts in making claims added another dimension to the investigation of promotion: if certain promotional steps could be considered face-threatening, to what extent were they counterbalanced by politeness mechanisms, i.e. hedging and mitigation? Did the three disciplines/six journals under study here differ in their use of politeness strategies? Hedging and mitigation in scholarly writing has been the object of several studies e.g. by Hyland (1994, 1996a, 1996b, 1998a, 1998c, 2000),

and his categorization of hedging devices provided a useful starting-point for the linguistic analysis used in the present study.

The basic assumption of this study was that, despite generally being categorized under the social sciences, research articles in the three disciplines under study are likely to differ in their promotional strategies and in the structuring of those sections in which authorial presence is most discernible, i.e. in abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusions (cf. Butler 1990, Hunston 1994a, Hyland 1996a). The second assumption was that for teaching purposes these promotional strategies can best be studied by examining exemplars of best practice in the most prestigious journals.

### **13.1 Analytic framework of promotional steps**

This study identifies two major types of promotion: direct and indirect, and the division is based on the following functions (see also Chapter 8). Of the direct promotional steps, Claims of centrality are used to catch the reader's attention and to show the relevance or importance of the research field or problem area. Although potentially face-threatening, depending on the formulation, the function of Gaps or problem statements is to build up the reader's perception of the need for the present research, i.e. they justify the project about to be presented. Both of these categories and functions are found in Swales' CARS model (Swales 1990). However, in the present study, the Gap statement is shorthand for all indications of unsolved or conflicting issues, rather than merely explicit statements of gaps of knowledge as such. In addition, the study argues that Gap statements can also be used to build up credibility, by showing the writers' knowledge of the field (cf. Bazerman 1981, 1988, Kaufer and Geisler 1991).

An entirely new category is Boosting the writers' own contribution, i.e. a step that explicitly points out the merits or usefulness of the research presented, whether in terms of the material or the methods/model used, or in terms of the findings and/or their implications for research theory and/or business practice. This step differs from Swales' category *Announcing principal findings* in that the latter does not take into account overt evaluation. The term 'booster' is used by Hyland (1998a, 2000) but as a label for grammatical categories ('items expressing certainty', for example: *always, convince, evidence, no doubt*) rather than to denote a rhetorical step, as is the case in the present study.

Further promotional steps in the model are rhetorical steps mainly found in discussion/conclusions. For the identification of these, Dudley-Evans' (1989) model was the starting-point, but in addition to collapsing some of his categories and adding the criterion of promotion, the present study introduced the rhetorical steps of Caveats and Limitations, due to their extensive occurrence in Management and Marketing discussion/conclusions. In a later version of his model (1994) Dudley-Evans also included these.

The indirect promotional steps are so named, because their promotional effect is not necessarily immediately perceivable. Counterclaims are likely to be face-threatening and to impinge on the territory of researchers working in the same or ancillary fields, so the effect on the readers is likely to be negative (cf. Myers 1989). On the other hand, Counterclaims are justified by their potential for advancing knowledge, and this is frequently how new knowledge is announced (cf. Kuhn 1962/1996). Hence they indicate progress in the field and novelty, thus promoting the writers' contribution. Statements of Caveats and Limitations at first sight appear to diminish the current contribution by listing the anomalies, shortcomings or possible oversights in the research presented. On the other hand, their acknowledgement positions the contribution more accurately by showing the researchers' awareness of the reliability, validity, and generalizability of their contribution, thus promoting credibility. Another important function especially of elaborate statements of Limitations is to establish a territory or niche for further research, as is the function of listing remaining gaps. Suggestions for Future research can be perceived as a further enumeration of what the present research did not accomplish, or as a staking out of further territory, which can be perceived as face-threatening by the immediate research community. On the other hand, they enhance the writers' current contribution by showing how it has made it possible or easier to pursue further research or how it has generated a rich array of potentially fruitful research questions. While the first two effects may be perceived as face-threatening to writers or readers, respectively, the two latter effects enhance the interest and value of the contribution for the progress of the field or for business practice.

An important point in applying the analytic categories described above is to note that despite the fact that the same labels are used in analyzing abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusions, their functions in the three sections differ in some respects.

Claims of centrality and Gaps have the same promotional functions in abstracts and introductions, but in discussion/conclusion sections they sometimes take on different functions. First, at the beginning of the conclusions they are often restatements of previous Claims of centrality and Gaps, to remind the reader and set the scene for the discussion of findings. In this position their function is similar to that found in the introduction. However, Claims of centrality may also be placed at the end of a section/subsection in the conclusion, in order to assess the relevance or importance of the contribution (not the problem area) for the field, society or business practice in very general terms, thus reflecting the last move in Huckin's model of discussion/conclusion sections (Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). As restatements in discussions, the effect of Gaps is to *enhance* the value of the current contribution, whereas in introductions the function was to create the *need* for the contribution as well as to map out the state of knowledge in the problem area, and thus increase credibility. Further, Gaps in discussion/conclusions may not be restatements but may indicate Gaps that *remain* in the literature even after the present contribution, thus calling for further research, and then function as another indication of familiarity with the field and of insights gained due to the contribution.

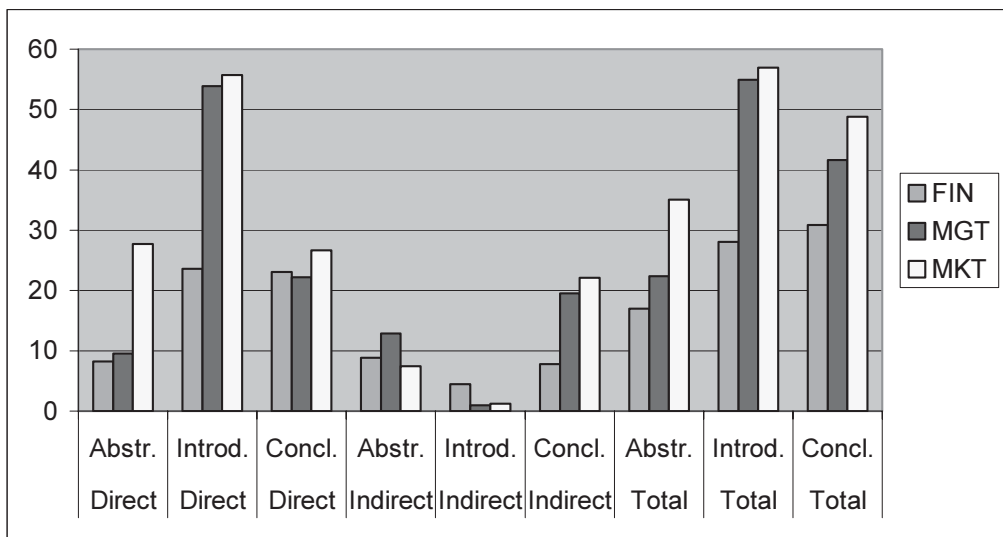
The face-threatening or politeness aspect of promotion generated the questions to what extent the promotional steps are mitigated and how the disciplines vary as regards the types of steps mitigated. The analytic framework for mitigating signals used in the present study was adapted chiefly from Hyland (1996a, 1998c), but it in addition a new category: *fronted concessive clauses* emerged in the material and was added into the set of mitigating signals (see Chapter 7). It is important to point out that both the promotional steps and the mitigations were identified on the basis of explicit linguistic signals, as illustrated in the incremental model of evaluation and the examples (see Sections 5.2, 7.2, 8.2 and 8.3.). However, I acknowledge the fact that the evaluative meanings of many linguistic signals are deeply dependent on the context/cotext and are not easy to delimit into specific items. Nevertheless, it is frequently the evaluation/mitigation signals that alert the reader to the possibility that a writer is promoting a contribution rather than merely reporting it or that s/he is making a claim rather than stating a fact.

## 13.2 Promotion strategies

### 13.2.1 General trends

The findings showed that direct and indirect promotion occurred in all three sections of the research articles, but that the degree of use varied considerably between disciplines, journals and sections (see Fig. 1). The major disciplinary differences were found between the Finance articles on the one hand and the Management and Marketing articles on the other hand: The lowest overall degree of use was found in the Finance journals and the highest degree in the Marketing journals, with the Management journals closer to Marketing than to Finance. This trend was fairly consistent throughout the different sections studied, with the exception of Management abstracts. Further, *Administrative Science Quarterly* showed individual strategies in some respects.

**Figure 1. Direct and indirect promotion in abstracts, introductions and discussion/conclusions (percentage of total no. sentences)**



Legend: FIN = Finance, MGT = Management, MKT = Marketing

In comparing the three sections, the lowest amount of promotion relative to the total number of sentences was generally found in the abstracts and the highest amount in the introductions. This emphasis on promotion in introductions tallies with Swales' observation of the introduction being the location of the major rhetorical effort (Swales 1990). Moving into the more specific level of sections and percentages of sentences (here rounded off), the average share of direct and indirect promotional steps in Finance

and Management abstracts was around 18-22% whereas the corresponding figure for Marketing was considerably higher at 34%, i.e. occurred in a third of the sentences on average. In Management the two journals showed very different trends: AMJ abstracts contained about 17% but *Administrative Science Quarterly* merely about 3% direct promotion.

In introductions, even the Finance texts contained promotion in more than a quarter (28%) of the sentences on average, whereas in Management and Marketing the corresponding shares were twice as high (55% and 57%, respectively). These levels of promotion in introductions are surprising, and to the best of my knowledge this phenomenon has not been systematically demonstrated in previous research. It is to be recalled that the percentages are proportional, i.e. calculated relative to the total number of sentences. Therefore, they show emphases rather than absolute occurrences. As the Finance introductions were on average nearly twice as long as the introductions of the other two disciplines, the difference in the actual number of promotional steps per text was smaller: 3.3 per text in Finance vs. 4.5 in Management and Marketing.

Somewhat lower (in Finance slightly higher) levels of emphasis on promotion than in the introductions were found in the discussion/ conclusion sections. Marketing consistently topped the list with an average of about 49% whereas Management was slightly lower with about 42% and Finance contained about 31% promotion. What these figures illustrate on a very general level is that the three disciplines appear to follow a consistent strategy regarding the amount of promotion. When actual average numbers of promotional steps per text were compared, the difference between Finance and the other two disciplines was bigger, due to the differences in length of the conclusion sections: Finance contained 5.1 promotional steps vs. 28 and 29 steps in Management and Marketing, respectively.

When the two journals within each discipline were compared, there was less consistency in some categories of promotion. This may be due to various factors: the audience addressed, the house styles of journals, or even individual preferences of authors that may affect a limited sample such as this. In the next section I will examine some of the consistencies and inconsistencies of the findings in terms of emphasis on a specific



promotional step in each of the sections under study here, and compare the findings to prior research.

### *13.2.2 Promotion strategies in abstracts*

In general direct promotion was used least in the abstracts, but the most frequent promotional step in all the disciplines was Boosting the writers' own contribution. This is not surprising in view of the fact that in many disciplines journal abstracts have become increasingly result-oriented (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995, Hyland 2000). However, the three disciplines and even the journals showed different tendencies: whereas on average only about a quarter of the Finance and the Management abstracts contained Boosts (ASQ only two), the Marketing abstracts used Boosts in as many as half the abstracts. In addition, the Marketing abstracts showed several instances of Claiming centrality and stating Gaps, which were rarely used in the abstracts of the other two disciplines.

In an extensive study Hyland examined changes over time in the rhetorical structure ('moves') of abstracts in eight different disciplines, one of which was Marketing (Hyland 2000). Although his perspective was 'promotion and credibility in abstracts', his labels of categories of moves do not specifically reflect promotion, with the possible exception of the term 'Product', which 'States main findings or results, the argument, or what was accomplished.' (Hyland 2000: 67) Hyland found that virtually all the abstracts in his material (94%) contained a Product statement 'which foregrounded the main argument or findings' (Hyland 2000: 68), and he concludes that this supports Berkenkotter and Huckin's (1995) view of abstracts as being a promotional genre. Hyland does not specify what he means by 'foregrounded', whether it is by placement or linguistic signaling, and according to his definition Product appears to refer to all statements of findings, whether they refer to results or to implications/applications. In contrast, the present study differentiates between a neutral statement of results or implications and one which is overtly evaluated, a Boost, or prominently argued, an initial Thesis. Thus it is difficult to compare our findings. If a statement reporting findings is included as a matter of course in abstracts (i.e. is generic), as Hyland's data seem to indicate, then its promotional effect would appear to be slight, unless the contribution is formulated as a 'Boost', i.e. contains a signal of positive evaluation, or a Thesis, i.e. the argument is presented as the main contribution by prominent positioning

or linguistic signaling. It is the identification of such factors that has been central in my analysis.

In the present material, the Marketing abstracts contained a great deal of implications; in fact this step was more typical of Marketing than of the other two disciplines. Even if only Boosts, and no other comments or implications, were subsumed under Conclusion, as many as 50% of the Marketing abstracts contained this move. Thus it would seem to be a major strategy at least in these prestigious journals, rather than a minor strategy as Hyland's findings based on a larger variety of Marketing journals seem to indicate. Although Hyland's definition of Conclusion appears to include more functions: 'Interprets or extends results beyond scope of paper, draws inferences, points to applications or wider implications.' (Hyland 2000: 67) it does not explicitly emphasise promotion.

According to American composition theory, the first sentence in a paragraph is in a rhetorically prominent position (cf. for example Axelrod and Cooper 1985). Examining the strategies of initial sentences, an interesting finding in my data was that in 90% and 80% of the cases, respectively, abstracts in Finance and Management introduced present research or purpose, or stated the main thesis or claim, i.e. adopted an '*in medias res*' strategy (front-weight), whereas Marketing abstracts did this in only 50% of the cases (end-weight). Instead the Marketing abstracts were initiated mainly by orienting statements of previous research/theories or Claims of centrality. The latter finding tallies with Hyland's data on Marketing, where the initial sequence of Introduction, Purpose, Product seemed to be the preferred order, but in my data explicit purpose statements occurred in less than 10% of the abstracts, and even then almost exclusively as infinitive forms.

### 13.2.3 *Promotion strategies in introductions*

As mentioned above, the introductions were the primary locus of direct promotion in all three disciplines, in terms of the emphasis of promotional steps relative to total number of sentences. However, the disciplines differed both in respect of the amount of promotion and the types of promotion that were emphasized. The Finance introductions emphasized Boosting the contribution (on average about 10% of the sentences) whereas the Management and the Marketing introductions emphasized Claiming centrality and

Gap statements (about 22%-24%). In contrast, the Finance introductions showed low use of these promotional steps (on average about 6% and 8%, respectively). The Finance strategies seem to accord with Bazerman's (1981) characteristics of the natural sciences (cf. Section 2.2) in showing little need to establish the territory or niche. They also correspond with the characteristics found in high-paradigm disciplines/fields (Kuhn 1962/1996, Gross 1990/1996, MacDonald 1994, Weick 1995). The Finance introductions were primarily result-oriented and the promotional emphasis was put on foregrounding the contribution at an early stage of the article (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995 on a similar trend in the natural sciences). In contrast, the Management and Marketing introductions put the primary promotional weight on establishing the importance of the research area or topic (building consensus) and on outlining the range of problems in previous research or mapping out uninvestigated areas. These latter strategies tally with the characteristics outlined by Bazerman (1981) for the social sciences, by MacDonald (1994) for 'particularism' in the humanities, and by Weick (1995) for low-paradigm disciplines/fields (cf. also Kuhn 1962/1996, Gross 1990/1996).

The differences between the journals did not always accord with the conventions generally associated with their respective target audience. Notably, in each pair of journals one journal was consistently considerably more promotional than the other. However, though all primarily research-oriented, the more promotional journal of the pairs each addresses a different type of audience: JF is targeted at academics, ASQ is targeted at academics, practitioners, and the government, and JM is targeted at academics and practitioners (Pierce and Garven 1995). Conversely, the journals with less promotion in each pair are targeted at similar types of audience: academics as well as practitioners. The conclusion is therefore that the variations in the journals' use of promotion within a discipline are likely to be due to in-house styles of journals rather than perceptions of audience.

Swales' (1990) CARS model is widely used in academic writing instruction as a basis for instruction manuals (for example Weissberg and Buker 1990, Swales and Feak 1994, May 1997). Therefore, my study compared the promotional structures of introductions with the CARS model, to see to what extent the disciplines followed the model. In addition I introduced the category of Boosting the contribution, apparently subsumed under *Announcing principal findings* in Swales' model. The occurrence/non-occurrence

of each type of direct promotional step in each paragraph was investigated to see whether specific steps tended to be placed in specific positions. Thus each step was located in one of six positions: first, second, third, middle, penultimate, and last paragraph.

The patterns of emphasis generally seemed consistent within the disciplines, as the two journals in each pair tended to show fairly similar patterns. However, in terms of location of the major promotional emphasis, the disciplines differed in the following respects: in the Finance introductions the largest amount of promotional emphasis was found in the middle paragraphs, which is explained by the fact that this was where the findings were discussed and assessed. In contrast, the Management and the Marketing introductions generally put the largest promotional emphasis into the first and second paragraphs, into establishing the territory and the niche (Claims of centrality and Gap statements).

The finding that the majority of Claims of centrality were located in the first paragraph in all three disciplines indicated major support for the CARS model for this rhetorical step. However, in examining the initial sentences of the first paragraphs, a slightly different picture emerged: in the Finance introductions, almost half the number of initial sentences contained another alternative: the Announcement of present research (25%), a Hypothesis or Thesis/Claim (10%), or a Gap statement (10%), thus deviating from the CARS sequence in as many as about 45% of the cases. In contrast, the Management introductions were mostly initiated by Claims of centrality (58%) or Topic generalizations (20%), although also in this discipline about 8% were initiated by Gap statements. In the present material, Marketing was the discipline where the CARS model was most strongly supported: 75% of the introductions were initiated by Claims of centrality and another 15% by Topic generalizations, totaling 90%. These observations indicate first, that the three disciplines appear to differ in their structuring of promotional steps and, secondly, that it seems possible to some extent to discern these different strategies by examining the initial sentence in the introductions. In other words, the result-orientation of Finance was also reflected in the introductions, and frequently as early as the initial sentence (cf. Section 10.4.2).

As one aspect of creating a convincing introduction, the types of appeals used in Claims of centrality in the three disciplines were examined, to see whether similarities or

differences were discernible and whether the differences could be explained by the types of audiences addressed. Understandably, in this genre the overall most frequent type of explicit appeal was research interest, closely followed by practitioner interest and prevalence or scope of the phenomenon. However, the disciplines differed somewhat in terms of which of these appeals was preferred, and the appeals did not always seem consistent with the targeted audience.

The Finance Claims of centrality primarily appealed to the prevalence or scope of the phenomenon and secondly to the research importance, the emphasis in each journal being consistent with the audience addressed: both academics and practitioners. The Management journals appealed to research and to practitioner interest almost equally, but here each journal's preference did not seem entirely consistent with the targeted audience: AMJ is research-oriented but appealed primarily to practitioner interest, while ASQ allegedly addresses a wider audience (Pierce and Garven 1995) but appealed primarily to research interest. This inconsistency might be due to the small sample and the finding needs to be checked in a larger material to justify a more general claim. However, Myers (1995:7) among others has suggested that academic writing conventions may be influenced by external factors, for example sources of funding for projects, and these might well influence the appeals used to catch the readers' interest in initial statements (cf. also Whitley 1984a, Hyland 1999a). In the Marketing introductions, both journals appealed strongly to practitioner interest, but this was barely exceeded by research interest in JMR and was equal to appeals to financial importance (economy) in JM. These appeals correlate with their audiences, which consist of both academics and practitioners, although JMR is considered the more technical of the two journals (Bass 1993).

The point of examining the types of appeals was to see what varieties occurred, whether any tendencies were discernible, and if so, how they could be linked to audience. Even if the small sample gives no clear indications, it can still be used to sensitize writing students to the varieties available and the effect of different types of promotional appeals.

To sum up, the promotional strategies of the Finance introductions have more in common with the strategies usually associated with discussion/conclusions, because the introductions have in fact taken over a great deal of the functions of the last section, and

are therefore strongly result-oriented. Further, considerably less attention is paid to establishing the territory or the niche, which correlates with the characteristics outlined by Bazerman (1981) and also by Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) for the natural sciences and which have been considered typical of high-paradigm disciplines/fields (cf. Weick 1995). In contrast, the Management and the Marketing introductions appear to devote the primary promotional effort to establishing the territory and almost equally or more to establishing the niche, which Bazerman (1981) found to be characteristic of the social sciences, and which has also been considered typical of low-paradigm disciplines/fields. However, I would like to argue that the extensive elaboration of Gaps in these two disciplines is not only due to the effort of creating a niche for the projected contribution, but also to an effort to outline the frontiers of knowledge in order to identify the research area by saying what it is *not* (cf. Kaufer and Geisler 1991). In addition, by showing extensive knowledge of the-state-of-the-art, credibility is enhanced.

#### *13.2.4 Promotion strategies in discussion/conclusion sections*

Both the Management and the Marketing discussion/conclusion sections in the present material were very long, consisting of several subsections which appeared in a somewhat variable order, although some preferred structures of rhetorical moves/steps have been found (Lindeberg 1994c). In contrast, the Finance discussion/conclusions were usually very short, consisting of two or three paragraphs, almost like slightly extended abstracts, and were often even labeled *Summary*. However, despite the variability certain general tendencies for emphasizing promotional steps were discernible. Not unexpectedly, in direct promotion the main emphasis was on Boosting the contribution in all three disciplines and all six journals. For indirect promotion there were no clear patterns in Finance, due to the shortness of the texts, but in Management and Marketing the main space allocation was on suggestions for Future research, closely followed by statements of Limitations.

