

*Review Article*

# Language and Authority in Scientific Articles on the Indonesian Language: A Conceptual Review

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**Abstract:** Scientific articles not only function as a medium for conveying information but also as a representation of the author's academic credibility and intellectual authority within the scientific community. In academic writing, language plays a crucial role in shaping the author's identity, reliability, and scholarly position. This research aims to conceptually examine the relationship between linguistic choices and the construction of authority in Indonesian-language scientific articles. The study employs a library research method with a critical discourse analysis approach toward various references related to functional linguistics, discourse studies, and ethics in academic writing. The findings indicate that academic authority is constructed through several linguistic aspects, including lexical precision, grammatical objectivity, cohesion and coherence of ideas, as well as a careful epistemological attitude that remains open to alternative interpretations and scientific dialogue. In addition, the use of formal, systematic, and evidence-based language contributes significantly to strengthening the legitimacy of scientific arguments. Within this framework, language is not merely a communication tool used to present ideas, but also an instrument for legitimizing knowledge and reinforcing the author's credibility, reliability, and authority in academic discourse. Therefore, mastery of academic language becomes an essential component in producing quality scientific articles.

**Keywords:** Academic Authority; Academic Discourse; Indonesian Language; Journal Article; Scientific Language.

## 1. Introduction

Scientific articles serve as a fundamental medium for the dissemination and exchange of ideas among academics. The quality of an article is determined not only by the depth of the data or the sophistication of the research methods, but also by how those ideas are packaged and presented to the reader. This makes language a strategic tool. In a scientific context, language is not merely a passive means of communication, but an active tool that builds the author's "authority" or credibility in the eyes of peer reviewers and the scientific community.

Authority in scholarly writing refers to the level of trust readers place in the author's competence, integrity, and the validity of the arguments presented (Putri & Erlianti, 2026). Globally, English is often regarded as the gold standard of authority. With the push to advance the national body of scientific knowledge, the use of Indonesian in high-quality scholarly articles is becoming increasingly crucial. The problem is how to establish equally strong authority using Indonesian without getting caught up in a style that is too rigid, convoluted, or conversely too casual, thereby losing its academic nuance.

A common problem encountered in the field is the inability of some authors to strike a balance between linguistic formality and clarity of message (Pomalango, 2024). Many manuscripts are rejected not because of flawed methodology, but because the language fails to convince reviewers of the author's seriousness and expertise. A conceptual understanding of

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how language establishes authority is therefore crucial. This article aims to conceptually review the linguistic elements that contribute to the establishment of authority in Indonesian-language scientific articles, as well as their implications for the quality of publications in accredited journals.

In the contemporary academic ecosystem, scientific articles occupy a strategic position as the primary medium for the dissemination, validation, and exchange of ideas among scientific communities (Fauzi & Aziz, 2023). The quality of an article is not measured solely by the depth of data or the sophistication of research methodology, but also by the effectiveness of presenting arguments coherently, systematically, and persuasively to peer readers. Language no longer functions as a passive tool of communication but as an active instrument that constructs academic authority that is, the level of trust granted by peer reviewers and the scientific community regarding the author's epistemic competence, scientific integrity, and the validity of the logic presented. This authority does not arise automatically from research findings, but is deliberately shaped through the choice of diction, sentence structure, paragraph cohesion, and consistent, standardized academic rhetorical conventions.

Globally, English has long been established as the *de facto* standard in international scientific communication, and is thus often implicitly associated with academic authority and a manuscript's readiness for publication in reputable journals. Along with the strengthening of the knowledge decolonization movement and the strategic push by the government and academic stakeholders to strengthen the national scientific heritage, the use of Indonesian in high-quality scientific articles has become increasingly urgent. The fundamental challenge is how to establish equivalent academic authority in Indonesian without falling into a false dichotomy between rigid formality and convoluted language. A balance is needed between adherence to academic norms and clarity of expression, so that scientific messages are not distorted by linguistic barriers or an incongruous writing style.

