

Rhetorical structure and metadiscourse markers of local and international agriculture research abstracts

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ABSTRACT

Educational mandates promoting a research culture among educators and students emphasize the importance of high-quality research publications. A critical component of this is writing effective research abstracts, a key requirement for journal acceptance. This comparative genre-based study aimed to analyze the macrostructure and linguistic features of 40 local agricultural research abstracts from a state university journal and 40 international abstracts from reputable journals covering 2011-2024. Using Hyland's (2000, 2004, 2005) frameworks, the rhetorical structures, metadiscourse patterns, and communicative functions of the corpora were analyzed. Both local and international abstracts commonly employed moves like Purpose, Method, and Product. Local abstracts considered the Introduction and Conclusion moves as optional, while these moves were conventional in international abstracts. Typical patterns for local abstracts were PMPPrC and PMPr, while most international abstracts followed Hyland's IPMPPrC framework. Both sets used metadiscourse markers, but international abstracts employed them more frequently, favoring boosters over hedges to emphasize certainty and validation. These findings highlight the importance of adhering to international academic writing norms to enhance research visibility and impact, with implications for teaching academic writing and research.



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1. Introduction

The Philippine educational landscape has undergone significant changes over recent decades, particularly in higher education. The Commission on Higher Education ([Commission on Higher Education, 2019](#)) has issued policies requiring graduate students to produce research publishable in indexed or refereed journals. This reflects a broader response to globalization, internationalization, and the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Under the new guidelines on the reclassification of faculty positions in the state colleges and universities, faculty research productivity has also become a core component in faculty evaluation, requiring publications in internationally indexed journals such as Scopus and Web of Science ([Department of Budget and Management \[DBM\] & Department of Education \[DepEd\], 2022](#)). Despite these academic mandates, challenges persist—particularly for Filipino graduate students and faculty who struggle to meet international publishing standards. It is observed that there is a lack of expertise in global publishing practices among Filipino scholars ([Quinto, 2019](#)). This is further exacerbated by poor academic writing skills, particularly in English, as Filipino authors are non-native English speakers ([Juan & Tao, 2013, as cited in Amnuai, 2019; Magday et al., 2022](#)). Poorly constructed abstracts have been identified as a major barrier to manuscript acceptance in prestigious journals, with

many submissions being denied due to failure to meet expected rhetorical and linguistic standards (El-Dakhs, 2018; Saidi & Talebi, 2021).

Consequently, this heightened the importance of genre analysis in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classrooms (Kaya & Yagiz, 2020). Various models were proposed, including Hyland (2000), as cited by numerous authors (Ramadhini et al., 2020; Saidi & Talebi, 2021; Magday et al., 2022). Genre analysis, such as research articles (Amnuai, 2019; Magday et al., 2022; El-Dakhs, 2018; Saidi & Talebi, 2021), theses and dissertations (Adais & Panolong, 2022), and books (Bal-Gezegin and Baş, 2020), which are crucial for successful academic communication and publication, have become a trend among scholars. Among the different sections of research articles, abstracts became particularly significant because of their gatekeeping function (Roxas, 2020; Magday et al., 2022) and their important role in indexing and retrieving articles for possible citation (Sriwanat & Phoocharoensil, 2024). Analyzing rhetorical structure and language use in abstracts, especially through move analysis and the study of metadiscourse markers, has become a research interest.