In order to signal the macrostructure of the lengthy discussion/conclusions in Management and Marketing, subheadings were commonly used. However, descriptive headings predominated overwhelmingly, and thus informative subheadings, suggested to be more promotional by Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), seemed not to have gained major acceptance yet. Only ASQ showed a more even distribution of descriptive and

informative subheadings, thus indicating a more promotional tendency in this respect. To what extent this accords with the audience addressed, which in addition to academics includes practitioners as well as the government (Pierce and Garven 1995), is an intriguing question.

Whereas the Finance introductions were result-oriented, and the Management and the Marketing introductions were concerned with promoting the territory and the niche, in the discussion/conclusions all three disciplines put the main promotional emphasis on Boosting the writers' own contribution. This is not surprising, since the major purpose of this section traditionally is to discuss the findings and to assess the implications and value of the contribution. What was surprising, however, was the large amount of space devoted to discussing Limitations and to suggesting Future research in both the Management and the Marketing discussion/conclusions, which often formed sizeable subsections of their own. As mentioned previously, this finding led to the establishment of the taxonomy of indirect promotion, as described in Chapter 8.

In direct promotion, in all three disciplines Boosting was three or four times as frequent as Claims of centrality or statements of Gaps. Nevertheless, when added together the two latter accounted for about a third of the direct promotion. It is noteworthy that in addition to *restating* previous Claims of centrality or Gaps to set the scene for the assessment of the writers' contribution, in discussion/conclusions these steps also acquired new functions: Gap statements referred to *remaining* lacunae in the literature and were often used to justify suggestions for Future research, and Claims of centrality/relevance at the end of discussions referred to the relevance of the contribution for the business world or society in more general terms, i.e. implemented the last move in Huckin's model of the macrostructure of discussion/conclusions (Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995).

An interesting finding was that, despite their brevity, the Finance discussion/conclusions showed similar relative distributions of direct promotional steps as the other two disciplines, i.e. a similar pattern of emphasis. However, whereas all the Management and the Marketing discussions contained Boosts, a quarter of the Finance discussions did not. The two journals in each discipline differed considerably in their amount of direct promotion, which may again indicate preferences in journal house styles. When indirect promotion was included, which received a substantially heavier emphasis in the

Management and the Marketing discussions (twice or more times the amount of indirect promotion in Finance), the Finance discussion/conclusions on average contained promotion in every third sentence whereas in the Management discussions the share was about 42% and in the Marketing discussions almost half of all the sentences.

Consistent with the fact that initial sentences had been examined in abstracts and introductions, the discussion/conclusions were also studied in this respect. Overall the most frequently used initial rhetorical step was the *restatement*, mostly expressing Aims, Announcing present research, Gaps, or Hypotheses, but the emphasis in each pair of journals varied as much as did the disciplines. Thus one of the two Finance journals (JF) preferred restatements of background whereas the other (JFE) favored beginning by stating major claims or findings. It could be argued that the former favored a ‘soft sell’ strategy whereas the latter favored a ‘hard sell’ strategy although both address a similar audience. The latter strategy was also preferred by one of the Management journals (AMJ) while the other (ASQ) tended to state major findings/claims and Boosts initially (‘hard sell’), consistent with other assertive strategies (assertive verbs in abstracts, more promotion in introductions). In Marketing there was more similarity between the two journals in showing a preference for restatements, but initial Boosts were used in 25% of the cases. The Marketing journals thus more consistently used a more orienting strategy providing background (‘soft sell’). In addition they frequently summarized the main findings and implications in the initial paragraph, which thus took on the characteristics of an abstract, and this could be considered a reader-friendly strategy in offering a quick overview.

#### *13.2.5 Consistency of promotion strategies*

When the total promotional strategies of the three disciplines and six journals were examined by comparing the findings for abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusions, the following similarities and differences were found. In all sections the Finance journals consistently contained less promotion than did the journals in Management and Marketing, which showed more similar tendencies. Regarding specific sections, the Finance writers put most promotional emphasis on the introductions whereas Management and Marketing writers placed the main emphasis in the discussion/conclusion sections. This is logical, seeing that the Finance journals presented and discussed their major findings in the introductions whereas the



Management and Marketing journals usually saved this for the discussion/conclusion sections.

As regards specific steps, the Finance writers consistently put the major emphasis of promotion on Boosts, whereas the Management and the Marketing writers did this in abstracts and discussion/conclusions, but instead emphasized Claims of centrality and Gaps in introductions. In addition, the Management and the Marketing discussion/conclusions had sizeable sections on Limitations and Suggestions for Future research, whereas the Finance introductions (largely doing the job of discussion/conclusions) as well as the discussion/conclusions contained few of these steps. The lack of suggestions for future research may be due to competitive reasons, as has been suggested to be the case with some natural sciences (Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). The lack of a discussion of limitations may be explained by the familiarity to the readership of the accepted paradigms and thus also their limitations. To conclude, despite differences between each journal in the pairs regarding emphasis on certain of the steps, on the macrolevel there was a fairly clear consistency of promotional strategies within each discipline across the different sections.

### **13.3 Mitigation of promotional steps**

The study addressed the following questions: 1) How frequent is mitigation of promotion and what are the main linguistic signals? 2) In what ways do the three disciplines differ in their use of mitigation? 3) Can the possible similarities/difference be linked to disciplinary cultures and politeness concerns?

#### *13.3.1 Mitigation of promotion in abstracts*

Although the sparseness of data on promotion in abstracts makes it difficult to draw conclusions about the mitigation of promotion, one interesting finding did emerge, namely that the most frequent promotional step, i.e. Boost, was rarely mitigated (only 7 out of the grand total of 57). This seems to indicate that when explicit promotion of the writers' own contribution was chosen as a strategy in the abstracts, it tended to be implemented baldly, despite being potentially face-threatening by ignoring deference to the acceptance of the research community. This applied especially to the Marketing abstracts, because those of the other two disciplines contained rather few Boosts. Moreover, although Gap statements were few overall (16) only half of these were

mitigated, while Claims of centrality (18) were not mitigated at all. The explanation for the latter might be that the appeals were made on generally acceptable grounds. For comparison, a check on the mitigation of all rhetorical steps in abstracts showed that knowledge claims/results largely tended to be mitigated (cf. Section 12.1). If these are seen as promotional, as the definition of 'Product' in Hyland's study suggests (Hyland 2000), then there is more mitigation of promotional steps in abstracts. However, in terms of the taxonomy of explicit promotion used in the present study, there was little mitigation of promotional steps in abstracts, which thus supports Myers' (1989) suggestion that baldness is acceptable in abstracts for reasons of brevity and efficiency (cf. also Meldrum 1994).

An interesting question is to what extent the mitigation of major knowledge claims as such is to be seen as a politeness signal, as suggested by Myers (1989), and hence a promotional device. Presumably it is easier for the research community to accept a claim that is deferentially or tentatively formulated than one that is assertive, for reasons of face (both the writers' and the readers', cf. Hyland 1996a) and epistemic plausibility. However, as mentioned above the focus of the present study is on the mitigation of overt promotional steps, which can be seen as impositions, and in most of these politeness or caution did not seem to be a major concern, although they appeared frequently in major knowledge claims.

An interesting ancillary question is whether the use of personal attribution (self-reference) in knowledge claims in abstracts was to be seen as a mitigating device (cf. Myers 1989). In this study the rhetorical impact of the personal attribution was judged on the basis of whether the verbs following the personal attributions were assertive or tentative. More than half or two thirds of these verbs in the Finance abstracts were assertive whereas the opposite was true of Management and Marketing. Thus self-reference in the Finance abstracts was mainly assertive, whereas in Management and Marketing it was mainly tentative, i.e. more concerned with politeness and caution. Moreover, in Marketing only the third person (*the author(s), he/she/they*) was used. This usage is now an explicit instruction in the journals' guidelines to contributors for writing abstracts but was not yet included in the guidelines of the current material (see Appendix 5). Interestingly, in the Marketing introductions the usage did not occur at all. In the two journals in Management the amount of assertive self-reference in abstracts

differed a great deal, ASQ being much more assertive in this respect. Studies of conference abstracts from different national cultures have suggested that the assertive use of personal pronouns may differ widely in different cultures (cf. Andersson and Gunnarsson 1995 and Melander et al. 1997). The present findings show that such differences may be even as local as journal conventions within a single discipline (cf. Kaplan et al. 1994).

### *13.3.2 Mitigation of promotion in introductions*

As introductions displayed a major emphasis on promotion, more data on the use of mitigation were available. Here I shall focus on the mitigation of direct promotion, as the instances of indirect promotion were few. On average, around 30% of the promotional steps in the Finance and the Marketing introductions and 40% of the steps in the Management introductions were mitigated. However, as much as two thirds of the Boosts in both Finance and Marketing journals were baldly stated, whereas the Management introductions mitigated Boosts in almost half the cases. In other words, like in abstracts, promotion in introductions was predominantly expressed baldly rather than tentatively, although Management was considerably more tentative. However, the degree to which specific steps were mitigated differed, and even the strategies of the two journals within disciplines varied to some extent. The variations in emphases between journals in each pair seem to indicate that the choice of emphasis and degree of mitigation might be due to house styles of journals rather than due to disciplinary conventions. These trends need to be followed up in a larger material.

Consistent with politeness expectations, the total percentages showed that the journals in each pair that contained more promotion also used more mitigation, but when specific steps were examined this no longer held true. Therefore, it can neither be claimed that a specific step is generally mitigated nor mitigated in a specific discipline. Which of the steps should be considered more face-threatening is therefore difficult to judge. The generally high percentage of bald promotion is interesting in view of Myers' proposal that major knowledge claims and denials of claims tend to be hedged (Myers 1989), which would indicate that Boosts and Gaps should be predominantly mitigated. However, the present findings did not confirm this hypothesis.

With a pedagogical aim in mind the linguistic signals of mitigation in promotion were examined. The data showed that in Finance introductions only about a third came from the group consisting of modal auxiliaries, the modal verb *suggest*, and the approximator *some*, and instead they used a great variety of signals that occurred less than five times in any one of all the journals. In contrast, with the addition of fronted concessive clauses, modal auxiliaries and lexical verbs accounted for 50% of the mitigating signals in Marketing and as much as two thirds of those in Management, which thus showed considerably more consistency. The difference between Finance on the one hand and Management and Marketing on the other hand might be partly explained by the lower overall use of promotion in Finance. The pedagogical implication for academic writers is that, although often sparingly used, the mitigation of promotion tends to follow certain patterns, which might be specific for each journal.

### *13.3.3 Mitigation of promotion in discussion/conclusion sections*

In discussion/conclusion sections the three disciplines showed roughly the same cline of degrees of mitigation as they did of promotion: on average the Finance writers mitigated about 33%, the Management writers about 44%, and the Marketing writers about 51% of the promotional steps (direct and indirect added together). However, similarly to introductions, these figures do not show a real correlation between mitigation and degree of promotion. An examination of which promotional step received the emphasis of mitigation revealed great variances. The Finance discussion/conclusions were very short and showed a strong tendency not to mitigate Boosts, Gaps and Limitation statements, i.e. to state these baldly (74-80%). Similarly to Finance, the Management and the Marketing writers tended to state Gaps and Boosts baldly, albeit the latter to a somewhat lower degree (66% and 56%, respectively), but interestingly the majority of statements of Limitations were mitigated (62% and 56%, respectively). The only promotional step in which all three disciplines showed a consistent tendency was in mitigating suggestions of Future research, which were tentatively formulated in over half or even two thirds of the cases. The pedagogical implication seems to be that in discussion/conclusions Boosts should be baldly stated to make the right impact, whereas it is politic to mitigate the study's limitations as well as the suggestions for Future research.

Why is there a clear tendency to mitigate Limitations and suggestions for Future research, and what is the effect of such mitigation? The simplest explanation for the tentative formulation of both Limitations and suggestions for Future research is that in many cases these tend to be speculative, as knowledge may not exist or may be based on scant evidence. However, I would also like to suggest another explanation. Choosing a tentative formulation when acknowledging and describing the limitations of a study makes these limitations seem less definite, more like matters of interpretation and opinion, and therefore not necessarily true or important. In other words, the negative impact of the limitations is diminished. The writers are saving their own face by anticipating possible objections, but they are also respecting the communal face by playing by the rules and by showing deference and the expected caution. In other words, in terms of promotion the detailed reporting of limitations adds accuracy and credibility while the mitigation simultaneously lessens the extent of negative impact, thus also subtly increasing acceptability.

Apart from showing awareness of the speculative nature of suggestions for Future research, the extensive mitigation can be explained by the fact that these suggestions may invade the territory of other researchers working in the same area, by staking out further territory for the writers or by limiting what other researchers can subsequently do (cf. Myers 1989). This can be perceived as highly face-threatening, and therefore politeness signals are politic, increasing the acceptability of the suggestions and showing necessary deference to the research community. Similarly to the areas in the sciences mentioned by Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) which avoid suggestions for future research for competitive reasons, Finance discussion/conclusions contained relatively few of these. However, those that did occur were mitigated in three quarters of the cases.

In a comparison of the use of linguistic signals of mitigation, the three disciplines showed more consistency in the discussion/conclusion sections than there was in the introduction sections, because except in Finance there were more data. Thus the ten most frequent signals accounted for two thirds of the signaling in Finance and as much as three quarters of the signaling in both Management and Marketing. In all three disciplines, the modal *may* was the most frequently used signal, and in Management and Marketing this was followed by *would* and *should*, whereas the Finance writers

preferred *suggest* and the approximator *some*, just as they did in introductions. MacDonald (1994: 179) has proposed that the frequency of the use of 'suggest' is partly explained by the fact that it allows (social) scientists 'to show that they are observing disciplinary constraints about inferencing.' The preponderance of modals was also illustrated by the fact that in Management *might* was fairly frequent whereas Marketing preferred *could*. The frequency of these modals as well as *should* and *would* is explained by the large number of Limitations and suggestions for Future research. The pedagogical implication is that the linguistic signals of mitigation need to be taught in the context of their rhetorical/promotional functions, especially to the EFL scholar. Hyland's (1994) study of EAP textbooks found that very few paid attention to hedging (except for Jordan 1990, Weissberg and Buker 1990), but later textbooks (Swales and Feak 1994, May 1997) do provide some examples and practice.

#### *13.3.4 Consistency of mitigation strategies and politeness*

In very general terms, all three sections in all three disciplines tended not to mitigate direct promotion: although the disciplines differed and journals within disciplines sometimes differed widely regarding extent, bald formulations of direct promotion predominated. On the basis of these findings, it seems that in these prestigious journals, which operate in a highly competitive academic community, it is more important to the writers to promote the value of their own contribution than to cater to the politeness or deference requirements of the research community. In other words, when they use explicit direct promotion, politeness considerations are of secondary importance. For example, when Boosts and Gap statements were used in abstracts, they tended to be baldly stated. However, there were also differences between the disciplines. For example, assertive use of self-reference was more common in Finance than in Management and Marketing abstracts.

Although the overall findings for introductions and discussion/conclusions showed certain parallel tendencies of more promotion correlating with more mitigation on a general level, this was no longer consistently true for specific journals or steps. On the basis of the politeness theory of Myers (1989), I did not expect the highly FTAs (face-threatening acts) Boosts to be unmitigated to such an extent as they were in the large majority of cases, although Management here took a more cautious line than Finance and Marketing. Similarly, the large majority of the highly face-threatening Gap

statements in introductions were baldly stated in all three disciplines, although personal attribution was generally avoided. Thus it seems more important to build up the justification and significance of the writers' own contribution in no uncertain terms than to address the face of the cited research. In discussion/conclusions, the Finance and Management writers predominantly stated Boosts baldly, but the Marketing writers used mitigation in almost half the cases, indicating a softer (more palatable?) approach to promoting their contribution.

A completely different line was taken when indirect promotion was used, which was primarily in the discussion/conclusion sections. It tended to be mitigated rather heavily, apart from the face-threatening Counterclaims, although here JMR was an outstanding exception. Perhaps as with Boosts it is paramount to the writers that the Counterclaims (also a statement of a new contribution) are unequivocally and categorically stated. It seems, then, that in the majority of cases the writers in these prestigious journals consider it more important to express their contribution in a bald manner than to choose more tentative and less face-threatening formulations. In contrast, all journals and disciplines consistently tended to formulate suggestions for Future research tentatively, which may be in order not to intrude too directly into areas already being worked by other researchers but may also be due to the speculative nature of such suggestions. The effect of the extensive mitigation of the Caveats and Limitations of their own research by Management and Marketing writers seems to have little to do with communal politeness, but does pertain to saving the writers' face from anticipated questioning by peers. They also work in the writers' favor by increasing credibility, because they show knowledge of the state of the art (cf. Hyland's writer-based and accuracy-based hedges in Section 6.2).

### 13.4 The competitive market of scholarly publication

In looking for an explanation for the substantial amount of bald promotion, Huckin's suggestion earlier about the natural sciences comes to mind:

'...it is not the amount of surprise value that is remarkable in today's scientific journal articles as it is the **promoting** of it. The answer seems to lie in the greatly increased competitiveness of modern science.' (Huckin 1993:28, original emphasis)

The motivations for scholarly publication have variously been described as follows: 1) to enhance reputation, 2) to gain tenure or promotion, 3) to initiate a scholarly dialogue,

and 4) to contribute to the knowledge of the field (cf. Becker 1986). The number of articles by faculty published in refereed journals also influences the awarding of funds to departments. Thus the publication of a scholarly article is a highly complex social act, intended to accomplish a multitude of goals. This no doubt impacts the rhetorical strategies adopted for presenting contributions. Further, as the disciplines have developed and departments at universities have grown in size, the importance of and competition in gaining publication in the top-tier journals has increased correspondingly. The highly competitive atmosphere of academic institutions in the US is reflected in the fact that getting published in the top-tier journals is judged to be more important than a researcher's total number of publications (Gomez-Mejia and Balkin 1992). The journals examined here have all repeatedly been ranked among the three to five top journals in their fields and their rates of rejection are around 80-90% (cf. Section 1.3.2). *The Journal of Finance* is published by the American Finance Association, the *Academy of Management Journal* by the Academy of Management, and the *Journal of Marketing* and the *Journal of Marketing Research* by the American Marketing Association, all regarded as the most prestigious organizations in their field in the US and elsewhere. Thus getting accepted and published in these journals is central in the establishment of a researcher in his academic career as well as in the eyes of those business practitioners who read these journals.

What these observations show is that the social importance of acceptance in these journals has increased substantially over time. The submitters of articles to all the journals studied are experiencing increasing degrees of competition, and in order to get accepted, in addition to presenting respectable research, they have to include clear and concise expressions of what their scholarly contribution is and of its value. A detailed analysis of the review processes and editorial policies would go beyond the scope of the present study. Briefly, however, according to their instructions to contributors (see Appendix 5), the Finance journals appear to be more interested in an easily summarizable contribution, whereas the Management and Marketing journals emphasize the importance of variety and pluralism in approaches and explanations, at the same time stressing logic and coherence. The rhetorical effort involved in attempting to span diverse approaches in Management research has been illustrated by Locke and Golden-Biddle (1997, see Section 13.6), and judging from the discipline's description of its evolution (Kerin 1996) the issues are likely to be similar in Marketing. An intriguing



question is whether the rhetorical/promotional strategies can be linked with disciplinary cultures. Hyland suggests that fast evolving and diversifying disciplines, such as Marketing, need to engage in substantial rhetorical effort (Hyland 2000), and the present data certainly support this view of Marketing. On the other hand, as pointed out earlier, it seems logical that a discipline whose very object of study is (product/service) promotion engages in promotional rhetoric when presenting research.

### **13.5 Promotion strategies and disciplinary cultures**

In his paper ‘Genre analysis’ from 1995, Bhatia proposes the following goal for studies of genre:

Genre analysis extends discourse analysis from linguistic description to explanation, often attempting to answer the question, why do members of specific discourse communities use language the way they do? (Bhatia 1995:1)

The issue here is to see what links there might be between promotion strategies and differing characteristics of the disciplines. For this purpose, it is useful to return briefly to Bazerman’s (1981) description of disciplinary differences (cf. Section 2.2). It seems that the promotional strategies of the Finance journals do show several characteristics in common with the rhetorical conventions of the natural sciences as described by Bazerman (cf. also MacDonald 1994). In comparison with the other two disciplines less effort is put into establishing a framework by citing the literature, especially in terms of Gaps, and less effort is put into pointing out the implications of the contribution in terms of Boosts, Limitations or suggestions for Future research. Thus the Finance journals seem to rely on more established paradigms and address a more homogeneous audience. However, in contrast to the description of the natural sciences, there seems to be a fairly strong authorial presence in terms of a more frequent assertive use of personal pronouns (cf. Bazerman 1988:216 on self-reference to indicate ‘ownership’ of the current work) and also as reflected in promotion and mitigation. The journals were also consistently result- and contribution-oriented, presenting these at an early point in the sections and articles (cf. Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995 on this trend in the sciences), thus not seeing a need for extensive reader orientation at the beginnings of sections.

