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## **Interactive Metadiscourse in Arabic Abstracts: A Comparative Study of Kitābah Implications for Native and Non-Native Writers**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the use of interactive metadiscourse in Arabic research article abstracts, with particular attention to rhetorical differences between native Arab writers and non-native Indonesian writers. Metadiscourse in abstracts is crucial, as it shapes textual clarity, coherence, and the perceived credibility of scholarly work. Drawing on Hyland's framework of interactive metadiscourse, this study analyzed forty Arabic research article abstracts, consisting of twenty abstracts written by native Arab authors and twenty by non-native Indonesian authors. The data were coded using a structured codebook and quantitatively analyzed to examine the distribution of interactive metadiscourse categories across both groups. The findings reveal significant rhetorical differences. Non-native writers tend to employ interactive metadiscourse more explicitly to signal research purposes, stages, and logical relations, while native writers rely more heavily on implicit cohesion, reflecting established Arabic rhetorical conventions. These patterns indicate that cultural and academic backgrounds play an important role in shaping abstract writing practices. By situating these findings within the perspective of contrastive rhetoric, this study extends existing metadiscourse research and provides pedagogical implications for improving *kitābah* instruction for non-native learners of Arabic.

**Keywords:** *Metadiscourse Interactive, Abstract, Arab writers, Indonesian writers*

**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini mengkaji penggunaan *interactive metadiscourse* dalam abstrak artikel ilmiah berbahasa Arab dengan menyoroti perbedaan strategi retorik antara penulis penutur asli Arab dan penulis non-penutur asli asal Indonesia. Metadiskursus dalam abstrak memiliki peran penting karena memengaruhi kejelasan, koherensi, dan kredibilitas karya ilmiah. Dengan menggunakan kerangka *interactive metadiscourse* dari Hyland, penelitian ini menganalisis empat puluh abstrak artikel ilmiah berbahasa Arab, yang terdiri atas dua puluh abstrak karya penulis penutur asli Arab dan dua puluh abstrak karya penulis non-penutur asli Indonesia. Data dikodekan menggunakan *codebook* terstruktur dan dianalisis secara kuantitatif untuk mengidentifikasi distribusi kategori *interactive metadiscourse* pada kedua kelompok. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya perbedaan retorik yang signifikan. Penulis non-penutur asli cenderung menggunakan *metadiscourse* secara lebih eksplisit untuk menandai tujuan penelitian, tahapan, dan relasi logis, sementara penulis penutur asli lebih mengandalkan kohesi implisit yang selaras dengan tradisi retorika Arab. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa latar belakang budaya dan akademik berpengaruh terhadap praktik penulisan abstrak, serta memberikan implikasi pedagogis bagi peningkatan pembelajaran *kitabab* bagi pembelajar bahasa Arab non-penutur asli.

**Kata Kunci:** *Metadiskursus Interaktif, abstrak, penulis arab, penulis indonesia*

**Introduction**

Many Indonesian academic writers experience difficulties in conveying the main ideas of their research in a well-structured and effective abstract. This challenge is particularly pronounced among writers with Arabic as a foreign or second language background<sup>1</sup>. Ren and Li<sup>2</sup> argue that non-native writers frequently struggle to produce abstracts that meet international academic rhetorical and linguistic standards. In fact, Hyland emphasizes that effective abstract writing is

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<sup>1</sup> Siti Soleha, Evi Muzaiyidah Bukhori, and Mokhammad Miftakhul Huda, "Transforming Student 's Arabic Writing Skills through Word Square Media: Examining Its Effectiveness Transformasi Keterampilan Menulis Bahasa Arab Siswa Melalui Media Word Square: Menguji Efektivitasnya" 08 (2025): 89–107, <https://doi.org/10.30762/asalibuna.v8i02.5231>; Thoyib Thoyib and Hasanatul Hamidah, "Interferensi Fonologis Bahasa Arab 'Analisis Kontrasif Fonem Bahasa Arab Terhadap Fonem Bahasa Indonesia Pada Mahasiswa Universitas Al Azhar Bukan Jurusan Sastra Arab,'" *JURNAL AL-AZHAR INDONESIA SERI HUMANIORA* 4, no. 2 (2018): 63, <https://doi.org/10.36722/sh.v4i2.257>.

<sup>2</sup> Hongwei Ren and Yuying Li, "A Comparison Study on the Rhetorical Moves of Abstracts in Published Research Articles and Master's Foreign-Language Theses," *English Language Teaching* 4, no. 1 (2011): 162, <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v4n1p162>.

not merely a matter of linguistic competence, but also requires rhetorical skill to guide readers through the structure and flow of the argument.

One key aspect that distinguishes the quality of an abstract is the use of metadiscourse. Metadiscourse functions as a linguistic resource through which writers establish a relationship with their readers. Early work by Vandele Kopple<sup>3</sup> who conceptualized metadiscourse as a language that helps readers to understand how prepositions relate to one another and how writers position themselves toward their claims. This view was further refined by Crismore et. al<sup>4</sup> who distinguished between textual metadiscourse, which organize discourse, and interpersonal metadiscourse which reflects between writer and reader interaction. These foundational perspectives highlight that metadiscourse functions as rhetorical strategy embedded in academic communication, rather than merely a linguistic ornament.

Based on these previous frameworks, Hyland categorizes metadiscourse into two types: interactive and interactional. This study focuses specifically on interactive metadiscourse, which serves to organize the structure of a text through elements such as frame markers, transitions, code glosses, evidentials, and endophoric markers. However, the use of interactive metadiscourse cannot be fully understood without considering cultural and rhetorical traditions that shape academic discourse practices. Studies in contrastive rhetoric by Kaplan<sup>5</sup> and Connor<sup>6</sup> and also Arabic rhetorical traditions that mentioned by Hatim<sup>7</sup> demonstrate that metadiscourse practices are socially and culturally conditioned rather than universal.