Cross-disciplinary research is a notable trend in abstract studies. Scholars have compared rhetorical structures, metadiscourse, and language features across different fields. For instance, Darabad (2016) examined Applied Linguistics, Applied Mathematics, and Applied Chemistry. Eighty abstracts from both native and non-native English contexts in four disciplines: humanities (education and sociology) and science (electronics and agronomy) were examined by Viera (2019) to assess their rhetorical organization. These studies revealed both significant similarities and differences across disciplines, highlighting implications for teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

An interdisciplinary evaluation of 100 research abstracts in the field of food technology, undertaken by Suntara (2018), found that the most preferred move pattern among the authors is M- Pr-C, I-M-Pr-C, I-P-M-Pr-C, P-M-Pr-C, M-Pr, I-Pr-C, and I-P-Pr-C, and that the majority of the corpus has three moves. There are no obligatory moves, but the Method, Product, and Conclusion are conventional, and the Introduction and Purpose are optional. Ngai et al. (2018) also analyzed the move structure of 500 research article abstracts from five science disciplines and discovered significant variation in move structure. Research articles from Thai Scopus Journals (TSJ) and Top- Ranked Scopus Journals (TRSJ) in Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching were explored by Sriwanat and Phoocharoensil, (2024), revealing different dominant patterns. While both journals display distinct individual optional and conventional moves, they both consider the Product move as obligatory.

On the other hand, Cross-linguistic studies also offer insights into abstract structures. For example, studies have found differences in the occurrence of conclusions in ICT abstracts written by Thai versus non-Thai writers (Amnuai, 2019). Comparing Turkish and non-Turkish scholars' use of rhetorical structures in their abstracts, Kaya and Yagiz (2020) found no significant differences in moves, but Turkish writers more frequently included three moves (purpose, method, product), while foreign writers included four (purpose, method, product, conclusion). In another study by Gheinani & Tabatabaei, (2017), significant differences in the use of moves and structural patterns in the field of agricultural engineering were found between Iranian and English RA abstracts.

Research has also explored variation in moves across different venues. A study examined the rhetorical moves and linguistic features of English research article abstracts written by three groups of authors in Applied Linguistics, and found that the common moves employed were purpose, method, and result. There were also notable differences in using tenses and hedges (Andika et al., 2018). Research article abstracts from SCOPUS-indexed national and international journals were evaluated by Tamela (2020), who identified that the most common move patterns were I-P-M-Pr and P-M-Pr, with Purpose, Method, and Product as the most frequent and obligatory elements. Saidi and Talebi (2021) examined RA abstracts from a local Iranian journal and an international journal in Applied Linguistics, finding that both included conventional moves, with Purpose, Method, and Product being the most prevalent. Magday et al. (2022) had the same finding in a comparative genre analysis of research abstracts from local and international conferences, noting that Purpose, Method, and Product were frequently used in both contexts, with local abstracts being longer. Navigating the required moves in language-related field abstracts, it was found that authors of highly recognized journals employ at least 4 moves, such as Purpose, Method, Product, and Conclusion (Arsyad et al., 2023; Ashofteh et al., 2020).

Examining the linguistic features of abstracts has also gained prominence, including voice, verb tenses, modality, and metadiscourse elements such as hedges and boosters (Ramadhini et al., 2023). Linguistic features of language theses and dissertations are among the topics being discussed (Adais & Panolong, 2022). Scholars have shown an increasing interest in its function and frequency in the different rhetorical sections of scientific papers. Ashofteh et al. (2020) investigated the use of metadiscourse markers in every move of 125 RA abstracts in Applied Linguistics, finding that authors prominently used hedges. This aligns with the cross-cultural study of metadiscourse features of research article abstracts of Turkish and Chinese L2 English scholars. Ekoç-Özçelik (2023) reported that both hedges and boosters were used by both group favoring the use of hedges over boosters. This runs against the study where Turkish writers used boosters and frame markers more frequently, while native speakers of English use hedges, code glosses, and self-mentions more (Kirisçi & Duruk, 2022). On the other hand, a higher frequency of hedges than boosters in the Conclusion move was observed in the study of food technology abstracts by Suntana (2018), suggesting that researchers in this field tend to allow propositions from other authors. Ruonan and Al-Shaibani (2022) investigated the use of metadiscourse in the abstracts of undergraduates in social sciences across three disciplines (English Language and Communication, Mass Communication, and Psychology). The findings revealed that interactional metadiscourse markers were used nearly twice as often as interactive discourse markers across the three disciplines, and that the most frequently used markers were boosters. Another comparative study in the abstract sections of research articles written by Turkish and English Researchers discovered that there is a cross-linguistic variation in the use of metadiscourse markers.