In contrast, consistent with Bazerman’s description of the social sciences, the Management and Marketing journals showed a larger need to identify and establish the research area and topic, i.e. both the territory and the niche, and to revalidate the

literature. They seem to address a much less homogeneous audience and engage in more promotion in terms of Claims of centrality and Gap statements, as well as Boosts, Limitations and suggestions for Future research. In that sense there is stronger authorial presence than in the Finance journals. As for maintaining readers' goodwill, both the Finance and the Management and Marketing journals showed a surprisingly high degree of bald promotion, but in introductions the Management writers used tentative formulations of Boosts in nearly half the cases while the Marketing writers did this in discussion/conclusions (cf. Hyland 1998a and 2000 on a fairly high level of hedging in Marketing journals in general). In other words, they showed a softer approach in several respects. There was also more crediting in the form of citations, for example by balancing a Gap statement with a fronted clause acknowledging achievements in the research area. However, much rhetorical effort was put into establishing originality and significance of contribution.

The rhetoric of the natural sciences is largely seen as that of positivism and empiricism whereas the scientific status of various social sciences as sciences has often been debated (cf. McCloskey 1986). In a study of the scientific status of Management research, Whitley refers to this standpoint when he points out that it is the dependency of the contribution on its practical application, 'its ability to affect social practice' that 'renders the scientific status of Management research doubtful according to traditional views of scientific knowledge...' (Whitley 1984a: 372). He suggests that Management research is even more reflexive and self-conscious than other social sciences and that the results tend to be more accessible to lay audiences. Further, the direct interest in improving practices leads to topics being selected in a different way from those selected for explanatory and theoretical interest, in that they require good theories of implementation as well as explanatory power and need to be related to current topics of concern among practitioners. According to Whitley, this has important consequences, leading to theoretical and technical pluralism:

Because of the importance of these lay audiences and their capacity for controlling considerable resources, scientists in this field are unlikely to develop the sort of cohesive and intellectual structures which are found elsewhere in the sciences. (----) The apparent lack of coherence and enormous variability of research styles and evaluation criteria evident in this field are not, I suggest, the inevitable epistemological consequence of being practically oriented but rather follow from the sociological situation of management research where high task uncertainty is combined with low autonomy and low mutual dependence among researchers. (Whitley 1984a: 375f.)

However, Whitley argues that this does not necessarily imply any fundamental epistemological difference in the knowledge produced from that obtained in fields more oriented to theoretical goals. Acknowledging that there are substantial differences between the objects of the natural sciences and the social sciences, he argues that these do not hinder their comparability, since observations and perceptions are ‘theory laden’ in all forms of research, and there is no direct access to ‘reality’ unmediated by language and preconceptions. Whitley thus subscribes to the social constructivist view of scientific knowledge, but observes that whereas natural scientists can operate with closed systems, social scientists have to take their data from open systems:

The universal laws and theories beloved of orthodox philosophy of science apply only in closed systems where these mechanisms and their effects can be isolated; in open systems they operate as tendencies which may or may not be realized in practice according to the prevailing circumstances. (Whitley 1984a:380)

Whitley suggests that it is the plurality of accounts that forces the social scientist to construct a framework in which the accounts make sense, and that such a framework suggests alternative descriptions of social phenomena which are seen as more accurate or correct for the current purposes. Thus he sees criticism as being inherent in management research, because ‘the objects to be understood are ordered meanings and descriptions, attempts at providing better accounts which explain the social world more systematically, and which also explain why inadequate accounts exist’ (Whitley 1984a: 386). In other words,

To undertake social science research is to criticize existing accounts of events, to formulate new descriptions and underlying mechanisms which would account for these redescribed phenomena. (Whitley 1984a: :386)

These observations explain the large reliance of the Management articles on statements of Gaps in introductions and the extensive elaboration of Limitations in discussion/conclusion sections in the present material (cf. also Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997). The contingency element in Management research is relatively prominent.

### 13.6 Extending the promotion models

The models of analysis in this study are based on theories of genre analysis, rhetoric and applied linguistics. Interestingly, strong parallels and a useful extension of the model can be found in a study done from inside one of the disciplines: Management scholars Locke and Golden-Biddle's study of what is essentially the promotion of a scholar's contribution (1997). They problematize the concept of 'unique contribution' by reviewing the variety of terms used in the organizational sciences to express the concept: *novelty*, *disconfirming evidence*, *significance (to the field)*, and *originality*. They claim that the following questions have been neglected within the discipline:

[But,] despite the attention paid to establishing that contribution matters in scientific work, relatively little attention has been paid to what contribution means in practice, in the language used in written texts. How is contribution constructed in scholarly writing? How do texts create the opportunity for contribution? How does the uniqueness value translate into practice through the writing of scientific texts? How is the case made that a given text provides something important? (Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997:1024f.)

Despite the different starting-points, these questions are remarkably similar to the ones posed by the present study, and as their model offers reinforcement as well as ideas for further refinement of my model I will briefly present and discuss it here.

Like the present writer, Locke and Golden-Biddle are adherents of the social constructivist view of scientific knowledge. The focus of their claim is that the importance and relevance of a contribution is in particular situated within the extant literature of the topic under investigation and that, therefore, in order to study the construction of the contribution, it is crucial to examine how scholars situate their contribution in relation to this literature. This stance explains the sometimes extensive citations of previous research in the Management articles of the present material (cf. also Swales 1990 on the importance of 'positioning' the contribution) and the importance of establishing common ground:

An idea becomes a contribution, then, when it is constructed as important by the members of a scholarly community, relative to the accepted knowledge constituted by the field's written work. (Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997:1025, cf. also Myers 1989, 1992)

I will summarize the analytic framework proposed by Locke and Golden-Biddle, and subsequently compare it to the models of Swales (1990) and the present work. Their basic assumption is that there are two key processes 'that manuscripts enact in order to

construct claims that contribution opportunities exist and are warranted. ' (Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997:1029):

- 1) re-present and organize existing knowledge so as to configure a context for contribution that reflects the consensus of previous work (**Constructing Intertextual Coherence**)
- 2) subvert or problematize the very literatures that provide locations and raisons d'être for the present efforts (**Problematizing the Situation**)

These processes are further broken down into a number of categories and subcategories. An overview of the various categories is given in Table 66 below, which is a condensed version of the original table in Locke and Golden-Biddle. The boldfaced markings indicate evaluative items and are my additions.

**Table 66. Textual Acts and Rhetorical Practices that construct Intertextual Coherence (modified from Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997:1041, emphasis added)**

Form of Intertextual Coherence	Textual Acts	Rhetorical Practices
<b>Synthetized coherence</b>	Formulate general ideas Construct <b>congruent</b> relationships Demonstrate latent <b>consensus</b>	Thematic generalization <b>Connecting divergent</b> literatures <b>Reinterpretation</b> to show underlying <b>consensus</b>
<b>Progressive coherence</b>	Construct cumulative <b>progress</b>  Construct <b>consensus</b>	Referencing <b>time devoted</b> Serializing citations (showing <b>development</b> ) Citing densely (showing <b>effort</b> ) Stating <b>agreement</b> Citing <b>shared</b> perspectives
<b>Noncoherence</b>	Construct <b>discord</b>	<b>Contentious</b> characterizations Differentiating internal <b>challenges</b> <b>Negating</b> findings <b>Dichotomizing</b> approaches

*Note: Boldface indicates evaluation (my emphasis)*

The basic underlying logic of the textual acts and rhetorical practices used to construct *Intertextual Coherence* is the tension between established prior research findings and frameworks and the acceptable challenging of them (cf. also Myers 1989, 1992, Hyland 1999a). As will be shown in the brief elaboration of Locke and Golden-Biddle's framework below, they especially stress the importance of an initial establishment of an intertextual coherence, before moving on to claim space for the current research topic. This seems to be important in the Marketing journals in the present material as well: both the Management and the Marketing introductions put the main promotional

emphasis on Claims of centrality (cf. *Constructing cumulative progress and consensus*) as well as statements of Gaps (cf. *Constructing discord*).

In Locke and Golden-Biddle's model, the promotional aspect, the legitimizing purpose, of reviewing previous research before getting to the challenging stage is more pronounced than in Swales' model, suggesting that:

... although there is not a recognized body of work on the topics of interest, a critical mass of evidence and arguments can be gleaned to legitimately configure the topics for investigation. (Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997: 1043)

The basic purpose of linking networks of researchers, by citing shared theoretical perspectives and methods over time, by depicting cumulative knowledge growth and constructing consensus, is to establish research domains, to show development of understanding in the topic area and the growing focus of inquiry (cf. a similar development in Marketing, Kerin 1996). This is realized by the use of dense citations. There may be divergent lines of inquiry, but these are portrayed as being complementary, whereas the next major category: *Constructing Noncoherence*, seems to cover both Gap statements and Counterclaims.

However, the dividing line between the acts and practices described under Noncoherence and those described under Problematizing the Situation does not seem entirely clear-cut. The process of problematizing the situation is a promotional act, which 'seeks to establish the contribution's importance and relevance to readers.' (Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997:1040) Drawing on narrative theory, they call this stage the 'complication' (cf. e.g. Labov and Waletzky 1966). Below in Table 67 I have tabulated the gist of the textual acts and rhetorical practices realizing the problematization of the situation, as construed from Locke and Biddle's description.

**Table 67. Textual Acts and Rhetorical Practices that Problematize the Situation (summarized reconstruction from Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997, emphasis added)**

Textual Acts	Rhetorical Practices
Claiming <b>incompleteness</b>	Identifying <b>lacunae</b> (i.e. elaboration needed) Foreshadow how study <b>fills the gap</b> Address prior literature <b>politely</b> Portray own contribution <b>politely, humbly</b>
<b>Illuminating oversight</b>	Framing <b>oversights</b> Foreshadow how study <b>can redress oversight</b> Portray own contribution <b>directly but humbly</b> Cite literature to <b>support alternative</b> view Introduce <b>partisan</b> viewpoint
Claiming <b>incommensurability</b>	<b>Head-on challenge</b> of extant literature <b>Replace</b> extant perspectives Portray own contribution <b>directly as superior but humbly</b> Use language to <b>provoke</b>

*Note: Boldface indicates evaluation (my emphasis)*

The interesting point about the continuum of textual acts depicted in Table 67 above is the increasing directness of promoting the writer's own contribution, and the way Locke and Golden-Biddle find this to affect the rhetorical practices and style. The first act, establishing incompleteness, only seeks to complement and elaborate and is presumably the least face-threatening act (cf. Swales' *Continuing a tradition*). Notably, at every point, even in the last most direct act, the necessity of politeness and/or humility is stressed (cf. Myers 1989). This is interesting in light of the findings of the present study that, of the three disciplines, the Management introductions used the largest proportional amount of mitigation, and in both journals Boosting the contribution received the main emphasis of mitigation (cf. Section 12.2).

Locke and Golden-Biddle's work gives a more delicate description of the rhetorical effect of reviewing previous research in order to construct the opportunity for a scientific contribution than do the various rhetorical moves and steps utilized in present rhetorical/linguistic models in academic writing. However, on the superordinate level there are interesting overlaps between the models, which are tabulated below (Table 68). I see adopting Locke and Golden-Biddle's application of Labov's narrative theory as a useful tool for teaching the rhetoric of introductions, but while they take up only *Orientation* and *Complication* I would take it a step further by including the category of

*Resolution*, which would correspond to the Boosts of the present model (cf. also Weissberg and Buker 1990 on stating value or justification in introductions).

**Table 68. Comparison of the models of rhetorical structure of introductions**

Narrative theory (Labov & Waletzky 1966)	Locke&Golden-Biddle 1997	Swales 1990	Lindeberg	Bhatia 1993
Orientation	Intertextual coherence	Establish territory	Claim of centrality	Establish credentials
Complication	Noncoherence/ Problematization	Establish niche	Gap/Problem statement	Establish customer need
Resolution	Foreshadow/portray superior contribution	Occupy niche	Boost own contribution	Introduce offer

Returning to the discussion of the marketization of academia introduced in Section 3.1, a further interesting parallel illustrated in Table 68 above is the one between the rhetorical moves in research article introductions and in sales promotion letters suggested by Bhatia (1993). The underlying rationale in these moves/steps is the promotion of the contribution/offer. This parallel especially appeals to students of business sciences, who can identify with this procedure of promoting a product, be it knowledge or goods or services.

On the basis of the large amount of promotion found by the present study it seems inevitable to conclude that strong elements of marketization are indeed prevalent in the rhetoric of the prestigious journals examined here. Interestingly, it is easy to find further instances of metaphors of business terminology being used by rhetoric and genre analysts: as early as 1983 Swales called the writing of research article introductions ‘exercises in public relations’ (1983:195). In 1988 Bazerman used business terminology to describe the editorial policy of scholarly publications, calling it *corporate identity*. Subsequently Swales (1990) introduced the concepts of *niche* and *positioning*, which are both terms used in Marketing (cf. Toffler and Imber 1994), Fairclough publicized the concepts of *marketization* and *commodification* (Fairclough 1993, 1995), and finally Hyland the term *Product* for research contribution in scholarly abstracts (Hyland 2000). Undoubtedly, for knowledge organizations and knowledge workers, such as researchers,



knowledge is the main ‘product’, and a major task is how to disseminate this knowledge, and gain attention and acceptance for it in the research community.

The present study shows that the articles published in the highly prestigious American journals examined here use a great deal of explicit promotion to ‘market’ their contribution, and thus would seem to substantiate Fairclough’s claim of the marketization of academia. Whether this ‘surprising amount’ of promotion is true only for American journals in these disciplines or only for the most prestigious journals in the disciplines are interesting questions deserving further study. Another interesting extension would be to study what differences there might be in the conventions of British journals vs. American journals, if comparable journals are available. Teachers of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) to foreign learners for convenience often resort to speaking about Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-American rhetoric. It would be important to know to what extent we are justified in using such terms, and in what respects there are significant differences between American and British English academic rhetoric and style.

In a contrastive study of scholarly introductions in English and Polish, Duszak points out that it is often argued that ‘Western cultures are individualistic and hence supportive of direct, assertive, and explicit verbal styles.’ (1994:294) While it is rash to generalize about Western writing cultures as such, as shown by a large number of cross-cultural studies of Western academic writing (cf. e.g. Clyne 1987, Mauranen 1993a, 1993b, Connor 1996 for an overview, Melander et al. 1997, Isaksson-Wikberg 1999), the argument certainly seems true about the American journals studied here. However, Swales and his associates have cautioned that even in the American scholarly realm there are disciplinary cultures that favor ‘textual silence’ or ‘authorial diffidence, indirectness and deflection’ (Swales 1999:18, cf. also Dressen and Swales 2000), at least in certain parts of research articles.

### **13.7 Contribution, limitations, and suggestions for further research**

The present study has focused on overt promotion strategies in research articles in three disciplines in the business sciences and also studied the degree of mitigation of promotion. The aim was to increase awareness and knowledge of the ways disciplines and journals within what is widely called the social sciences use similar or different

strategies and to try to link these strategies with readerships and disciplinary cultures. It has been said that a model works to the extent that it is able to show differentiating patterns that provide useful knowledge. The model of promotion proposed and used in the present study is a simplification of a large number of variables, but I would like to claim that even so it brings out important rhetorical characteristics of scholarly articles that have not been similarly highlighted previously, thus extending Swales' (1990) and Dudley-Evans' (1989, 1994) models. It shows important differences in disciplinary cultures but also between journals within the same discipline, thus cautioning against sweeping generalizations about disciplines based on the analysis of a single publication, even if the sample might be large.

Examining the cultural aspects of genre knowledge, Huckin (1997) lists about twenty features that have been emphasized by various genre studies. Observing that these features are complex, often difficult to define and for the most part unquantifiable, he nevertheless observes: 'And yet it is precisely these kinds of features that seem to be most illuminating in showing how culture influences genre knowledge and genre use.' (Huckin 1997: 75). Of the features listed, the present study can be seen to address the following, depending on how the features are defined: *amount of salesmanship, type of politeness emphasized, degree of self-reference, tone of certainty/uncertainty, point-making styles, and different emphasis on moves*. Like Bhatia (1995), Huckin also calls for more comprehensive, context-sensitive, and qualitative methods of discourse analysis:

Most of the studies I have cited, despite considerable cultural awareness and insight on the part of the researchers, do not really succeed in capturing the insider's view of the cultural manipulation involved in the use of genre. Too many of them are confined to textual analysis, with the analyst being forced to hazard mere guesses as to what the textual evidence means for those who actually use the genre in real life. (Huckin 1997:75)

It would seem, then, that one of the major limitations of the present study is that it does not include a qualitative part, i.e. interviews with the writers of the articles examined or with journal editors. This would be an interesting task for further research, but for practical reasons it was not possible in the present case. However, even if it were feasible, it is possible that interviewees might choose not to disclose hidden agendas or confidential editorial policies. Perhaps because of the limited number of informants, previous studies including interviews have repeatedly shown very variable views on writers'/readers' perceptions of the use of bald vs. tentative styles (cf. Meldrum 1994,

Okamura 1997, Varttala 2001). Okamura interviewed a number of scientists from different fields about their strategies of citation and their use of modified claims and found that scholars are often unaware of their own rhetorical strategies. The majority of them at first claimed caution to be the main reason for modified statements of findings or citations but gradually, during conversation, they became aware of their own politeness considerations as well. Interestingly, it was the senior researchers who were more conscious of politeness concerns.

Another obvious limitation of my study is the choice of corpus. The reason for choosing these three disciplines, and these highly respected journals in each discipline, as well for focusing on American publications only, was that I wanted to create a framework and find a benchmark based on a reasonably valid and controllable corpus, on which further studies into other scholarly disciplines, cultures and languages could be based. The assumption was that the acknowledged high quality of the journals would minimize the amount of random characteristics that might be reflected in the rhetorical strategies. For example, it has sometimes been suggested that novice writers do not begin introductions by sufficient reader orientation before introducing present research. My findings showed that this was not a question of less experience but a matter of convention and audience, since experienced writers in Finance frequently chose to initiate their article by announcing present research, and apparently this was not only the case with highly established writers (cf. Swales 1990: 128f. on the fact that these “powerful luminaries” may deviate from convention).

The size of the corpus is always debatable, and for many of the phenomena studied here there were obviously too few data to allow generalizations. However, this fact can be turned into an advantage by taking up the very same phenomena for analysis in a larger corpus, since these are now routinely electronically available. Concordances of phrases associated with certain rhetorical functions, e.g. *the/this paper* with aims and claims, *our/the findings/results* with claims and boosts, and their collocations with assertive or tentative verbs, would generate pedagogically useful information on the rhetorical/promotional conventions of specific disciplines/journals/writers.

### 13.8 Implications for teaching academic writing

It is obvious that by choosing highly prestigious journals, my findings would seem to have more immediate usefulness for scholars and postgraduate students than for undergraduates. However, once they have chosen their major subjects, and often even earlier, undergraduates in business studies are required to read and write about articles in these very journals. As shown in my own teaching experience, analyses of the type undertaken in the present study help the students read the factually often heavy texts and to organize and structure the information more easily (cf. also Johns 1997). Sensitizing them to the expressions used to signal various promotional/rhetorical functions also helps them to read more critically, as students have repeatedly remarked in course evaluations. In the process they pick up some of the rhetorical and linguistic conventions prevalent in their own disciplines, but of course they also have to be trained by using more focused exercises. Students need to try the conventions in practice, to obtain response and gain confidence. In the words of David Bartholomae:

I think that all writers, in order to write, must imagine for themselves the privilege of being "insiders" – that is, the privilege of both being inside an established and powerful discourse and of being granted a special right to speak. (Bartholomae 1985:143)

For business students the idea of promotion is familiar, and most of them easily recognize and adopt the model of Claiming centrality/Establishing credentials – Establishing question/gap/ niche/need – Introducing offer/Boosting your contribution. In discussion/conclusions the sequence of stating major findings and Boosting implications/applications followed by an examination of Limitations and suggestions for Further research seems to work quite well for term papers, but in Master's theses a more elaborate model is needed (cf. Lindeberg 1994c, Räisänen 1996).

For postgraduate students and scholars writing in EFL, the direct and explicit promotion possibly needed in the English-language journal they are targeting may not be easy to adopt, since in many cultures a more implicit and inductive and less assertive manner of stating claims seem to be the rhetorical convention (cf. e.g. Clyne 1987, Mauranen 1993a, 1993b, Duszak 1994). These differences might be due to different conventions taught at school (cf. Isaksson-Wikberg 1999) or possibly because the competitive situation of the researchers is different in different cultures (cf. Fredrickson and Swales 1994). In these cases a familiarity with the proposed model makes it easier for researchers to meet the reviewers' request that they should explicitly build up and

formulate the value of their own contribution. However, as the present findings showed, it is not possible to generalize categorically about disciplines or even publications. Nevertheless, this study provides some of the tools for seeing the similarities and differences, whether more or less promotion and whether more or less mitigation is likely to be expected and in what contexts. Thus in the present material, the Finance journals appeared to be less promotional but more assertive, whereas the Management and the Marketing journals seemed more promotional but also more ‘defensive’ (Duszak’s (1994) term), in the sense that they made more effort to anticipate objections and were more tentative in certain promotional steps.

In his paper on the ‘metaphorical silence’ (textual absence) of certain parts of research articles, e.g. lack of description of how the data were collected or of pointing out the significance of findings, Swales (1999) suggests that these illustrate differences in disciplinary cultures. He nevertheless concludes by saying:

And the paradox for all those of us concerned with writing in the disciplines is that as we attempt to assist our students in the crossing of Geisler’s “great divide” (1994) toward a mature academic style, our students in fact need to read and create less silenced texts than those that typically appear in advanced textbooks, research articles and scholarly essays. (Swales 1999:26)

Learning to see what parts in a research article are explicitly included and even promoted is an important and necessary skill for academic writers entering a discipline, a new culture, perhaps a new language. The aim of this study has been to provide some models and examples of readings and writings of less silenced texts, with the purpose of offering some tools and guidelines for learning to see characteristic promotional strategies and conventions in various disciplines.

