

Domination of Positivism in Academic Writing of Iranian Applied Linguists: A Critical Corpus-based Approach

Research Article

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Abstract

Academic writing is one of the important skills in higher education and as a social phenomenon can be investigated for ideological manipulations. This study tries to unveil the westernized hegemonic discourse such as legitimation patterns in academic discourse of Iranian applied linguists in three major research paradigms. To this end, five-point classification of van Leeuwen's (2008) authorization's category was used as our analytic framework. The published articles of Iranian academic-scholarly journals

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were critically analyzed for the observed frequencies of the mentioned classifications and Chi-square tests were used to statistically investigate the associations between authorization's patterns and research paradigms. The results revealed statistically significant associations between quantitative and qualitative research methods on one hand and between qualitative and mixed-methods on the other hand. Accordingly, the results of this study may shed some lights on the domination of positivist's ideology in academic writing of the applied linguists in Iran. In this respect, the policy makers in the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology, along with editorial boards of Iranian journals in the field of applied linguistics, may change the globalized and westernized view of education into more locally oriented approaches. Furthermore, professors and students may adopt more democratic views in their research and reporting studies.

Keywords: positivism, academic writing, critical corpus-based approach, hegemonic discourse, domination

Introduction

One of the most challenging skills with regard to gatekeeping characteristics in second language learning is writing. Language learners deal with writing in everyday life and learn and improve this skill from the beginning of their studies. There are numerous definitions for writing available in the literature. According to Cumming (1998), "writing is text, is composing, and is social construction" (p. 61). Despite the shortness of this definition, the vastness of this skill is identifiable respectively. This definition draws the attention from mere understanding of writing skill as development of texts to more contextual, dynamic, and social approaches. Among different models of this skill, academic writing is of paramount importance and can be considered as one of the most crucial tools in education. According to Hyland (2016), academic writing became an enterprise in which "six million scholars in 17,000 universities produce over 1.5 million peer reviewed articles" (p. 58). This amount of publication and academic findings, by nature, leads to visible or hidden influences in the education. In other words, education cannot be considered as a neutral and apolitical setting which only scientific findings are focalized. Through manipulative issues for research in the applied linguistics, Mirhosseini (2018) identified several sources for scrutiny of which publishing has an important contribution to this study. Publishing in many circumstances has a hegemonic role for the researchers. Accordingly, Canagarajah (1996) underlined three obstacles to publishing, in which; "non-discursive requirements exclude Third World scholars from scholarly publications; that the material constraints on academic writing bear on knowledge production; and that such academic /publishing practices are embedded in international power relations" (p.438).

The ideological problems in academic writing can be investigated from two major manipulative sources of power namely the dominant research paradigm and the journals' policies. The mirror image of the sources of power reflects the ideological stand of the dominated group. Moreover, researchers may adopt

the tenets of the dominant ideology in their study to become accepted as the member of the particular academic discourse community. This is one of the manipulative issues in academic writing which the dominant research paradigm may directly manipulate the language of the researchers. Hall (2007) mentioned that “good journals may reject good work for reasons of ideology” (p.13). Ideological manipulation of scholarly papers can be considered as one of the several sources of hegemony in academic settings which may tackle the identity of the authors. According to Burgess and Ivancic (2010) identity in writing is not a fixed entity and includes “the self that a person brings to the act of writing, the self she constructs through the act of writing, and the way in which the writer is perceived by the reader(s) of the writing” (p.232). However, the self-construction has relations with political, economic and cultural agendas in higher education.

Publication, in essence, makes great opportunities for universities’ income, judgment of scholars and practitioners. Moreover, researchers are engrossed in opportunities for their future careers (Hyland, 2016). In other words, publication validates researchers in their field of inquiry (Canagarajah, 1996). This validation in Iranian context has roots in policies of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (henceforth MSRT). Tavakoli and Tavakol (2018) found education in Iran as a problematic jurisdiction in that neither relevant need analysis nor appropriate right analysis existed in higher education and decisions were based on intentions of authorities. In this respect, the second concern is the hegemonic control of Iranian local journals with regard to the global effects on the language of the accepted articles. As the crux of the matter, if journals seek for scientific scholarly papers which “I” as an identity indicator must be excluded, scholars and practitioners will unquestionably remove their identity in what they have found to gain the mentioned validity and visibility.