The reality on the ground shows that a significant number of scientific manuscripts written in Indonesian are rejected or undergo repeated revisions not because of methodological weaknesses or a lack of scholarly contribution, but because the language fails to convince reviewers of the author's seriousness, analytical acuity, and conceptual mastery. The inability to balance terminological precision, clarity of argumentation, and academic propriety often diminishes a manuscript's persuasive power in the eyes of evaluators. Meanwhile, the literature discussing the construction of authority in scholarly writing remains dominated by English-based studies, while specific research on how Indonesian linguistic features, ranging from the lexical, syntactic, to pragmatic discourse levels, contribute to the formation of academic authority remains limited and tends to be practical editing rather than theoretically conceptual. This gap hinders the development of writing guidelines that are contextually relevant, linguistically sound, and aligned with the evaluation standards of nationally accredited journals.

A previous study has examined the role of language in scientific writing, including an analysis of cohesion and coherence in scientific articles published in the 2024 issue of the *Pentas Journal of Unisda: a Case Study by Muhammad et al., tahun 2025, "Paragraph Cohesion and Coherence in Narrative Essays by 2017 Engineering Students at PGRI University of Banyuwangi"* by Lestari tahun 2019, and "Cohesion and Coherence in Discourse Analysis of News on Jokowi's Leadership in Tempo.Co" by Ardy tahun 2019. These studies tend to treat cohesion and coherence merely as technical linguistic aspects and have not yet linked them more broadly to the establishment of academic authority in scholarly writing. In fact, in the context of scholarly articles, language functions not only as a tool for conveying information but also as a means of building the author's credibility. Furthermore, such research generally focuses only on certain linguistic aspects without integrating them with other aspects such as lexical, grammatical, and others. This article is written to address this gap by examining various linguistic aspects more comprehensively in the construction of academic authority within scientific articles.

This article aims to conceptually examine the linguistic elements that play a role in the construction of academic authority in Indonesian-language scientific articles, as well as to identify their implications for the quality of publications in accredited journals. This review is conducted using an academic discourse analysis approach and scientific rhetoric theory, focusing on lexical cohesion, measurable syntactic complexity, modulation of the author's stance, as well as citation conventions and intertextuality that build epistemic credibility. Theoretically, this article fills a gap in the conceptual framework regarding the relationship between Indonesian linguistic features and the construction of academic authority. Practically, the results of this review are expected to serve as a reference for authors, editors, and reviewers of SINTA journals in evaluating and improving the linguistic quality of manuscripts, while

also supporting the national agenda to enhance the independence and competitiveness of Indonesian-language scientific publications. The discussion begins with a conceptual mapping of academic authority, followed by the identification of key linguistic features, an analysis of implications for accredited journal standards, and concludes with strategic recommendations for the development of national scientific writing.

## 2. Literature Review

### Systemic Functional Linguistics

The primary theoretical basis for this study is Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), developed by Halliday (1994). SFL views language not as a self-contained system of formal rules, but as a semiotic resource that functions within a social context. Every linguistic choice made by a speaker or writer is not a random choice, but a functionally meaningful one influenced by the situational and cultural contexts in which the language is used.

SFL posits that language functions simultaneously through three metafunctions. First, the ideational metafunction, which refers to language's role in representing experience and reality. Second, the interpersonal metafunction, which refers to language's role in building relationships between speakers, including the expression of attitude, modality, and scientific stance. Third, the textual metafunction, which refers to language's role in organizing messages into a coherent, coherent, and meaningful text. These three metafunctions do not operate separately but function in an integrated manner within every text unit, including scientific texts. The SFL framework is relevant as the foundation for this study because it allows for the simultaneous analysis of linguistic choices from the perspectives of idea representation, author-reader relations, and text organization.

### Academic Discourse Theory

Academic discourse is a specialized register of language use with its own conventions, norms, and values that have developed within the scientific community. Swales (1990) defines academic discourse as a communicative practice organized around specific rhetorical goals, namely the construction and validation of knowledge before a community that shares common epistemic standards. Scientific articles are the most central genre of academic discourse because they serve as the primary medium for the dissemination, validation, and exchange of ideas among scientific communities (Fauzi & Aziz, 2023).

