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## **MASTERS THESIS**

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Purpose of the Study**

The study of metadiscourse markers is central to this thesis, based on the insights and framework embraced by Hyland who is a pioneer in this discipline. Metadiscourse is understood as an approach in which a writer or a speaker adopts to project himself or herself in the discourse, which itself is his or her creation. It indicates the attitude of the content creator towards his or her content as well as the intended consumer of the discourse. This has made metadiscourse an extremely popular tool for investigators whose research area of interest span from social construction to functional orientation to discourse as well by scientists who perform corpus analysis. The metadiscourse approach provides an attractive mechanism to investigate patterns of interaction and cohesion across the content of a discourse in corpus-based analysis. As a concept and philosophical paradigm, the study on metadiscourse markers offers an approach of accumulating under a single heading a series of tools that creators intelligently utilize in order to clearly format their texts, connect with their intended audience and indicate their behavior. These markers also show the attitude of the author towards both the discourse and the consumer of the discourse.

However, the incorporation of metadiscourse in linguistic research has not been adequately exploited. Ideas around metadiscourse have not been properly evaluated and fundamental theories have not been developed and therefore has remained conceptually a vague notion. The inability of researchers to adequately pinpoint and elucidate the theoretical framework of metadiscourse has prevented analysts and investigators to deploy metadiscourse actively and intelligently in their research. This has barred the proper study in this field of enquiry.

The introduction of metadiscourse into the applied linguistics vocabulary in the 1980s, building on sociolinguistic conceptions of planes of discourse, frames, alignment and meta-talk, was largely a

reaction to this overemphasis on the propositional aspects of language and an attempt to establish the important principle that language use always draws on, and creates for itself, a social and communicative dimension.

(Hyland, 2005: 50-53)

This thesis aims to address this lacuna and adequately evaluate, understand, and elucidate the metadiscourse markers, especially in the context of corpus-based studies. The interpersonal model of metadiscourse is important for this work. It has become necessary for discourse analysis in the present era. Traditionally, the focus of linguists was to analyze the ideational dimensions of texts and speech. However, this approach has changed to evaluation of how the text and speech function interpersonally. This has been brought about by the field of metadiscourse and its effect on linguistic studies. This interpersonal model of metadiscourse is based on the attitude of the creator of the content. The driving force for this attitude is that the content is not created only to present information or to exhibit an external reality. The intent of the creator of the content is to eventually make the discourse understandable to the audience who appreciates and accepts the content and interacts with the creator of the content in a significant emotional involvement.

Hence, it is a solemn effort on the part of the writers or the speakers to create a meaningful connection with their intended audience and inspire them to follow along in the literary journey of the discourse. To do this effectively, writers and speakers make a sincere effort to imagine the addressee's hopes and expectations as well as their needs and resources. These efforts to understand the receiver's needs and expectations will allow the creators of the content to engage the intended audience to the text of the discourse and consequently influence the audience's understanding of the discourse. This is crucial for effective communication and the use of metadiscourse markers (both words and phrases) is an effective tool for the successful communication.

As effective communication is so crucial for a successful rendition of the discourse, writers and speakers consider their performance as a social and communicative enterprise between writers and speakers with their readers and listeners. As metadiscourse markers are investigated in great details, it is necessary to understand the importance and significance of the metadiscourse markers

for appreciation of the context and perspectives of this thesis. Metadiscourse has become an important tool in the current genre of discourse analysis. It is a new methodology to understand the way writers and speakers project themselves in their creation. Metadiscourse markers are the tools that allows for the projection to be effectively implemented in the text for the receiver to interact with the text in an effective manner.

Metadiscourse as a concept is based on the principle that any content or discourse is a vehicle or medium for social engagement. Hence, metadiscourse plays a vital role in the way the discourse is organized and structured, the way the intended receiver is engaged and indicates the content creators' attitude towards the discourse. To put it in simpler terms metadiscourse markers define and dictate the architectural design of the discourse and plays a vital role in its goal of effective communication and social engagement. Hence, the field of metadiscourse has gained traction as an effective tool for study of linguistics research. It has allowed researchers to understand and evaluate the patterns of social interaction through the discourse and to evaluate different aspects of language that is used by the general population, irrespective of them being the creator or consumer of discourse.

This thesis tries to investigate the attributes and performance of the discourse markers employed in the 'proposals' and 'case study' by investigating the corpora of written works at British universities by students of undergraduate and graduate levels. The meticulous study of literature during this field of research distinguished towards the interesting yet not fully explored field of metadiscourse employing the corpus methodology.

For Hyland, "Metadiscourse is an intuitively attractive concept as it seems to offer a principled way of collecting under one heading the diverse range of linguistic devices writers use to organize their texts explicitly, engage readers and signal their attitudes to their material and their audience" (Hyland 2005: ix). The research is corpus-driven research, which would examine academic writing. Here, the corpus linguistics is meant to be understood as a research tool that reveals the information and provides the perspectives on the research through the different tools assorted in the corpus engine. It helps to analyze a large number of written texts with absolute ease and confidence.