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## APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLES OF ABSTRACTS CODED FOR PROMOTIONAL STEPS

For ease of reference, promotional steps in text samples have been coded for entire sentences/clauses. Occasionally a sentence may be double-coded, which means that two (or more) promotional steps occur in the same sentence. The linguistic items justifying the identification of specific steps are shown in the examples presented in the body of the study.

**Coding key:** Underlining= Claim of centrality, Italics= *Gap statement*, Boldface= **Boosting the contribution**, Counterclaim= broken underlining, Initial Thesis/Claim= dotted underlining

**Please note that coding symbols vary in different sections, due to the limited amount of symbols and the fact that the salience of different steps varies in different sections.**

*Journal of Financial Economics* 33 (1993) 201-225.

A reexamination of analysts' earnings forecasts for takeover targets

Peter A. Brous and Omesh Kini

We examine analysts' earnings forecasts for a sample of takeover targets and document that the announcement-month forecasts are systematically revised upward, **supporting the hypothesis that a takeover announcement conveys favorable information about the target firm**. In addition, we find that abnormal forecast revisions of future stand-alone earnings are significantly greater for targets with low Tobin's q-ratios relative to targets with high q-ratios, **lending further support to the information hypothesis**. Finally, we provide evidence that managerial resistance to the takeover does not destroy value. Our results are in direct contrast to Pound (1988).

*The Journal of Finance*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 4 September 1993: 1231-1262.

No Arbitrage and Arbitrage Pricing: A New Approach

Ravi Bansal and S. Viswanathan

We argue that arbitrage-pricing theories (APT) imply the existence of a low-dimensional non-negative nonlinear pricing kernel. In contrast to standard constructs of the APt, we do not assume a linear factor structure on the payoffs. **This allows us to price both primitive and derivative securities**. Semi-nonparametric techniques are used to estimate the pricing kernel and test the theory. Empirical results using size-based portfolio returns and yields on bonds reject the nested capital asset-pricing model and linear APt and support the nonlinear APT. **Diagnostics show that the nonlinear model is more capable of explaining variations in small firm returns.**

*Academy of Management Journal* 1993, Vol. 36, No. 3, 502-526.

Procedural justice, attitudes, and subsidiary top management compliance with multinationals' corporate strategy decisions.

W.Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne

This study concerned strategy implementation in multinational organizations. In previous research, subsidiary top managers' perception that their head offices exercised procedural justice positively affected the formers' commitment, trust, and outcome satisfaction. **Here, we traced the effect of procedural justice beyond attitudes to the behavior of compliance**. Results, based on two-stage longitudinal data, suggest that procedural justice enhances subsidiary top managers' compliance directly and indirectly, through the attitudes of commitment, trust, and outcome satisfaction. These effects were not, however, constant but were more powerful for managers of subsidiaries operating in global, as opposed to multi-domestic, industries.

*Administrative Science Quarterly*, 37 (1992): 448-470

Personality and Charisma in the U.S. Presidency: A Psychological Theory of Leader Effectiveness

Robert J. House, William D. Spangler and James Woycke

We argue in this paper that in an age of complexity, change, large enterprises, and nation states, leaders are more important than ever. However, their effectiveness depends on their personality and charisma and

not solely on their control over bureaucratic structures. We used a study of U.S. presidents to test a general model of leader effectiveness that includes leader personality characteristics, charisma, crises, age of the institution headed by the leader, and leader effectiveness. Age of the presidency accounted for approximately 20 percent of the variance in presidential needs for power achievement, and affiliation. Presidential needs and a measure of leader self-restraint in using power, the age of the presidency, and crises accounted for 24 percent of the variance in presidential charisma. Age of the presidency, crises, needs, and charisma together predicted from 25 percent to 66 percent of the variance in five measures of presidential performance. **Our study demonstrates that personality and charisma do make a difference.**

*Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. XXX (February 1993), 42-51  
Capturing Individual Differences in Paired Comparisons: An Extended BTL Model Incorporating Descriptor Variables  
William Dillon, Ajith Kumar and Melinda Smith de Borrero

The method of paired comparisons addresses the problem of determining the scale values of a set of stimuli on a preference continuum that is not directly observable. The conventional approach in analyzing paired comparisons is to view all individuals as homogeneous and estimate a single vector of scale values for the stimuli. **The authors describe an extended BTL model, a simultaneous segmentation and estimation procedure for paired comparisons that can also accommodate descriptor variables, if available. The procedure extends methods for analyzing paired comparisons in two important ways. First, recognizing that individuals may be heterogeneous in their preference structure, the model attempts to group individuals into segments, where individuals belonging to the same segment can be characterized adequately by a segment-specific set of scale values. Second, the model allows descriptor variables to be incorporated into the analysis. Though incorporating descriptor variables in the analysis of paired comparisons entails some additional estimation issues, the ability to calibrate stimulus scale values for different market segments and to understand the potential reasons why the relative locations of the stimuli as perceived by persons making the judgments vary according to the latent segment to which an individual belongs appears to be an extremely useful feature of the proposed method.**

*Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 57 (April 1993), 11-31  
Boundary Role Ambiguity: Facets, Determinants, and Impacts  
Jagdeep Singh

The study of the organizational determinants of role ambiguity among sales and marketing professionals and its dysfunctional impact on job outcomes is an important area of research in marketing. Recently, researchers have identified several gaps in the literature in this area, including (1) substantial variability in results across studies and (2) lack of studies that conceptualize (and operationalize) role ambiguity as a multifaceted construct. As an initial step, the author uses a multifaceted conceptualization of role ambiguity to investigate a model that includes key organizational determinants and job outcomes. **Using data from multiple samples of sales and marketing professionals, the author estimates, augments, and validates the hypothesized model. The results show that multifaceted role ambiguity (1) helps uncover functional facets of role ambiguity (e.g., family) that facilitate coping with other ambiguous facets, (2) unravels the sensitivity of role ambiguity facets to different organizational determinants, and (3) offers evidence of differential potency because the different role ambiguity facets exhibit different potency in predicting the various job outcomes. Several directions for enriching theory about the role ambiguity phenomenon are provided and implications for practitioners are discussed.**

## APPENDIX 2: EXAMPLES OF INTRODUCTIONS CODED FOR PROMOTIONAL STEPS

Coding key: Underlining = Claims of centrality, Italics = *Gaps or Caveats and Limitations*, Counterclaims = broken underlining, Boosts = **boldface**, Dotted underlining = Suggestions for Future research.

*Journal of Financial Economics* 33 (1993) 313-340.  
An empirical study of the Mexican Treasury Bill Auction  
Steven R. Umlauf

### 1. Introduction

The U.S. Government issues billions of dollars of debt to the public each week in its T-bill auction. Whether the auction mechanism maximizes Government revenues is a persistent subject of debate. The intensity of this debate has increased in light of the recent Salomon Brothers affair, in which the firm's traders bid for quantities that exceeded legal limits.

Much of the debate on auction design in the U.S. focuses on the Government's choice of discriminatory versus uniform pricing. With discriminatory pricing, winning bidders pay the prices that they bid for the debt being sold, while under the proposed uniform pricing mechanism they would pay the price of the highest losing bid. Common value auction theory [see, for example, Milgrom and Weber (1982)] argues for uniform pricing. Uniform and discriminatory pricing are analogous, roughly speaking, to second- and first-price auctions, respectively. Second-price auctions generate higher expected revenues because they alleviate the winner's curse by linking the auction price to the highest losing bid. Bikhchandani and Huang (1989) argue that resale coupled with the public announcement of winning bids generates additional revenues in uniform auctions over and above those due to alleviation of the winner's curse because bidders have incentives to bid more aggressively in uniform auctions to signal high valuations to resale market participants. Friedman (1960, 1991) proposes a uniform price auction, which he refers to as a 'Dutch Auction', as a way to combat collusion, *but he provides no equilibrium model of bidding behavior*.

In mid-1986, the Mexican Treasury began selling its domestic debt in an auction mechanism virtually identical to the one employed in the U.S. In mid-1990, uniform pricing was substituted for discriminatory pricing to increase auction revenues and to combat collusion. This paper examines the impact of this regime change in the context of a more general empirical analysis of bidding behavior. **The results appear to be the only publicly-available comparison of uniform and discriminatory pricing in T-bill auctions.**

**The analysis employs a new data base which includes bids, resale prices, and accurate measures of bidding risk.** The data were generated in an environment characterized by substantial bidding uncertainty; during the sampling period, Mexico endured a foreign debt crisis, a moderate hyperinflation, and a highly-contested, potentially destabilizing presidential election.

When Mexico substituted uniform for discriminatory pricing, bidders' profits were eliminated, a result which is consistent with the implication of common value auction theory of revenue superiority of second-over first-price auctions. The elimination of bidders' profits is also consistent with Friedman's argument that uniform pricing makes collusion more difficult to sustain.

Results suggest collusion among the six largest bidders, who account for immense shares of auction purchases and profits during the discriminatory pricing regime. These bidders' profit margins were eliminated entirely once uniform pricing was imposed. *However, it cannot be determined whether the lower profit margins during the uniform pricing regime are due to a reduction in collusion or to the alleviation of the winner's curse.*

There is evidence of information asymmetries between large and small bidders. large bidders' ex post profits and profit margins exceed those of small bidders. small bidders lose money when large bidders bid less aggressively (or do not bid at all). There is also evidence that the entry of small bidders fails to explain variation in aggregate large and small incumbent-bidder profitability. **These results are consistent with the predictions of a model in which small bidders bid solely on the basis of public information [see Engelbrecht-Wiggans, Milgrom, and Weber (1983)].**



Aggregate auction profits are nonnegative, suggesting that bidders account for the winner's curse. Bidders earning negative profits appear to have been unlucky rather than ignorant of the winner's curse. In regression analysis, the downward biases in bids as estimates of resale values vary directly with measures of resale risk, indicating that bidders are risk-averse and/or, as Milgrom and Weber (1982) suggest, that common value auction revenues decrease when information dispersion is lowest.

*It is not possible to estimate an explicit model of equilibrium bidding behavior as no realistic T-bill auction model exists. **The inferences in this paper are based on robust implications of common value auction theory; they are not derived within the context of estimating of a rigorous bidding model.***

Cammack (1991) examines U.S. T-bill auctions, while Hendricks and Porter (1989) and Hendricks, Porter, and Boudreau (1987) examine OCS oil-lease auctions. **The results in this paper should be viewed as complementary to theirs.** *Cammack lacks the necessary data to analyze bidder-specific profits. Also, she is unable to compare uniform and discriminatory pricing as there is no regime change during her sampling period.* Hendricks and Porter as well as Hendricks, Porter, and Boudreau document information asymmetries and collusion, but their institutional setting differs dramatically from that of the Mexican T-bill auction. They find that bidders do not necessarily account for the winner's curse, a result which is contradicted in this study.

Section 2 summarizes the rules and institutional details of the Mexican Treasury auction. Section 3 summarizes relevant implications of auction theory for bidding behavior. Section 4 summarizes aggregate and bidder-specific Mexican Treasury auction results for the sampling period. Section 5 provides cross-sectional analysis of auction profits. Finally, section 6 provides concluding remarks.

*The Journal of Finance*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 4 September 1993: 1161-1191.

How Markets Process Information: News Releases and Volatility

Louis H. Ederington and Jae Ha Lee

WE EXAMINE THE IMPACT on interest rate and foreign exchange markets of scheduled macroeconomic news releases such as the employment report, the consumer price index (CPI), and the producer price index (PPI). Many market participants believe that such announcements have a major impact on financial markets. Indeed, a small industry devoted to predicting the figures to be released in upcoming releases has evolved in recent years. With the exception of the weekly money supply figures, however, the impact of such announcements on financial markets has received scant attention.<sup>1</sup> This is doubly surprising given the considerable research interest in market volatility since these news releases are a potential source of much of this volatility. Consider, for instance, Figure 1. As shown there, prices in interest rate and foreign exchange futures markets are much more volatile between 8:30 and 8:35 A.M. eastern time (ET) than during any other five-minute trading period including the open (8:20 A.M.) and close. In the two interest rate futures markets, the standard deviation of 8:30 to 8:35 returns is approximately two and a half times the next highest five-minute return standard deviation. In the deutsche mark market, the ratio is 1.9. Since several major macroeconomic statistical releases, including the employment report, the CPI and PPI, Gross National Product (GNP), the index of leading indicators, and the merchandise trade deficit, are released at 8:30 A.M. (ET), these releases are obvious candidates for explaining this phenomenon.

We examine the impact of the nineteen monthly announcements, listed in the Appendix, on the Treasury bond (T-bond), Eurodollar, and deutsche mark futures markets. We focus on these markets because they open before 8:30, are heavily traded, and provide tick-by-tick prices. **Because the futures and spot instruments are close substitutes, we believe our results are generalizable to spot interest and exchange rate markets as well. Indeed, we feel many of our results are relevant to any scheduled announcement, i.e., one whose timing is known beforehand, such as earnings and dividend announcements.**

Harvey and Huang (1991, 1992) observe that interest rate and foreign exchange futures prices are much more volatile during the first sixty to seventy minutes of trading on Thursdays and Fridays than during any other hour over the trading week. They hypothesize that this pattern is due to the fact that many macroeconomic announcements occur during the first hour of trading on these two days - it is not due to

the opening itself. **Our results support their hypothesis.** We find that, within the first seventy minutes, volatility is not usually high at the opening (8:20) but at 8:30 when the announcements are made. **More important, we find that, when we control for these announcements, volatility is basically flat both across the trading day and across the trading week.**

In examining the importance of individual announcements, we find that the following seven announcements (listed in order of decreasing impact) have a significant (0.005 level) effect on T-bond futures prices: employment, the PPI, the CPI, durable goods orders, industrial production-capacity utilization, construction spending National Association of Purchasing Managers (NAPM) survey, and the federal budget. Employment, the PPI, the CPI, durable goods orders, construction spending NAPM survey and industrial production-capacity utilization have a significant impact on Eurodollar futures, while employment, the U.S. merchandise trade deficit, the PPI, durable goods orders, GNP, and retail sales significantly impact the dollar-deutsche mark rate.

We explore the speed at which the market adjusts to these news releases focusing on both market efficiency and volatility. We find that the major price adjustment occurs within one minute of the release and the direction of subsequent price adjustments is basically independent of the first minute's price change. Nonetheless, prices continue to be considerably more volatile than normal for roughly fifteen minutes and slightly more volatile for several hours. This is a considerably more rapid adjustment than that observed by Patell and Wolfson (1984) in equity markets. They find that following dividend and earnings announcements, it takes five to ten minutes for trading profits in individual equities to disappear and that volatility may remain high even into the next day. Given our results, it appears that traders with immediate access to the market quickly form a basically unbiased estimate of the release's implications for market prices and that the price adjusts to this level almost immediately. Prices continue to adjust as details become available and as these and other traders reassess the news and its implications for prices. However, these subsequent adjustments are generally independent of the initial price change.

In the next section we explain our choices of news releases and markets; we also describe the news release procedures. In Section II, we examine the implications of these releases for intraday and day-of-the-week volatility. In Section III we turn to the question of the relative importance of these announcements. The efficiency of the markets in adjusting to this information is explored in Section IV and our results are summarized in Section V.

*Academy of Management Journal*, 1993, Vol. 36, No. 1, 80-105.

Social context of performance evaluation decisions

Timothy A. Judge

Gerald R. Ferris

There is perhaps not a more important human resources system in organizations than performance evaluation. Supervisors' ratings of subordinates' performance represent critical decisions that are key influences on a variety of subsequent human resources actions and outcomes. Indeed, this pivotal role of performance evaluation has promoted systematic efforts to develop a more informed understanding of the performance-rating process.

Landy and Farr (1980) issued a call for research investigating the cognitive processes underlying performance appraisal decisions. Although the process focus has generated considerable research concerning various components of performance-rating decisions, more comprehensive investigations incorporating several of those components has been lacking. Furthermore, process-oriented research has been limited by its reliance on laboratory studies (DeNisi & Williams, 1988). Whereas the cognitive processes involved in performance-rating decisions can be well illuminated in laboratory studies, the "quiet" nature of laboratory studies often does not match the "noisy" context in which performance-rating decisions are actually embedded (Lord & Maher, 1989).

Other researchers in the performance-rating area, although acknowledging that cognitive issues are important, have argued that social and situational factors have been neglected (Dipboye, 1985; Ferris & Judge, 1991; Ilgen & Fawcett, 1985; Mitchell, 1983; Wexley & Klimoski, 1984). As Mitchell pointed out, given that employees often work in groups, that some of their work is unobserved, and that evaluators often have various motives in evaluating performance, traditional approaches to performance appraisal

may be inadequate. Thus, the social context would appear to be important in the investigation of performance-rating decisions.

The purpose of the present study was to propose and test a model of social influence in the performance-rating process. **Implicit in the development of the model was recognition that the performance-rating process has multiple social and situational facets that should be simultaneously considered. This approach moves beyond the fragmentary manner in which past research has generally investigated social and situational variables.** *The proposed model is not intended to be a comprehensive test of all social and situational elements that may affect performance ratings. Rather, we employed a set of key social and situational variables, including some not previously tested, to investigate the overall relationship between social processes and performance ratings, as well as the specific effects of the variables in the model. The results should provide useful information regarding the importance of social context in the performance-rating process.*

*Administrative Science Quarterly*, 37 (1992): 422-447.

Homophily and Differential Returns: Sex Differences in Network Structure and Access in an Advertising Firm

Herminia Ibarra

Ample research has documented the sex structuring of organizations, including the segregation of men and women into different jobs, occupations, firms, and industries (Baron and Bielby, 1985, 1986; Bielby and Baron, 1986), patterns of selective recruitment and advancement (Acker and Van Houten, 1976; Baron, Davis-Blake, and Bielby, 1986), and salary differentials (Treiman and Hartman, 1981; Drazin and Auster, 1987). Yet despite voluminous anecdotal and survey research indicating that women in organizational settings lack access to or are excluded from emergent interaction networks (e.g., Kanter, 1977; Harlan and Weiss, 1982; Ragins and Sundstrom, 1989; O'Leary and Ickovics, 1992), little empirical research has investigated the role of networks in creating or reinforcing gender inequalities. Because the differential allocation of network rewards may partially account for gender differences in career outcomes (Brass, 1985; Morrison and Von Glinow, 1990; Smith-Lovin and McPherson, 1993), the role of sex differences in informal networks warrants further investigation.

*Most studies reporting gender differences in workplace relational patterns, with few exceptions, have not systematically examined the interaction networks in question, relying instead on anecdotal accounts of perceived exclusion. Network analysis, however, explores actual relationships that evolve among individuals rather than their feelings about and perceptions of their social involvement (Miller, 1975) or their membership in categories used as proxies for likely interaction patterns (Wellman, 1983). Further, any set of dyadic relationships is embedded in a structural context that allocates greater privilege and power to certain actors and that, therefore, must be taken into account in any empirical exploration (Krackhardt, 1990). Only network analysis can uncover systematic differences in the ways in which men and women are located in an organizational context shaped by both formally prescribed and emergent patterns of interaction.*

*The scant network analytic research on women in organizations (Miller, Labovitz, and Fry, 1975; Lincoln and Miller, 1979; Miller, Lincoln, and Olson, 1981; Olson and Miller, 1983; Brass, 1985; Miller, 1986) provides more systematic evidence of informal barriers faced by women in organizations. This body of research, however, has lacked well-developed theoretical explanations for differences in network access and has not clearly specified relevant network types. Further, the mechanisms through which network rewards may be differentially allocated to men and women have not been sufficiently examined. Overall, additional empirical evidence and theoretical development are needed to clarify the ways and extent to which men's and women's networks differ, as well as potential consequences of observed differences.*

This paper explores sex differences in network structure and access in five interaction networks within one organization. **To develop a better understanding of whether and how reported disadvantages to women are realized, I explored gender differences at two levels of network analysis - properties of individuals' sociometric choices and indices of centrality within organization-wide networks - as**

well as differences in the extent to which formal positions and individual attributes contribute to network access.

*Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. XXX (May 1993), 171-82.

A Bayesian Approach to Estimating Household Parameters

Peter Rossi and Greg Allenby

A fundamental assumption of marketing is that consumers differ in their preferences and reactions to promotional variables such as price and advertising. Researchers have proposed a wide variety of models of household behavior as a basis for developing and evaluating marketing policies. At the same time, a wealth of information on household purchase behavior has become available in scanner panel datasets. However, attempts to use household-level models with panel data have been frustrated by the lack of statistical procedures that are flexible enough to generate household-level estimates for all model parameters. We introduce a new approach to estimating household parameters that yields estimates of household preference and reaction to promotional variables.

**Our household-level estimates can be used to address two important issues. First, household estimates can be used to tailor marketing strategies to specific households. We give an example in which direct mail coupon drops targeted to price-sensitive households are used instead of traditional blanket mailings. Second, marketwide response to promotional variables can be estimated by aggregating the estimated responses across households. Estimates of aggregate market response can be severely biased unless adjustments are made for differences among households. In our analysis of scanner panel data, estimates of market response to in-store display and newspaper advertising double in size when adjustments are made for the distribution of heterogeneity.**

The challenge facing the modeler using scanner panel data is to devise a flexible estimation procedure that incorporates heterogeneity of a general form while simultaneously reckoning with the small amount of data per household. Typically, no more than 25 or so purchases a year are observed for each panel household, even though there might be more than 500 households in the panel.