This study aims to unveil the hegemonic discourse of Iranian published articles in the field of applied linguistics vis-à-vis their research paradigms. Shohamy (2008) divided language policy into overt and covert. In Iran, overt policies are those influenced by authorities in Iranian academic context whereas covert policies deal with actual practices which may or may not be influenced by bureaucratic power (Mirhosseini & Khodakarami, 2016). Covert policies may embrace the hidden intentions of sources of power in academic settings which make researchers servant of the system through eliminating their identity and promotion of positivism. This study targeted the discourse manipulation of researchers through the methodological forces in their academic articles. One of the reasons for this manipulation is that global forces and colonial intentions tend to disparage the local knowledge (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Geerlings and Lundberg (2018) argued for the need to uncover the hegemonic discursive in academic writing which had roots in globalization and universalizing knowledge in Asia. Uncurtaining the hegemonic discursive of western knowledge may shed lights on the reality of higher education in Iranian context. Furthermore, identification of global forces which influence academic writing in Iran may be fruitful for researchers’ identities.

The critical appraisal of academic writings in this study owes much to Foucault's (1980) identification of "subjugated knowledges" versus "low-ranking knowledges" (pp. 81-82). 'Subjugated knowledges can be generalized to the dominant school of thought approved by the majorities whereas 'low-ranking knowledges stay in minorities. Accordingly, the unification in scientific discourse which has been derived from the subjugated knowledge develops a threshold for scientific researchers and embroils other varieties and methodologies for research. The discourse of the researchers, in this case, becomes manipulated through assigned characteristics of the scientific discourse. Moreover, Shor and Freire (1987) highlighted the division of "producing knowledge" and "existing knowledge" as the pivotal point for domination of western ideology and dominant group of society in education. Dominant group maintains and replicates hegemony through manipulation which results in power abuse (van Dijk, 2006). The findings of this study may suggest academicians, journals reviewers, editors and decision makers more liberal and locally oriented approaches toward writing style of scholarly papers.

Background of the Study

The role of philosophy is irresistible in language studies. The skeleton of education is mounted on different theories and philosophies which are covertly filtered by power. According to Comte (2009), philosophy was derived from human life and it was intended to compensate for the shortcomings in three major layers of life namely "thoughts, feelings and actions" (p.8). Yet, we can simply realize that problems such as inequality and injustice are growing all around the world regardless of availability of different theories and philosophies. On one hand, philosophies and theories cannot create change unless the level of praxis is achieved; on the other hand, social transformation and educational change are two inseparable entities. These two notions underline the practice of critical pedagogy as a fortifying tool against dictatorship in education and societies.

Different intentions exist in education and universities canvass for them. Various types of ideology in higher education may unravel the unity of researchers in solving the real problems. These ideologies manipulate researchers in terms of the method and the form of the language they use. In essence, three major research paradigms are quantitative with positivist ideology, qualitative with reformist ideology and mixed-method which is based on pragmatism (Dornyei, 2007). These ideologies and methodologies segregate researchers and practitioners in education and may take their attention from problem-posing and problem-solving nature of research to visibility and benefits of publication.

McLean (2006) succinctly identified three key objectives which higher education should take into consideration namely democracy, identification of sources of inequalities and addressing global problems. Democracy in education and applied linguistics can help transgression of dictated methods and

conventional approaches in research and writing scholarly papers. On the other hand, undemocratic approach to applied linguistics may result in unjust, unfair, and unequal academic setting. Dewey (1916) did not divide education from the society and believed that democratic education leads to democratic society. Higher education in Iran, specifically in the field of applied linguistics, may masquerade its unequal appeal to positivist school of thought which promotes language of statistics, callousness and prescribed procedures. In what follows, the nexus between theoretical and empirical studies with regard to hegemony, critical language studies and identity are brought into consideration.

Critical Language Studies and the Identity Formation

In line with justice, equality and democracy in applied linguistics, Pennycook (2010) identified a number of critical domains and mentioned that critical approach towards language study “involves a constant skepticism, a constant questioning of the normative assumptions of applied linguistics” (p.3). Norms and conventions play a determinant role in promotion of the particular belief in higher education. To elaborate, Lazaraton (1997) specified several possible reasons such as department preference for instruction of quantitative research methodology as a conventional approach. Considering the research paradigm in postmethod, Kumaravadivelu (2006) believed that “contrary to common misconception, doing teacher research does not necessarily involve highly sophisticated, statistically laden, variable-controlled experimental studies” (p. 181). This belief paves the path for practitioners and scholars to adopt different research methodologies for their studies. Furthermore, the scientific approach cannot be conceived as the only research paradigm and researchers’ open-mindedness may resolve the distance between authors and readers in scientific studies. The quantitative research methodology with traditional, isolated and fragmented structures in the articles has been dominantly practiced in TESOL (Canagarajah, 2016). To this end, questioning the norms of scientific writing through the lens of critical discourse analysis (CDA) can be considered as an initial step in resistance to manipulative global forces in the local research articles.