Scientific thinking serves as the foundation for the academic world, research, and data-driven decision-making (Pramudho, 2025). This way of thinking is manifested in the conventions of academic discourse, which include the use of evidence-based arguments, respect for prior scholarly work through citations, and a willingness to be open to criticism and falsification. Mastery of academic discourse is not merely a matter of mastering writing skills, but rather mastery of a set of social practices that determine the author's position within their academic community.

### Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an approach that views texts as social practices that are never neutral. CDA, developed by scholars such as Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (1993), asserts that texts always contain an ideological dimension, namely specific ways of representing reality that benefit or disadvantage certain social groups. In the context of scientific texts, texts are not viewed as entirely neutral representations of reality, but as social constructions influenced by power relations, values, and ideologies (Sugiarti et al., 2026).

AWK analyzes texts at three interrelated levels, namely the textual level (linguistic analysis), the level of discursive practice (the processes of text production and consumption), and the level of social practice (the institutional and ideological contexts surrounding the text). This approach allows researchers to identify how specific linguistic choices strategically build or undermine the author's authority in the eyes of the scientific community. The relevance of AWK in this study lies in its ability to uncover the dimensions of power hidden within linguistic choices that appear technical and neutral.

### Theories of Cohesion and Coherence

Cohesion and coherence are two fundamental concepts in text linguistics that were first systematically conceptualized by Halliday & Hasan (2013). Cohesion refers to the formal connections between elements in a text that are established through grammatical and lexical devices. Grammatical cohesion devices include reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunctions, while lexical cohesion devices include repetition, synonymy, antonymy, and collocation. Conjunctions are words that serve to connect phrases, clauses, and lexical items or parts of a text that are logically and semantically related (Suriadiman et al., 2024).

Coherence relates to the unity of meaning within the text as a whole. While cohesion is superficial and identified formally, coherence is more profound and relates to logical consistency and semantic relevance among propositions within the text. Cohesion is viewed in terms of the relationship between sentences at both the grammatical and lexical levels and how they integrate with the main idea of the paragraph, whereas coherence is viewed in terms of the semantic relationship between sentences (Darmayani, 2011, as cited in Ardy (2019)). A text can be cohesive without being coherent, but a coherent text is generally supported by adequate cohesive devices.

### **The Theory of Hedging and Modality in Scientific Language**

Hedging is a linguistic phenomenon that refers to the linguistic strategies writers use to signal uncertainty, caution, or the limitations of a claim. The concept of hedging in scientific discourse was comprehensively developed by Hyland (1998), who classified hedging markers into two broad categories: propositional markers (which modify the content of a claim) and attribution markers (which link a claim to a specific source). The use of hedging reflects the author's epistemological awareness of the limits of the inferences that can be drawn from the data at their disposal.

Hedging is closely related to the concept of epistemic modality, which refers to the way a speaker or writer expresses their degree of confidence in the truth of a proposition. In Indonesian, epistemic modality is expressed through modal verbs, adverbs, and specific syntactic constructions that indicate gradations between certainty and uncertainty. Objective word choices free from emotional bias reinforce a scientific impression (Yotolembah et al., 2022), while the use of evaluative or subjective terms without empirical basis actually undermines the author's credibility. Understanding hedging and modality is crucial because these two mechanisms determine how the author positions themselves epistemologically within scientific discourse.

### **3. Proposed Method**

This study employs a qualitative method in the form of library research. The approach applied is a conceptual analysis of theories in functional linguistics, academic stylistics, and guidelines for scientific writing. Primary data sources were obtained from reference books on text linguistics, scientific writing guides from official institutions (such as the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and LIPI/BRIN), as well as previous articles discussing academic discourse in Indonesian. Data collection was conducted by searching relevant literature through national and international journal databases. Data analysis was conducted through the following stages: (1) identification of key concepts regarding language and authority, (2) classification of linguistic elements that support the construction of authority, (3) synthesis of findings into a coherent conceptual framework, and (4) drawing conclusions based on deductive logic. The analysis focused on lexical (word choice), grammatical (sentence structure), and pragmatic (context of language use) aspects in establishing the author's credibility.