## **1.2. Research Question/s**

The inspiration for this research came out of the inquisitiveness about the role of meta-argumentative expressions, particularly the discourse markers in academic writing. The immediate question arises - what constitutes an honest writing in an educational context and the way the underlying features may be studied? How does the student- writer engage with the shape and content of the educational writing? What functions and usage patterns of metadiscourse markers can be observed within the proposals and research reports (of native writers)?

Hence, the research question is posed: How do student writers negotiate (linguistically) with the topic and the reader simultaneously, and what are the grammatical patterns associated with the common discourse markers? The research is done primarily through the analysis of selected words and phrases, and their frequencies, categories, and usages in the proposals and research reports of the BAWE corpus. This thesis draws from the concept of metadiscourse to explain and comment upon the modes and strategies of academic writing.

Metadiscourse is a function of cohesion and grammar, but its utility extends far beyond the creation of meaning in the text, and it involves consideration for the target audience. Metadiscourse conveys the idea that communication involves aspects that transcends the exchange of facts and information. It also includes personalities, attitudes, thoughts, and perceptions created between writers and their target audience. Hence the kind of influence the creator of content wish to have on his reader assumes significance and is determined by metadiscourse (Hyland, 2005).

## **1.3. Scope of the Study**

This thesis focuses on the varied expressions that signal the argument or play a linguistic role within the academic discourse. This initiated a survey of assorted corpus and eventually, (British Academic Written English, BAWE) has been chosen, primarily thanks to its large size (6,968,089 tokens) with “proficient assessed student writing” across “evenly distributed disciplinary areas” ([www.sketchengine.eu/bawe-corpus/](http://www.sketchengine.eu/bawe-corpus/)). Upon making preliminary search of the maximum number of metadiscourse markers and observation of the concordance, some of the markers are further investigated to get the actual number that function as the metadiscourse markers. After the examination of specific vocabularies and phrases, it became evident that the corpus would yield sufficient results or show occasions of usages that the research could proceed towards analyzing

and interpreting in light of the theoretical models within the field. The research is done primarily through the analysis of selected words and phrases, and their frequencies, categories and usages within the proposals and case study within the BAWE corpus.

This thesis from time to time draws from the concept of metalinguistic awareness to clarify and comment upon the modes and techniques of educational writing. Here, the term metalinguistic awareness is treated as a holistic term pertaining to the skill to reflect upon and operate both the structural and functional features of the language. Metalinguistic awareness is “the ability to reflect upon and manipulate the structural features of speech communication, treating language itself as an object of thought, as critical simply using the system to grasp and produce sentences” (Tunmer and Herriman 1984: 12). It involves the notice that language itself is an “object of thought” which might be manipulated. As an example, one can return and forth in oral conversation or writing to amend the mistakes. Also, metalinguistic awareness enables a personal to comment upon one’s own or use of other’s language. It is a language to speak about the language itself. It requires a deeper consciousness than simply producing or understanding the language/ linguistic units in an act of writing or speaking. The thesis starts with a short summary of the corpus and presents the queries made on that.

The first task here is the identification of the maximum number of metadiscourse markers and searching the concordances using the sketch engine and noting the frequencies with a ‘simple query’. A quick survey of the distribution of the metadiscourse markers is done and are further selected based on their frequencies, usage, or other attributes. The reason behind such selection is delimiting the study and focusing only on some of the interesting aspects. Thesaurus, word sketch and word sketch difference are used where comparisons seem relevant. Choice of metadiscourse markers to be further analyzed are incorporated, taking into consideration, to the degree to which they contribute to the discursive function within the text. The results from the corpus are then classified in line with the “Interpersonal model of metadiscourse” (Hyland 2005: 49). Then, an in-depth summary of meta-argumentative expressions is provided, covering the theories on metadiscourse, and venturing into illustration and classification of the results in keeping with the theoretical model.

Furthermore, taking out examples from the classificatory scheme, the corpus results are discussed and analyzed drawing from the concepts of “stance and voice” as exemplified by Gaudin and Hyland (2005). They bring together the ideas from several authors and their researches and put forward that “the two features as a reversible flow of the communal into the personal” and discuss their role in “particular rhetorical situations” (Gaudin and Hyland 2005: 4). “We can see voice as more reader-oriented, concerning the use of a disciplinary-appropriate system of meanings by recognizing ‘how things are done’, whereas stance is more author-oriented, concerning how writers use this to say things” (Hyland 2012: 134). The corpus results and classification are analyzed regarding these concepts so that the broader interpretation can be made.