Language and ideology are intertwined facts which cannot be separated and have mutual effects on each other (Fairclough, 1995). The impacts of ideology on discourse and resistance upon “what is acceptable and what is tabooed” can be directly sought through critical language related studies (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p.13). Critical pedagogy, among various types of critical language studies, should be reputed as the artery of consciousness and criticality in education. According to Kubota and Miller (2017), the concept of criticality in language related studies could be enunciated in key issues such as “problematizing naturalized and normalized assumptions and practices; questioning power and inequalities; focusing on broader social, ideological, and colonial milieus; problematizing gender, race, class, and sexuality; transcending fixed knowledge and seeking visions for change; and practicing self-reflexivity and praxis” (p. 132). Understanding, scrutinizing and reflecting on these issues can be sought in op-

erationalizing Freire's (1970) notion of 'problem- posing' model of education. With regard to critical pedagogy, Kumaravadivelu (2006) pointed out the importance of teachers and learners' identity for interrogation of hegemony. The identity construction of educators can give them voice to resist inequities and injustice. Furthermore, they become able to change the undemocratic status quo in their education and society. This change or transformation is at the heart of the critical approaches toward education (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1970; Joseph, 2002; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Shor & Freire, 1987).

By considering the sociological standpoint of identity formation, Kumaravadivelu (2012) pinned three philosophical points namely modernism, post-modernism and globalism. Identity of individuals in modernism is tied directly to the societal conventions, yet in postmodernism it is constructed based on individual self-determination (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). However, the identity in globalism is what this paper seeks and the construction of this type of identity may not be achieved unless individuals develop "critical knowledge that can help them tell the difference between formation and disinformation, between ideas and ideologies, between trivial and the consequential" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 12). Globalism has reduced the boundaries and unfamiliarity of the nations with different cultures. Thereby, the powerful culture both in everyday life or academic setting maybe adopted by nations. In other words, the western theories and theorists, as the sources of power, may be role modeled by local educators, practitioners and scholars which in fact tackles their identity. In academic writing, Hyland (2002) specified several argumentations for the exclusion of students' identity two of which namely "culturally shaped epistemologies" and "culture specific views of authority" are related to global forces and the intentions of authorities (p. 1107). In this respect, reviewing some researches in line with the theory of identity in Iran may possibly shed some lights on the perceptions of the Iranian educated elite.

Researchers' Self-determination and the Control of Authors in Iranian Context

Culture and identity are inseparable facts which can be investigated in social settings. Karimifard (2012) spotted three areas such as nationality, religion and modernism which Iranian identities are constructed upon. To study culture and identity empirically, Saboori et al. (2015) investigated the relationship between cultural dimensions and identity components. In their initial step, their findings revealed that those with adopted western identity have more democratic perspectives in their identity formation. To remark some of these democratic features, the participants were intolerant of inequality and had lower emotional gender distinction (see Saboori et al. 2015). Although investigation of identity at social level is significantly important due to inseparability of society and education, more pertinent studies in line with this study is worthy of attention.

Concerning the academic setting, Rashidi and Mansurian (2015) studied the possible relationship between personal, relational, social and collective identi-

ties and the English achievements of Iranian learners. However, their result did not indicate significant correlation between variables. In contrast, Alimorad (2015) found identity as a crucial factor for academic performance, but instructors and practitioners paid little attention to this notion. To democratize the university setting, Alimorad (2015) suggested that “listening to the voices of language learners” was an important step for the future of education (p. 50). Listening to the voice of voiceless is one of the fundamental concerns in critical language studies which can be generalized to the identity construction of the researchers. Rahimpour et al. (2018) investigated researchers’ identity in their own academic articles in relation to the qualitative research methodology. In Rahimpour et al. (2018) study, researchers used personal pronouns and possessive to indicate their voice in their research articles. In different disciplines, the self-mention was used more frequently in social sciences such as philosophy, applied linguistics and sociology comparing to the other fields (Hyland, 2001).

However, the voice of the authors can be controlled by professors and editors. Hegemony is a control over a group via consent and agreement (Gramsci, 1971) and can be considered as a hurdle for the reformation. In this regard, Rezaei and Seyri (2019) found that Iranian PhD students “were concerned about the hegemony of English as the language of science and instead preferred publishing their works in Persian and in the local journals” (p. 949). Furthermore, they found that the evaluation system in Iran is based on the publication. One of the participants stated that:

One reason for submitting papers to international journals is that promotion of faculty members is tied to the number of articles they publish. If they publish a great number of articles, they can easily be promoted to associate professorship (Rezaei& Seyri, 2019, p.947).