Kaplan<sup>8</sup> with his contrastive rhetoric theory, argues that differences in writers' linguistic and cultural backgrounds influence the

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<sup>3</sup> William Vandele Kopple, "Some Exploratory Discourse on Metadiscourse," *National Council of Teachers of English* 36, no. 1 (1985): 82–93, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.58680/ccc198511781>.

<sup>4</sup> Crismore Avon, Markkanen Raija, and Steffensen Margaret, "Metadiscourse in Persuasive Writing: A Study of Texts Written by American and Finnish University Students," *SAGE Publications, Inc.* 10, no. 1 (1993), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088393010001002>.

<sup>5</sup> Robert B Kaplan, "2 . Contrastive Rhetoric," no. 1967 (1966): 21–38.

<sup>6</sup> Ulla M. Connor, *Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross-Cultural Aspects of Second-Language Writing*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524599>.

<sup>7</sup> Basil Hatim, *Communication Across Cultures: Translation Theory and Contrastive Text Linguistics* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1997).

<sup>8</sup> Kaplan, "2 . Contrastive Rhetoric."

selection of writing strategies. This perspective is particularly relevant distinguishing between native and non-native academic writing. Mauranen<sup>9</sup> further demonstrates that non-native writers often employ metadiscourse more explicitly as a compensatory strategy to enhance clarity and avoid ambiguity when writing in a second language. These views supported by Mohamed<sup>10</sup> and Nugroho<sup>11</sup>, who emphasize that native and non-native writers exhibit distinct cultural tendencies in selecting metadiscourse elements when composing research abstracts.

In Arabic academic writing, rhetorical conventions are likewise shaped by long standing discourse traditions.<sup>12</sup> Hatim<sup>13</sup> explains that Arabic academic discourse tends to prioritize semantic cohesion and implicit logical relations rather than extensive use of overt structural markers. Consequently, native Arabic writers may use fewer explicit metadiscourse features while maintaining textual coherence. Empirical studies reveal a consistent predominance of interactive metadiscourse. Zaki<sup>14</sup> analyzed 400 Arabic language research abstracts and found that most writers rarely employed interactional metadiscourse patterns, instead favoring interactive metadiscourse, particularly transitions and engagement markers. Similarly, Hasan and Alout<sup>15</sup> revealed that interactive metadiscourse features such as transitions and frame markers

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<sup>9</sup> Anna Mauranen, "Contrastive ESP Rhetoric: Metatext in Finnish - English Economics Texts," *English for Specific Purposes*, no. 12/1 (1993): 3–22.

<sup>10</sup> Tamer Hamed Mohamed, "An Approach to Metadiscourse Markers : A Contrastive Study of English and Arabic Linguistic Research Articles" 11, no. 5 (2019): 232–43, <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v11i5.15688>.

<sup>11</sup> Ardi Nugroho, "Investigating the Use of Metadiscourse Markers by American and Indonesian Writers in Opinion and Business Articles," *Journal of English Language and Culture* 10, no. 2 (2020): 75–87, <https://doi.org/10.30813/jelc.v10i2.2138>.

<sup>12</sup> Musalwa, Rahmat Satria Dinata, Syafrimen Syafril, Ahmad Basyori, Vanadya Amelia, Putri Amelia, and Salah Benrabah. "The Arabic Linguistic Landscape of Islamic Universities: Patterns, Strategies, and Pedagogical Practices in West Sumatra." *Alibbaa': Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 6, no. 2 (July 2025): 243–63. <https://doi.org/10.19105/ajpba.v6i2.19601>.

<sup>13</sup> Hatim, *Communication Across Cultures: Translation Theory and Contrastive Text Linguistics*.

<sup>14</sup> Mai Zaki, "The Metadiscourse of Arabic Academic Abstracts: A Corpus-Based Study," *Research in Corpus Linguistics* 10, no. 2 (2022): 113–46, <https://doi.org/10.32714/ricl.10.02.06>.

<sup>15</sup> Eatidal Hasan and Ergaya Alout, "A Pragmatic Approach To the Rhetorical Analysis and the Metadiscourse Markers of Research Article Abstracts in the Field of Applied Linguistics," *Discourse and Interaction* 16, no. 2 (2023): 51–74, <https://doi.org/10.5817/DI2023-2-51>.

were predominantly used in Arabic abstracts. These findings suggest that Arabic academic abstracts prioritize textual organization and reader guidance over explicit interpersonal engagement.

Comparative studies further reveal systematic differences between native and non-native writers. Kirişçi and Duruk<sup>16</sup> reported that non-native writers tend to use frame markers more frequently, whereas native writers show a stronger preference for transitions that indicate divergent rhetorical orientations. Focusing on non-native Arabic writers that indicate the variability shaped by educational and structural contexts, Indarti and Yudhiantara et al.<sup>17</sup> showed that Indonesian writers composing abstracts in a second language tend to adopt more explicit writing strategies. Assassi et al.<sup>18</sup> also indicate that metadiscourse practices by non-native writers vary according to educational and cultural backgrounds, indicating that familiarity with the conventions of Arabic academic writing traditions.

Despite the growing body of research on metadiscourse, most existing studies continue to focus on English academic writing, including abstract analysis and cross-disciplinary studies<sup>19</sup>. Meanwhile, the research that specifically examines Arabic research abstracts written by non-native Indonesian scholars remains limited. Moreover, previous studies have tended to examine metadiscourse in isolation, without sufficiently addressing how cultural and linguistic backgrounds shape rhetorical strategies in Arabic academic discourse. This complexity is

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<sup>16</sup> Dilay Işık Kirişçi and Eda Duruk, "A Comparative Study of Metadiscourse Markers in the Abstract Sections of Research Articles Written by Turkish and English Researchers," *Shanlax International Journal of Education* 10, no. 4 (2022): 101–14, <https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v10i4.5171>.