The purpose of the research is not to make any generalizations but to reflect upon some of the interesting findings. The research has been interesting in itself -to engage with keywords, observe patterns, classify functions, and interpret discursive practices prominent in the academic writing of the students in the BAWE corpus. It has both implications on pedagogical and research level.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Understanding Metadiscourse and Metalinguistics**

A focus on the metadiscourse marker in corpus-based analysis leads to an understanding of how authors wish to position themselves. Metadiscourse helps “to define the rhetorical context by revealing some of the expectations and understandings of the audience for whom a text was written” (Hyland and Tse 2004: 175). There are mainly five kinds of metadiscourse markers.

Attitude markers – these represent the opinion of the writer or assessment of a particular proposition.

Examples of Attitude marker: *I agree, I am amazed, appropriate, correctly, dramatic, hopefully, unfortunately*

Self-mention- these are indicative of the explicit presence of authors in the content and provides information about his/her nature and position.

Examples: *I, we*

Engagement markers- these markers clearly address consumers of the content in order to bring them into the narrative. Examples: *we, our (inclusive)*

Hedges- these markers imply the writer's intent to identify opinion others apart from his own, their views, possibilities, and possibly allow the writer to interact with the reader. Examples: *apparently, assume, doubt, estimate, from my perspective, in most cases, in my opinion, probably*

Boosters- these markers allow the writer to anticipate in advance and remove from consideration point of view contrary to his own, or the possibility of conflicting arguments by expression of certainty and leaving no place for an alternative viewpoint. Examples: *beyond doubt, clearly we found, we proved, it is a fact*

(Hyland, 2005: 50-53)

At times, the term metalinguistic awareness is discussed along with the metadiscourse markers. The former term is treated as a holistic term, referring to the skill to reflect upon and operate both the structural and functional features of the language. Metalinguistic awareness is “the ability to reflect upon and manipulate the structural features of spoken language, treating language itself as an object of thought, as opposed to simply using the language system to comprehend and produce sentences” (Tunmer and Herriman 1984: 12). It involves the awareness that language itself is an “object of thought” which can be manipulated. For instance, one can go back and forth in an oral conversation or writing to amend the mistakes. Also, metalinguistic awareness enables an individual to comment upon one's own or use of other's language. It is a language used to talk about the language itself. It requires a deeper consciousness than simply producing or understanding the language/ linguistic units in the act of writing or speaking.

## **2.2. Scope and Limitations of using corpora**

The use of corpora in linguistics research has brought about a revolutionary change as it brings an aspect of authenticity (Almutairi, 2016). Tools related to corpus-driven studies have allowed investigators to work on linguistics and look at actual usage and characteristics of specific genres. Reppen defined corpora as a vast body of naturally occurring text, that is either spoken or written and is electronically stored (Reppen, 2010). Analysis of this definition leads to two inferences

about corpora. The first inference is that collection related to corpora needs to be principled and structured. The second inference is that corpora must consist of naturally occurring texts that are part of actual usage of the language in real-life scenarios like letters, books, student assignments, and similar texts. This observation makes it simple to understand the significance of corpus-based research of linguistics. It provides a snapshot of the actual usage of the language in real-world scenarios that allows us to understand and evaluate the pattern of the linguistic nature of the native speaker.

The appreciation of corpora has enormously impacted language research since the beginning of the nineteen-eighties. It has resulted in the creation of many corpus-based publications for reference purposes. These include dictionaries and empirical research based on English grammar (Yoon, 2011). According to Partington, these corpora are incredibly crucial for language research and have led to a compilation of mini corpora and its increased utilization and relevance in linguistics (Partington, 1980). Hence this thesis investigates details about the influence of corpora and its importance in language research.

Scholars who intend to research and study languages agree that corpus linguistics provides innovative and powerful approaches for language analysis. Corpora have diverse architecture and may be of different kinds. “The act of writing down what people say was probably pioneered as a research practice at the turn of the twentieth century by anthropologists and linguists working to document the phonological and grammatical patterns of ‘native’ languages” (Jones, 2009:11). The initial corpora designed were normative in their approach. An example of this kind of corpora is the brown corpus, and the creators of this model of corpora aimed to understand the nature of the standard language (Hofland & Johansson, 1982). New corpora adopt a similar approach and avoid wide variation as much as possible, and the majority of instances collected by users of the corpora.

These have been utilized as models by other users. Some corpora have a wide variation in their collection. They may incorporate a time component in their collection, and they are referred to as monitor corpus. (Sinclair, 1982). A monitor corpus collects its constituents at regular intervals, and the software records changes in vocabulary of the language and the use of phrases. Parallel and contrastive corpora consist of two or more languages, and they are built primarily to compare and contrast the principal components of languages (Biber, 1999). Hence, design and study of

corpora have gained traction in the past few decades as a powerful approach utilized as investigative tools for linguists.