In a study on the sciences (Earth, Formal, Life, Physical, and Social Sciences), all disciplines use boosters mainly in the Results section of abstracts. But interestingly, the Life Science discipline employs most boosters in the Introduction move as well. The Social Science discipline has the highest percentage of abstracts with the Methods move among all five science disciplines, and it employs more boosters in the Methods move than Earth and Physical Sciences. Because of the huge complexity and wide character of Social Sciences (e.g., human behavior), scientists may explain the technique in greater depth and qualify their knowledge claims (Ngai et al., 2018).

The present genre-based research adapted a comparative analysis of rhetorical structure and metadiscourse markers in local and international research article abstracts (RAs) in the field of agriculture. This approach aims to uncover effective strategies for presenting claims with the appropriate balance of confidence and caution, which is essential for international recognition.

While genre analysis is well-established in linguistics and related fields, comparative studies of agricultural research abstracts remain underexplored (Suntara, 2017). This is also true in the Philippine context. Given the country's strong agricultural sector and the role of state colleges and universities in the production of new knowledge, this study fills a notable gap in genre analysis literature, which has predominantly centered on linguistics and soft sciences. Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader educational goal of enhancing academic literacy and international visibility of Filipino researchers in the agriculture discipline. It offers practical insights for language instructors, novice researchers, and faculty members seeking to publish in international journals. By highlighting the significance of rhetorical moves and metadiscourse markers, the study supports improved pedagogy in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and helps cultivate more globally competitive scholars. Its focus on agriculture aligns with national development priorities and emphasizes the role of academic writing in promoting knowledge dissemination and practical application.

To compare the move structures and metadiscourse markers between the two sets of published research article abstracts, the following questions guided the study.

1. What are the rhetorical structures of local and international research abstracts?
2. What are the rhetorical patterns of the moves in the local and international abstracts?
3. What are the metadiscourse markers used in each move of the local and international research abstracts in terms of hedges and boosters?
4. What are the communicative functions of hedges and boosters of the two corpora?

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

A foundation for text analysis is provided by the theory of rhetorical structure, which deals with text organization. According to the theory, a text is made up of groups of clauses arranged hierarchically and in different relationships to one another rather than just being a collection of clauses. In this study, the researcher applied a qualitative design to investigate the moves of the corpus through the lens of genre analysis using Hyland's five-move framework, as cited in Magday et al. (2022), as shown in Figure 1.

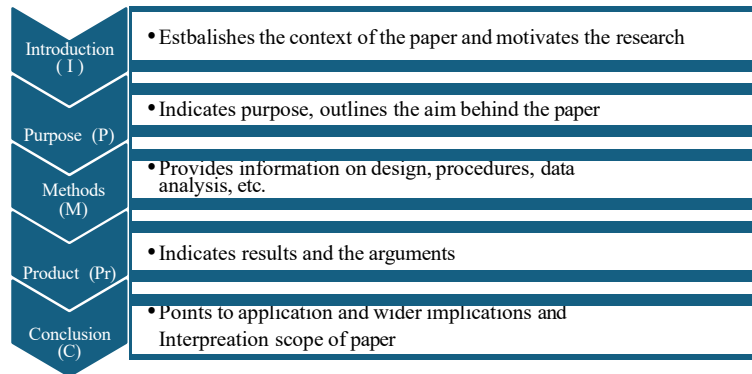


Fig 1. Hyland's Five Move framework

Accordingly, the presence of metadiscourse markers (hedges and boosters) in each move was also examined based on the metadiscourse taxonomy of Hyland (2005, as cited in Ondondo, 2020). To have a more comprehensive resource, the researcher also referred to a more detailed list of hedges and boosters by Vazquez and Giner (2008), and Vazquez and Giner (2009), and the evaluation of communicative functions was based on the framework of Hyland (2004).

