

*In the Name of  
God*



**Teachers Education University**

**Faculty of Humanities**

**Department of Foreign Languages**

**An Interactive Metadiscourse Analysis of the Result and Discussion**

**Sections of EAP and ESP Research Articles**

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**Dedicated with Love and Respect  
to My Parents  
Who Were My First Teachers  
and My Dear Husband without whom,  
My Thesis would Never Be Finished**

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## **Abstract**

The present study addresses the interactive metadiscourse markers as important features of academic discourse. To investigate the use of code glosses, endophoric markers and evidentials between result and discussion sections of EAP and ESP research articles, sixty research articles were analyzed based on the metadiscourse model proposed by Hyland and Tse (2004).

The findings of this study revealed significant differences in the use of these categories between result and discussion sections in both research articles of EAP and ESP. There are also significant differences in the use of these categories across result sections and discussion sections of EAP and ESP research articles. The findings of this study can have pedagogical implications for EAP and ESP instructional courses and for researchers who wish to publish their research in international journals.

Key words: genre, research article, metadiscourse, interactive (textual) metadiscourse, interactional (interpersonal), metadiscourse, code glosses, endophoric markers, evidential.

# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Table of contents

List of tables

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview.....	2
1.2. Statement of the problem and purpose of the study.....	4
1.3. Significance and justification of the study.....	6
1.4. Research questions.....	7
1.5. Null-hypotheses.....	8
1.6. Definitions of key terms.....	8
1.7. Limitations of the study.....	13

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Overview.....	15
2.2. Metadiscourse: The definitions of metadiscourse and its typologies.....	15
2.3. The important role of metadiscourse.....	22
2.4. Levels of meaning (propositional discourse and metadiscourse).....	23
2.5. Functional analyses of metadiscourse.....	24
2.6. Metadiscourse signals.....	25

2.7. Metadiscourse and its typologies.....	27
2.8. Textual metadiscourse .....	32
2.9. Interpersonal metadiscourse.....	33
2.10. Hyland and Tse’s (2004) typology.....	33
2.11. Interactive resources.....	42
2.12. Interactional resources.....	44
2.13. Metadiscourse: a selected review of related empirical studies.....	48
2.13.1. Linguistically-oriented study of metadiscourse.....	51
2.13.2. Disciplinary-oriented study of metadiscourse.....	53
2.13.3. Studies regarding the analysis of result and discussion sections.....	55
2.14. Summary.....	57

### CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Overview.....	59
3.2. The corpus.....	59
3.3. Analysis framework.....	61
3.4. Procedure.....	63
3.5. Data analysis.....	64

### CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Overview.....	66
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4.2. The purpose of the study and re-statement of the null-hypotheses.....	66
4.3. Results.....	67
4.3.1. Results regarding the total frequency of code glosses in the result and Discussion sections of EAP and ESP research articles.....	67
4.3.2. Results regarding the total frequency of endophoric markers in the Result and discussion sections of EAP and ESP research articles.....	67
4.3.3. Results regarding the total frequency of evidentials in the result and discussion Sections of EAP and ESP research articles .....	68
4.3.4. Results regarding the frequency of code glosses in EAP corpus.....	69
4.3.5. Results regarding the frequency of endophoric markers in EAP corpus.....	71
4.3.6. Results regarding the frequency of evidentials in EAP corpus.....	72
4.3.7. Results regarding the frequency of code glosses in ESP corpus.....	74
4.3.8. Results regarding the frequency of endophoric markers in ESP corpus.....	76
4.3.9. Results regarding the frequency of evidentials in ESP corpus.....	77
4.4. Discussion.....	84
 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS	
5.1. Overview.....	91
5.2. Conclusions.....	91

5.3. Theoretical implications of the findings.....	94
5.4. Pedagogical implications.....	94
5.5. Suggestions for further research.....	97
References.....	98
Appendix 1.....	110
Appendix 2.....	115

## List of Tables

Table 2.1. Kopple's (1985) classification of metadiscourse	28
Table 2.2. Crismore et al's (1993) metadiscourse classification	30
Table 2.3. Hyland's (1999:7) metadiscourse typology for academic texts	31
Table 2.4. Hyland and Tse's (2004) model of metadiscourse in academic texts	41
Table 3.1. Textual resources in academic writing (Hyland 2005, b)	62
Table 4.1. The frequency of code glosses in EAP and ESP corpus	67
Table 4.2. The frequency of endophoric markers in EAP and ESP corpus	68
Table 4.3. The frequency of evidentials in EAP and ESP corpus	68
Table 4.4. The frequency of code glosses for EAP corpus	69
Table 4.5. Chi-square for the frequency of code glosses across result and discussion sections of EAP research articles	70
Table 4.6. The frequency of endophoric markers for the corpus of EAP	71
Table 4.7. Chi-square for the frequency of endophoric markers across result and discussion sections of EAP research articles	72
Table 4.8. The frequency of evidentials for the corpus of EAP	72
Table 4.9. Chi-square for the frequency of evidentials across result and discussion sections of EAP research articles	73