*As we discuss in detail subsequently, most current procedures meet this modeling challenge by assuming that some of the model parameters are constant across all households (Guadagni and Little 1983) or at least some subset of households (Currim 1981; Kamakura and Russell 1989). An alternative approach is to assume that household parameters come from a common distribution. This approach, referred to as a random effects specification, estimates the distribution of parameters over the population but does not directly produce household parameter estimates. A random effects model for the intercepts of a logit model is investigated by Chintagunta, Jain, and Vilcassim (1991). Our analysis of scanner data suggests that it is very important to allow for different slopes as well as intercepts across the population of households.*

*All current approaches to modeling heterogeneity in short panels rely on some sort of a priori restrictions on the extent of variation in the parameters across households. For example, Kamakura and Russell (1989) assume that households within a segment share common parameter values. We solve the problem of scarcity of household information by using prior information about the likely range of choice probabilities and parameter values. Our approach incorporates prior information through a Bayesian method that yields different parameter estimates for each household. An interpretable and flexible reference prior is used to form the household Bayes estimates. Moreover, our Bayesian household estimates can be obtained by simple modifications of current maximum likelihood algorithms.*

In the next section, we review and critique present procedures in more detail. The proposed Bayesian procedures are then introduced and evaluated with both simulated and actual scanner panel data. The simulation experiments serve to assess the sampling properties of the proposed procedures and to compare them with alternatives. **We then use an ERIM scanner panel dataset from A. C. Nielsen to illustrate the procedure and provide new evidence on the bias induced by slope heterogeneity and the relation between price sensitivity and coupon usage.** Finally, we examine the predictive performance of the procedure and offer concluding remarks.

The importance of understanding role ambiguity among marketing professionals operating at the boundary of an organization has been recognized by marketing scholars for some time (cf. early studies by Donnelly and Ivancevich 1975; Pruden and Reese 1972; Walker, Churchill, and Ford 1975). Since these early studies, marketers have produced an impressive body of research on role ambiguity's organizational determinants and its impact on job outcomes in a wide range of boundary-spanning roles (Behrman and Perreault 1984; Chonko, Howell, and Bellenger 1986; Ford, Walker, and Churchill 1975; Jackson and Schuler 1985; Lysonski 1985; Michaels, Day, and Joachinsthaler 1987; Teas, Wacker, and Hughes 1979). Because boundary spanners are highly vulnerable to role ambiguity, this research has important implications for researchers and practitioners in their efforts to optimize boundary spanners' job outcomes (e.g., performance) and upgrade their quality of life on the job (e.g., satisfaction).

Despite the quantity and significance of role ambiguity research, critical gaps are evident (Fisher and Gitelson 1983; King and King 1990). Though a complete discussion of these gaps is beyond the scope of this article, **two gaps that appear germane to the literature in marketing are addressed here.** First, in their meta-analysis, Jackson and Schuler (1985) found a significant portion of "unaccounted" variance in studies that used role ambiguity as an antecedent of several dependent variables (e.g., satisfaction, performance). Second, in their critique of role ambiguity literature, King and King (1990) assert that because most studies view role ambiguity as a global, unidimensional construct, they fail to capture the "breadth" of uncertainties faced by boundary spanners. *This problem is serious because Jackson and Schuler report that more than 85% of all studies they reviewed had assessed only global role ambiguity by using some variation of the unidimensional scale developed by Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970).*<sup>1</sup>

This article attempts to fill some of the gaps in our understanding of boundary role ambiguity. **In particular, three aspects of the study set it apart from most previous research. First, boundary spanners' perceived ambiguity was analyzed in terms of several distinct facets of their role, and this multifaceted view was used to probe its organizational determinants and impacts on job outcomes. Second, the determinants and impacts of multifaceted role ambiguity were examined by hypothesizing, testing, and validating a theoretical model of role ambiguity that simultaneously models all interrelationships. Third, for empirically testing the role ambiguity model, relatively large samples of marketing-oriented boundary spanners (e.g., salespeople, customer service reps) were drawn from two disparate organizational settings. In particular, the data analyzed were obtained from 472 sales and marketing executives (SMEs) drawn from small to medium-sized firms and an industrial sample (IS) of 216 boundary spanners working in sales and customer service positions in a multinational *Fortune* 500 firm. This variability is useful because it (1) increases the likelihood that reported variance in role ambiguity reflects differences in objective organizational environments and is not just due to differences in boundary spanners' perceptions and (2) affords an opportunity to test and augment, if necessary, the hypothesized model by using one dataset (i.e., SME sample) and to *validate* the augmented model by using the second dataset (i.e., IS sample).**

First, the related literature is discussed and the hypotheses for empirical investigation are developed. Then the research method, samples, research settings, measurements, and method of analysis are described. Finally, the results are reported and discussed.

### APPENDIX 3: EXAMPLES OF DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION CODED FOR PROMOTIONAL STEPS

Coding key: Underlining = *Claims of centrality*, Italics = *Gaps or Caveats and Limitations*, Counterclaims = broken underlining, Boosts = **boldface**, Dotted underlining = Suggestions for Future research,

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Financial policy, internal control, and performance

Sealed Air Corporation's leveraged special dividend

K. H. Wruck

Sealed Air's leveraged special dividend illustrates one management team's conscious use of dividend policy and financing decisions to motivate successful changes in internal control systems. Leadership by top management combined with effective internal changes made external intervention unnecessary. Sealed Air was able to achieve substantial performance improvements without the equivalent of an LBO sponsor organization, a change in control, new management, or the adoption of a new organizational form. Additionally, the company left itself exposed to capital market discipline throughout the change process, refusing to adopt protective charter amendments or other anti-takeover measures. If Sealed Air became more difficult to take over after the special dividend, it is because effective internal changes closed the gap between its value as an independent, publicly traded firm, and as a restructured takeover target.

Analysis presented earlier examined and rejected the possibility that post-dividend value creation at Sealed Air was attributable to exogenous events. Another possibility is that the value creation resulted from unusually 'good luck', and that the changes in internal control are simply neutral permutations. Reconsideration of the evidence rejects this possibility as well. If luck explains it, it would have to be luck not experienced by either the market or other firms in Sealed Air's industry. In addition, it would have to be luck that started following the special dividend, coincided with major internal organizational changes, and has been sustained for over four years. The existence of such a coincidental type of luck seems unlikely.

Problems implementing programs that promote organizational change, such as those Sealed Air faced in its initial attempt to implement WCM, are common. Examples of other change programs include drives to improve product quality, increase production efficiency, ensure customer satisfaction, and cut overhead costs. The effectiveness of such programs is frequently short-lived, often in spite of vigorous management support and early evidence of success. **A testable implication of this study is that change programs stall and old organizational problems reemerge when managers do not or cannot create a environment that supports necessary changes in internal control systems.** Evidence on Sealed Air's lackluster pre-dividend performance, its stalled manufacturing program, and employees' views support the conclusion that its outstanding performance could not have been achieved absent financial leverage. It is equally unlikely, however, that substantial performance improvement would have been achieved without effective changes in internal control. At Sealed Air, the two reinforced one another to create an environment that supports value-maximizing decision making.

An implication of this study that merits further testing is that borrowing decisions are not solely about tax benefits, the costs of financial distress, or signaling. Managers who make major financing decisions cannot ignore internal control systems - to do so is to miss an opportunity, and possibly create a disaster. **This concept of dividend and financial policy as an integral part of internal control applies not only to debt financing or highly leveraged transactions, but to all types of financing strategies.** For example, active equity investors, such as Warren Buffet, play an important role in the process of transforming large bureaucratic public corporations into leaner, more effective competitors. A deeper understanding of financial policy's role as a catalyst for organizational change is critical to understanding the determinants of effective internal control, and ultimately, firm value.



*The Journal of Finance*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 2 June 1993: 555-573.  
Macroeconomic Influences and the Variability of the Commodity Futures Basis  
Warren Bailey and K. C. Chan

#### Summary and Conclusion

There are significant common elements to futures basis variability across a broad variety of commodity markets. To address the issue of whether these common elements represent ex ante risk premiums common to all financial markets, we have borrowed concepts and methodological tools from the growing body of research which examines the significance of time-varying risk premia and business cycle factors for stock and bond returns. We show that the default yield spread in the bond market and the dividend yield in the equity market can explain a large portion of the common variation in futures bases. We produce evidence that the macroeconomic risks that previous authors have shown to affect stock and bond markets also appear to be the contributing factors to these risk premiums embedded in the basis series. In particular, production and corporate default risk appear to earn significant time-varying risk premiums in commodity markets. A broader selection of ex ante risk premium measures and ex post risk variables and a more extensive time-series and cross-section of futures prices might yield evidence that exposure to other systematic and commodity-specific factors earns an ex ante risk premium in commodity futures markets.

**Our results are significant. First, they are consistent with previous evidence on the presence of time-varying risk premiums due to macroeconomic influences in the stock and bond markets. Second, they suggest that studies of commodity futures markets may be improved by including risk premium and business cycle variables like those we have used. Third, the results imply that multifactor models may be needed to value commodity-contingent claims like futures and options contracts. Typical contingent claims models based only on the dynamics of the cash price cannot capture the variety of factors that our results indicate are significant determinants of the cash-futures basis. Fourth, the results have implications for portfolio management strategies based on multifactor models like the APT. The commodity contracts we have shown to be exposed to macroeconomic risks are traded in liquid markets. Therefore, they may represent an efficient medium with which to manage the risk exposure of a stock portfolio. They may also be useful in strategies that attempt to both mimic the risk and outperform the return of some benchmark portfolio. Finally, our results highlight the commonalities across markets that we expect to find in a rational economy in equilibrium.**

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Organizational and financial correlates of a "contrarian" human resource investment strategy  
Charles R. Greer and Timothy C. Ireland

#### DISCUSSION

**The results indicate that the models can explain a reasonable amount of variance in the measures of counter-cyclical hiring. Five variables were found to be significantly related with at least two measures of counter-cyclical hiring: planning to avoid personnel shortages, age distribution (both positive and negative relationships), development and career planning, financial performance, and cost. Companies emphasizing planning tend to be more likely to hire counter-cyclically. Such planning efforts are likely to assume greater importance in the 1990s, given the predicted escalation in demand for some key technical specialties, such as engineering (Silvestri & Lukasiewicz, 1988). Given the labor shortages that are expected to result from the demographics of the 1990s, planning failures will be more serious than they were formerly (Greller & Nee, 1990). Companies hiring countercyclically in order to avoid labor shortages should be well positioned as these labor shortages develop.**

Maintenance of a regular age distribution also appears to be an important incentive for hiring managers, whether replacements or non-replacements, and retaining managers during downturns. Companies may have learned that curtailing hiring during downturns can leave critical gaps in managerial age

distributions. Further, the thinning of the middle-management ranks during the 1980s may have sensitized companies to age distributions.

**An unexpected finding was that companies more concerned about maintaining a regular age distribution were less likely to hire professionals during downturns and were probably more likely to reduce than increase their numbers.** *Whether reductions in numbers of professionals involve younger or older workers is unknown*, as such reductions could result from inverse seniority-based layoffs, voluntary early retirements, or reductions in all areas of the age distribution. These results are in contrast to those for managers. Company sensitivity to the age distribution of professionals may be related to the frequency of obsolescence in engineering and other technical professions. Although obsolescence is sometimes a problem in management, it is usually more serious and prevalent in the technical professions (Kaufman, 1974). Also, the typically higher salaries of professionals make them targets for layoffs during downturns (Hoffman, 1976; Raelin, 1987). Turnover could also contribute to the explanation of these differing results if companies hire replacements for managers but not for professionals. Regardless of the cause of reduction, to the extent that companies thin their ranks of capable, highly paid professionals, their distinctive organizational competencies will be diminished and they will be slower to respond after upturns. Cost reduction strategies involving the voluntary early retirement of professionals may backfire because of the costs associated with the loss of experience, even in the short run.

Development and career planning was also related to counter-cyclical hiring. Developmental activities are probably a major assignment for employees hired counter-cyclically. Such assignments may be particularly relevant for inexperienced employees, such as new college graduates hired during downturns. **As expected, financial performance was strongly related to percentage changes in total employment and marginally related to the employment of managers.** Companies having strong financial performance conduct more extensive hiring during downturns than do weaker performers. This pattern seems reasonable, as companies performing well should be able to trade immediate costs for future contributions to productivity and profitability.

In contrast to these positive relationships, the cost of the strategy limits the extent of its practice because there are important cost-benefit trade-offs. The negative relationship between cost and counter-cyclical hiring appears to be a logical complement of its positive relationship with financial performance. **Surprisingly, we found little or no support for the hypotheses involving human resource planning's link with strategic planning, affirmative action, risk aversion, and inaccurate human resource forecasting.**

#### Limitations of the Study

*Although we employed four measures to tap different dimensions of countercyclical hiring, all had weaknesses. Percentage change in total employment, for which data were readily available, is a "noisy" measure of countercyclical hiring since it reflects more than the hiring of key managerial and professional employees. Percentage changes in the employment of managers-officials and professionals are more precise measures, but because of difficulties in obtaining these data, there were relatively few observations. The subjective measure of countercyclical hiring overcomes some limitations because it deals only with hiring. Nonetheless, this variable shares the weaknesses common to all self-report measures, such as tapping higher-order cognitive processes (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Another limitation is that it was necessary to use retrospective data for some of the variables. Further, the convergent validities for cost considerations and regular age distribution were lower than desired. Finally, the regression analyses were sensitive to the effects of small sample size and multicollinearity. However, bivariate correlations provided support for most of the significant regression results.*

#### CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

**Taken as a whole, many of the relationships appear to describe the practices of profitable companies that have a strategic view of human resource management. Such relationships are consistent with those found in Cook and Ferris's (1986) study of strategic human resource management in declining industries.** They found that companies performing well planned for future environmental fluctuations and had integrated strategic views of human resource activities. **These findings are also consistent with the emphasis on human resource planning and systems of complementary human resource policies that have enabled some companies to avoid both shortages of personnel and layoffs (Greenhalgh et al., 1986).** These strategically oriented programs are also more



likely to have the credibility needed to convince decision makers of the feasibility of counter-cyclical hiring.

In addition to the hypothesized relationships, the relationships among the dependent variables deserve comment. The negative correlation between the percentage change in employment of managers and professionals and the low, negative correlations between these variables and the subjective measure of counter-cyclical hiring may indicate that some companies hire key employees while reducing the number of other employees. Counter-cyclical hiring could be a component in utility-based strategies of substituting high-quality, key employees for lower-quality or low-skill employees, such as seen in the example of Hublein, Inc. (Henn, 1985). Such relationships lead us to speculate as to whether declining companies hire a few key employees, while conducting layoffs, in turnaround efforts designed to ensure future survival. Obviously, such practices would generate strong feelings of inequity, and the potential for long-term ill will is great. Nonetheless, there have been recent precedents for the successful implementation of strategies that challenge traditional concepts of equity. Examples include the introduction of two-tiered wage structures and the permanent replacement of economic strikers. Under current conditions of intensely competitive global markets, low company loyalty to host countries, low organizational loyalty to employees (and vice versa), and diminished union power, such actions may be more likely than they were formerly.

**In summary, the present analysis has identified characteristics of companies that are related to the practice of counter-cyclical hiring.** Companies that hire more extensively than others during downturns appear to justify the costs of the strategy by the value they place on human resource benefits. Such companies tend to plan for their human resource needs, monitor the age distributions of their work forces, and focus on employee development; also, they probably have integrated, strategic views of human resource management activities. They may also tend to be more profitable than competitors, which probably enables them to trade current costs for uncertain future benefits. **We hope these findings will enhance understanding of the relationships of the components of complex human resource systems that have enabled some companies to conduct limited hiring during downturns.**

#### Suggestions for Future Research

*At present, there is a paucity of empirical work in the general area of strategy adjustments during the business cycle (Mascarenhas & Aaker, 1989) and a specific void on employment strategies during the cycle. Aside from investigations of hiring and work force stability, studies of the merits of different work force reduction strategies are also needed (Greenhalgh et al., 1988). Another question for researchers concerns which approaches to human resources will become dominant.* While strategies such as counter-cyclical hiring and no-layoff policies can be rational when viewed from an investment perspective, the emergence of "unbundled" companies, or those that divest traditional functions, may produce a far less developmental and investment-oriented view of human resources. There are formidable obstacles to the conduct of such studies, but they do not diminish the importance of studying these strategy adjustments.

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Localized Competition and Organizational Failure in the Manhattan Hotel Industry 1898-1990

Joel A. C. Baum and Stephen J. Mezias

#### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Understanding the role of organizational variation in the evolution of organizational populations is central to ecological theory because variation in the adaptive capacities of organizations within a population forms the basis for competitive selection processes and population change. This study was prompted in part by the growing empirical attention to the relationship between organizational differences and population dynamics. We attempted to build on the existing literature by systematically examining localized competitive processes in the Manhattan hotel industry. **The findings of this study demonstrate the promise of models of localized competition for the development of an ecological approach to competitive dynamics that is sensitive to differences among individual organizations and, more generally, to the significance of organization-level variation in the competitive dynamics and evolution of organizational populations.**

**The results of this research provide direct empirical evidence of the effects of localized competitive processes on failure rates.** In particular, the results show that the intensity of competition among Manhattan hotels depends on similarity in terms of size, geographic location, and price; the more similar a focal hotel was to its competitors, the greater the intensity of competition it experienced. The findings also support the idea that competitors are localized within particular segments of the distribution of variation. *The predicted effects of localized competition in terms of geographic location and price (hypotheses 2 and 3) were supported only when we used measures of localized competition based on the competitive-window restrictions.*

**This study also illustrates the complexity of localized competitive processes.** Most notably, the pattern of geographically localized competition appears to have resulted from factors specific to the Manhattan hotel industry. As described earlier, location is of primary importance in the hotel industry because it determines proximity and convenience to points of tourist interest or business activity and proximity to competitors in highly localized competitive arenas. Consequently, incentives for locating near other hotels (i.e., economies of agglomeration and geography) must be traded off against localized competition with neighboring hotels. Thus, "good" hotel locations for Manhattan hotels were not necessarily those that were further away from other hotels. *This implies that some of the results reported here are not necessarily generalizable to other populations of organizations and points to the need for similar studies in diverse populations.* Future replications and extensions of this study could help to establish the generalizability and broader significance of localized competition for the evolution of organizational populations. **These results also highlight the need to elaborate the ecological view of localized competition by incorporating ideas from economic models of spatial competition, especially as they pertain to the study of localized competition in segmented environments.**

**Several future research directions follow from the results of this study.** First, there is a need for research examining the relationship between localized competition and the dynamics of organizational founding, growth, and transformation. Such research would help to specify more fully the significance of localized competitive processes for population dynamics and organizational evolution. Second, there is need for research that examines the relative explanatory power and different substantive implications of alternative competitive-window formulations that embody different theoretical assumptions about the nature of localized competition. The development and testing of these alternative formulations should proceed in the context of a variety of organizational dimensions and across diverse organizational populations. Third, explorations of more complex, multidimensional models and measures of localized competition are needed. For example, in highly segmented geographic environments, such as the Manhattan hotel industry, it may be useful to examine specifications in which localized competition on organizational dimensions such as size and price is treated as nested within a competitive window based on geographic location. Such hierarchically nested competitive windows may prove germane to other organizational dimensions on which the resource mix is highly specialized to particular segments of the distribution of variation. Alternatively, Winter (1990: 288) has speculated that the geographic reach of competitors is an increasing function of their size. This suggests that future research should examine geographically localized competitive windows that are an increasing function of the focal organization's size.

Fourth, future research should be designed to improve our ability to specify the conditions under which different forms and patterns of localized competition operate. In the Manhattan hotel industry, localized competition tended to operate most intensely within particular segments of the distributions of organizational variation studied. *Are there other populations in which localized competitive processes operate very differently or not at all?* In this regard, Barnett and Amburgey's (1990) conjecture that the competitive reach of the large-sized organizations in a population is reduced by the heterogeneity of the population's environmental niche suggests two research questions for future studies. The first question concerns whether the relevant competitive window for measuring size-localized competition depends on the level of niche heterogeneity. The second and related question concerns whether changes in the level of niche heterogeneity alter the dynamics of size-localized competition. These questions may be equally relevant to other dimensions of organizational variation.

**Fifth, this research highlights potential linkages between organizational ecology and economic theories of industry structure.** Economic theories usually characterize industrial structure as arising from the differential growth of firms within an industry (e.g., Ijiri and Simon, 1977). In contrast, organizational ecology emphasizes processes of founding and failure as essential components of economic

competition. This suggests the need for studies of industry evolution in which the growth and decline of individual organizations as well as the dynamics of founding and failure are considered simultaneously. *Ecological and economic theories of industry structure also appear to yield competing predictions.* In traditional economic models, large firms are predicted to use their market power, which results from such factors as scale economies, cost advantages, product differentiation, and capital availability, to reduce entry rates of new firms and protect the profitability of the industry (Bain, 1956). In contrast, Hannan and Freeman's localized competition model and Carroll's resource-partitioning model suggest that localized competition among large organizations may generate market opportunities for smaller organizations. **Supporting the predictions of both ecological and economic models, the effects of size-localized and mass-dependent competition in this study indicate that large hotels both competed intensely with other large hotels and generated stronger competition for existing small hotels. Combining ideas from economic and ecological approaches to competitive dynamics may provide new insights into processes of industry structuration.**

**Finally, while this paper provides preliminary evidence of the effects of localized competition on organizational failure, why organizations located at the tails of the distributions of organizational variation tend to outcompete those in the middle has not yet been explored.** Earlier, we suggested that one possible basis for such a pattern of localized competition in terms of size is that large organizations capture the advantages of generalism, small organizations the advantages of specialism, and mid-sized organizations the liabilities of both (Carroll, 1985; Meyer, 1990). In terms of price, we suggested that the ability of economy and luxury hotels to outcompete mid-price hotels may represent a classic case of being stuck in the middle (Porter, 1980): Mid-price hotels are in an inferior cost position to economy hotels, lack the uniqueness required to capture the pricing advantages of luxury hotels, and have not oriented themselves toward a specific, well-defined market segment (i.e., economy or luxury). These observations suggest the need for future research investigating the interaction of competitive strategy and localized competition. Such research could inform strategic management by helping to specify mechanisms underlying the mobility barriers that deter organizations from shifting between strategic groups and by establishing empirically the risks associated with movement between strategic groups.