<sup>17</sup> Dwi Indarti, "Rhetorical Moves and Meta-Discourse Markers in Abstracts of Indonesian Scopus Indexed Journals Across Academic Disciplines," *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching* 10, no. 4 (2022): 483, <https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v10i4.5173>; Rully Agung Yudhiantara et al., "A Metadiscourse Analysis of Research Article Abstracts Across English, Indonesian, and Arabic Authored by Indonesian Islamic Higher Education Scholars" 10, no. 2 (2024): 260–79, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v10i2.39165>.

<sup>18</sup> Tarek Assassi et al., "Formulaic Sequences and Meta-Discourse Markers in Applied Linguistics Research Papers," *Academicus International Scientific Journal*, 2023, 154–75.

<sup>19</sup> William S Pearson and Esmael Abdollahzadeh, "ScienceDirect Metadiscourse in Academic Writing: A Systematic Review," *Lingua* 293 (2023): 103561, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2023.103561>; Zhangjing Song et al., "Metadiscourse in English Academic Writing across Disciplines: A Systematic Review" 22 (2024): 20211–27.

further intensified by linguistic characteristics such as the use of tense and voice, which add an additional layer of rhetorical complexity to Arabic academic writing<sup>20</sup>. This gap is particularly significant given that Arabic academic writing requires systematic development and targeted instructional support<sup>21</sup>, while existing pedagogical practices often emphasize grammatical accuracy over rhetorical competence<sup>22</sup>.

Therefore, examining how metadiscourse is employed in Arabic research article abstracts is of critical importance, particularly given the differences in cultural and linguistic backgrounds between native Arabic writers and non-native writers from Indonesia. Metadiscourse can serve as an important benchmark for assessing writers' mastery of Arabic academic writing conventions and their ability to convey information clearly and effectively. Overall, this study addresses three main research focuses: (1) how interactive metadiscourse is used in Arabic abstracts written by native and non-native writers, (2) how the underlying rhetorical strategies differ between the two groups, and (3) how these of interactive metadiscourse influences the development of Arabic academic writing (*kitābah*) among learners of Arabic. By addressing these questions, this study is expected to contribute both theoretically and pedagogically to the development of more effective and context-appropriate Arabic academic writing.

## Method

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach using discourse analysis to describe the use of interactive metadiscourse based on Hyland's<sup>23</sup> model, which includes frame markers, transitions, evidentials, code glosses, and endophoric markers. This approach was selected to allow an in-depth analysis of how the writers organize

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<sup>20</sup> Rinaldi Supriadi et al., "The Use of Tense and Aspect in Arabic: A Comparison of Educational Research Articles by Native and Non-Native Speakers," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 16, no. 2 (2024): 480, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v16i2.24421>.

<sup>21</sup> Muhammad Kamal et al., "Compiling E-Learning Kitabah Muqoyyadah Teaching Materials through the CEFR" 8, no. 1 (2025); Zulfa Tsalitsatul Muna, Nur Hidayah, and Ashley Le Souef, "Mind Mapping as an Innovation in Reading and Writing Learning : A Study of Understanding Arabic Texts" 6, no. 1 (2025).

<sup>22</sup> Nanang Kosim, Ade Arip Ardiansyah, and Hilda Saripatul Hikmah, "The Use of The Task-Base Language Teaching ( TBLT ) Method to Improve Learning Outcomes of Arabic Language Skills" 5, no. 2 (2024).

<sup>23</sup> Ken Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005).

discourse and guide readers through Arabic research abstracts. The data consist of 40 Arabic language research article abstracts, comprising 20 abstracts written by native Arabic writers and 20 abstracts written by non-native Indonesian writers. These abstracts were selected from accredited national (SINTA) and international (DOAJ) journals in the fields of linguistics and education. The sample size was determined through criterion-based purposive sampling to ensure representativeness and comparability between native and non-native writers, rather than statistical generalization<sup>24</sup>. The analytical procedures were designed to directly address the research questions by identifying, categorizing, and comparing interactive metadiscourse features across the two groups of writers.

Data were collected use a documentation method by downloading articles that met several criteria: (1) the articles were published within the last ten years (2016–2026); (2) they were drawn from accredited national (SINTA) or international (DOAJ) journals; (3) they focused on the fields of linguistics and education; and (4) the abstracts were clearly written in Arabic. The journals serving as data sources included *Al-Arabi*, *Al-Mahara*, *Lisanu Dhad*, and *Lisanuna* for non-native writers, as well as the *Journal of Arabic Language and Literature (JALSL)* and the *Egyptian Journal of Science Education* for native writers. These selection criteria were applied to ensure comparability between the two groups and to maintain consistency in academic genre and disciplinary scope.

All data were analyzed through a systematic coding process using a codebook developed based on Hyland's<sup>25</sup> interactive metadiscourse categories. Each abstract was carefully read to identify instances of frame markers, transitions, evidentials, code glosses, and endophoric markers. The coding was conducted manually to ensure contextual accuracy, particularly in identifying rhetorical functions that may vary in Arabic academic writing. Following the identification process, the frequency of each metadiscourse category was calculated, and their distribution was compared between native and non-native writers to reveal patterns of dominance and variation. The analysis involved

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<sup>24</sup> Guest Greg, Bunce Arwen, and Johnson Laura, "How Many Interviews Are Enough?: An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability," *SAGE Publications, Inc.* 18, no. 1 (2006), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903>.

<sup>25</sup> Ken Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005).

calculating the frequency of each metadiscourse category and comparing their dominance between the two groups of writers.