### **4. Results and Discussion**

#### **The Concept of Authority in Academic Discourse**

Authority in scholarly articles is not absolute power, but rather a social construct formed through the interaction between the text and the reader. An author is considered to have authority when their writing demonstrates mastery of the subject matter, objectivity, and the ability to reason systematically. From a linguistic perspective, this authority is realized through precise language choices. If the language used is ambiguous, emotional, or ungrammatical, readers' perception of the author's competence will diminish, which implies a weakening of the text's authority.

In academic discourse, authority refers to the level of trust and legitimacy that an author holds within the scientific community. This authority is not automatically established but is built through discursive practices that reflect competence, integrity, and adherence to scientific norms. In the writing of scientific articles, language serves as the primary means of representing and affirming this authority. In line with the discourse analysis perspective, scientific texts are not viewed as a completely neutral representation of reality, but as social constructions influenced by power relations, values, and ideologies (Sugiarti et al., 2026). The way authors develop arguments, choose terms, structure claims, and formulate conclusions reflects discursive practices in the academic realm.

Scientific thinking serves as the foundation for the academic world, research, and decisions based on data (Pramudho, 2025). Within a conceptual framework, academic authority relates to an author's ability to construct logical, data-driven arguments supported by credible references. The ability to demonstrate a systematic connection between theory, method, and findings also influences the level of reader trust in a text. Furthermore, authority is determined not only by the substance conveyed but also by a presentation that is structured, coherent, and consistent with academic discourse practices.

Language is a key factor in shaping an author's scholarly image. The use of standard language, appropriate technical terms, and effective sentence structure serve as indicators of academic professionalism and underscore the importance of precision and appropriateness in conveying information (Ratnasari et al., 2023). Furthermore, rhetorical strategies such as the use of quotations, paraphrases, and synthesis of sources demonstrate that the author is engaged in a broader scientific dialogue. Authority is not merely individual in nature but intertextual, meaning it is formed through relationships with previous scientific works.

The author's scholarly stance in academic writing also reflects the epistemological views they hold. This is manifested through the use of cautious statements, a willingness to consider alternative perspectives, and clarity in distinguishing between facts, assumptions, and personal views. The use of words indicating limited certainty, such as "mungkin," "cenderung," or "dapat," signals the author's awareness of the limits of their knowledge, which actually enhances readers' trust in their work. Conversely, a lack of academic authority is generally revealed through incoherent logical flow, language that deviates from linguistic norms, or claims not supported by relevant data or references. Such conditions have the potential to foster reader skepticism regarding the validity and reliability of the text.

The concept of authority in academic discourse depends not only on the depth of the subject matter being discussed, but also on the way language is used to organize, present, and validate those ideas. Through careful word choice, coherent structure, and adherence to scholarly standards, authors can establish their standing in the academic community while enhancing the persuasive power of their writing.

#### **The Importance of Word Choice (Lexical) in Building Credibility**

The first element that establishes authority is the precision of word choice or terminology. Word choice or diction plays a role in determining the clarity and accuracy of the content of a scientific paper (Khoiroh & Damayanthi, 2025). Every word used serves not only to convey meaning but also to represent the level of precision, depth of understanding, and the author's scientific attitude toward the subject of study. The accuracy and precision of language use, especially in word selection, form a crucial foundation for building academic authority (Syifani et al., 2025).

In academic articles, consistency demonstrates that the author is engaged in a specific and in-depth discussion. Academic and professional credibility is fundamentally built through consistent vocabulary use, particularly in the consistent use of terms to refer to the same concepts. This consistency plays a crucial role in minimizing ambiguity that could undermine reader trust. The consistent use of terminology also strengthens the cohesion between ideas in the text and reflects the author's attention to maintaining semantic consistency, ensuring that each idea is conveyed clearly and systematically. Mastery of precise writing conventions enables the author to convey information more effectively and in a structured manner (Arif et al., 2025).