It is inevitable that interraters will come up with differing interpretations of the contents of the abstracts, both in their macro and micro-organization. Hence, to come up with a unified decision among them, a reliability test was conducted. Figure 2 the process flow in the conduct of the study.

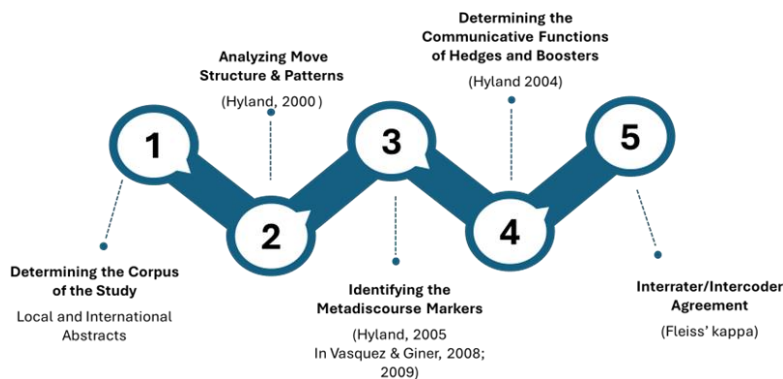


Fig. 2. Process flow

2.2. Corpus Management

This study intended to compare two corpora in terms of their moves and the use of metadiscourse markers. A total of 80 abstracts were subjected to evaluation; 40 from the local journal (QSU journals) and 40 from international journals. The selection of the local corpus published in the QSU journals was motivated by its availability and representativeness, as it is easily accessible. These were prepared by faculty and staff researchers across all university campuses. Since there are limited RAs related to Agricultural Sciences, QSU journal publications from SY 2011 to 2024 were used as sources. Abstracts from international, open-access agriculture-related journals were selected for the same period of coverage.

2.3. Data Analysis Process

After the required number of corpora had been completed, each research abstract was coded manually. It was deconstructed by the researcher into sections to come up with the constituent moves. Once the move structure was sorted, the use of metadiscourse markers and the communicative functions in each move was identified. To eliminate subjectivity, which is a criticism against a qualitative research method, four intercoders, one local and three international experts validated further the distribution of moves. A reliability analysis was undertaken to check the mutual agreement and correctness of the identified moves found by the four coders. In cases of disagreement in coding and theming, segments with inconsistent classifications were noted. These disagreements were resolved through another series of consensus meetings, where coders discussed their interpretations based on Hyland's (2000; 2005) framework. In cases where consensus was not immediately reached, the decision of the majority prevailed. This repeated process ensured consistency and strengthened the reliability of the coding scheme before the final analysis. (0.81– 1.00) (Albakkosh, 2024). The overall Fleiss' K (Kappa) coefficient is in this study is .83, which is categorized as almost perfect agreement.

After the 80 datasets had been classified, it was tabulated correspondingly to determine the leading move pattern and the rhetorical structure of the abstracts. The frequency of move was identified using the criteria introduced by Kanoksilapatham as cited in Magday (2022) which are obligatory (if the move appears in 100% of the corpus), conventional (60-99% move appearance), and optional (less than 60%) moves. Basing on the summary, the most dominant pattern was also determined including its adherence to the standard arrangement of sections in the abstract (linear or non-linear).

To evaluate its macrostructure, the metadiscourse markers in each move was manually examined to determine the prominence of usage based from Hyland's (2005) framework, supported by additional list from Vazquez and Giner (2008; 2009). The collection of data was text-driven in nature as there were some circumstances that the word was not used for the intended purpose as words may have different roles in the same context (Şanverdi, 2021). After classifying the boosters and the hedges used in the different sections of the abstracts, they were correspondingly coded with their communicative function guided by the framework of Hyland (2004). Again, with the assistance of English experts, a reliability test was executed simultaneously with the evaluation of the moves and arrived at an almost perfect level of agreement.