These findings possibly indicate the control of professors over PhD students’ academic writing for publishing purposes. Accordingly, professors are more familiar with the expectations of academic discourse community in comparison to the students. These expectations are accepted by majority and create a uniform frame for academic communications. For instance, quantitative articles follow sets of predetermined steps and deviation from these steps can be considered problematic by professors and editors. However, the uniform means of communication may be fruitful for some scholars and practitioners. In this regard, Mansouri Nejad et al. (2019) found the interests of Iranian PhD candidates for quantitative research methods based on facts such as easiness, speed, time saving features of data analysis and cost effectiveness. However, from a critical lens the uniform means of communication may be considered problematic. These steps are not locally identified and have deep roots in the western traditions of scientific writing. Disrespect of the identified standards which are accepted globally and by western theorists is equal to rejection. For instance, Stapleton (2019) states his strong opposition to the deviation from standards in the discourse of scientific articles that have been accepted by the majority (natives).

Also, the pressure of editors and reviewers is highly influential in maintaining the status quo in academic writing. Accordingly, O'Neil (2019) underlined that the editors in well-accredited international journals can control and define the construction of knowledge for the entire discipline. Local journals, in Iran, may also follow the standards of western dominant scientific discourse in Iranian academic setting.

Research Question and Hypothesis

Through critical approach toward globalized and ideological manipulation of discourse, this study seeks domination of scientific writing in relation to the research methodologies in the well-accredited local Iranian journals in the field of applied linguistics. According to our initial investigation there was a significant relationship between quantitative and Mixed-methods in terms of Authorization's patterns (see table 3). Therefore, we investigated those patterns between quantitative and qualitative along with qualitative and mixed-methods designs:

- Are there statistically significant associations between adoptions of authorization's patterns in different research paradigms in Iranian local journals?
- H0: There are no statistically significant associations between adoptions of authorization's patterns in different research paradigms in Iranian local journals.

Materials and Methods

This study is based on quantitative text analysis method. The texts of academic articles published in local Iranian journals are critically analyzed to quantitatively investigate the patterns of discourse in relation to their research methodologies.

Corpus

The corpus of this study is consisted of scholarly papers published in open access '*Academic-Scholarly*' journals granted and approved by the MSRT of Iran. These journals are well-accredited and follow peer-reviewed process in their decisions. The titles of Iranian targeted journals along with the date of availability are brought in Table 1. Some of the journals have been excluded since they publish articles in Persian language.

Table 1.
Title and Date of Availability of Iranian Academic-Scholarly Journals

Title	Date of Availability
Teaching English Language (TEL)	2007
Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics (IJAL)	2008
Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies (IJALS)	2009
Journal of Teaching Language Skills (JTLS)	2009
Journal of Research in Applied Linguistic (JRAL)	2010
Applied Research on English Language (AREL)	2012
Issues in Language Teaching (ILT)	2012
Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research (IJLTR)	2013
Iranian Journal of English for Academic Purposes (IJEAP)	2015

The listed journals are related to the field of applied linguistics and mainly directed by Iranian state universities. Iranian scholars mostly present their research and their line of thoughts in such journals. Additionally, the future of many educators in Iran, specifically PhD candidates, depends on the publication in one of these journals under some circumstances. This highlights the importance of this study and other critical studies with regard to the same subject.

As it was discussed in preceding sections, Dornyei (2007) identified three main ideologies of research methods in applied linguistics (see Table 2). This classification has systematized the selection of the articles in this study. Accordingly, 36 papers for each research methodology were randomly selected from the mentioned journals ($t = 108$).

Table 2.
Three Main Ideological Research Methods in Applied Linguistics

Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed methods
Positivism	Reformist movement	Pragmatism

One of the main issues for appropriateness of a quantitative study is the sample size; however, in text and discourse analysis this point is secondary. In text analysis, researchers might adopt flexible range of subjects. For example, Hyland (2013) mentioned that “sometimes researchers work with a single text” (p. 149).

The Analytic Framework

The discourse in academic writing embraces large area for research. It can be critically analyzed from the positivistic traditions in textual format of articles such as “Introduction, Method, Result, and Discussion” (Canagarajah, 2016) to more meaning oriented approaches such as Hyland’s (2005) stance and engagement markers. But, the concept of legitimation can be considered at the heart of power manipulation in academic settings and mainly positivist school of thought. With regard to CDA, van Leeuwen (2008) classified four areas for the discursive manipulation of legitimation in which we selected authorization.