With the design of numerous corpus management tools that are readily available to researchers, it is vital to understand and appreciate the representativeness of the corpus is the responsibility of the user and not the designer of the corpus. It is quite a distinct possibility that a corpus constituent adequately represents its diversity within a significant normative corpus; however, it is not representative enough on its own (Halverson, 1998).

As far as the general features and general architectural aspects of a corpus is concerned Dash et al. (Dash, 2010) mention the following salient features i) it is usually a collection of machine-readable text ii) it is also a collection of language that occurs naturally iii) it may represent language generally as in British National Corpus, or it may represent a specific genre as in MICASE. iv) It may contain both spoken and written language v) it may represent data related to language but does not attempt at analysis. vi) it should be hassle-free to retrieve data, information examples, and citations vii) documentation should be comprehensive. An important point mentioned in the above features of the corpus is the aspect of machine readability. With the rapid progress in computer and information technology has opened a new world of corpus research and its application.

Rapid processing of a large amount of data has allowed many different kinds of corpora to be accessed and perused by a varied disciplines like general linguists, lexicographer, scientists working on morphology, phonetics making this an interdisciplinary field of investigation (Hiltunen, Mcveigh, & Saily, 2017). Numerous linguists like Noam Chomsky disliked using a corpus as a tool to study linguistics with the argument that it is an error-prone approach (Marza, 2009). However, this is not a tenable argument, and it has been pointed out by McEntry et al. (McEntry, 2000) that corpus-based linguistic studies have always been part of academic research, and recently that this field has been appropriately defined and scientifically annotated.

Hence, it has been argued that corpus and language are dynamically and organically intertwined and influence each other (Gledhill & Kubler, 2016). it provides a rich source of text and literature to provide a novel and innovative insight into language patterns and how it affects learners' production and expert users (Barker, 2010). This approach has importance and is relevant in the

way constructs are defined both theoretically and operationally. As mentioned in the previous discussion, veteran linguists like Noam Chomsky have a problem with the corpus-based study, and instead, they prefer intuition-based scales.

Numerous scholars counter-argued the necessity of methods based on scales based on close analysis of learner language (Fulcher, 1996). Hence, the recent spurt in number and range of corpora at the disposal of language researchers will allow them to make an essential contribution to the theory and practice of language assessment (Kane, 2006). The use of corpus data is also useful for validation or discarding of perceptions or beliefs related to the use of language and is especially useful for inferences related to evaluation and explanation (Cushing, 2017). Hence, it is quite clear that the corpus-based linguistic approach is a valid scientific method that will pay rich dividends when used intelligently.

### **2.3. Corpus-driven research on metadiscourse**

For the metadiscourse analysis to be successful, the researcher needs to consider a few salient features (McEnery & Hardie, 2011). Firstly, the corpus should be aligned with the research question as mentioned. Also, the corpus should be adequately homogeneous. It means the texts of the corpus should belong to a similar genre. Finally, the corpus should be composed of different kinds of texts. British Academic Written English fulfills these conditions and may be considered an ideal corpus for investigation of metadiscourse analysis. The Economic and Social Council created this corpus in 2007 as a collaborative effort between Universities of Warwick, Reading and Oxford Brookes. It consists of 6,506,995 annotated words that are part of 2761 pieces of high-quality students writing with a range of words varying between 500 to 5000 words. This makes BAWE an ideal corpus to perform studies. Another beneficial aspect of this corpus is that it is open-source and available free of charge to researchers.

Farahani performed a detailed analysis of metadiscourse on academic English texts based on investigation of British Academy of Written English, which is relevant for this thesis (Farahani, 2019). As correctly mentioned by this author, metadiscourse allows us to analyze genre of the text in question. Farahani refers to Hyland in buttressing the point that metadiscourse features are predominantly text or its genre dependent. In his later work, Hyland further elucidates that this

kind of context-dependency allows writers to respond and create a context in which the language is designed (Hyland, 2019).

An investigation into metadiscourse and its nature is versatile.

Metadiscourse, on the other hand, seeks to offer a more comprehensive way of examining interaction in academic argument, broadening the scope of interactional resources to also include features such as conjunctions, framing devices, and glosses on content. While these are often considered as simply helping to tie texts together, they have an important role in relating a text to a community. (Hyland, 2009:182)

Some studies perform experiments that observe the usage of metadiscourse in enhancing the quality of student writing (Cheng & Steffensen, 1996). Other studies look at the speaking ability of students (Kong & Xin, 2009). Some studies also look at students' listening and reading abilities (Flowerdew & Tauroza, 1995). Other types of studies perform a comparative analysis of metadiscourse features across genres (Crismore, Markkanen, & Steffensen, 1993) or between native and non-native speakers (Abdollahzadeh, 2003). Hence, metadiscourse analysis is an extremely critical parameter concerning corpora based linguistic studies. The distribution pattern of the metadiscourse markers in the corpus under scrutiny needs to be assessed both from an interactive and interactional perspective (Farahani, 2019).