**We have provided an empirical demonstration of the value of studying organizational and population-level phenomena simultaneously. Our understanding of the Manhattan hotel industry is richer because we have incorporated the characteristics of organizations directly into measures of competition rather than counting the organizations in the population and measuring only their density. This answers those critics of ecological theory who have argued against treating all organizations in a population as equivalent. Our research also provides a bridge between strategic management and population ecology. Firm and industry in strategy research have clear analogs with organization and population in ecological research. Strategic management research on competition and organizational strategy can thus inform ecological models that incorporate organization-level variation. By the same token, an ecological approach that is sensitive to both organization and population levels can inform research in strategic management by providing a model of the effects of organizational differentiation in dynamic populations. It is time to expand the boundaries of both research areas to understand the strategies of organizations as they struggle to survive in a changing world.**

*Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 57 (July 1993), 1-18  
 An Analysis of the Market Share-Profitability Relationship  
 David M. Szymanski, Sundar G. Bharadwaj and P. Rajan Varadarajan

## Discussion

The studies addressing the relationship between market share and profitability span a broad spectrum. Several studies view building market share as conducive to superior financial performance (e.g., Buzzell and Gale 1986); other studies view models that do not specify intangible factors as deficient and question whether market share has any effect on profit (e.g., Jacobson 1988). Still other studies contend that the magnitude of the market share elasticity is moderated by other specification errors and sample and measurement characteristics. Although the meta-analysis findings cannot completely reconcile these differing viewpoints, on one hand, the findings indicate that, on average, market share has a

**significant (SSW mean = .259) and positive effect on business profits.** *On the other hand, the multivariate findings reveal that the estimate of the market share elasticity is moderated by modeling, sample, and measurement factors. These findings support the perspective that third factors moderate the estimate of the market share elasticity.* A more detailed discussion of the theoretical and managerial implications of the findings follows.

#### Theoretical Implications

**The alternative explanations offered for the market share-profitability relationship are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and the findings from the meta-analysis offer an opportunity to determine the extent to which efficiency, market power, product quality assessment, and "non-causal" theories on the market share-profitability relationship are supported.**

In general, the findings fail to support the efficiency theory perspective. Advertising and R&D expenditures do not significantly moderate the magnitude of the market share-profitability relationship, as would be suggested by efficiency theory, and sales force expenditures negatively, rather than positively (the latter being consistent with efficiency theory), moderate the magnitude of the relationship. *It is, however, conceivable that failure to support efficiency theory is the result of the analysis of large businesses in the majority of the studies.* Research has shown that economies of scale/scope dissipate, on average, at a small percent of the market (Scherer 1974; Rumelt 1991), and even businesses with relatively small market shares can be operating at levels greater than minimum efficient scale (Schmalensee 1987).

The findings from the meta-analysis also fail to support market power theory. Price and industry concentration (which can be proxies for market power) do not moderate the impact of market share on profits. **However, the findings do provide support for product quality assessment and non-causal theories. Consistent with product quality assessment theory, omitting product quality from the model is shown to bias the market share elasticity upwards, and consistent with non-causal theory, the estimate of the market share elasticity all but disappears on average when firm-specific intangibles are specified in the profit model.**

#### Managerial Implications

Utilization of externally generated market information is viewed as increasingly important for making effective strategic decisions. Along these lines, studies show that assessing and using market information is moderated by environmental stability, task variability, organization centralization and formalization, information quality and accessibility, managers' cognitive skills, etc. (e.g., Deshpande and Zaltman 1982, 1984, 1987; John and Martin 1984; Lee, Acito, and Day 1987; Menon and Varadarajan 1992; Root and Kinnear 1991; Zinkhan, Joachimsthaler, and Kinnear 1987). **The findings from the meta-analysis, in turn, can facilitate the use of information on the market share-profitability relationship by (1) increasing its accessibility, (2) facilitating its assessment, and (3) offering insights for developing parsimonious models.**

Accessing information. Recognizing that the evaluation and use of market information is the outcome of a complex decision process with many competing forces, O'Reilly (1982) notes that the ambiguity inherent in most of the information available to managers and the pressures on decision makers to produce results places the accessibility of relevant information at the forefront of the determinants of information use. Specifically, more accessible information is likely to be used more frequently, and concerns regarding the usability of academic research by managers notwithstanding, journals facilitate easy access to external information.

**By providing managers with information on the profit impact of market share through an easily accessible source, this meta-analysis facilitates the interpretation of numerous and diverse findings on the market share elasticity and economizes on managers' search costs of collecting information on 276 profit models from forty-eight studies reported in the marketing, management/business policy, and economic literatures.**

Greater accessibility of the information at lower costs could in turn lead to greater use of the information by managers as input into strategic decisions, especially for those managers who can be characterized as

highly involved, risk-averse, and cognitively skilled (Zinkhan, Joachimsthaler, and Kinnear 1987). These managers may use the information (1) conceptually, e.g., to enhance knowledge and understanding of the market share-profitability relationship; (2) affectively, e.g., to impact on confidence or dissonance levels as they pertain to market share strategies to increase profits (see Menon and Varadarajan 1992); and/ or (3) instrumentally, e.g., to directly impact on business strategies when the information confirms a priori beliefs (Deshpande and Zaltman 1982, 1984, 1987; Lee, Acito, and Day 1987).

*Assessing the quality of information.* **The findings from the meta-analysis also provide a backdrop for evaluating the quality of externally generated information on the market share-profitability relationship.** For example, studies show that the technical quality of market information (sampling procedures, statistical analyses, etc.) plays an important role in the use of this information by managers (e.g., Deshpande and Zaltman 1982, 1984). **The findings from the meta-analysis also can provide managers with insights into several central cues for evaluating the technical quality of market share-profitability information.** Specifically, the quality of the market share-profitability information can be assessed in part by examining whether the profit model specifies firm-specific intangibles, sales force expenditures, product/service quality, product line breadth, and market growth rate.

**The meta-analysis reveals that omitting these factors from the model produces a biased estimate of the market share elasticity.** The authors' findings also indicate that managers should carefully review the composition of the sample on which the estimate of the market share elasticity is based. *As evidenced in this study, analysis of mixed samples and PIMS samples of businesses, on average, produces inflated estimates of the market share elasticity.* Finally, managers should examine how market share and profitability are measured to assess whether the market share-profitability information before them is of high or low quality. **Our findings reveal that operationalizing profit as ROS, rather than ROI, and profit and market share as 1-year rather than 4-year averages significantly moderates the estimate of the market share elasticity.**

*Generating information.* **Finally, the findings from the meta-analysis offer insights for modeling the market share-profitability relationship in a parsimonious manner. In lieu of the costly and time-consuming "all possible factors approach" to modeling profitability, our findings indicate that just five of the eleven "relevant-explanatory variables" examined (intangibles, sales force expenditures, product/service quality, product line breadth, and growth rate) moderated the estimate of the market share elasticity.** Therefore, ideally, these five factors should be incorporated into any profit model

### ***Limitations and Directions for Future Research***

*The limitations of this study should also be borne in mind when interpreting the findings. They include the fact that the analysis was restricted to variables frequently reported in the literature, to the exclusion of other potential moderating factors, e.g., product innovation and product life cycle. The review was also restricted to econometric models, whereby added insights might be gained from a review of non-econometric findings. Finally, the SSW method does not exhaust the weighting schemes but reflects deficiencies in the reporting of descriptive information in the literature.*

*The meta-analysis also was not designed to be definitive. Rather, its purpose was to develop a concise quantitative understanding of the market share-profitability relationship and to offer a point of departure for future research on the antecedents of profitability and the role of market share in the business' financial performance. Therefore, additional research is called for to (1) establish the validity of lagged ROI as a proxy measure for firm-specific intangibles, e.g., develop psychometric measures, prior to dismissing the market share-profitability relationship as artifactual; (2) examine the moderating effects of additional strategic variables, e.g., order of entry and strategic alliances, and environmental factors, e.g., social values, on the estimate of the market share elasticity; and (3) examine the degree to which the estimate of the magnitude of the market share-profitability relationship generalizes across foreign markets. If examined programmatically, these and other issues would increase understanding of the value of a market share building strategy for improving the financial performance of a business.*

A Dynamic Process Model of Service Quality: From Expectations to Behavioral Intentions  
William Boulding, Aiay Kalra, Richard Staelin, and Valarie Zeithaml

## DISCUSSION

We present a process model of how individuals develop perceptions of a firm's service delivery system over time. **By explicitly acknowledging that perceptions and expectations change over time, we are better able to explicate and test the relationships between expectations perceptions, and intended behavior.** The model is tested with data derived from two very different studies, one a longitudinal laboratory experiment and the other a field study using questionnaire data collected at one point in time. In both cases, the results are strongly compatible with all aspects of our process model.

We find the convergence of results for the two different studies very encouraging. Our model appears robust to different analytic approaches, different data collection methods, and different service settings. *Thus, though one might generate specific criticisms of the individual studies, we can think of none that span both studies.* Consequently, we have a strong posterior belief that our model adequately summarizes the major forces that cause customers to form and update their perceptions of a firm's overall service quality level.

These forces have major implications for any firm interested in service quality. As expected, but never empirically verified in a field setting, our results indicate that the greater customers' perceptions of a firm's overall service quality, the more likely the customers are to engage in behaviors beneficial to the strategic health of the firm (e.g., generate positive word of mouth, recommend the service, etc.).

Our research also provides insights into how firms can best increase customers' perceptions of their overall service quality. Our most important managerial insight relates to the role of expectations. *The prevailing model of service quality defines perceived service quality as the gap between expectations and perceptions, and does not differentiate among types of expectations. It leads to the strategic implication that firms can try either to increase perceptions or lower expectations in their quest to increase overall service quality. Our results are incompatible with both this one-dimensional view of expectations and the gap formulation for service quality. Instead, we find that service quality is directly influenced only by perceptions.* Also, increasing customer expectations of what a firm will provide during future service encounters actually leads to higher perceptions of quality after the customer is exposed to the actual service, all else equal. From this finding we infer that firms should manage customers' predictive expectations up rather than down if they want to increase customer perceptions of overall service quality. **In addition, our results strongly support our premise that customers' expectations of what a firm should deliver during a service encounter decrease their ultimate perceptions of the actual service delivered, all else equal.** Therefore, improved assessments of service quality can result when customers' expectations of what a firm *should* deliver are managed downward.

The issue of managerial importance, then, is how to manage both types of expectations. Ideally, one would want to simultaneously increase customers' *will* expectations and decrease their *should* expectations. *At this stage of our research, we know of no activity that can ensure this result.* One airline firm attempted to do this by simultaneously telling customers that all airlines had problems with guaranteeing on-time arrivals because of factors outside the airlines' control, but that they were the best at being on time. In this way the firm's ad campaign attempted to address both the *should* and *will* expectations. *Whether or not this approach to managing both sets of expectations worked as intended is an empirical question.*

A second approach to managing *will* and *should* expectations is for the firm to engage in activities that increase the customers' *will* expectations without a proportional increase in their expectations of what the firm *should* do. From equations 1S and 2S, we see that providing the best possible service each and every time can increase *will* expectations but it might also increase the *should* expectations. **Fortunately, our empirical evidence suggests that the *will* expectations increase faster than the *should* expectations, so that the net impact on perceptions is positive.** However, firms need to monitor the relative



magnitudes of  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\gamma$  to ensure that increases in objective service quality also result in increases in perceptions of service quality (see footnote 13 for more details). Finally, managers may be able to identify specific firm actions (other than service) that affect only the *will* or *should* expectations. Such actions would enable the firm to increase (decrease) the *will* (*should*) expectations without modifying the other.

**In addition to providing managerial insights, we were able to demonstrate a method of estimating the two key parameters from our dynamic model by using survey data taken from customers at only one point in time. As a result, managers can learn about the relative importance of service delivery and customer expectations for their specific business. This determination should be very useful in assessing the relative value of trying to modify perceptions through changes in the service delivery system and the firm's communications, as well as identifying the speed with which managers can expect perceptions to change over time.**

**We believe our analytic approach provides managers an easily implementable method for estimating our model because it does not require measuring the actual service provided or prior expectations.** *However, as seen from our derivation, the estimation technique requires that (1) the surveys obtain multiple measures of perceptions and expectations, (2) all of the measures within a dimension have identical influence on that dimension, and (3) if the managers believe customers have much different levels of prior experience, they segment the customers so as to reflect the possible differences in the updating parameters.*

**Our research also has implications for academicians. We note a great similarity between our work on modeling perceived service quality and its impact on intended future behavior and the models of Churchill and Surprenant (1982) and Tse and Wilton (1988), who were concerned with explicating the factors that influence perceived product performance (and ultimately its impact on consumer satisfaction). As in our study 1, both of these research teams were able to measure prior expectations and the actual product performance.** However, only Tse and Wilton measured two types of expectations and thus were able to obtain unbiased estimates. **Their study found, analogous to our results,** that prior *will* expectations and actual product performance were positively related to perceived performance. In addition, they found that prior expectations on what consumers would ideally like to see in the product were negatively related to perceived performance. Interestingly, they found the actual product performance variable to have a much stronger influence on perceived performance than we did in our study. This difference is not surprising given that services typically have a higher proportion of experience and credence properties than products, making service performance more difficult to evaluate than product performance. It seems likely that perceptions will be more influenced by expectations (relative to actual service) for firms with a higher content of unobservable (or fallible) quality. Along these lines, future research might assess the degree to which different industries or customers with different levels of prior experience influence the extent to which prior knowledge, new communications, or the actual service encounter dominates the process by which customers form judgments of quality.

*Though we suggest conceptually, and demonstrate empirically, that customers update their expectations and perceptions, interesting aspects of this process have not been investigated. For example, the antecedents of the different expectation variables remain largely unexplored.<sup>20</sup> Given the need to manage *will* expectations up and the *should* expectations down, understanding the determinants of these expectations is a critical managerial issue. Also, because we can restate our equations mathematically in a variety of formats, our empirical analyses provide no evidence on the cognitive process by which customers form, store, or retrieve perceptions. Consequently, we hope that researchers utilize experimental and panel data to continue delving into the dynamic process by which customers form expectations and perceptions of service quality.*

**Finally, we note that our process model has the potential for broader applications. First, one might view overall service quality as a measure of the firm's service equity. Further, because the antecedents of this construct are known, measuring and managing these antecedents (e.g., expectations) can help a firm better understand which actions either enhance or detract from the firm's service equity and thus its ability to compete. Second, we see no reason why our process model would not apply to products as well as services. However, empirical support for this belief remains to be provided. Third, we see direct applicability of our model in better understanding, tracking, and influencing customer satisfaction as referred to in the popular press. The reason is**

**that the measures used to reflect satisfaction are usually cumulative, versus transaction specific, and thus are analogous to our construct of perceived quality.**



## **APPENDIX 4: PRIMARY MATERIAL**

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An empirical analysis  
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Evidence from employee stock ownership plans  
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John W. Cooney, Jr. and Avner Kalay (149-172)

Institutional trades and intraday stock price behavior  
Louis K. C. Chan and Josef Lakonishok (173-199)

A reexamination of analysts' earnings forecasts for takeover targets  
Peter A. Brous and Omesh Kini (201-225)

Private benefits from block ownership and discounts on closed-end funds  
Michael J. Barclay, Clifford G. Holderness and Jeffrey Pontiff (263-291)

Restructuring through spin-offs - The stock market evidence  
Patrick J. Cusatis, James A. Miles and J. Randall Woolridge (293-311)

An empirical study of the Mexican Treasury bill auction  
Steven R. Umlauf (313-340)

Seniority and maturity of debt contracts  
Douglas W. Diamond (341-368)

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Capital structure and firm response to poor performance  
An empirical analysis  
Eli Ofek (3-30)

The hidden costs of stock market liquidity  
Amar Bhidé (31-51)

Interest rate swaps - An empirical investigation  
Tong-sheng Sun, Suresh Sundaresan, and Ching Wang (77-99)

Corporate governance through the proxy process  
Evidence from the 1989 Honeywell proxy solicitation  
Karen Van Nuys (101-132)

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Financial policy, internal control, and performance: Sealed Air Corporation's leveraged special dividend  
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Kroger's recapitalization and Safeway's LBO  
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Market Discounts and Shareholder Gains for Placing Equity Privately  
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Andrew Winton (487-512)

Incentive Conflicts, Bundling Claims, and the Interaction among Financial Claimants  
Chester S. Spatt and Frederic P. Sterbenz (513-528)

A General Equilibrium Model of International Portfolio Choice  
Raman Uppal (529-553)

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Scott B. MacKenzie, Philip M. Podsakoff, and Richard Fetter (70-80)

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Boundary Role Ambiguity: Facets, Determinants, and Impacts  
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## APPENDIX 5. INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES TO CONTRIBUTORS

This appendix presents the instructions and guidelines to submitters of manuscripts valid at the time the articles in the present material were published. It is to be noted that in the case of the *Journal of Marketing Research*, no instructions similar to those in the other journals occurred in any of the issues published during 1992-1994. The only comparable information was found in an editorial, which is therefore included in the appendix.

Today the instructions to contributors are available on the Internet, and in most cases these have become more specific and elaborate. For example, on the website [www.ama.org/pubs/jmr](http://www.ama.org/pubs/jmr) the following information is found in the Editorial Guidelines for the *Journal of Marketing Research*:

The article should indicate the circumstances under which the new method is superior and why it is superior.

Clearly, this exhortation reads as an explicit request for what in this thesis has been termed a Boost, and thus explains the prevalence of Boosts especially in the Marketing journals. Further, on the corresponding website for *Journal of Marketing* ([www.ama.org/pubs/jm](http://www.ama.org/pubs/jm)) under Manuscript Guidelines: Preparing the Final Version and Copy Editing Style Rules, it is postulated that

The abstract should be written in third person.

Thus, it is interesting to observe that some of the features that this study found to be characteristic of the disciplines/journals have subsequently been made explicit in the guidelines for contributors. I can only hope that other useful findings of the present study will find their way to the guidelines of the journals, and thus ease the writing process of future contributors.

#### INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

- (1) Papers must be in English.
- (2) Papers for publication should be sent in quadruplicate to:

Mmes. Teri Foley/Helen Johnston	or	Professor Michael C. Jensen
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Submission of a paper will be held to imply that it contains original unpublished work. The Editor does not accept responsibility for damage or loss of papers submitted.

Upon acceptance of an article, author(s) will be asked to transfer copyright of the article to the publisher. This transfer will ensure the widest possible dissemination of information.

- (3) Manuscripts should be typewritten on one side of the paper only, double-spaced with wide margins. All pages should be numbered consecutively. Titles and subtitles should be short. References, tables and legends for figures should be typed on separate pages. The legends and titles on tables and figures must be sufficiently descriptive such that they are understandable without reference to the text. The dimensions of figure axes and the body of tables must be clearly labeled in English.
- (4) The first page of the manuscript should contain the following information: (i) the title; (ii) name(s) and institutional affiliation(s) of the author(s); (iii) an abstract of not more than 100 words. A footnote on the same sheet should give the name and *present address* of the author to whom proofs and reprint order form should be addressed.
- (5) Acknowledgements and information on grants received can be given before the References or in a first footnote, which should not be included in the consecutive numbering of footnotes.
- (6) Important formulae (displayed) should be numbered consecutively throughout the manuscript as (1), (2), etc. on the right-hand side of the page. Where the deviation of formulae has been abbreviated, it is of great help to referees if the full derivation can be presented on a separate sheet (not to be published).
- (7) Footnotes should be kept to a minimum and be numbered consecutively throughout the text with superscript arabic numerals.
- (8) The References should include only the most relevant papers. In the text, references to publications should appear as follows: "Jones (1969) reported that. . ." or "This problem has been a subject in literature before [e.g., Jones (1969, p. 102)]". The author should make sure that there is a strict "one-to-one correspondence" between the names (years) in the text and those on the list. At the end of the manuscript (after any appendices), the complete references should be listed as:  
*For monographs*  
Tobin, James, 1971, *Essays in economics*, Vol. 1, Macroeconomics (North-Holland, Amsterdam).  
*For contributions to collective works*  
Glejser, Herbert, 1970, Predictive world models, in: Colette Duprez and Etienne Sadi Kirschen, eds., *Megistos: A world income and trade model for 1975* (North-Holland, Amsterdam) 3-16.  
*For periodicals*  
Goldfeld, Stephen M. and Richard E. Quandt, 1973, A Markov model for switching regressions, *Journal of Econometrics* 1, 3-15.  
Note that journal titles should not be abbreviated.
- (9) Illustrations should be provided in triplicate (1 *original*, professionally drawn in black ink on white paper, and 2 photocopies). The drawings should not be inserted in the text and should be marked on the back with figure numbers, title of paper, and name of author. All graphs and diagrams should be referred to as figures and should be numbered consecutively in the text with arabic numerals. Illustrations of insufficient quality which have to be redrawn by the publisher will be charged to the author.
- (10) All unessential tables should be eliminated from the manuscript. Tables should be numbered consecutively in the text with arabic numerals and typed on separate sheets.