Table 4.10. The frequency of code glosses for the corpus of ESP	75
Table 4.11. Chi-square for the frequency of code glosses across result and discussion sections of ESP in research articles	75
Table 4.12. The frequency of endophoric markers for the corpus of ESP	76
Table 4.13. Chi-square for the frequency of endophoric markers across result and discussion sections of ESP in research articles	76
Table 4.14. The frequency of evidentials for the corpus of ESP	77
Table 4.15. Chi-square for the frequency of evidentials across result and discussion sections of ESP in research articles	77
Table 4.16. Chi-square for the frequency of code glosses across result sections of research articles in ESP and EAP	79
Table 4.17. Chi- square for the frequency of endophoric markers across result sections of research articles in ESP and EAP	80
Table 4.18. Chi-square for the frequency of evidentials across result sections of research articles in ESP and EAP	81
Table 4.19. Chi-square for the frequency of code glosses across discussion sections of research articles in ESP and EAP	82
Table 4.20. Chi-square for the frequency of endophoric markers across discussion sections of research articles in ESP and EAP	83

Table 4.21. Chi-square for the frequency of evidentials across discussion sections of research articles in

ESP and EAP

84

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Overview

Academic communication and the disciplinary knowledge and practice are largely exhibited and evaluated through the medium of writing. Academic discourse has increasingly taken central stage in both first language composition studies and second language writing research and instruction over the past decades.

Silva (1990, P.20) believes the approaches to teaching writing should clearly “account for the contribution of writer, reader, text and context as well as their interaction”. It is in line with this interaction that Hyland and Tse (2006) argued that in addition to producing texts that discuss the epistemic knowledge or social or natural realities, academic writers and research article authors use language to acknowledge, construct and negotiate social relations with their audience. Moreover, to realize this interpersonal negotiation, writers must “convey affective, addressee-oriented reading in addition to cognitive ones, presenting themselves as informed, respectful and competent insiders by displaying an orientation to disciplinary values and rhetorical practices” (Hyland, 2005 b, P.788). Metadiscourse (MD) is a key concept in realizing the interaction in academic communications.

According to Halliday’s (1985 & 1994) systemic functional theory of language , metadiscourse has been regarded as a key characteristic of both reading and writing processes in L1 and L2 learning and teaching, particularly in ESP settings in the last decades. The concept of metadiscourse has been developed based on the framework of Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). For Halliday (1985, 1994), linguistic options are determined by three key features of social context: field, mode and tenor. The interplay of these features accounts for the relationship among components of a communicative event where the writer, the text and the audience are the key ones.

In addition, for SFL, meaning-making in language is achieved in three levels or metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual (ibid). At the ideational level, the content of the text is considered and it is basically informational, referential and representational. At the interpersonal level, the writers establish relationships with their audience and reflect their attitudes towards the content and guide the readers through the text. The third level enables the writers to give texture to the discourse (Halliday, 1985 & 1994). Accordingly, metadiscourse is a tenor-oriented concept and serves to realize the interpersonal and textual metafunctions of language.

Metadiscourse as a rhetorical and persuasive aspect of academic genre which establishes social engagement between the writer and the reader tends to focus on “those aspects of the text which explicitly refer to the discourse or the writer’s stance towards either its context or the reader” (Hyland, 1998, P.433). In other words, metadiscourse markers are rhetorical elements by which writers transmit propositional content more reader-friendly in a way that the reader is likely to construct the meaning as intended by the writer.

Metadiscourse is a social act (Hyland, 2005) since it reflects the social interactions within the specific academic community norms and conventions. Metadiscourse has been under study in the past years to clarify the relations between the text producer and its audience as well as to link the language to the social context in which it is used.

The approaches to the study of metadiscourse have mostly been contrastive in the sense that they have focused on the metadiscoursal patterns across two or more languages (Marandi, 2003; Dahl, 2004; Orta et al, 2006) or across two or more disciplines (Hyland, 1999; Hyland, 2004; Hyland and Tse, 2004; Hyland and Tse, 2006). Besides, metadiscourse has been studied in different genres across disciplines: text books (Hyland, 2000), research articles (Mauranen, 1993; Hyland, 1998, 1999), PhD theses (Bunton, 1999), book reviews (Hyland and Tse, 2006). Meanwhile, ESP has evolved in the past years, following the



works done by Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) on genre analysis. Recently some scholars in ESP have called the researchers to investigate not only a single genre across disciplines but also to investigate related genres and genre sets in a discipline or related disciplines (Conner & Mauranen 1999; Samraj, 2005). It is in line with these trends that the focus of this study has been on code glosses, endophoric markers and evidentials as the three main but less explored categories of interactive markers that make the text more understandable for the readers.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem and purpose of the study**

Leki (1989) states that L2 writing, due to its “gate keeping mechanism” in access to knowledge, power and credit, is a primary means of participation in international disciplinary journals. English has now strongly established itself as the lingua franca of academic discourse and literacies. For an EFL student, academic writing is a challenging task since he/she must learn how to take a stance, approximate the conventions of the disciplines, and interact with the reader and to explore his/her disciplinary persona (ibid).