After the completion of move and metadiscourse coding, move frequency classification, identification of communicative function, and the coding reliability assessment, a comparative analysis was undertaken to find the similarities and differences between the two corpora.

An illustrative example in identifying the moves is shown in Figure 3.

*Over the past seven decades, the grain yield of maize (*Zea mays* L.) has increased continuously in China, mostly due to hybridization innovations, particularly recent genetic improvements in photosynthesis (I). In order to reveal photosynthetic characters of elite inbred lines in different ears, a field experiment was conducted at the North China Plain of Shandong Province in China (P). Six parental lines of maize introduced in three eras (the 1960s, 1980s, and 2000s) were investigated diurnal variation of gas exchange, chlorophyll fluorescence, and photosynthetic response characteristic at the grain filling stage (M). Compared to earlier parental lines, the 2000s parental lines always had higher net photosynthetic rate (Pn) throughout the day, especially at noon, and a mid-day depression in Pn did not occur in all hybrids parental lines. Moreover, the stomatal conductance (Gs) and water use efficiency (WUE) of the 2000s' lines showed higher value than those of the 1960s' and 1980s' lines. The inbred lines differences in photosynthetic parameters were partly owing to their different quantum carboxylation efficiencies and light synthase activities. Simultaneously, the 2000s parental lines exhibited lower light and CO2 compensation points, and their higher apparent quantum yield, and carboxylation efficiency (Pr). These suggested that the modern parental lines required lower light intensity and less CO2 to maintain a relatively high photosynthetic capacity, substantially increasing leaf physical quality and stress resistance. It provided crucial information of high photo-efficiency and stress-resistance breeding in maize(C).(International Abstract # 28 with an IPMPPrC linear pattern)*

Fig. 3. Move identification example

2.4. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

For the local journals, all abstracts discussing agricultural related matters were set apart and reviewed and then the 40 final researches closest to the sub-fields of Animal Science, Crop Science, Agricultural Technology and Engineering and Agroforestry were selected as part of the corpus.

The same process was adopted in the international journals ; RA abstracts were taken from open access highly recognized journals such as International Journal of Agricultural Technology (SCOPUS & ACI), Agricultural Systems, (SCOPUS) Plant Science Today, Journal of Integrative Agriculture (WOS), Asia Pacific Journal of Science and Technology, Cantho University Journal of Science (ACI), Journal of Agricultural Sciences (SCOPUS & WOS), Soil Research and Journal of Forestry (internationally referred), Pertanika Journal of Tropical Agricultural Science (SCOPUS, ACI, WOS). Research articles which were closest to the sub-fields were selected to control possible disciplinary variations. Since there are a lot of international journals which publish diverse subject matter related to agriculture, only those which are relevant to the subfields under study were initially collected randomly from the enlisted journals and finally came up with the final 40 international RA abstracts.

2.5. Ethical Considerations

During the conceptualization of this research project, a letter requesting permission to use the journals as resources was sent to the office of the University Research Director, which was duly approved. For international journals, only the publicly accessible abstracts of research articles were used as materials for evaluation. All documents referenced in the study were handled with the utmost confidentiality.

3. Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings and explanations on the evaluation of 40 local and 40 international research abstracts taken from the QSU Research Journal and top-tier publications such as Scopus, ACI, WOS, and international refereed journals, respectively.

3.1. Research Design

To determine the move structure of the corpus, the results are presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1 Move Structure of Local And International Abstracts

Moves	Abstracts					
	Local	Percentage	Classification	International	Percentage	Classification
I	14	35%	Optional	29	72.5%	Conventional
P	37	92.5%	Conventional	27	67.5 %	Conventional
M	31	80%	Conventional	40	100%	Obligatory
Pr	37	92.5%	Conventional	40	100%	Obligatory
C	20	50%	Optional	29	72.5%	Conventional