Any manuscript which does not conform to the above instructions may be returned for the necessary revision before publication.

Page proofs will be sent to the authors. Corrections other than printer's errors may be charged to the author. 25 reprints of each paper are supplied free; additional reprints are available at cost if they are ordered when the proof is returned.

## STYLE INSTRUCTIONS

- (1)—All submitted manuscripts must be original work that is not under submission at another journal or under consideration for publication in another form, such as a monograph or chapter of a book. Authors of submitted papers are obligated not to submit their paper for publication elsewhere until an editorial decision is rendered on their submission. Further, authors of accepted papers are prohibited from publishing the results in other publications that appear before the paper is published in the Journal unless they receive approval for doing so from the managing editor.
- (2)—Authors must submit three copies of their manuscript, clearly typed with double spacing. The pitch must not exceed 12 characters per inch, and the character height must be at least 10 points.
- (3)—The cover page shall contain the title of the manuscript, the author's name and affiliation. This page will be removed before the manuscript is sent to a referee. The first page of text should show the title but NOT the author's name.
- (4)—Each manuscript should include an abstract of not more than 100 words.
- (5)—The introductory section must have no heading or number. Subsequent headings should be given Roman numerals. Subsection headings should be lettered A, B, C, etc.
- (6)—The article should end with a non-technical summary statement of the main conclusions. Lengthy mathematical proofs and very extensive detailed tables should be placed in an appendix or omitted entirely. The author should make every effort to explain the meaning of mathematical proofs.
- (7)—**Footnotes.** The initial footnote, identifying the author by title and affiliation should be marked with an asterisk. Footnotes in the text must be numbered consecutively and typed on a separate page, double-spaced, following the reference section. Footnotes to tables must also be double-spaced and typed on the bottom of the page with the table.
- (8)—**Tables.** Tables must be numbered with Roman numerals. Please check that your text contains a reference to each table. When tables are typed on oversized paper, please submit the oversized paper rather than a xerox reduction. Indicate in the margin approximately where each table should be placed. Type each table on a separate page at the end of the paper. Tables must be self-contained, in the sense that the reader must be able to understand them without going back to the text of the paper. Each table must have a title followed by a descriptive legend. Authors must check tables to be sure that the title, column headings, captions, etc. are clear and to the point.
- (9)—**Figures.** Figures must be numbered with Arabic numerals. All figure captions must be typed in double space on a separate sheet following the footnotes. A figure's title should be part of the caption. Figures must be self-contained. Each figure must have a title followed by a descriptive legend. Final figures must be submitted in camera-ready form, i.e., drawn in India ink on drafting paper or good quality white paper, or as glossy, black and white photographs. Final figures must be identified in the margin or on the back by number and author.
- (10)—**Equations.** All but very short mathematical expressions should be displayed on a separate line and centered. Equations must be numbered consecutively on the right margin, using Arabic numerals in parentheses. Use Greek letters only when necessary. To reduce errors in typesetting, please differentiate clearly between the letter l (ell) and the numeral 1 (one), the letter o (oh) and the numeral 0 (zero) with marginal notations. Write out the names of any Greek letters you use in the margin, and unequivocally identify sub- and superscripts as such. Do not use a dot over a variable to denote time derivative; only D operator notations are acceptable.
- (11)—**References.** References must be typed on a separate page, double-spaced, at the end of the paper. References to publications in the text should appear as follows: "Jensen and Meckling (1976) report that ...". At the end of the manuscript (before tables and figures), the complete list of references should be listed as follows:

For monographs:

Fama, Eugene F. and Merton H. Miller, 1972, *The Theory of Finance* (Dryden Press, Hinsdale, IL).

For contributions to collective works:

Grossman, Sanford J. and Oliver D. Hart, 1982, Corporate financial structure and managerial incentives, in John J. McCall, ed.: *The Economics of Information and Uncertainty* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL).

For periodicals:

Jensen, Michael C. and William H. Meckling, 1976, Theory of the firm: Managerial behavior, agency costs and ownership structure, *Journal of Financial Economics* 4, 305–360.

## STYLE GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

### ARTICLES

Submit five copies of the manuscript; be sure that they are good, clear copies and that all pages are included in each copy. The manuscript should be typed on standard size (8½" × 11") paper, *double-spaced throughout* (including footnotes, references, quotations, and appendixes), on only one side of the paper, and with wide margins (one inch or more) at top, bottom, and both sides of each page. Manuscripts prepared on computers should be printed on letter-quality printers or, if other printers are used, in double-strike or enhanced print. Footnotes, references, appendixes, tables, and figures should be on separate sheets of paper and should be arranged at the end of the manuscript in the order listed in this sentence. There is no absolute limit, but the length of articles should not ordinarily exceed 30 manuscript pages, including references, appendixes, tables, and figures.

#### Title Page and Abstract

The first page of the manuscript should include the title of the article (typed in all capital letters), the authors' names (typed in all capitals), and their affiliations, addresses, and phone numbers (typed with initial caps only). Example:

THE EFFECTS OF AN ACQUISITIVE GROWTH STRATEGY ON FIRM PERFORMANCE

MICHAEL A. HITT  
College of Business Administration  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, TX 77843-4221  
(409) 845-1724

No mention of authors' names should be made in the body of the paper, except where appropriate in citations and references.

The second page, numbered page 2, should repeat the title and include an abstract of 75 words or less. The text of the article should begin on page 3. Page numbering should continue through all pages of the manuscript, including those with footnotes, references, appendixes, tables, and figures.

#### Acknowledgments

An unnumbered footnote can be used to acknowledge financial support and/or assistance of others in preparing the manuscript. In the manuscript, the text for this footnote should appear at the bottom of the same page as the

abstract (page 2). It should be separated from the abstract by a 10-dash line beginning at the left-hand margin.

### Footnotes

Other footnotes should be used sparingly. Minimize their use for parenthetical discussion; material that is pertinent can often be integrated into the text. They should not be used for citing references (see References below). The text for all footnotes should appear on a separate page or pages at the end of the body of the article.

### Headings

*Main headings* should be used to designate the major sections of the article; three or four main headings should be sufficient for most articles. Initial headings, such as "Introduction," are unnecessary. Main headings should be centered on the page and typed in all capitals. They should not be underlined. Example:

#### METHODS

*Secondary headings* should be typed flush with the left margin and in small letters, with major words beginning with capitals. Secondary headings should not be underlined. Example:

Sample

*Third-order or paragraph headings* should begin with a standard paragraph indentation and be typed in capital and small letters, with only the initial word capitalized. Paragraph headings should be followed by a period; they should not be underlined. Example:

Manager sample. Respondents consisted of a random sample of 300 managers. . . .

The text should follow on the same line.

### Tables and Figures

Useful tables and figures do not duplicate the text; they supplement and clarify it. Because tables and figures are considerably more expensive to prepare for publication than text, the degree to which they add to the impact of the manuscript should be considered carefully.

Tables should be typed, double-spaced, on separate pages (one page for each table) from the text. They should be grouped together following the appendixes. If there is no appendix, tables should follow the references. For most papers, the first table should report descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and a complete intercorrelation matrix. Each table should have the word TABLE (typed in all caps) and its number (arabic numerals) centered at the top. The table title should be in capital and small

letters and centered on the page directly under the table number; it should not be underlined. Example:

TABLE 1  
Firms in Sample

Tables should be numbered consecutively from the beginning to the end of the article. The position of the table in the manuscript should be indicated in the text as follows:

-----  
Insert Table 1 about here  
-----

Footnotes to tables are of two types:

- (1) General footnotes that explain the table as a whole, the designations of table columns or rows, or an individual item. All of these should be designated by superscript small letters (<sup>a,b,c</sup>), with the footnotes for each separate table beginning with <sup>a</sup>.
- (2) Footnotes used to indicate the level of significance should follow any other footnotes and be designated by one or more asterisks: \* for  $p < .05$ , \*\* for  $p < .01$ , and \*\*\* for  $p < .001$ . Use a dagger symbol (†) for  $p < .10$ .

If it is necessary to distinguish some numerals in a table from others (for example, to indicate which factor loadings define a factor), boldface type can be used. In the typed manuscript, any numerals that should be set in boldface type should be underlined with a wavy line. This possibility should not be used when other conventions, such as footnotes, are sufficient.

Figures are any illustrations other than tables. Authors should be prepared to supply finished camera-ready artwork for all figures at the time the manuscript is accepted for publication. Unless the authors are highly skilled in graphics, a professional drafting service should be employed to prepare figures.

The spacing and lettering used in figures should allow for subsequent reduction in size by as much as 50 percent so that the figure will fit the size of the *Journal's* page. The original artwork for figures should not be submitted until after the manuscript has been accepted for publication.

Figures should be numbered consecutively with arabic numerals and their position in the text indicated as for tables (see above). Each figure should be presented on a separate page with FIGURE (typed in all caps) and its number centered above it and a short identifying title in capital and small letters centered underneath the figure number. Example:

FIGURE 1  
Model of Contextual Influences on Performance

The position of the figure in the manuscript should be indicated in the text as follows:

-----  
Insert Figure 1 about here  
-----

## References

An alphabetically ordered list of references cited in the text should be included at the end of the article. References should begin on a separate page headed REFERENCES. Continue the pagination.

Entries in the list of references should be alphabetized by the last name of the author (first author if more than one) or editor, or by the corporate author (U.S. Census Bureau) or periodical name (*Wall Street Journal*) if there is no indication of individual authors or editors. Several references by an identical author (or group of authors) are ordered by year of publication, with the earliest listed first. Multiple references to works by one author or group of authors with the same year of publication should be differentiated with the addition of small letters (a, b, etc.) after the year. Authors' names are repeated for each entry.

Citations to references should be designated throughout the text by enclosing the authors' names and the year of the reference in parentheses. Example:

Several studies (Adams, 1974; Brown & Hales, 1975, 1980; Collins, 1976a,b) support this conclusion.

Note the use of alphabetical order and an ampersand in citations.

Page numbers must be included in a citation to provide the exact source of a direct quotation. Page numbers follow the date of publication given in parentheses and are separated from it by a colon. Example:

Adams has said that writing a book is "a long and arduous task" (1974: 3).

They should also be used when specific arguments or findings of authors are paraphrased or summarized. As indicated in the example, if the name of the author occurs in the body of the sentence, only the year of publication is cited in parentheses. Otherwise, both name and date appear in parentheses, separated by a comma.

If a work has two authors, always cite both names every time the work is cited in the text. If the work has more than two authors, cite all authors the first time the reference occurs; in subsequent citations of the same work, include only the surname of the first author followed by "et al." (not underlined) and the year. Examples:

Few field studies use random assignment (Franz, Johnson, & Schmidt, 1976).  
(first citation)

... even when random assignment is not possible (Franz et al., 1976: 23).  
(subsequent citation)

However, for works with six or more authors, use only the surname of the first author followed by et al. whenever the work is cited.

Book entries in the list of references follow this form: Authors' or Editors' Last Names, Initials. Year. Title of book. (Book titles are underlined and typed in lower case letters except for the first word and the first word after a colon.) City Where Published, State or Country (only if necessary to iden-



tify the city; use U.S. Postal Service abbreviations for state identification): Name of Publisher. Examples:

- Boulding, K. E. 1956. *The image*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.  
 Kahn, R. L., & Boulding, E. (Eds.). 1964. *Power and conflict in organizations*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.  
 Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. 1978. *The social psychology of organizations* (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.  
 U.S. Department of Labor Statistics. 1976–1983. *Employment and earnings*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

*Periodical entries* follow this form: Authors' Last Names, Initials. Year. Title of article or paper (in lower case letters except for the first word and the first word after a colon). Name of Periodical, volume number (issue number): page numbers. Examples:

- Fry, L. W., & Slocum, J. W., Jr. 1984. Technology, structure, and workgroup effectiveness: A test of a contingency model. *Academy of Management Journal*, 27: 221–246.  
 Goggin, W. C. 1974. How the multidimensional structure works at Dow Corning. *Harvard Business Review*, 55 (1): 54–65.

This issue number should only be included if the periodical's pages are not numbered consecutively throughout the volume, that is, if each issue begins with page 1.

If a periodical article has no author, the name of the periodical should be treated like a corporate author, both in the citation and in the references. For example:

There is fear that Social Security rates may rise (*Wall Street Journal*, 1984).

*Wall Street Journal*. 1984. Inflation rate may cause Social Security increase. September 24: 14.

*Chapters in books* follow this form: Authors' Last Names, Initials. Year. Title of chapter (in lower case except for the first word and first word after a colon). In Editors' Initials and Last Names (Eds.), Title of book: page numbers. City Where Published, State or Country (only if necessary to identify the city): Name of Publisher. Examples:

- Berg, N. A. 1973. Corporate role in diversified companies. In B. Taylor & I. MacMillan (Eds.), *Business policy: Teaching and research*: 298–347. New York: John Wiley & Sons.  
 Roberts, F. S. 1976. Strategy for the energy crisis: The case of commuter transportation policy. In R. Axelrod (Ed.), *Structure of decision*: 142–179. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Unpublished papers, dissertations, and presented papers should be listed in the references using the following formats:

- Duncan, R. G. 1971. *Multiple decision making structures in adapting to environmental uncertainty*. Working paper no. 54–71, Northwestern University Graduate School of Management, Evanston, IL.  
 Smith, M. H. 1980. *A multidimensional approach to individual differences in empathy*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas, Austin.  
 Wall, J. P. 1983. *Work and nonwork correlates of the career plateau*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management, Dallas, TX.

### **Appendixes**

Lengthy but essential methodological details, such as explanations of long lists of measures should be presented in one or more appendixes at the end of the article. This material should be presented in as condensed a form as possible; full sentences are not necessary. No tables should be included in the appendixes. A single appendix should be titled APPENDIX in all caps. If more than one appendix is needed, they should be titled and ordered alphabetically: APPENDIX A, APPENDIX B, etc.

### **Biographical Sketches**

At the time an article is accepted for publication, a brief biographical sketch of 50 words or less should be submitted for each author. It should include where highest degree was earned, present position, affiliation, and current research interests. For example:

Andrea Barber earned her Ph.D. degree at the University of Wisconsin; she is an associate professor of management and Director of the Management Improvement Center at Famous University, Oxbidge, Ohio. Her current research interests include dual-career families and sociotechnical systems in organizations.

### **RESEARCH NOTES**

Research notes contain brief descriptions of original research. To be considered for the Research Notes section, manuscripts should not exceed 15 double-spaced typewritten pages in length. Descriptive surveys, replications, methodological demonstrations or analyses, studies that make incremental advances to established areas of inquiry, and commentaries with new empirical content are especially appropriate.

Manuscripts intended for the Research Notes section should be prepared according to the above instructions for articles, except that the abstract should not exceed 50 words in length.

### **GENERAL USAGE**

#### **Avoidance of Sexist and Other Biased Language**

Authors must avoid terms or usages that are or may be interpreted as denigrating to ethnic or other groups. Authors should be particularly careful in dealing with gender, where long-established customs (e.g., the use of "men and girls" in the office or "usually if the employee is given an opportunity, he will make the right choice") can imply inferiority where none exists or the acceptance of inequality where none should be tolerated. Using plural pronouns (e.g., changing the "client . . . he" to "clients . . . they" is preferred by Academy publications. If this is not possible, the phrase "he or she" can and should be used.

#### **Use of First Person**

Vigorous, direct, clear, and concise communication should be the objective of all articles in Academy journals. Although third-person style traditionally has been used, authors can use the first person and active voice if they do not dominate the communication or sacrifice the objectivity of the research.

## INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The *Academy of Management Journal* publishes articles in fields of interest to members of the Academy of Management. These fields of interest are reflected in the divisions and interest groups listed on the inside front cover of the *Journal*.

AMJ publishes only original, empirical research as articles or research notes. The *Journal* does not publish purely theoretical articles; these are published by the *Academy of Management Review*. Papers that are primarily applied in focus and that have managers as an intended audience should be submitted to the *Academy of Management Executive*.

In its articles, the *Journal* seeks to publish research that develops, tests, or advances management theory and practice. Articles should have a well-articulated and strong theoretical foundation. All types of empirical methods—quantitative, qualitative, or combinations—are acceptable. Exploratory survey research lacking a strong theoretical foundation, methodological studies, replications or extensions of past research, and commentaries with new empirical content are also of interest for publication as research notes if they make an important contribution to knowledge relevant to management.

Articles and research notes should be written so they are understandable and interesting to all members of the Academy. The contributions of specialized research to general management theory and practice should be made evident. Specialized argot and jargon should be translated into terminology in general use within the fields of management. Articles should also be written as concisely as possible without sacrificing meaningfulness or clarity of presentation. To save space, tables should be combined and data should be presented in the text wherever possible.

Manuscripts submitted for publication as articles should not ordinarily exceed 30 double-spaced typewritten pages, including tables. Manuscripts submitted as research notes should not exceed 15 double-spaced typewritten pages, including tables. Everything in submitted manuscripts, including tables, should be typed in double-spaced format on one side of the page. Manuscripts prepared on computers should be printed on letter-quality printers or, if other printers are used, in double-strike or enhanced print.

Manuscripts are considered for publication with the understanding that their contents have not been published and are not under consideration elsewhere. Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the *AMJ Style Guide for Authors*, which is published in the March issue and is also available from the editor. Contributors should submit five copies of their papers, retaining the original for their files. The *Journal* does not return manuscripts unless requested to do so.

Decisions regarding publication of submitted manuscripts are based on the recommendation of members of the Editorial Board or other qualified reviewers. All articles and research notes published in the *Journal* are subject to a blind review process. Obvious self-citations that make known the author's identity should be avoided whenever possible. Reviewers evaluate manuscripts on their significance to the field, conceptual adequacy, technical adequacy, appropriateness of content, and clarity of presentation. Reviewers' comments are made available to authors.

Submissions should be sent to Professor Michael A. Hitt, *Academy of Management Journal*, College of Business Administration, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843-4221.

## Notice to Contributors

The ASQ logo reads, "Dedicated to advancing the understanding of administration through empirical investigation and theoretical analysis." The editors interpret that statement to contain three components that affect editorial decisions. About any manuscript they ask, does this work (1) advance understanding, (2) address administration, (3) have mutual relevance for empirical investigation and theoretical analysis? Theory is how we move to further research and improved practice. If manuscripts contain no theory, their value is suspect. Ungrounded theory, however, is no more helpful than are atheoretical data. We are receptive to multiple forms of grounding but not to a complete avoidance of grounding.

Normal science, replication, synthesis, and systematic extension are all appropriate submissions for ASQ, but people submitting such work should articulate what has been learned that we did not know before. That it has been done before is no reason that it should be done again. There are topics within organizational studies that have become stagnant, repetitious, and closed. Standard work that simply repeats the blind spots of the past does not advance understanding even though work like it has been published before.

ASQ asks, "What's interesting here?" But we take pains not to confuse interesting work with work that contains mere novelties, clever turns of phrase, or other substitutes for insight. We try to identify those ideas that disconfirm assumptions by people who do and study administration. Building a coherent, cumulative body of knowledge typically requires work that suggests syntheses, themes, causal sequences, patterns, and propositions that people have not seen before. Interesting work should accelerate development.

We attach no priorities to subjects for study, nor do we attach greater significance to one methodological style than another. For these reasons, we view all our papers as high-quality contributions to the literature and present them as equals to our readers. The first paper in each issue is not viewed by the editors as the best of those appearing in the issue. Our readers will decide for themselves which of the papers is exceptionally valuable.

We refrain from listing explicit topics in which we are interested. ASQ *should* publish things the editors have never thought of, and we encourage that by being vague about preferences. Authors should look at what ASQ has published over the last 10 years, see if there are any precedents for the proposed submission, and, if there is even a glimmer of precedent, submit the work to ASQ. Manuscripts that are inappropriate will be returned promptly.

We are interested in compact presentations of theory and research, suspecting that very long manuscripts contain an unclear line of argument, multiple arguments, or no argument at all. Each manuscript should contain one key point, which the author should be able to state in one sentence. Digressions from one key point are common when authors cite more literature than is necessary to frame and justify an argument.

We are interested in good writing and use poor writing as a reason to reject manuscripts. We're looking for manuscripts that are well argued and well written. By well argued we mean that the argument is clear and logical; by well written we mean that the argument is accessible and well phrased. Clear writing is not an adornment but a basic proof of grasp.

The basic flaw common to rejected manuscripts is that authors are unable to evaluate critically their own work and seem to make insufficient use of colleagues before the work is submitted. All work has alternative explanations. All work contains flaws. The best way to recognize flaws is to discard the discussion section, ask what was learned and what is wrong with it, and frame the discussion in terms of these discoveries. To do this is to anticipate reviewers and improve the probability of acceptance.

### Preparation of Manuscripts

Manuscripts should be sent to the Editor, ASQ, Caldwell Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853. Manuscripts in a wide variety of formats will be read and reviewed, but we must have five copies. The following are guidelines for manuscript preparation:

1. Type all copy (including footnotes, references, or appendices) double-spaced, on one side only.
2. To permit anonymity, the author's name should not appear on the manuscript proper. Instead, attach a cover page giving the title of the article and the name and affiliation of each author. The title of the manuscript should be typed on the first page of the paper.
3. Include an informative abstract of less than 100 words with each copy of the paper.