Apart from the features mentioned in the previous section, few other details need to be kept in mind while selecting or designing a corpus. These are balance and representativeness in the corpus. This is ensured when various subcategories of the corpus are present (Zanettin, 2016). It is a proven hypothesis that bigger the size of the corpus, the better will be the result of the metadiscourse analysis. Quantitative aspects form the core philosophy of corpus-based studies, and the texts of the corpus should be accumulated with the specific endpoint in mind (Zanettin, 2016).

Metadiscourse is often divided into two models in academic research. The first is the reflexive model, which focuses on the structure of the narrative in the text. The other approach is integrative or the interactive, which brings the text analysis to an interpersonal level. In this model, the writers' attempt to create a connection with his or her reader is considered (Hyland, 2015). Metadiscourse markers are features that convey the type of interaction between the text, writer, and reader. Hyland has laid out a guideline for the investigation of metadiscourse in an academic text, which is a



corpora component. In this model which he proposed there is a distinction between interactive and interactional resources. In interactive resources, there are categories like frame markers (examples include *finally, to conclude*), evidential (examples include *according to Mr. X*) and transitional metadiscourse markers like *in addition, thus* etc. In case of interactional resources, the categories that are included are hedges ( examples like *might, possible* etc.), boosters (examples include *in fact, It is clear that* ) and engagement markers like *consider, you can see that* etc. Further, Ädel opines that it is necessary for metadiscourse analysis that metatext and writer-reader interactions are distinguished from each other.

Meta-text deals with the nature of the organization of the text and its discourse. The writer-reader interaction is self-explanatory and deals with how the writer and reader interact. Ädel makes a clear distinction in personal metadiscourse and directly refers to the reader or the writer form impersonal metadiscourse, which makes implicit reference to the reader or the writer. Ädel interprets the interaction between the reader and the writer as always personal in nature, while metatext may be both personal and impersonal (Ädel, 2006).

Ädel has done extensive research on the nature of metadiscourse and its nature. Apart from the concepts presented in the previous paragraph, Ädel has done further granular classification and conceptualization of metadiscourse (Ädel & Mauranen, 2010). She further classifies metadiscourse analysis into a narrow and broad approach. The narrow approach confines the analysis of linguistic elements that are used to attain textual function. The researchers who subscribe to this line of investigation believe that the distinction between textual and interpersonal metadiscourse is not adequately delineated, and the boundary is fuzzy in nature (Hyland, 2004). Without proper identification of metadiscursive examples, distinguishing between other kernels does not lead to proper analysis of metadiscourse analysis.

The researchers who believe in this school of thought have also identified another distinguishing feature in metadiscourse, and that is reflexivity of the current text. Reflexivity has been discussed previously and is considered an aspect of the narrow approach to metadiscourse. This narrow approach restricts the concept of metadiscourse, according to Ädel and her cohort (Ädel, 2006). The narrow approach separates the textual aspect from interpersonal functions, which is not appreciated by many. Hence numerous researchers adopt the broad approach to metadiscourse

analysis. There is no agreement on the classification made on subcategories of the broad approach to metadiscourse, and it varies from one researcher to the next.

Among the proponents of the broad approach, Williams was the earliest one (Williams, 1981). He classified metadiscourse into three common categories. These are hedges (an example is *possibly*) and emphatics (example include *certainly*), sequencers (example include *in the next section*) and topicalizers (an example is *with regard to*), narrators and attributors (*according to Mr.X*). Crismore (1983) classified metadiscourse into two general categories. These are informational and attitudinal. The informational category includes goals (an example is *the purpose of this study*), Pre-plans (example include *this chapter is about*), post plans (example are *in the earlier chapter*) and topicalizers (example provided previously). The second category includes saliency (example *even more necessary*), emphatics, hedges and evaluatives (*surprisingly*). These two categories are somewhat similar to textual and interpersonal functions of metadiscourse as discussed previously.

Finally, Vande Kopple classified metadiscourse analysis into seven types (Kopple, 1985). Out of these seven categories, four are textual, and the remaining three are interpersonal. His textual categories include text connectives (*example, however*), code glosses (examples like *that means this*), illocution markers (an example is *to conclude*), and narrators. The interpersonal markers are (these are hedges, emphatics and attributors, an example provided previously), attitude markers (*convincingly*), and commentaries (example *I may not concur with you*). Crismore and Farnsworth extended the scope of metadiscourse even further to include a new category of markers. These are referred to as scientific commentaries. Scientific commentaries consist of textual as well as typographical aspects like quantitative, source (example *Hyman, 2000*), graphics (example *table 4*), captions (example include *figure refers to*), and Latin terminology (example *post scriptum*).