To ensure the credibility and validity of the coding process, this study applied an intra-rater reliability test by re-reading and re-coding 20% of the randomly selected samples at different points in time. This procedure was informed by Krippendorff's<sup>26</sup> concept of stability reliability, which emphasizes consistency over time as a key indicator of validity in content analysis. It also aligns with Miles and Huberman's<sup>27</sup> assertion that coder consistency is a primary criterion for assessing the trustworthiness of qualitative analysis. The implementation of intra-rater reliability testing in this study not only ensures analytical accuracy but also strengthens the overall credibility of the data.

### Results and Discussion

The data analysis of 40 Arabic-language research article abstracts written by native Arabic writers and non-native Indonesian writers, revealed a total of 216 occurrences of interactive metadiscourse categories. This analysis was conducted with reference to the five interactive metadiscourse categories proposed by Hyland<sup>28</sup>: frame markers, transitions, evidentials, code glosses, and endophoric markers. The frequency distribution of each interactive metadiscourse category is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Interactive Metadiscourse

Num	Metadiscourse Category	Native	Non-native	Total	Native Percentage (%)	Non-Native Percentage (%)
1	Frame markers	47	65	112	42%	58%
2	Transitions	33	38	71	46%	54%
3	Evidentials	8	15	23	35%	65%
4	Code glosses	4	6	10	40%	60%
5	Endophoric markers	0	0	0	0%	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>92</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>100%</b>	

The results presented in the table indicate clear differences in the use of interactive metadiscourse between native and non-native writers, as conceptualized by Hyland. Across all categories, non-native writers dominated the use of interactive metadiscourse, accounting for 57% of

<sup>26</sup> Klaus H Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, 2004.

<sup>27</sup> Miles & Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis* (SAGE Publications, 1994).

<sup>28</sup> Ken Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005).

the total occurrences. Within this distribution, non-native writers produced 124 instances of interactive metadiscourse, demonstrating a higher frequency of use across their abstracts. In contrast, native writers employed only 92 instances of interactive metadiscourse. This quantitative difference, however, should be interpreted qualitatively as evidence of contrasting rhetorical strategies shaped by linguistic background, academic training, and familiarity with Arabic academic discourse conventions.

Frame markers emerged as the most dominant category across both groups of writers. In abstracts written by native Arabic writers, this category occurred 47 times, while in abstracts written by non-native Indonesian writers, it appeared 62 times. The high frequency of frame marker usage indicates that although research abstracts are inherently concise texts, they still require explicit structural signals to guide readers through the logical progression of research objectives, methods, results, and implications. Hyland emphasizes that frame markers play a crucial role in facilitating readers' comprehension of a text, particularly when information is presented in a condensed and succinct form, as is typical of research abstracts.

The higher frequency of frame marker usage among non-native writers indicates a stronger emphasis on orientation and structural explicitness in their abstracts. This finding aligns with Mauranen's<sup>29</sup> observation that non-native writers tend to construct slightly longer abstracts and rely more heavily on explicit markers to signal the beginning and end of each informational segment. Similarly, native writers also identified frame markers as the most frequently used category in their abstracts; however, their overall frequency was somewhat lower than that of non-native writers. This suggests that while native writers consistently maintain structural clarity, they tend to employ a more implicit style of textual organization.

Hatim<sup>30</sup> notes that contemporary Arabic academic writing has evolved through the integration of classical rhetorical traditions, which emphasize clarity of meaning, with modern academic practices that demand clearer structural organization. This perspective helps explain why native writers employ fewer frame markers compared to their non-native counterparts.

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<sup>29</sup> Mauranen, "Contrastive ESP Rhetoric: Metatext in Finnish - English Economics Texts."

<sup>30</sup> Hatim, *Communication Across Cultures: Translation Theory and Contrastive Text Linguistics*.

According to Hyland, frame markers function to guide readers through the stages of an argument by introducing research purposes, delimiting the scope of discussion, signaling shifts in argumentative focus, and summarizing findings. Based on the present analysis, three types of frame markers were found to occur most frequently: (1) Markers of Research Purpose. Both groups of writers commonly employed expressions such as *يهدف هذا البحث إلى* (“this study aims to”), which function to explicitly state and signal the purpose of the research presented in the abstract. (2) Markers of Research Sections or Stages. This type of marker was more frequently found in abstracts written by non-native writers. The use of enumerative structures such as *أولاً* and *ثانياً* (“first” and “second”) reflects a linear writing style that is commonly observed in foreign-language academic writing. Kaplan and Mauranen<sup>31</sup> argue that non-native writers tend to use explicit sequencing markers to enhance textual clarity and facilitate reader comprehension. (3) Markers of Delimitation. Non-native writers typically employed expressions such as *نتيجة البحث هي* (“the result of this study is”) to clearly delimit the scope of their arguments. In contrast, native writers relied more heavily on contextual meaning and implicit cues, rather than using explicit delimitation markers.

From these three types of frame markers, the following examples illustrate their use in research abstracts written by both groups of writers:

Use of Frame Markers by Native Writers<sup>32</sup>:

*في التراث الإسلامي والعربي قضايا تظل عالقة لم تُحسم ولم يُصر فيها إلى حل مُرضٍ*  
 (“Within Islamic and Arabic heritage, there are issues that remain unresolved and for which no satisfactory solution has yet been reached.”)

Use of Frame Markers by Non-native Writers<sup>33</sup>:

*تناول هذا البحث الحياة العلمية لابن حجر العسقلاني وآثاره في مجال الشعر*  
 (“This study examines the scholarly life of Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī and his literary contributions in the field of poetry.”)

<sup>31</sup> Kaplan, “2 . Contrastive Rhetoric”; Mauranen, “Contrastive ESP Rhetoric: Metatext in Finnish - English Economics Texts.”

<sup>32</sup> Co-prof Ibrahim Sulaiman and Ibrahim Almatroudi, “The Prophetic Hadith as Evidence for Grammar” 2, no. 4 (2023): 1–20.