The role of word choice (lexical) in establishing credibility requires authors to use terminology precisely to avoid potential ambiguity. For example, terms such as "hipotesis," "dugaan sementara," and "asumsi" need to be conceptually distinguished according to the methodological framework used. Additionally, the use of emotive words with subjective undertones, such as "sangat menakutkan," "sayangnya," or "hebat," should be avoided as they can undermine the impression of objectivity. Instead, authors are encouraged to use data-driven descriptive phrases, such as "signifikan secara statistik" or "menunjukkan peningkatan." Thus, the accuracy and neutrality of word choice not only clarify meaning but also strengthen the author's credibility and authority within the scientific discourse. Objective word choices free from emotional bias further reinforce the scientific impression (Yotolembah et al., 2022). The use of evaluative or subjective terms without empirical basis, such as "sangat buruk" or "luar biasa," should be avoided or replaced with more measurable, data-driven descriptions. Hedging strategies (cautious markers), such as "cenderung," "diduga," or "berpotensi," can be used to demonstrate a non-absolute scientific stance while maintaining the integrity of the argument.

In the context of scientific language, the use of denotative and specific terms is highly prioritized. Denotative terms help avoid ambiguity of meaning, making the message conveyed clearer and more precise. Furthermore, the use of technical terms appropriate to the field of study demonstrates the author's conceptual mastery of the topic under discussion. The use of such terms must still prioritize clarity for the reader, so as not to cause confusion or give an overly exclusive impression.

Furthermore, precision in word choice is also related to adherence to the rules of standard language. In substance, standard language can be seen in terms of its skill in structuring writing, namely the ability to present ideas in a structured and logical manner, as well as its cohesion and coherence at the sentence and paragraph levels. Using vocabulary that conforms to Indonesian language standards, while avoiding informal language or irrelevant slang, will enhance the professional and academic impression of a text. A reference for standard sentence structure can be found in the book *Tata Bahasa Baku Bahasa Indonesia* (Nurdiana, 2022).

### **Sentence Structure and Objectivity (Grammatical)**

A sentence that is correct or conforms to linguistic rules is one that has a correct structure (Setiawibawa, 2023). Sentence structure in Indonesian has a flexibility that can be a double edged sword. In scientific articles, sentence structure is not merely a tool for conveying information, but also serves as the primary foundation for objectivity and scholarly authority. To establish authority, the author must utilize sentence structures that emphasize the research subject, not the author. Grammatically, correctly structured sentences reflect orderly thinking, logical precision, and consistency in conveying ideas. The use of effective, clear, and systematic sentence structures is a key indicator in assessing the quality of a scientific paper. Sentences constructed with precision can help authors craft scientific articles that are more structured and logical (Pratama, 2023).

From a structural perspective, sentences in scientific articles should ideally adhere to the principles of subject and predicate clarity, coherence among elements, and completeness of meaning. Sentences that are overly long and complex without proper organization risk creating ambiguity, which ultimately undermines the author's authority. Conversely, concise yet meaningful sentences demonstrate the author's ability to manage information effectively and efficiently. Objectivity in scientific language is reflected through the selection of neutral and non-subjective sentence structures. One of its characteristics is the use of straightforward declarative sentences and the avoidance of emotional expressions or personal opinions not supported by data. Additionally, the use of passive voice is often employed to emphasize the research process or results rather than the agent, thereby reinforcing an impersonal tone. One type of passive voice used is the impersonal passive. The impersonal passive involves using the passive voice without mentioning the agent. For example, "Data dianalisis menggunakan..." rather than "Penulis menganalisis data..." helps shift the focus from the author's personal perspective to the scientific process itself. This creates the professional distance required in science.