The utilization of metadiscourse analysis has evaluated numerous corpora. Mur-Dueñas investigated the interpersonally driven features in a corpus of 24 research articles in the domain of business management (Mur-Dueñas, 2011). Out of those twenty-four research articles, twelve were in English and were published by scholars who were based out of North American institutes of higher education and published in international journals. The remaining twelve were in Spanish, published by Spanish scholars, and published in national journals. He found a significant difference in the overall occurrence of metadiscourse markers and a significant difference in the

incidence of some subcategories of markers in some sub corpora. Hence, differences in language and culture create a difference in rhetoric choices when research articles are being written.

Similarly, Hu & Cao observed a significant difference in the occurrence of hedges in the abstract published in English medium journals compared to Chinese medium journals (Hu & Cao, 2011). They investigated 649 articles from eight journals related to applied linguistics published in both English and Chinese journals. Hence culture plays a definite role in the choice of metadiscourse markers. Culture is an important parameter during the analysis of a corpus. Besides different language, cultural or disciplinary community, metadiscourse markers are also analysed for different kinds of academic writing like whether these are experimental in nature or academic, or whether these papers put forward an argument (Tarone, 1998).

In academic writing, a succinct presentation of findings and opinions is of vital importance. It reveals how the writer is projecting himself or herself in his or her discourse and presenting their understanding to their target audience (Hyland, 2010). Metadiscourse refers to language markers which a writer uses to organize his or her discourse and how he or she relates to his or her reader. It has been reported by Livingstone, K.A, (Livingstone, 2019) that metadiscourse markers or lexical devices is necessary for effective argument presentation and for creating a cohesive content. It has been reported that both interactive and interactional markers are needed to be properly utilized. However, these lexical devices need to be used in an organized fashion, not in a haphazard way. Instead, the use of these metadiscourse markers needs to be by the applicable rules of communication. These vary according to the standards and protocols of a discipline.

Lack of knowledge regarding these language features or its improper use in the creation of academic content may lead to loss of professional opportunities that may cause a setback for the writers. These need to be avoided and proper and appropriate utilization of the metadiscourse markers need to be implemented. Hence, the lack of familiarity with metadiscourse markers may have an immense effect on the argument being presented in the paper. This usage in turn determines the academic competence of the writer as determined by the intended reader. Hence, the importance of proper implementation of these linguistic features cannot be overemphasized. The quality of information presented is critical to the readability, and eventual effect on the audience and should be treated with extreme caution. This research showed the necessity and importance of metadiscourse markers in academic writing.

According to Cheng and Steffensen, metadiscourse is a construct that is increasingly acquiring importance in composition as well as reading research (Cheng & Steffensen, 1996). Their study aimed first to explore how metadiscourse can enhance the writer's awareness of readers' needs and, second, how the employment of metadiscourse is related to the standard of the texts that students create. In this quasi-experimental study, university-level student writers who are part of the experimental class were taught metadiscourse additionally to a process method. In contrast, those writers who were part of the control class were taught composition through only a process method.

Pre- and post-treatment student papers were analysed to determine whether metadiscourse markers' usage was different and how the interpersonal, textual, and ideational components of the texts within the two groups were affected. The results of indicated that the experimental group benefited from instruction about metadiscourse: Students within the experimental group produced essays that received significantly higher grades than those within the control group. Qualitative in-depth analyses of the experimental students' essays further showed that this improvement may be attributed to the utilization of metadiscourse markers, which made the texts more accommodating toward readers, and to the strengthening of the ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings of the texts. These results suggest that teaching students to use metadiscourse is also crucial to improve their writing skills.

A Study by Mina, G.K. and Biria, R (2017), aimed to explore the difference between articles published in medical and scientific discipline concerning the use of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers as proposed by Hyland (Hyland, 2005), and also the interpersonal taxonomy within the discussion sections of articles written in English by Persian authors in both social and medical science domain. Analysis of the data revealed the answers to the research questions regarding the effect of metadiscourse markers. As per the obtained findings and consequent Chi-square obtained results, in articles written by a native Persian speaker writing in English, the utilization of transitions, frame markers, and evidential, interactive metadiscourse was high in science articles. However, there was no significant difference in applying the endophoric markers and code glosses.

As obtained results showed, the medical science research articles, the authors used hedges, boosters, self-mentions, and interactional metadiscourse markers more. The engagement markers

were utilized in science texts more frequently than life science. There was no significant difference within the case of attitude markers in both corpora. Totally, supported the results, scientific discipline authors applied interactive metadiscourse markers more, but bioscience authors used interactional metadiscourse markers more frequently in their texts. These results were in line with the study results by Firoozian, Khajavy, and Vahidnia (Firoozian, Khajavy, & Vahidnia, 2012).