<sup>33</sup> Imran Anwar Kuba, Kamaluddin Abu Nawas, and Asriyah Aliyah, “ابن حجر العسقلاني و خصائص شعره” 7, no. 2 (2021).

The two examples above clearly demonstrate a noticeable difference in writing style between the two groups. Native Arabic writers tend to present ideas within a cohesive textual organization that relies more heavily on contextual cues and the overall semantic flow of the text, without explicitly stating the research purpose. In contrast, non-native Arabic writers show a stronger tendency to define the topic and objective of the study from the beginning of the sentence in a direct manner, explicitly highlighting the scope of the research to ensure clarity for the reader. This tendency is consistent with the findings of previous studies<sup>34</sup>, which indicate that non-native writers often adopt a more formal and explicitly structured model of Arabic academic writing compared to native writers. Despite these differences in degrees of explicitness and organization, both groups employ frame markers to achieve the same rhetorical function, namely presenting the research content or purpose in a way that enables readers to follow the progression of ideas. Moreover, frame markers play a crucial role in helping readers understand the organization of the text and anticipate its argumentative trajectory, making them an essential element in the construction of clear and effective academic abstracts.

A similar pattern emerges in the use of transitions category with a total of 71 occurrences with 33 instances in abstracts written by non-native writers and 38 instances in those written by native writers. Although the difference in transition usage between the two groups was not as pronounced as that observed for frame markers, the data indicate that non-native writers still demonstrated a slightly higher reliance on transition markers.

The variation in the use of transitions between native and non-native writers can be explained through contrastive rhetoric theory. Non-native writers tend to employ logical connectors more explicitly to maintain clarity and coherence, as suggested by Hinkel, Hyland and Tse<sup>35</sup>, who argue that non-native writers rely more heavily on explicit

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<sup>34</sup> Hmoud Alotaibi, "Metadiscourse in Arabic and English Research Article Abstracts," *World Journal of English Language* 5, no. 2 (2015): 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v5n2p1>; Abbas Sultan, "A Contrastive Study of Metadiscourse in English and Arabic Linguistics Research Articles," *Acta Linguistica* 5, no. 1 (2011): 28–41, <http://www.actalinguistica.com/arhiv/index.php/als/article/viewFile/354/485>.

<sup>35</sup> Eli Hinkel, *Second Language Writers' Text Linguistic and Rhetorical Features*, 1st Editio (New York, 2002), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410602848>; Tse Polly Hyland Ken,

logical markers to avoid ambiguity. In contrast, native writers tend to depend on meaning-based cohesion embedded within the Arabic language structure, resulting in a less explicit use of transitions. This finding is consistent with the views of Crismore et. al. and Kaplan's<sup>36</sup> contrastive rhetoric theory, which indicate that native writers from certain cultural backgrounds are more inclined to express logical relations implicitly.

According to Hyland, this category is used to signal logical relationships between propositions, such as caus-effect, comparison, and addition. In abstract writing, transitions help readers understand how different components of the abstract namely the research objectives, methods, results, and conclusions are interconnected. The following examples illustrate the use of transitions identified in the abstracts written by both groups of writers:

Use of Transitions by Native Writers <sup>37</sup>:

بالإضافة إلى أن الرواية العراقية تجاوزت...

(“Moreover, Iraqi novels have gone beyond...”)

Use of Transitions by Non-native Writers <sup>38</sup>:

...وكذلك كيف تطبيقها في تعليم...

(“...and how it is applied in education...”)

Overall, the use of transition markers by native and non-native writers did not differ substantially. Native writers appeared to maintain argumentative flow in accordance with their established writing conventions. As shown in the example above, native writers employed the expression إلى بالإضافة (“moreover”), which signals a shift in argumentative focus while maintaining a clear connection between the preceding idea and the new one. Besides, non-native writers more frequently relied on explicit transition markers to connect ideas and

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“Metadiscourse in Academic Writing: A Reappraisal,” *Applied Linguistics Review* 25, no. 2 (2004): 156–77, <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/25.2.156>.

<sup>36</sup> Avon, Raija, and Margaret, “Metadiscourse in Persuasive Writing: A Study of Texts Written by American and Finnish University Students”; Kaplan, “2 . Contrastive Rhetoric.”

<sup>37</sup> Itidal Salman Iraby, Sura Saleem, and Abdel Shaheed, “Semiotic Connotations in the Arabic Novel The Baghdad Morgue , for Example” 4, no. 4 (2023): 67–78.

<sup>38</sup> Andi Arif Pamesangi, “9 تطبيق تعليم اللغة الجماعة في تعليم اللغة العربية” 9, no. 2 (2019): 299–308.

ensure reader comprehension. For instance, the use of *وكذلك* (“and also”) functions as a direct connector between ideas, making the progression of arguments more transparent and accessible.

These findings are consistent with Hyland's assertion that transitions play a crucial role in maintaining textual coherence and guiding readers through the flow of argumentation. They also align with Hinkel's<sup>39</sup> observation that non-native writers tend to use transitions more frequently to enhance clarity and readability, whereas native writers employ them more efficiently, relying on their familiarity with natural and structured writing patterns.

The evidentials category exhibited a noticeable difference in frequency between the two groups of writers. Non-native writers employed evidentials 15 times, whereas native writers used this category only 8 times. This finding is consistent with Hyland's<sup>40</sup> claim that non-native writers tend to rely more heavily on source attribution to reinforce the validity of their arguments. Similarly, Crismore et. al.<sup>41</sup> argue that non-native writers often draw on external references to strengthen the persuasiveness of their claims. In contrast, the relatively limited use of evidentials by native writers suggests a stronger focus on the core content of the argument rather than on explicitly establishing theoretical validity through citations. This tendency aligns with Hatim's<sup>42</sup> observation that Arabic abstracts do not necessarily require direct references to other writers, as they typically favor a more concise and implicit style of abstract writing.