### Format of References in the Text

Use footnotes sparingly. Material of importance should be incorporated in the text; material having weak relevance should be deleted. References to other articles, books, and other source works should be cited in the text by noting—in parentheses—the last name of the author, the year of publication, and page numbers where appropriate. Do not use "*ibid.*," "*op. cit.*," or "*loc. cit.*"; specify subsequent citations of the same source in the same way as the first citation. Examples follow:

1. If the author's name is in the text, follow it with the year in parentheses. [". . . Evan (1963) had advocated. . . ."] If the author's name is not in the text, insert it and the year in parentheses. [". . . the era (Brewster, 1958)."] Multiple references are listed chronologically in parentheses, separated by semicolons. [". . . (cf. Stern, 1953; Ben-David, 1960)."]
2. In the case of two or three authors, give all the authors' last names; if there are four or more authors, give only the first author's name followed by "et al." [". . . (Merck and Ford, 1964; Dill et al., 1966). . . ."]
3. Page numbers, to indicate a passage of special relevance or to give the source of a quotation, follow the year and are preceded by a colon. [". . . Chandler (1966: 478) states. . . ."]
4. If there is more than one reference to the same author in the same year, postscript the date with "a, b, c. . . ." [". . . (Parsons (1956a) . . . .")]

### The List of References in Appendix

Alphabetize by author, and for each author list in chronological sequence. List the authors' names exactly as written in the source cited. Use no italics and use no abbreviations. See examples:

### REFERENCES

Allen, T. J., A. Gerstendfeld, and P. G. Gerstberger  
1968 "The problem of internal consulting in research and development organizations." Working paper, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management, Paper No. 319-68.

Ben-David, Joseph  
1960 "Roles and innovations in medicine." *American Journal of Sociology*, 65: 557-568.

Ben-David, Joseph, and Awraham Zloczower  
1972 "Universities and academic systems in modern societies." *European Journal of Sociology*, 3: 45-84.

Dill, William R.  
1962 "Administrative decision making." In Sidney Mailick and Edward H. VanNess (eds.), *Concepts and Issues in Administrative Behavior*: 29-48. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Haire, Mason (ed.)  
1959 *Modern Organization Theory*. New York: Wiley.

McKelvey, William W.  
1967 "Expectational noncompleteness and deviant adaptation in a research organization." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Parsons, Talcott  
1956a "Suggestions for a sociological approach to the theory of organization—I." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1: 63-95.

1956b "Suggestions for a sociological approach to the theory of organization—II." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1: 225-249.

## EDITORIAL

The three years I served as a member of the AMA Task Force on the Development of Marketing Thought have significantly influenced my editorial philosophy. The task force identified a number of structural impediments to the development of marketing thought, ranging from the diminished research activity of senior scholars to the criteria used by universities to promote and compensate faculty (see "Developing, Disseminating, and Utilizing Marketing Thought," *Journal of Marketing*, October 1988, p. 1–25). Many of those impediments can be removed only through a concerted effort by a large segment of the academic community; however, as editor of the *Journal of Marketing Research*, I can have an influence on the development of marketing knowledge and its dissemination.

Task force members felt that the nature of the review process in marketing journals tends to discourage researchers in general and leads researchers to undertake incremental studies using well-defined paradigms rather than riskier, but potentially more pathbreaking research. One of my objectives as *JMR* editor is to stimulate, assist, and reward those who undertake major, innovative research. I outline my position on several issues related to that objective in the remainder of this editorial.

### SCOPE OF RESEARCH PUBLISHED IN *JMR*

According to the AMA mission statement, *JMR* should "publish the best manuscripts available dealing with research in marketing and with marketing research practice." Though *JMR* publishes the best methodological manuscripts pertaining to the practice of marketing research, I do not perceive *JMR* as the consistent leader in terms of research in marketing, particularly research on normative, substantive, or descriptive issues. As editor, I want to publish the entire spectrum of research in marketing, from analytical models of marketing phenomena to descriptive studies that use ethnographic methodologies. Thus, the research published in *JMR* will overlap that published in *Marketing Science* and the *Journal of Marketing* and with the marketing-oriented research published in the *Journal of Consumer Research* and *Management Science*.

Though segmentation and positioning are cornerstones in marketing practice, I feel that overlap in the content of the major marketing journals improves potential knowledge dissemination. All of us who have had manuscripts rejected know that the review process is imperfect and that the obstacles are greatest for innovative research. For example, at least one O'Dell Award-winning paper was rejected after the initial submission. An overlap in journal content increases the probability that high quality, innovative research will have an opportunity to be considered for publication in more than one of the major marketing journals and that researchers who undertake such research will be rewarded for their efforts.

### NATURE OF RESEARCH PUBLISHED IN *JMR*

As editor, I would like to publish more research that makes major rather than incremental contributions and that examines substantive versus methodological issues.

#### *Major Versus Incremental Contributions*

As the major academic journal in marketing, *JMR* should focus on research that makes major contributions to the discipline. Articles in *JMR* should provide new directions for addressing substantive or methodological issues and should be relevant to a broad cross-section of the marketing community. For example, *JMR* should not be the primary vehicle for publishing research that simply adds another parameter to an existing model or illustrates an estimation method. Methodological articles published in *JMR* should identify shortcomings with current methods, present a new method for addressing those problems, and demonstrate the advantages of the new method over current methods. Similarly, *JMR* should not publish empirical research that simply reexamines relationships between constructs without providing new insights or interpretation of prior results. Empirical research published in *JMR* should identify contradictory findings or gaps in prior research, develop theories to account for those gaps, and test the proposed explanation.

Articles published in *JMR* should be of interest to a broad readership. Typically, providing a theoretical base for research broadens its relevance. For example, the use of agency theory to study the development of salesforce compensation plans is of interest to researchers examining other marketing control problems because the underlying theory and results can be applied to their problems. Similarly, some methodological research, such as models for analyzing choice data, is relevant to a broad base of problems. In addition, choice models typically are applied to data uniquely associated with marketing research and practice. Methodological research addressing a very specific problem of interest to only a narrow segment of the *JMR* readership should be published in a journal directed toward that audience. For example, *Public Opinion Quarterly* might be more appropriate for research on questionnaire response rates as a function of callbacks, and the *Journal of Advertising Research* for research on the reliability of an ad effectiveness measure.

Integrative reviews and theoretical research can make major contributions to the development of marketing knowledge and are relevant to a variety of marketing researchers. Even though such research accounts for less than 10% of the articles published in *JMR* during the last 10 years, most winners of the O'Dell Award are in that category. Because of its potential impact, that type of research should be encouraged and supported in the review process.



### *Substantive Versus Methodological Research*

Developing better methods for assessing marketing phenomena is a necessary step toward understanding marketing phenomena. More than 50% of the articles published in *JMR* during the last 12 years were methodological. However, the ultimate objective of marketing research is to enable marketing managers and public policy makers to use their understanding of marketing phenomena to make more effective decisions. Today, our limited understanding of marketing phenomena prevents us from fully exploiting the sophisticated methodologies we have developed and refined. The marketing discipline needs to place more emphasis on understanding basic marketing phenomena.

Research on panel data illustrates this point. The vast amount of data available to marketers through POS terminals is intended to afford a better understanding of the impact of marketing activities on consumer behavior. Clearly, the first step in developing such understanding is developing methods for converting the data into usable information, yet most research on panel data continues to be methodological. Only small part of the research involving panel data explores substantive issues or forms the basis for inductive theory building.

### *PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH*

Because *JMR* publishes state-of-the-art research in marketing, the information in the articles is not intended for all marketing practitioners. The AMA policy statement recognizes that limitation by specifying that *JMR* is targeted toward "technically sophisticated marketing researchers and educators." However, we can increase readership by making it possible for people to learn something from each published article even if they are not familiar with the research domain. That can be accomplished by clearly positioning the research in the introduction and by using language that attracts readers and stimulates them to continue reading. The dissemination of the most complex information can be improved by summarizing the conceptualizations, results, contributions, and implications in a straightforward manner throughout the article.

### *REVIEW PROCESS*

The review process plays an important role in the development and dissemination of marketing knowledge. It can encourage academic research, improve the quality of submitted research, and assist researchers in developing their conceptual and methodological skills.

#### *Objectives*

My objectives for managing the review process are to (1) maintain the standards befitting the major academic journal in marketing and (2) have authors feel they benefit by submitting manuscripts to *JMR* for review. Because *JMR* is the major journal in marketing, articles must satisfy the highest standards of scholarly research and the review process must ensure that research is well conceived and executed. In addition, I want authors to receive good advice on how to improve the submitted manuscript as well as learn how to improve their future research activities.

#### *Partnership*

Achievement of those objectives is possible only when the reviewers, the authors, and the editor work together in a partnership. Each member of the partnership has specific responsibilities.

As editor, I manage the review process by selecting a set of reviewers with expertise and skills in the appropriate substantive and methodological areas and by soliciting their inputs on a timely basis. I use the reviewer comments and evaluations to assess the potential contribution of manuscripts. When I ask authors to revise and resubmit a manuscript, I provide guidance to the authors, indicating the critical areas to be addressed and resolving conflicting reviewer comments.

In addition to being timely, reviewers should provide constructive suggestions for improving the contribution of a manuscript so that authors will receive useful feedback even if the manuscript is not accepted for publication. Finally, the authors have a responsibility to undertake significant research and to prepare and submit manuscripts that represent their best efforts. When asked to revise a manuscript, authors should thoroughly consider comments and suggestions made by the reviewers.

A key element in a successful partnership is trust in the good intentions and expertise of all parties. The reviewers, authors, and editor must accept that all parties are attempting to increase the development and dissemination of marketing knowledge. All parties should feel that the comments and suggestions have been made in good faith.

### *CONCLUSION*

I am honored to have an opportunity to make a contribution to the marketing discipline and the *JMR* tradition developed by the previous editors, from Robert Ferber to Michael Houston. As editor of a refereed journal, particularly

a major journal with a rich tradition, I cannot make, nor do I want to make, major changes in the nature of research published in *JMR*. The nature of the manuscripts submitted defines the set of potential articles, and the evaluation by reviewers plays a major role in determining what will be published from that set. However, my philosophical orientation will guide my decisions when I evaluate manuscripts in light of reviewer comments. In addition, I will make a special effort to motivate research consistent with my perspective and to assist it through the review process. Finally, I will insist that authors devote attention to the presentation of their research.

BARTON A. WEITZ  
*Editor*

Reprint No. JMR291100



## MANUSCRIPT GUIDELINES

### Journal of Marketing

Manuscripts should be typed double spaced, including references, on  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$  inch white, nonerasable paper. Allow margins of at least one inch on all four sides. Type on one side of the page only.

Submit five copies of the manuscript to Thomas C. Kinnear, Editor, School of Business Administration, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1234.

The author should keep an extra, exact copy for future reference.

### ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

Three minimum criteria must be met in order for an article to be published in *JM*:

1. The article must make a contribution to knowledge in marketing. It must provide *new insights, new ideas, or new empirical results*.
2. It must be based on sound evidence, whether literature review, theory, or empirical research. *JM's* readers expect articles that build on previous theory, literature, and empirical findings.
3. It must be of value to marketing practitioners and/or academicians. That is, the information must be considered *new, insightful, and important* by either (or both) the marketing practitioners or the marketing academicians.

All manuscripts are judged on their contributions to the *advancement of the science and/or practice of marketing*. All articles are expected to follow the rules for scholarly work, namely:

- Use references to previous work when developing your model or theory. Do not assume other work on the subject does not exist, giving yourself credit for all the ideas in your manuscript.
- Consider the relevance of the sample to the subject matter when data collection is discussed. Carefully chosen sample groups are preferable to haphazardly chosen subjects who have little knowledge of or relevance to the subject being studied.
- Give as much information as possible about the characteristics of the sample and its representativeness of the population being studied.
- Do not ignore the nonrespondents. They might have different characteristics than the respondents.
- Give consideration to the limitations of your study, and model or concepts, and discuss them explicitly in your manuscript. Be objective.
- Use appropriate statistical procedures.
- Address the reliability and validity of any empirical findings.

The following types of manuscripts will not be accepted for review:

1. A manuscript being reviewed concurrently by another journal. The only exception would be with prior discussion and written permission of the *JM* editor.
2. A manuscript based on the same data and reporting results that are essentially similar to those used in previously published research.
3. A manuscript whose prime contribution is related to the development of research methodologies/marketing models.

Authors of *JM* manuscripts using data-dependent results are required to share their research findings and insights. Authors will make available, upon request during the review process, exact information about procedures, materials (excluding data), and stimuli. In addition, the authors will also be required to provide information, upon request, for a period of 5 years from date of publication to researchers interested in replicating and/or extending the research.

### REVIEW PROCEDURE

The procedures guiding the selection of articles for publication in *JM* require that no manuscript be accepted until it has been reviewed by the editor and two members of the editorial review board. The decision of the editor to publish the manuscript is influenced considerably by the judgments of these advisors, who are experts in their respective fields. The author's name and

credentials are removed prior to forwarding a manuscript to a reviewer so as to maximize objectivity and ensure that a manuscript is judged solely on the basis of its content and contribution to the field.

The editor and reviewers of *JM* are dedicated to protecting the intellectual property of the authors. A reviewer may not use the ideas or show a manuscript to anyone else without the author's prior approval through the editor.

The review is the sole responsibility of the person to whom it was assigned by the journal editor. Sharing responsibility is inappropriate.

If a conflict of interest such as any financial interest or knowledge of the author's identity arises, the reviewer should consult with the editor.

It is each reviewer's responsibility to provide constructive, unbiased, and confidential comments designed to improve the quality of the manuscript and respect the author's dignity.

## READABILITY

*JM* manuscripts are judged not only on the depth and scope of the ideas presented and their contributions to the field, but also on their clarity and whether they can be read and understood. Readers have varied backgrounds. Hence, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Write in an interesting, readable manner with varied sentence structure. Use as little passive voice as possible.
- Avoid using technical terms that few readers are likely to understand. If you use these terms, include definitions. Remember: **the journal is designed to be read, not deciphered.**
- Keep sentences short so the reader does not get lost before the end of a sentence.

## WHAT GOES WHERE

- First Page: Name of author(s) and title; author(s) footnote, including present position, complete address and telephone number, and any acknowledgement of financial or technical assistance.
- Second page: Title of paper (without author's name) and a brief abstract of no more than 50 words *substantively* summarizing the article. It should be informative, giving the reader a "taste" of the article.
- Next: The text with major headings centered on the page and subheadings flush with the left margin. Both should be typed upper and lower case (for special typing instructions, see paragraphs on footnotes, mathematical notation, and figures).
- Then: Technical appendices if applicable (see Technical Appendix).
- Followed by: Footnotes numbered consecutively and typed double spaced in paragraph style on a separate page.
- Then: Tables, numbered consecutively, each on a separate page. If tables appear in an appendix, they should be numbered separately and consecutively, e.g., Table A1, A2, etc. (see paragraph on Tables).
- Next: Figures, numbered consecutively, each placed on a separate page. As with tables, if figures appear in an appendix, they should be numbered separately, e.g., Figure A1, A2, etc. (see paragraphs on Figures).
- Last: References, typed double spaced in alphabetical order by author's last name (see Reference List Style).

## MORE INFORMATION ON FOOTNOTES

Footnotes should *not* be used for reference purposes and should be avoided if possible. If the author feels they would clarify, extend a point, or improve the readability of the text, a few footnotes may be included. They should appear double spaced on a separate page and be numbered consecutively throughout the text.

## MORE INFORMATION ON MATHEMATICAL NOTATION

Mathematical notation must be clear within the text.

Equations should be centered on the page. If equations are numbered, type the number in parentheses flush with the right margin.

Unusual symbols and Greek letters should be identified by a marginal note. If equations are too wide to fit in a single column, indicate appropriate breaks.

## MORE INFORMATION ON TABLES

Tables should consist of at least four columns and four rows; otherwise they should be left as in-text tabulations or their results should be integrated in the text.

The table number and title should be centered on separate lines.

Use only horizontal rules.

Designate units (% , \$ , etc.) in column headings.

Align all decimals.

Refer to tables in text by number. Avoid using "above," "below," and "preceding."

If possible, combine closely related tables.

Indicate placement within the text.

Make sure that the necessary measures of statistical significance are reported with the table.

Complex tables might require camera-ready artwork (see instructions in next paragraph).

## MORE INFORMATION ON FIGURES AND CAMERA-READY ARTWORK

Figures should be prepared professionally for camera-ready reproduction.

Label both vertical and horizontal axes. The ordinate label should be centered above the ordinate axis; the abscissa label should be placed beneath the abscissa.

Place all calibration ticks inside the axis lines, with the values outside the axis lines.

The figure number and title should be typed on separate lines, centered.

Once a manuscript has been accepted, complex tables and all figures must be camera-ready. Table and figure headings should be typed on a separate page and attached to the appropriate camera-ready art. These titles will be set in our own typeface.

One-column art should be 7 inches wide and two-column art should be 14 inches wide. Lettering should be large enough to be easily read with 50% reduction. The art should be professionally drafted in india ink.

*Please do not submit camera-ready art until your manuscript has been accepted.* If the artwork is completed, submit photocopies.

## REFERENCE CITATIONS WITHIN THE TEXT

Citations in the text should be by the author's last name and year of publication enclosed in parentheses *without punctuation*: (Kinsey 1960). If practical, the citation should stand by a punctuation mark. Otherwise, insert it in a logical sentence break. If you use the author's name within the sentence, there is no need to repeat the name in the citation; just use the year of publication in parentheses, e.g., "... the Howard Harris Program (1966)."

If a particular page, section, or equation is cited, it should be placed within the parentheses: (Kinsey 1960, p. 112). For multiple authors, use the full citation for up to three authors; for four or more, use the first author's name followed by *et al.* A series of citations should be listed in alphabetical order: (Donnelly 1981; Kinsey 1960; Wensley 1981).

## REFERENCE LIST STYLE

References are to be listed alphabetically, last name first, followed by publication date in parentheses. Use full first name, not just initials. The reference list should be typed double spaced with a hanging indent, on a separate page.

Single- and multiple-author reference for *books*:

Donnelly, James H. and William R. George (1981), *Marketing of Services*. Chicago: American Marketing Association.

Single- and multiple-author reference for periodicals (include author's name, publication date, article title, complete name of periodical, volume number, month of publication, and page numbers):

Wensley, Robin (1981), "Strategic Marketing: Betas, Boxes, or Basics," *Journal of Marketing*, 45 (Summer), 173-82.

Single- and multiple-author reference for an article in a book *edited by another author(s)*:

Nevin, John R. and Ruth A. Smith (1981), "The Predictive Accuracy of a Retail Gravitation Model: An Empirical Evaluation," in *The Changing Marketing Environment*, Kenneth Bernhardt et al., eds. Chicago: American Marketing Association.

If an author appears more than once, substitute a 1" line (elite = 12 characters, pica = 10 characters) for the author's name or for each of a repeated team of authors.

Fornell, Claes and David F. Larcker (1981a), "Evaluating Structural Equation Models With Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18 (February), 39-50.

——— and ——— (1981b), "Structural Equation Models With Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error: Algebra and Statistics," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18 (August), 382-8.

If two or more works by the same author have the same publication date, they should be differentiated by letters after the date. The letter should also appear with the citation in the text:

Day, George (1981a), "Analytical Approaches to Strategic Market Planning," in *Review of Marketing 1981*, Ben M. Enis and Kenneth J. Roering, eds. Chicago: American Marketing Association, 89-105.

——— (1981b), "The Product Life Cycle: Analysis and Applications Issues," *Journal of Marketing*, 45 (Fall), 60-7.

References to unpublished works such as PhD dissertations, working papers, etc., should be included in the reference list as:

Coughlin, Maureen (1980), "Fear of Success: Reaction to Advertising Stimuli and Intention to Purchase," PhD dissertation, City University of New York.

## TECHNICAL APPENDIX

To improve the *readability* of the manuscript, any mathematical proof or development that is not critical to the exposition of the main part of the text may be placed in a technical appendix.

## OTHER INFORMATION

All published material is copyrighted by the American Marketing Association with future-use rights reserved. This does not limit the author's right to use his/her own material, however, in future works.

For details on manuscript preparation not covered here, see *A Manual of Style*, 13th edition, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1982. For specific questions on content or editorial policy, contact the editor.

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In the increasingly international world of scholarship today, the major language of communication is English. Scholars wishing to disseminate their findings to a wide audience need to not only master the English language but also the rhetorical conventions of the targeted discourse community. The focal question is, how do scholarly writers in different disciplines and discourse communities present their contribution to maximum advantage, in order to persuade their readers that their contribution is worthy of attention?

This study examines professional scholars' strategies of promoting their contribution in research articles in three major business disciplines: Finance, Organization and Management, and Marketing. It does so by describing the rhetorical moves used by writers published in two of the most prestigious journals in each discipline. The author proposes models for identifying promotional steps in the three sections of research articles where the writers' presence is strongest, i.e. in abstracts, introductions, and discussion/conclusions. Since self-promotion can be perceived as an imposition by the academic community, the study also examines to what extent mitigating devices are used in the context of promotion.

One of the major findings of the study is that, despite similarities between the promotional strategies of the three disciplines, which justify certain generalizations about academic rhetoric in (American) English research articles, there are also noticeable differences between the disciplines, and indeed between journals within the same discipline. Therefore, writers need to recognize the types and degrees of direct and indirect promotion, as well as possible mitigating devices, which may be expected by their target audience.