In both corpora, interactive and interactional features were implemented as shown in this study. Furthermore, it had been against this study, because in both groups, writers used the interactive metadiscourse over the interactional one. However, within the study, interactive metadiscourse markers were employed in scientific disciplines more, and interactional markers were employed in bioscience articles more frequently. This study also was in line with the contrastive study conducted by Abdi (2002), the social sciences, and natural sciences, which were compared in terms of the employment of interpersonal metadiscourse. The results of the analysis showed that science writers employed interpersonal metadiscourse more frequently than science writers. This study is contrary to Zarei and Mansoori's (2011) study in applying interactional and interactive metadiscourse markers. In their study, the applied linguistics writers used both interactive and interactional resources over computer engineering, but during this study, scientific discipline authors used interactive metadiscourse markers more, and life science ones applied interactional markers more frequently. This study was contrary to Abdollahzadeh (2001) that Anglo-Americans used significantly more illocution markers and code glosses than Iranians.

However, this study was contrary to Abdollahzadeh's (2003) study showing that Anglo-Americans used significantly more certainty and attitude markers than Iranians, but no important use for them in two corpora during this study. This study was matched with Faghih and Rahimpour's (2009) contrastive study of metadiscourse markers in applied linguistics research articles in English and Persian written texts by Iranians showed that hedges were the first interactional devices in both groups the identical as this study which showed the numbers of hedges was the very best. The analysis revealed that Iranians had used interactive metadiscourse quite interactional within the English written texts.

Gillaerts and Van de Velde (2010) conducted a study handling interpersonality in research article abstracts; it can be said that research articles abstracts were considered to create more use of boosters and the less use of hedges, which was in contrary to the current study. It displayed the

more use of hedges than boosters and attitude markers. Comparing this study with Mirshamsi and Allami's (2013) study, it had been observed that it had been in line with applying transitions and contrary to attitude markers. The research by Jalilifar and Kabezadeh (2012) was done to analyse variations within the use of textual metadiscourse markers in two significant sections of research articles: introduction and method. It cleared that this study agreed to apply transitions and evidentials, frame markers which were applied frequently during this study, and disagreed in using endophoric markers, which they did not have much significant difference.

This study also concords with the study conducted by Cao and Hu (2015) in applying hedges and boosters and attitude markers. It is believed that metadiscourse plays a key role in producing and constructing persuasive writing supported by people's expectations and norms (Amiryousefi & Eslami Rasekh, 2010; Tuomi, 2009) also considered as a brand new and exciting field of research. Metadiscourse because the linguistic tool is employed to create the texts of the writers or speakers more manifest. Those markers give an idea about the kind of interaction among the writer/speaker with their texts and hearer/ reader simultaneously (Hyland, 2005). This scientific research showed that metadiscourse markers are quite frequent within the science articles compared to bioscience ones.

Moreover, this research demonstrated that transitions and frame markers in science articles and hedges and boosters in life science ones are more abundant than other forms of metadiscourse markers. To conduct any reasonable research project, one may face some limitations and problems. The current study could have reached somewhat different findings if it had not confronted the subsequent limitations. First, the corpus of this study was almost limited. Other studies with larger samples can be applied to be sure about the validity of those findings. Second, during this study, the researchers could not have contact with the writers to work out if their articles were written originally by themselves. Therefore, a comparison of metadiscourse markers in other fields or subfields may be the topic of future research.

It is necessary to understand in detail and further depth the use of metadiscourse concerning linguistic, cognitive, academic, and other related abilities of students. The relationship between language function and metadiscourse also needs to be evaluated and understood. To adequately understand the inherent intricacy and complexity of metadiscourse that constantly interweaves

with the discourse that is under assessment, it is necessary to understand the vital functions of the language under consideration.

Halliday proposed the systemic functional theory of language that distinguished ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions of language (Halliday, 1994). According to Halliday, metadiscourse serves the textual or interpersonal aspects of language, in contrast to the ideation aspect (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999). Halliday has defined textual function as a function that enables the creation of text. It allows the writer or speaker to organize the content of his message in a manner that makes it meaningful and fulfils its purpose of function as a message (Halliday, 1973).

On the other hand, an interpersonal function was postulated as any knowledge that may be realized by the expression of one's personality traits and internal feelings and also different forms of interaction and interplay of different social scenarios with others who participate in the communication. However, Hyland has put a caveat by putting forward his thought on the matter. He opined that metafunctions are not capable of operating autonomously and discreetly, but they are expressed together in every form of utterance (Hyland, 2005).

It has often occurred that writers have conducted discourse on two distinct levels. The primary discourse is initially referred. They are following that the first discourse is embedded within the metadiscourse. Another point of view that was put forward by Dillon was that the use of metadiscourse highlights the act of discourse or the main idea of content (Dillon, 1981). Crismore further illustrates the point by stating that metadiscourse is utilized in any content or discourse where ideas are filtered by the thought about how the readers will perceive the discourse (Crismore, 1985). The different ideas and definitions of metadiscourse lead to the understanding that metadiscourse is discourses about discourses.