This category is comprised of Personal Authority (PA), Expert Authority (EA), role model authority (RA), impersonal authority (IA), the authority of tradition (AT) and the authority of conformity (AC). Among these six categories, role model authority is excluded due to limited application in academic writing.

To illustrate each sector briskly, in personal authority researchers' "obligation modality" can be investigated (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 106). In fact, identities which authors construct in the report of their study (such as I or we) are under scrutiny. The second classification, expert authority, has much in common with Clark's (1992) notion of "appeal to authority" which pinpoints the conventional use of pioneers in academic discourses (p. 135). Researchers refer to a number of studies which have similar result to support their point of view. For instance, as Karimi and Nafissi (2017) have also mentioned, the importance and integration of culture learning into second or foreign language learning curriculum has been highlighted by many (Brown, 2007; Choudhury, 2014; Christiansen & Silva, 2016; Kramsch, 1998; Schulz, 2007; Tomalin, 2008; Wang, 2008, all cited in Karimi & Nafissi, 2017). According to van Leeuwen (2008) this classification typically occurs in academic discourse in which researchers instead of "providing arguments and evidence, quote intellectual megastars, or just add their names in parentheses" (p. 107). Numerous references in support of a point may also squander the intellectual priorities of readers such as critical reading and thinking.

Additionally, standardized rules in research methodologies can be investigated through impersonal authority (e.g., $r = .071$, $p < .01$). These rules are mainly indicated by the methodologies that researchers adopt in accomplishing their studies. The authority of tradition also tackles the conventions in academic discourse such as presenting estimate of reliability of instruments in the research articles (e.g., Cronbach's alpha was found to be 0.77 or reporting Kappa value for Qual studies). The report of reliability estimates instead of validity investigation which plays much greater role in studies became a common sense in Iranian academic discourse community. Finally, the authority of conformity targets the reductionist and to the point presentation of gap or statement of the problem. In other words, the traditions of scientific writing conform authors to study single problem while possibility of other forces such as political, economic and cultural constraints are not included in the studies. The reductionist approach to stating the problem is under magnifier in this part e.g. Askari Matin et al. (2018) specifically mentioned several *gaps* in changing teacher education in Iran.

Procedure

In order to critically analyze the corpus, AntConc software is used for the discourse in the texts. AntConc toolkit is a useful program for the frequency measurement of words and phrases in corpus analysis. Anthony (2013) depicted the usefulness of AntCon freeware in providing researchers with constructive elements of the texts. This program has a converting option for PDF files which

gives the opportunity for critical analysis of the published texts. After the text converting step, the identified discourse based on van Leeuwen's (2008) category of 'authorization' is investigated through words and clues of those patterns. In this step, texts were scrutinized through Cluster and N/Grams which calculates frequencies (Cluster size = Min.1 and Max.1). In case of occurrence, the observed frequencies of each category were jotted down. AntConc only provides the list of words and sentences without identification of sections (whether the clue is in reference, transcription of interviews, or author's writing) which may lead to inconsistent results. To this end, we double checked the occurrence of the authorizations clues visually by three reviewers in the texts for assurance of existence and observed frequencies.

In order to test the hypothesis, Chi-square test is used via SPSS (version 17). This study investigates the associations between frequencies of authorization's patterns (categorical variable) and research methodologies (categorical variable). Our variables are both categorical and the most appropriate statistical test is Pearson's Chi-Square (Field, 2009).

Results

In order to probe the research question, two pairs (Quan-Qual and Qual-Mixed) exist for running Chi-square test. These two pairs are under scrutiny based on the frequency of authorization's patterns in texts. The findings based on AntConc program such as the observed frequencies of authorization's patterns in quantitative, qualitative and mixed are listed in Table 3.

Table 3.
Observed Frequencies

Authorizations	Methods		
	Quan	Qual	Mixed
PA	161	162	153
EA	135	120	113
IA	200	25	210
AT	67	10	49
AC	31	18	16
Total	594	335	541

Accordingly, quantitative research methodology has the highest total value of using authorization's patterns. This research methodology has the most adoptability of the scientific writing conventions and discourse (Total $f = 594$). The second place belongs to mixed-methods (Total $f = 541$), yet the frequency of occurrence of IA were even higher than quantitative method due to reliance of some researchers on percentage in qualitative data analysis sections. On the contrary, the researchers in qualitative study used the lowest authorization's patterns in their writing (Total $f = 335$). However, the highest frequency of PA is recognizable in qualitative research methodology which is a good sign of sur-

passing the discourse of scientific writing. These observed frequencies were used in running the Chi-square test.