Consequently, evidentials do not function as a central structural marker in abstracts written by native Arabic writers. According to Hyland<sup>43</sup>, the use of evidentials reflects writers' awareness of argumentative credibility, as indicated by the extent to which they incorporate external sources. The following section presents examples of evidentials identified in the research abstracts produced by both groups of writers.

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<sup>39</sup> Hinkel, *Second Language Writers' Text Linguistic and Rhetorical Features*.

<sup>40</sup> Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing*.

<sup>41</sup> Avon, Raija, and Margaret, “Metadiscourse in Persuasive Writing: A Study of Texts Written by American and Finnish University Students.”

<sup>42</sup> Hatim, *Communication Across Cultures: Translation Theory and Contrastive Text Linguistics*.

<sup>43</sup> Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing*.

Use of Evidentials by Native Writers <sup>44</sup>:

كما قرره ابن جني في خصائصه...

(“As stated by Ibn Jinnī in his al-Khaṣā'is...”)

Use of Evidentials by Non-native Writers <sup>45</sup>:

... في كتاب الترجمة جوهر المكنون لإمام الأخصري.

(“...in the book Tarjamah Jawhar al-Maknūn by Imam al-Akhḍarī.”)

The dominance of evidential usage among non-native writers indicates a tendency to reinforce claims through explicit source attribution. As academic writers operating in a second-language context, non-native writers often employ evidentials as a strategic means to strengthen the credibility of their arguments. Alotaibi<sup>46</sup> notes that non-native writers commonly enhance their arguments by referring to previous studies, whereas native writers tend to prioritize the findings of the current research rather than emphasizing them through extensive citation. As illustrated in the examples above, native writers use evidentials primarily to support or clarify their stance toward an existing scholarly opinion. In contrast, non-native writers more frequently employ evidentials to emphasize the credibility of the sources they cite. Sultan<sup>47</sup> similarly describes a rhetorical tendency in Arabic academic writing that places greater emphasis on content and argumentative substance than on detailed source attribution.

The code glosses category appeared relatively infrequently in the abstracts produced by both native and non-native writers. The limited occurrence of this category suggests that Arabic research abstracts are concise texts that provide minimal space for detailed explanations of terms. As abstracts function primarily as overviews of research, the use of code glosses is often considered unnecessary. This observation is supported by Hyland and Tse<sup>48</sup>, who argue that code glosses are more commonly found in extended argumentative sections such as

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<sup>44</sup> Sulaiman and Almatroudi, “The Prophetic Hadith as Evidence for Grammar.”

<sup>45</sup> Gema Mutakabbir and Rinaldi Supriadi, “Analysis of the Translation of Arabic Texts in the Book of Science: Balaghah Tarjamah Jauhar Maknun by Imam Akhdlori,” 2023.

<sup>46</sup> Alotaibi, “Metadiscourse in Arabic and English Research Article Abstracts.”

<sup>47</sup> Sultan, “A Contrastive Study of Metadiscourse in English and Arabic Linguistics Research Articles.”

<sup>48</sup> Hyland Ken, “Metadiscourse in Academic Writing: A Reappraisal.”

introductions and discussions rather than in abstracts. When code glosses were employed, they were more frequently used by non-native writers to clarify terms or provide additional explanations for readers. This tendency aligns with Hinkel<sup>49</sup> assertion that non-native writers often include extra explanations to prevent potential reader misunderstanding. The following examples illustrate the use of code glosses identified in the abstracts written by both groups of writers:

Use of Code Glosses by Native Writers <sup>50</sup>:

أداة واحدة للدراسة وهي عبارة عن استبيان يقيس معوقات استخدام تكنولوجيا.

("One instrument used in this study is a questionnaire that measures obstacles to the use of technology.")

Use of Code Glosses by Non-native Writers <sup>51</sup>:

والفصحى أيضًا، هي ظرف لم يتوفر لأي لغة من لغات العالم أنها ارتبطت بالقرآن الكريم منذ أربعة عشر قرنًا.

("Classical Arabic (fuṣḥā) is a condition not shared by any other language in the world, as it has been associated with the Qur'an for fourteen centuries.")

For non-native writers, the use of code glosses is particularly important, as it reflects a need to provide additional explanations to ensure reader comprehension. Hyland<sup>52</sup> describes this practice as reader-oriented metadiscourse, through which writers facilitate understanding by clarifying terms or concepts that may be unfamiliar. In contrast, native writers tend to assume that readers of Arabic academic journals are already familiar with the terms and concepts employed, which explains their limited use of code glosses compared to non-native writers.

The final category, endophoric markers, was not found in any of the 40 Arabic-language research abstracts analyzed, neither in the native nor in the non-native writers' group. This result is consistent with the

<sup>49</sup> Hinkel, *Second Language Writers' Text Linguistic and Rhetorical Features*.

<sup>50</sup> Khawazem Aisyah & Yousefi Nasima, "Obstacles to the Use of Educational Technology in Teaching and Training People with Special Needs - as Perceived by Their Teachers and Educators," 2023, 21–39, <https://doi.org/10.21608/SKJE.2023.230132.1019>.

<sup>51</sup> Hamilah Hasan, Febrian Nafisah, and Nurul Afida, "The Genesis of The Language of Arab Youth in the Modern Era" 6, no. 2 (2022): 105–19.

<sup>52</sup> Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing*.

concise and self-contained nature of abstracts. Hyland<sup>53</sup> explicitly states that endophoric markers function to direct readers to other parts of a longer document and are typically found in sections such as introductions or discussions that require internal cross-referencing. In contrast, abstracts are designed to stand alone, which makes the use of internal references largely unnecessary and therefore avoided.