By the early 1990s, linguists had begun to react against the strong emphasis on propositional meaning in text analysis, resulting in a range of new perspectives on text, among which the studies of metadiscourse have gained prominence. As described by Vandekopple (1988, p.234), the overriding focus of text research had previously been on aspects of subject matter itself: “much of the recent work on the nature of informative texts and on the processes that readers apply to them proceeds as if there is only one kind of meaning in such texts, the referential, ideational or propositional”.

Metadiscourse strategies in general and interactive and interactional aspects of disciplinary writing in particular can be a useful category to master in order to be fully socialized in the academic community

and publish research. To explore and find patterns of three kinds of interactive metadiscourse markers (code glosses, endophoric markers and evidentials), the present study is to analyze the use of these three types of interactive markers in the result and discussion sections of research articles within two subdisciplinary genres of applied linguistics; that is, English for Specific Purposes and English for Academic Purposes. It aims to find out whether or not scholars in these two journals show degrees of variability in the use of these interactive strategies between result and discussion genre sets within a single discipline. Furthermore the study investigates the issue whether there is variability in result and discussion genre sets across two subdisciplinary genres; i.e. EAP and ESP research articles. To conclude, the study will focus on the pragmatic dimension of these metadiscourse categories.

The present study is dedicated to the metadiscoursal analysis of the result and discussion sections of EAP and ESP research articles. Therefore gaining a better understanding of the frequency of metadiscoursal features in the EAP/ ESP research articles, verifying the existence of any probable differences between result and discussion sections of EAP/ ESP research articles in terms of using code glosses, evidentials and endophoric markers and also finding any significant differences across result sections and discussion sections of EAP and ESP research articles regarding the use of code glosses, endophoric markers and evidentials are the main objectives of the present study.

### **1.3 Significance and justification of the study**

Academic writing of EFL learners in general and ESP and EAP students in particular should be taken into account from different perspectives. In the literature, genre analysis, following contrastive rhetoric, has been regarded as the latest development in the field of ESP which in itself evolves around two directions: ESP and EAP. Move analysis on macrostructures of genres has shed light on the norms and conventions of language use in specific social contexts. Moreover, for the microstructure analysis of

research articles (RAs), Swales (2004) suggests the need of more research on stylistic features in research articles, as many previous studies have focused on the move structures and information ordering of research articles.

Among the features, metadiscourse devices are crucial and influential. Therefore, EFL students are required to familiarize themselves with all aspects of academic writing. With all these in mind, the present study offers insights in to the use of textual (interactive) metadiscoursal devices in the result and discussion sections of ESP and EAP research articles which in itself, may furnish more insights in the understanding of the concept of genre. This study can be a guide for TEFL students who seek to publish their articles in international journals. It can also be helpful for writing instructors and material developers in designing academic writing course for TEFL/TESL students

As a contribution to academic literacy, the present study can enhance our awareness regarding the probable variance of the frequency of metadiscoursal features occurred in the result and discussion sections of EAP/ESP research articles and more importantly investigate whether the result and discussion sections of research articles fit into the Hyland and Tse's (2004) framework. One of the reasons justifying the present study is that findings regarding both the extent to which the interactive metadiscoursal features (code glosses, evidential and endophoric markers) occurred in the result and discussion sections of EAP and ESP research articles and also their probable variation across result and discussion sections of RAs might be generalizable to all written academic discourse.

#### **1.4 Research questions**

The following research questions were investigated in this study:

RQ1. Is there any significant difference between result and discussion sections of research articles concerning the use of interactive metadiscourse features (code glosses, endophoric markers and evidentials) in English for Academic Purposes?

RQ2. Is there any significant difference between result and discussion sections of research articles concerning the use of interactive metadiscourse features (code glosses, endophoric markers and evidentials) in English for Specific Purposes?

RQ3. Is there any significant difference between result sections of research articles in ESP and EAP journals concerning the use of code glosses, endophoric markers and evidentials subcategories of metadiscourse?

RQ4 .Is there any significant difference between discussion sections of research articles in ESP and EAP journals concerning the use of code glosses, endophoric markers and evidential subcategories of metadiscourse?

## **1.5 Null- hypotheses**