Table 4
Quan and Qual Methods Authorizations Crosstabulation

		Authorizations					Total	
		PA	EA	IA	AT	AC		
Methods	Quan	Count	161	135	200	67	31	594
		Expected Count	206.5	163.0	143.9	49.2	31.3	594.0
		Std. Residual	-3.2	-2.2	4.7	2.5	-.1	
	Qual	Count	162	120	25	10	18	335
		Expected Count	116.5	92.0	81.1	27.8	17.7	335.0
		Std. Residual	4.2	2.9	-6.2	-3.4	.1	
Total	Count	323	255	225	77	49	929	
	Expected Count	323.0	255.0	225.0	77.0	49.0	929.0	

In order to meet the assumption, the expected count should be higher than 5 in each cell (Field, 2009). All the expected frequencies in Table 4 are above the threshold which indicates the appropriateness of the proportion of cases in each category.

Table 5.
Qual and Mixed Methods Authorizations Crosstabulation

		Authorizations					Total	
		PA	EA	IA	AT	AC		
Methods	Qual	Count	162	120	25	10	18	335
		Expected Count	120.5	89.1	89.9	22.6	13.0	335.0
		Std. Residual	3.8	3.3	-6.8	-2.6	1.4	
	Mixed	Count	153	113	210	49	16	541
		Expected Count	194.5	143.9	145.1	36.4	21.0	541.0
		Std. Residual	-3.0	-2.6	5.4	2.1	-1.1	
Total	Count	315	233	235	59	34	876	
	Expected Count	315.0	233.0	235.0	59.0	34.0	876.0	

Furthermore, the assumption was checked for the second pairs namely qualitative and mixed-methods designs. Similar to the previous pairs, all the values were higher than five which indicates that the assumption is met.

Table 6.
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	119.740 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	133.424	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	64.162	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	929		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 17.67.

The result of Chi-square revealed a statistically significant association in adoption of authorization's patterns between quantitative and qualitative research methodologies ($\chi^2(4) = 119.74, p < .001$). This indicates that qualitative and quantitative methods were not significantly different in terms of the frequency of occurrence of PA, EA, IA, AT and AC. Also, the result of the Chi-square was statistically significant for the qualitative and mixed-methods design ($\chi^2(4) = 130.79, p < .001$).

Table 7.
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	130.793 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	146.281	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	53.701	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	876		

Note. a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.00.

Based on these results we can reject our null hypothesis 'There are no statistically significant associations between adoptions of authorization's patterns in different research paradigms in Iranian local journals.' In contrast, there was a significant association between methodologies and domination of authorization's patterns which can be considered as the domination of scientific discourse in academic writings.

Table 8.
Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal (for Quan and Qual)	Phi	.359	.000
	Cramer's V	.359	.000
N of Valid Cases		929	
Nominal by Nominal (for Qual and Mixed)	Phi	.386	.000
	Cramer's V	.386	.000
N of Valid Cases		876	

The Cramer's statistics turned out to be statistically significant ($V = .359, P < .001$), similarly; the result for the second pair was statistically significant ($V = .386, P < .001$) which indicates the proper effect size and reduces the involvement of chance in the result of Chi-square (See Table, 8).

Discussion

In this study, we investigated the associations of authorization's patterns vis-à-vis three major research methodologies in applied linguistics. The results revealed statistically significant associations between these two variables. This indicates that the scientific writing with authorization's patterns as a positivistic move is dominant in reporting research in the field of applied linguistics in Iran. Accordingly, the results of this study supports the findings of Tavakoli and Tavkol (2018) with regard to educational system as one of the several roots of domination of traditional (positivist) approaches to English for academic purposes. By considering publications and their scopes and objectives as a part of educational system, this study revealed that the articles with different methodologies more or less followed the same old conventions of positivism and scientific writing. This can indicate the domination of ideology of positivism in research and reporting research. The qualitative method is widely used in Iranian academic context but conventions of scientific (quantitative) writing such as reliance on percentages in support of findings is also used in such methodology. Reformist movements of qualitative research need critical approach toward all aspects of writing not just replacing questionnaires with interviews.