The absence of endophoric markers can also be attributed to the limited length of abstracts, which aim to present only the essential content of a research article. Referring readers to other sections of the article is rarely practiced in abstract writing. This finding aligns with Hyland's<sup>54</sup> assertion that endophoric markers are more commonly used in extended texts, such as introductions or discussion sections, where cross-referencing is required. Similarly, Zaki<sup>55</sup> notes that endophoric markers are almost never found in Arabic academic abstracts, as the primary function of abstracts is to convey core information without the need for additional internal references. Therefore, the use of endophoric markers is not considered necessary within the rhetorical structure of research abstracts. In the context of academic writing instruction, particularly for non-native writers, this finding may serve as a guideline to prioritize the use of metadiscourse categories that are more appropriate for abstracts and that directly contribute to textual clarity and effective reader guidance in academic discourse.

Overall, the distribution of interactive metadiscourse categories demonstrates systematic rhetorical differences between native and non-native writers rather than random stylistic variation. While both groups rely on frame markers and transitions to organize abstract structure, non-native writers consistently employ these markers more explicitly. This pattern indicates a stronger orientation toward reader guidance, whereas native writers rely more heavily on implicit cohesion embedded within Arabic rhetorical conventions.

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<sup>53</sup> Ken Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005).

<sup>54</sup> Ken Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005).

<sup>55</sup> Zaki, "The Metadiscourse of Arabic Academic Abstracts: A Corpus-Based Study."

## Discussion

Clear differences were observed in the use of interactive metadiscourse patterns between native and non-native writers. Native writers employed 92 metadiscourse patterns, whereas non-native writers used 124 patterns. This difference is not merely quantitative in nature; rather, it reflects systematic differences in rhetorical strategies. This finding aligns with Hyland and Tse<sup>56</sup> assertion that non-native writers tend to use discourse markers more explicitly to assist readers in understanding textual structure. Such a tendency suggests that non-native writers are generally more cautious in selecting clear and explicit organizational strategies to ensure that their arguments are easily understood and not misinterpreted by readers.

Furthermore, Crismore et. al.<sup>57</sup> note that non-native writers frequently rely on relational and structural markers to reduce ambiguity. This tendency is evident in the present study, particularly in the frequent use of frame markers and transitions by non-native writers. In contrast, native writers do not consistently signal intersentential relationships or textual structure explicitly. Instead, they tend to maintain coherence through lexical choices, semantic repetition, or syntactic patterns that are already embedded within Arabic academic rhetorical conventions. This observation is consistent with Kaplan's<sup>58</sup> contrastive rhetoric theory, which emphasizes that native writers typically exhibit a more fluid writing style and prioritize internal rhetorical coherence.

Based on the analysis of 40 Arabic-language abstracts, non-native writers were found to demonstrate more systematic and structured writing patterns, especially in their use of frame markers. This finding supports Indarti's<sup>59</sup> claim that Indonesian writers tend to emphasize structural clarity when composing abstracts in a foreign language. It is further reinforced by Nugroho<sup>60</sup>, who explains that Indonesian non-native writers commonly adopt more explicit argumentative strategies when writing in a second language. Consequently, the frequent use of

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<sup>56</sup> Hyland Ken, "Metadiscourse in Academic Writing: A Reappraisal."

<sup>57</sup> Avon, Raija, and Margaret, "Metadiscourse in Persuasive Writing: A Study of Texts Written by American and Finnish University Students."

<sup>58</sup> Kaplan, "2 . Contrastive Rhetoric."

<sup>59</sup> Indarti, "Rhetorical Moves and Meta-Discourse Markers in Abstracts of Indonesian Scopus Indexed Journals Across Academic Disciplines."

<sup>60</sup> Nugroho, "Investigating the Use of Metadiscourse Markers by American and Indonesian Writers in Opinion and Business Articles."

frame markers by non-native writers serves to clearly signal research boundaries, objectives, and stages of presentation.

Overall, the differences observed between native and non-native writers indicate that cultural and academic backgrounds play a significant role in shaping rhetorical strategies. Native writers tend to rely on a more fluid Arabic rhetorical style with less emphasis on explicit structural markers. In contrast, non-native writers favor clearer and more explicit organizational structures to help readers follow and comprehend the flow of research arguments more effectively.

Across the five metadiscourse categories analyzed, the use of metadiscourse was dominated by non-native writers, who produced 124 markers out of a total of 216 occurrences. Non-native writers employed these markers as tools to connect ideas, reinforce claims, and guide readers in understanding the overall structure of the text. As demonstrated in the previous findings, non-native writers most frequently used frame markers and transitions. This pattern indicates that non-native writers adopt explicit strategies to construct coherent and reader-friendly texts. Such strategies reflect a common tendency among second-language writers to rely on clear and structured textual organization as a means of reducing uncertainty in their claims <sup>61</sup>. In contrast, native writers tended to produce more concise and compact abstracts, using fewer metadiscourse markers while maintaining a strong focus on content development. Based on these differences, it can be concluded that the two groups of writers exhibit distinct rhetorical tendencies: (1) The explicit writing style of non-native writers reflects a high level of reader awareness (reader-oriented), and (2) The implicit writing style of native writers suggests confidence that readers are already familiar with the conventions of Arabic academic discourse (text-oriented).

This phenomenon aligns with contrastive rhetoric theory proposed by Kaplan<sup>62</sup> and further reinforced by Hyland<sup>63</sup>, which posits that cultural values, educational background, cognitive habits, and writers' familiarity with specific discourse communities influence the rhetorical patterns employed in academic writing. Furthermore, these findings may serve as a reference for non-native writers, highlighting the importance of academic writing training and a deeper understanding of

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<sup>61</sup> Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing*.

<sup>62</sup> Kaplan, "2 . Contrastive Rhetoric."