[Table 1](#) shows that all the five moves in Hyland (2000) model are present in both datasets. However, the local abstracts in this study do not exhibit any obligatory moves. This corroborates the results in the study of [Suntara \(2018\)](#) on the absence of obligatory moves in the abstracts related to food technology. Further, the conventional moves—Purpose, Method, and Product—appear with the highest frequency. This pattern aligns with previous research on rhetorical structures which also identified the prevalence of these three moves ([Saidi & Talebi, 2021](#); [Kaya & Yagiz, 2020](#); [Viera, 2019](#); [El-Dakhs, 2018](#); [Ramadhini et al., 2020](#)). The optional status of Introduction and Conclusion moves in local abstracts corroborates the findings of [Magday et al. \(2022\)](#), who conducted a comparative analysis of research abstracts in linguistics between local and international colloquia. Their study revealed that both moves were used less frequently, below 60%, suggesting that they are not considered essential. Even the results in the study of [Kaya and Yağız, \(2020\)](#) suggests that non-native writers such as Turkish authors neglect some moves in their studies particularly the conclusion move and end their abstracts without the wider implications or conclusions of the studies. This trend indicates that many local writers often begin with stating the purpose and conclude by presenting descriptive results. The optional inclusion of Introduction and Conclusion in local abstracts may arise from the perspective held by some writers that these sections are not obligatory in research abstracts ([Amnuai, 2019](#); [Tamela, 2020](#); [Ashofteh et al., 2020](#)).

The international abstracts on the other hand considered Method and Product as mandatory and Introduction and Conclusion as conventional moves. This is aligned with the trend in genre analysis studies on hard and life sciences where agriculture belongs ([Ngai et al., 2018](#)). This may indicate that international writers acknowledge the importance of providing background information relative to the study and offering broader implications or conclusions. These deviations may also imply differences in

writing culture among disciplines (Saidi & Talebi, 2021; Arsyad, 2023) but may also indicate a weakness in the use of the English language, especially among non-native speakers (Amnuai, 2019).

3.2. Rhetorical Patterns

Aside from the move structure, this study also attempted to determine the rhetorical patterns of the moves in both corpora, as shown in Figure 4.

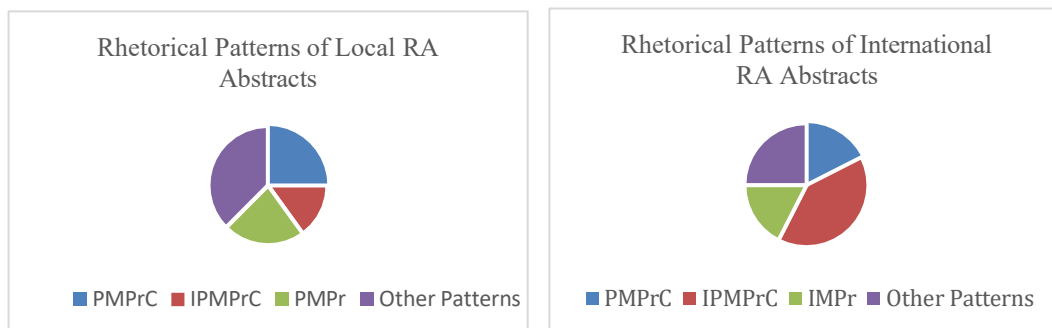


Fig. 4. Rhetorical patterns of local and international RA abstracts

Figure 4 reveals that both abstracts encompass various patterns and PMPPrC and PMPPr predominated as the preference of the local writers. There were only six authors who used the complete sections of the framework in use.

On the contrary, the majority of international authors conform to Hyland's (2000) abstract writing framework, IPMPPrC. This trend in rhetorical move patterns observed in international abstracts is consistent with the findings of Saidi and Talebi (2021), Sriwanat and Phoocharoensil (2024), and Amnuai (2019), which show that the linear patterns P-M-Pr-C and I-P-M-Pr-C are the most preferred ordering patterns in international corpora and high-ranked Scopus-indexed journals. These findings highlight the importance of the Conclusion move in abstract writing.