Moreover, the qualitative and mixed-methods papers could not completely achieve the epistemic break in presenting their reports. Kumaravadivelu (2012) mentioned that "practitioners of academic disciplines work within the epistemic discourse to understand, express, and predict patterns of meaning within their disciplines" (p.14). The statistical association of the epistemic discourse and research methodologies indicates that 'understanding, expressing, and predictions of meaning' in Iranian context is tied to scientific/positivistic characteristics of knowledge production. Considering globalism as another factor for the hegemony of "western publishing industries" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, P. 21), academic authors can be rejected according to the political reasons. In this regard, Rezaei and Seyri (2019) found that some of the participants of their study received unequal and unjust rejections of their studies due to political reasons. This finding, in fact, pinpoints the political influence of power in education which Freire (1970) pinpointed. Moreover, Mansouri Nejad et al. (2019) underlined the force of faculty members for publishing in international well-accredited journals. This attitude can influence local journals and local academic scholars and practitioners through unequal and limited access to the constructed knowledge of their own setting (Raitskaya & Tikhonova, 2020). Also, the importance of international well-accredited journals in Iran can influence the local journals to follow the dominant school of thought and to set similar structures, norms and standards for local settings. Our findings indicated that most of the studies followed similar legitimate patterns of discourse in their reports. This finding indicated the domination of quantitative discourses based on the positivist ideology in the academic writing of Iranian scholars and practitioners. Furthermore, practicing the legitimate discourse based on the dominant ideology in higher education can restricts critical inquiry and intellectualism (Shear, 2008). For instance, we recognized that some studies intellectually sought the language related matters while they followed the tradition

of positivism and scientific writing. In this regard, the identity of authors and researchers are under the influence of external forces such as expectations of discourse community and greater forces such as the policies of the MSRT.

The external forces which we underlined are transparent in some findings of Rezaei and Seyri (2019) in that the evaluation system in Iran is based on the quantity of publications. Accordingly, authors may adopt the predetermined and standardized styles of writing which are widely practiced by international scholars in order to achieve their benefits (graduation, promotions, recognition, etc.). The findings of this study showed that Iranian researchers adopted globally approved authorization's patterns which are widely practiced and accepted by the majority of academicians as the scientific language. However, following the rules and standards may faint innovation and reform in academic writing. For instance, some authors who qualitatively investigated problems used similar patterns of scientific and quantitative research methodology. The force of academic discourse community for following standards in reporting research problematizes the claim of democratic education in Iran. One of the possible circumstances for achieving democracy in higher education is to allow "low-ranking knowledges" enter in educational system. In contrast, the higher education in the field of applied linguistics mostly follows the "subjugated knowledges" in Iran. In like manner, every scientific move from research methodologies to writing the report of a study should follow prescribed and legitimized standards in order to become available in public. This notion supports Freire's banking model of education. In other words, attentions of intellectuals, scholars and practitioners are directed toward materialistic notion of education rather than problem-posing and problem-solving characteristics. To enlighten this, Atai et al. (2018) stated that "the ultimate goal of doctoral education is to prepare doctoral students to write publishable research papers" (p. 31). This claim indicates the materialistic features of higher education in Iran; in which, the intentions of authors are more integrated with academic visibility and benefits rather than solving socially-related issues which are sought in problem-posing model of education.

On the other hand, personal authority is majorly used in academic articles. The result indicated statistical associations of self-mention among all three methodologies. This is in contrast to findings of Alimorad (2015) with regard to little attention of practitioners toward identity. Moreover, the result (PA with frequency of 161, 162 and 153 for Quan, Qual and Mixed respectively) supports Hyland (2001) findings on the frequency of self-mention in applied linguistics. Iranian practitioners and scholars used personal authority to establish the aspects of identity mentioned by Burgess and Ivanic (2010). However, this does not entirely pave the road for democratic view in research and academic writing. In some single authored articles 'we' was used instead of 'I'. Rezvani and Mansouri (2013) found similarity between the identity construction of Iranian authors and other authors. However, the identity construction is not limited to the use of 'we or I' in the articles. The nature of research plays a determining role and it is in line with what Gee (2000) categorized as 'institution-identity'. In this category the identity is defined and described through institutions and

sources of power's intentions. In academic context, the requirements and objectives which create institutional-identity for faculty members, professors, students, and as such are predetermined by authorities. Academicians should follow the expected and predefined characteristics to become member of that community.

This can be considered as hegemony (control through the agreement of majority). According to Gee (2000) institutional-identity is constructed based on the discourse. Montessori (2011) highlighted the role that language plays in hegemony and mentioned that this hegemony can be unveiled through CDA. The results of this study revealed the domination of positivistic institutional-identity for academicians in Iranian context. To analyze this finding, personal authority was one of the absent features of the texts in scientific writing which after several articles and seminal works of critical scholars such as Ivancic (1998) became more visible in the academic discourse. But this is only one of the several possibilities for overcoming scientific/positivistic rules which are identified by authorities in academic discourse and controlled through the consent in the community of applied linguists. For instance, expert authority is highly expected in most of Iranian local journals in the field of applied linguistics. But, the role that mega masterminds play in readers and reviewers expectations and approval of the statements and frameworks advocates inequality between scholars and practitioners. This is what Kumaravadivelu (2006) astutely tried to minimize via postmethod pedagogy which had deep roots in critical pedagogy. As it was mentioned, the authorities use predetermined criteria for controlling the discourse in report of a research. This is one of the reasons that van Leeuwen (2008) identified several authorizations' patterns which should be applied in order to gain acceptance by authorities (ministry of education, journals policy makers, reviewers, readers, etc.).