<sup>63</sup> Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing*.

the rhetorical functions of metadiscourse. Such awareness can contribute to producing academic texts that are more communicatively effective and better aligned with modern Arabic academic norms.

The differences in metadiscourse use between native and non-native writers reflect not only linguistic preferences but also rhetorical strategies shaped by cultural and educational backgrounds. Indonesian non-native writers tend to employ metadiscourse more explicitly to ensure textual clarity and facilitate reader comprehension. This tendency aligns with Yudhiantara et. al.<sup>64</sup>, who argue that non-native writers frequently rely on transitions and frame markers as strategies for constructing texts that are clearly organized and easy to follow.

In contrast, native Arabic writers rely more heavily on the inherent structure of the Arabic language and established academic conventions. Their use of metadiscourse is comparatively limited, based on the assumption that readers are already familiar with Arabic academic writing norms. This strategy reflects a text-oriented approach, in which writers prioritize content over reader guidance. Such findings are consistent with Kaplan's<sup>65</sup> contrastive rhetoric theory, which posits that writing styles are strongly influenced by cultural background and habitual ways of thinking.

Overall, the findings reveal that the use of interactive metadiscourse in Arabic research abstracts is shaped by both linguistic competence and rhetorical tradition. Non-native writers tend to adopt explicit organizational strategies as a means of ensuring clarity and preventing misinterpretation, while native writers demonstrate greater rhetorical economy by relying on shared discourse conventions. These differences confirm that metadiscourse functions not only as a textual device but also as a culturally embedded rhetorical strategy.

From a linguistic perspective, the use of metadiscourse by non-native writers indicates a strong awareness of readers' pragmatic needs.<sup>66</sup> Non-native writers employed code glosses to clarify potentially unfamiliar terms and evidentials to reinforce claims through explicit

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<sup>64</sup> Yudhiantara et al., "A Metadiscourse Analysis of Research Article Abstracts Across English, Indonesian, and Arabic Authored by Indonesian Islamic Higher Education Scholars."

<sup>65</sup> Kaplan, "2 . Contrastive Rhetoric."

<sup>66</sup> Khoerun nisa, Salma, Rinaldi Supriadi, and Tatang. "Rhetorical Structures of Conclusion Sections in Arabic Scholarly Articles for Indonesian and Arabic Speakers." *Alibbaa': Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 6, no. 2 (August 2025): 373–92. <https://doi.org/10.19105/ajpba.v6i2.21432>.

references. These strategies reflect a reader-oriented approach that is particularly important in second-language academic writing contexts. The pedagogical implications of these findings are significant. Instruction in Arabic academic writing for non-native learners should emphasize the appropriate use of metadiscourse. Training programs need to include an understanding of the rhetorical functions of each metadiscourse category, as well as practical guidance on composing effective and communicative abstracts. As suggested by Hyland<sup>67</sup>, metadiscourse is not merely a linguistic feature but a rhetorical tool that enables writers to build relationships with readers and convey information effectively.

The findings of this study are consistent with Zaki<sup>68</sup>, who reported a dominance of transitions in Arabic research abstracts. Research by Al-Zubi and Fareh<sup>69</sup> also supports these results, showing that Arabic medical articles tend to use transitions more frequently, whereas English medical articles place greater emphasis on frame markers and code glosses.

Additionally, the study by Assassi et. al.<sup>70</sup> provides further insight by demonstrating that non-native writers from Algeria tend to emulate native Arabic writing styles, while non-native writers from Saudi Arabia are more selective in adopting such rhetorical patterns. These findings highlight the crucial role of cultural and educational backgrounds in shaping academic writing strategies.

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<sup>67</sup> Hyland, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing*.

<sup>68</sup> Zaki, "The Metadiscourse of Arabic Academic Abstracts: A Corpus-Based Study."

<sup>69</sup> Dalal Al-Zubi and Shehdeh Fareh, "English and Arabic Abstracts in Medical Research Articles: A Contrastive Study," *Cogent Arts and Humanities* 10, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.2273602>.

<sup>70</sup> Assassi et al., "Formulaic Sequences and Meta-Discourse Markers in Applied Linguistics Research Papers."

## **Conclusion**

This study demonstrates that the use of interactive metadiscourse in Arabic research abstracts differs systematically between native and non-native writers. Non-native writers employ frame markers and transitions more frequently, supporting findings by Hyland and Tse as well as Indarti, who note that non-native writers tend to rely on explicit discourse markers to ensure textual clarity. In contrast, native writers use metadiscourse more implicitly, reflecting the concise and fluid characteristics of Arabic rhetorical traditions described by Hatim and Zaki. The absence of endophoric markers in the abstracts of both groups further supports Hyland's assertion that abstracts, due to their concise nature, generally avoid internal cross-referencing. These findings address the research questions by showing that rhetorical differences are not merely quantitative, but reflect systematic contrasts in writing strategies shaped by cultural and academic backgrounds.

From a pedagogical and rhetorical perspective, the results highlight the importance of metadiscourse awareness in Arabic academic writing instruction for non-native learners. Non-native writers appear to adopt a more reader-oriented approach, prioritizing reader comprehension through explicit guidance of textual flow, whereas native writers demonstrate a text-oriented approach characterized by compact and integrated rhetorical patterns. These contrasts reinforce Kaplan's contrastive rhetoric theory, which emphasizes the influence of cultural and academic backgrounds on writing styles, and align with Hyland and Yudhiantara et al., who stress the pedagogical value of metadiscourse awareness in academic writing instruction. Despite these contributions, this study is limited by its relatively small corpus and its focus on interactive metadiscourse categories. Future research may expand the analysis to interactional metadiscourse, other sections of research articles, or cross-linguistic contexts to provide a more comprehensive understanding of rhetorical variation in Arabic academic writing.

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