This contrasts with Tamela's (2020) comparative study of research articles published in Scopus-indexed national and international journals, which found that the most frequently occurring move patterns were Introduction-Purpose-Method-Product (I-P-M-Pr) and Purpose-Method-Product (P-M-Pr), showing that the Conclusion move may be disregarded. However, in both national and international abstracts, the Purpose, Method, and Product moves are consistently observed. This corroborates the findings of Ramadhini et al. (2020), who reported that the Purpose, Method, and Product moves were present in 100% of the hard science abstracts examined. Even in the field of English Language Teaching and Applied linguistics, top-tier Scopus journals regarded Product as an obligatory move (Sriwanat & Phoocharoensil, 2024). It can be inferred from this variation that even interdisciplinary studies adopt different patterns depending on the preference of the writer, but the Purpose, Method, and Product are the core parts included to share the results of a study.

In the course of evaluation, it is also worth noting that three abstracts in the local corpus exhibited a non-linear move sequence, whereas all international abstracts followed a linear sequence. The presence of non-linear move patterns in local abstracts supports the findings of Magday et al. (2022), which indicate that some non-native writers do not fully conform to the standard sequencing of abstract sections.

3.3. Metadiscourse Markers and their Communicative Function

Linguistic features of abstracts also contribute to the clarity of the abstracts. It guides the readers on the flow of ideas and builds interaction as the authors reveal their stance. The recurring metadiscourse markers, particularly the hedges and boosters and their corresponding communicative function, are listed in Table 2 for local abstracts and Table 3 for international abstracts.

Table 2 Communicative Functions of Metadiscourse Markers in Local Abstract

Hedges	Frequency	Communicative Function	Boosters	Frequency	Communicative Function
could	9	politeness	showed	14	Certainty
most/mostly	5	tentativeness	found/found out	11	Certainty
potential	5	tentativeness	significant/ly	7	Conviction
comparable	5	tentativeness	revealed	5	Certainty
Total	49			63	

Table 3 Communicative Functions of Metadiscourse Markers in International Abstracts

Hedges	Frequency	Communicative Function	Boosters	Frequency	Communicative Function
indicate(d)(s)	12	tentativeness	showed	22	certainty
suggested	9	politeness	significantly	14	conviction
could	7	politeness	revealed/s	8	certainty
may	6	Epistemic modality	found	6	certainty
Total	76			88	

Tables 2 and Table 3 illustrate that both local and international authors employed both hedges and boosters, with international authors demonstrating a more extensive use. Notably, both groups favored boosters over hedges. The findings supports the observation of Ngai et al. (2018), which noted a higher prevalence of boosters in life sciences compared to other science disciplines in the study, indicating a discipline-based variation in asserting claims. This also validates the results of the investigation of Ruonan and Al-Shaibani (2022) showing that the interactional metadiscourse markers were used nearly twice as often as the interactive discourse markers for the three disciplines, and the most used markers are boosters. Onondo (2020) also discovered that in doctoral thesis writing, boosters are more frequently used over hedges as they need to persuade their panel on the novelty of their findings. This implies that both authors in the study employed boosters to strengthen their assertions and convey certainty in their knowledge claims, while maintaining a respectful tone.

However, the studies of Ashofte et al. (2020) and Ekoç-Özçelik (2022) run against the previous findings. Both authors argue that hedges outranked boosters in exploring 125 research articles from five major applied linguistics journals, and the hedges and boosters in research article abstracts of Turkish and Chinese Scholars in the field of English Language Teaching, respectively. In another study, hedges also recorded higher frequency over boosters in all the rhetorical moves of the research article abstract in the field of Applied Linguistics written by Libyan authors (Hasan & Alsout, 2023).