Another aspect which possibly creates this hegemony is publishing. Accordingly, Chu Kwan (2010) underlined the pressure on doctoral students for publishing internationally in Asian context. In the field of applied linguistics in Iranian context, this pressure (pressure of publishing as key for students' prosperity) is not limited to publishing in international journals and locally approved journals adds to it. In fact, doctoral and graduate students' future is defined in either publishing in well-accredited international journals or locally approved journals. The result of this pressure is competition and it will be the benefit for the sources of power. In this regard, Atai et al. (2018) found that Iranian doctoral students compete for gaining the profit of publishing. This profit is what sources of power identified for students, professors, and researchers which creates individual competition. In other words, MRST's policies created an atmosphere which graduation became one of the main motives of PhD candidates (Rezaei and Seyri, 2019) and accordingly they might follow the expectations of the discourse community unquestionably. This competition is not appreciated in liberal education. However, to achieve this benefit (such as permission for defense session, upgrading assistant position into associate and as such) we have to follow those authorizations' patterns. For instance, we used similar au-

thorizations' patterns in this study that we critically investigated in the articles of other authors.

Conclusion

Change in educational system happens gradually. In hey days of behaviorism, behaviorists merely thought about other possibilities in applied linguistics. This change can be achieved through praxis of intellectual priorities in higher education which invites academicians to democratic approaches. To investigate the possibility for democracy in academic writing, we sought authorizations' patterns among three major research methodologies in local Iranian journals. In fact, we expected that the ideology behind the research methods influence the writing patterns of authors in their article. However, the result indicated that there is statistically significant association between research methods in terms of adoption of authorizations' patterns. In other words, the same conventions in writing quantitative studies were used in qualitative and mixed-methods designs. This indicates the domination of scientific style of writing in Iranian contexts in the field of applied linguistics. However, qualitative inquiry could be more indicative of its inherited resistance against positivism based on the observed frequency but this was not statistically significant. One of the intentions in qualitative research method is democratic society (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005); as a result, researchers could imply more democratic style of writing for paving the road for the future of applied linguistic in Iran. For instance, they can bring their identity in all parts of their article. Moreover, Canagarajah (2016) underlined the traditional sections of articles (i.e. Introduction, Method, Conclusion) as the conventions in empirical and positivists ideology. Researchers, specifically those who adopt qualitative research methods, can use different alternative sections for the report of their studies. Furthermore, Dornyei (2007) specifically mentioned that there is no guarantee for the truthfulness of the language of statistics in quantitative method; therefore, it is suggested that qualitative researchers replace numerical oriented (such as percentages and values) explanations in their findings by in-depth explorations.

The result of this study may shed some lights on the domination of positivist's ideology in the field of applied linguistics in Iran. In this respect, the policy makers in the MSRT along with editorial boards of Iranian journals in the field of applied linguistics may change the globalized and westernized view of education into more locally oriented approaches. According to Mansouri Nejad et al. (2019) findings, one unethical action practiced by the PhD candidates in Iran was 'simultaneous multiple submissions'. Possible reformation in MSRT policies may create an atmosphere for PhD candidates to follow ethical actions. MSRT's policy makers can adopt problem-posing model of education (in which socially related issues in language related studies are of concern) instead of the banking model of education (which the number of publications based on western academic convention is of importance). University professors can also provide students with an open-minded view towards education and research field. They can help students to democratically adopt their research methodologies

which they want to use in their studies beside the freedom of reporting. Students of the field of applied linguistics, on the other hand, can use reformist approach in their academic communications in the case of interests for the deviation from positivistic norms.

For further scrutiny, we suggest an in-depth study on moves and authorization's patterns in qualitative research articles in applied linguistics. Accordingly, some possibilities for alternatives of the authorization's patterns in academic discourse may become apparent. Moreover, investigation of authorization's patterns among well-accredited international journals may specify the dominant scientific discourse that has been practiced internationally. We also suggest a comparison of dominant discourse between Iranian and international journals to identify the status of Iranian and global authors. Identification, resistance and reflection on the positivism and positivists' traditions have roots in emancipatory knowledge (see Habermas, 1971), which strive for democracy.

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