Grammatical objectivity is also related to consistency in the use of terminology, word forms, and sentence patterns. Inconsistencies in the use of terminology or structure can cause readers to doubt the author's accuracy and credibility. Grammatical errors in writing can indicate a person's level of proficiency in applying the language (Nensilanti et al., 2025). Adherence to the standard rules of the Indonesian language, as stipulated in the *Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia* (PUEBI), serves as a crucial foundation for maintaining scientific standards. Grammatically correct and objective sentence structure not only supports text readability but also plays a strategic role in establishing scientific authority. Authors who can construct sentences logically, consistently, and free from personal bias will more easily gain the trust of both readers and the academic community.

### **Cohesion and Coherence as Indicators of Logical Thinking**

Cohesion and coherence are fundamental aspects in the construction of scientific discourse that reflect the author's line of reasoning while reinforcing scholarly authority in scientific articles written in Indonesian. Cohesion (formal connection) and coherence (semantic connection) between paragraphs demonstrate that the author has a firm grasp of the central thread of their argument. According to (Darmayani, 2011), cohesion is viewed in terms of the relationship between sentences at both the grammatical and lexical levels and their integration with the main idea of the paragraph, while coherence is viewed in terms of the semantic relationship between sentences. The presence of cohesion and coherence indicates that a text that is cohesive but not coherent will appear neat in form, yet the intended meaning is difficult to grasp due to a lack of clear semantic connections. Conversely, a text that is coherent but lacks cohesion can be generally understood but is less cohesive from a linguistic perspective.

Cohesion and coherence serve not only as linguistic devices but also as indicators of the quality of academic reasoning. A text that is cohesively and coherently structured demonstrates that the author possesses a structured, argumentative, and logically sound line of reasoning. This contributes to the establishment of the author's authority, as the ideas presented appear more convincing, systematic, and scientifically sound.

The use of conjunctions as one of the markers of cohesion plays a crucial role in clarifying logical relationships, such as cause and effect, contrast, addition, and sequence. Accuracy in selecting and using conjunctions supports the achievement of coherence, ensuring that the constructed argument is not only structurally organized, but also semantically interconnected. Conjunctions are words that serve to connect phrases, clauses, and lexical units or parts of a text that are logically and semantically related (Suriadiman et al., 2024). The appropriate use of conjunctions such as "oleh karena itu," "sebaliknya," and "selain itu" serves as logical markers that guide readers in following the author's argumentation.

Inconsistencies in the research flow are often interpreted by reviewers as a sign of the author's immaturity in thinking, which directly undermines the manuscript's authority. This can be seen in the lack of coherence between the research question, the research objectives, the methods used, and the resulting discussion and conclusions. Consequently, the arguments presented become less convincing because they are not supported by a coherent and systematic line of reasoning. Additionally, weak cohesion and coherence in the text's composition further diminish the manuscript's quality, as the relationships between ideas are not clearly established. These issues can lead to ambiguity in meaning and make it difficult for readers to grasp the core of the research (Suriadiman et al., 2024). Consistency in the line of reasoning and precision in the use of linguistic devices are crucial aspects that authors must pay attention to in order to maintain the credibility and scientific authority of a work.

## 5. Conclusions

Based on this conceptual review, authority in scientific articles written in Indonesian is a discursive construct systematically established through linguistic choices, rather than merely a reflection of mastery of the subject matter. Academic authority is formed through lexical precision, grammatical objectivity, cohesion, and coherence that reflect the order of logical thinking, as well as an epistemological attitude that is cautious and open to alternative interpretations. Language serves as both a vehicle for conveying ideas and an instrument for legitimizing knowledge, thereby strengthening the author's credibility, reliability, and standing within the scientific community. The primary challenge in establishing this authority lies in the process of translating and adapting foreign concepts into Indonesian, where syntactic interference, literal translation, and inappropriate word choice risk eroding the clarity, standardization, and professional impression of the text. The ability to package complex concepts into flexible yet rigorous Indonesian language structures and idioms is a crucial competency for academics. Moving forward, empirical research examining the correlation between linguistic patterns and the acceptance rate of articles in indexed journals, the development of corpus-based academic stylistic guidelines, and the integration of linguistic training and epistemological awareness into the scientific writing curriculum could serve as strategic directions to strengthen national scientific authority and enhance the competitiveness of Indonesian academic publications.

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