Tables 2 and 3 also provide insights into the most used hedges and boosters in both datasets, along with their communicative functions, adapting the taxonomy of metadiscourse by Hyland (2005). The top four (4) frequently used hedges in the local abstracts include **could**, which conveys politeness and openness to alternative perspectives; **potential**, **most/mostly** and **comparable**, indicating a tentative stance and readiness for further exploration.

In the international abstracts, the predominant hedge was **indicate(s)(d)**, suggesting a cautious approach, followed closely by **suggested** and **could**, which uphold politeness and openness to different viewpoints. This is similar to the list of Ekoç-Özçelik (2022) who reported that **indicate(d)(s)** is the most preferred hedge by the Turkish scholars. **May** was also prevalent in the current study indicating the use of epistemic modality. **May** and **could** are also in the list of Onondo (2020) as one of the low commitment modal auxiliaries which are used to tone down their statements and reduce the risk of opposition. Hence the presence of hedges in this present study may indicate a courteous and receptive attitude toward other propositions, particularly noteworthy among Filipino authors. Furthermore, the use of hedges such as **may** and **could** reflects academic modesty. This tendency aligns with findings on Chinese scholars, for

whom modesty and respect are regarded as important scholarly virtues (Mu et al., 2015, as cited in Ekoç-Özçelik, 2022). Similarly, Anglophone linguists tend to present their reasoning as plausible rather than certain, thereby creating a dialogic space that invites readers to question or evaluate their claims and methodological choices (Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2016, as cited in Ekoç-Özçelik, 2022).

As to boosting strategy, both abstracts frequently employed terms like **showed**, **found**, and **revealed**, indicating a strong level of conviction. This tendency may have stemmed from the experimental nature of the agriculture discipline, where the researchers base their interpretations on empirical data. This observation accords with the findings of Ngai et al. (2018), who also noted that **show** and **found** are among the most used boosters in their research. This implies that both authors under study employ boosters to strengthen their assertions and convey certainty in their knowledge claims, while maintaining a respectful tone.

These variations in findings in both the macro and micro structure of RA abstract implies that writing conventions may be dependent on some variables such as the discipline, language and nationality of authors. Hence it is necessary to be aware of the standards in international research writing to be able to cope with prevailing norms.

4. Conclusion

Taking into account the findings of this study, it can be concluded that international abstracts in agriculture demonstrate a stronger adherence to standardized rhetorical structures and conventions than their local counterparts. This consistency reflects alignment with global academic writing norms, thereby enhancing clarity, persuasiveness, and visibility on an international scale. In contrast, the variability observed in local abstracts indicates a need for heightened awareness and training in discipline, language and culture-specific writing conventions. These insights highlight the pedagogical importance of integrating international abstract-writing standards into academic writing and research instruction, particularly within agriculture-related fields.

Beyond these implications, the study offers broader contributions to English for Academic Purposes (EAP) pedagogy and international publication practices. It underscores the need for explicit instruction on rhetorical moves and metadiscourse features in the classroom, enabling students and novice researchers to produce abstracts that meet global expectations. In classroom contexts, this may be operationalized through genre-based teaching, corpus-informed activities, and guided analysis of high-quality international abstracts to develop learners' awareness of disciplinary conventions. In research training contexts, the findings support the inclusion of targeted workshops on abstract writing, peer review practices, and scaffolded writing tasks that emphasize both structure and stance (e.g., appropriate use of hedges and boosters). Such pedagogical interventions can help bridge the gap between local and international writing practices, ultimately increasing scholars' readiness for publication in indexed journals.

Given that agriculture is a broad field, it is recommended that further research be conducted to explore the comparative rhetorical strategies across its various subdisciplines, in order to establish more defined and context-sensitive writing conventions for each specific area.

It is important to acknowledge that this study is limited to a specific set of agriculture abstracts, which may not fully represent all subdisciplines or broader academic contexts. Consequently, the generalizability of the findings may not be applicable to other fields or writing settings.

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Declarations

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- The authors fully support ELTEJ's commitment to maintaining high standards of academic integrity, professional conduct, and honesty in all academic and professional activities.
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