Williams described metadiscourse as content or writing that acts as a form of guidance for the reader rather than something that passively informs the reader (Williams J., 1981). This is similar to Halliday's hypothesis, who made a clear differentiation between inter-personal and textual aspects related to metadiscourse in contrast to relational or ideational aspects of the central discourse (Halliday, 1973). The concept of metadiscourse, as mentioned previously, has an interplay between various stakeholders.

There is the influence of the language user, the intended audience, and the socio-pragmatic of the way language is used has been observed to be attractive to young audiences like college students. (Hyland, 2005). It has been observed that metadiscourse enhances the practice of collaborative reasoning. Collaborative reasoning, in turn, leads to intellectual stimulation and personal engagement with the writing and the discourse. (Anderson, 2001). Collaborative thinking with the sublime influence of metadiscourse also encourages young audiences to participate in critical and independent thinking and also encourages them to critically assess peers and ask relevant questions (Chen, 2009). Collaborative reasoning has immense cognitive and social benefits (Reznitskaya, 2008).

Metadiscourse markers have an essential influence on the formation and evolution of the thought process. Reznitskaya (Reznitskaya, 2008) and Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1962) developed a groundbreaking theory that thoughts are not just expressed in words, but they come into existence through the formation of words. This insight shows that discourse and metadiscourse analysis is imperative to understand the thought process in reflective and other forms of creative writing. It has been reported that argumentation is not inherently negative or positive, but a well-formed argument is considered a positive trait. The use of argumentative expression and improved critical thinking judged from the perspective of metanalysis has the potential to understand the development of young readers' cognitive and reasoning abilities (Almasi, 2001). Argumentation allows readers to consider the topics from various angles and leads to an increased effort towards the process of thinking in terms of issue relevance (Petty & Cacioppo, 1979).

Metadiscourse markers are an essential aspect of argumentation. This is an effect of the author arguing an issue from different perspectives and the readers' understanding of the perspective as well as the author's own comprehension of the argument he or she is presenting (Crismore, 1985). Schiffrin described the issue as mutually contradictory evaluations, and explanations lead to a compelling argument, and metatalk and metadiscourse factors form the evaluative aspect in this conversational and interactional paradigm (Schiffrin, 1980). Schiffrin also mentions that metatalk and metadiscourse may serve as an organizational platform where it may act on a referential and informational plane and an evaluative platform where it functions on expressive and symbolic factor (Schiffrin, 1980).



Studies on metadiscourse in academic settings that involve an aspect of critical argumentation have been done at the university level (Bondi, 2005). It has been suggested that metadiscourse has the potential to highlight the potential issues involved with the vents and perspectives raised in the process of argumentation. Bondi puts forward the argument that in dialectical models of argument presentation that try to balance different points of view, metadiscursive practices often enhance the significance and credibility of the problematizing process. In this context, problematizing refers to highlighting the importance and novelty of the issue under discussion.

Metadiscursive practices also do the credibility and enhanced significance by claiming significance related to the claim to debate within the discourse community and the signalling stance done by showing the anomaly in evaluating data results and conclusion. Crismore performed research which revealed that metadiscourse has significant influence and pursues the author's thought process throughout the work under consideration (Crismore, 1989). Crismore also found in this study that metadiscourse also promotes critical thinking in readers as they contrast their opinion with respect to the author's perspective. Both written and oral argumentation is made comprehensive via study and implementation of metadiscourse as it leads to thought mediation in the use of language, which is vital for the development of intellectual prowess in students. This is a critical skill to be acquired in order to develop as a scholar and researcher and, most important a critical thinker. (Vygotsky, 1986).

This thesis takes a comprehensive approach at the concept of metadiscourse. Hence, it is necessary to look at the metadiscourse concept from a socio-linguistic perspective as well. Socio-linguistic variation is an important aspect that explains linguistic variation across genders when determined from the perspective of metadiscourse analysis. Sociolinguists observe that use of vague words is considered to be exponents of power (Channell, 1994). It was observed to be more frequently used by the female gender, who was considered less potent than the male gender in the era before female emancipation.

In the corpus-based study of this aspect, the choice of the corpus selected was COLT; it was observed that there were not many differences in the frequency of use of these words across gender (Stenström, Andersen, & Hasund, 2002). The corpus is extensive and consists of approximately half a million words gathered across London boroughs in 1993. Hence, the hypothesis that the

female gender is somewhat less powerful than male was proved as far as linguistics is concerned via metadiscourse analysis.

This is an important finding where metadiscourse analysis of socio-linguistic factors led to an important finding that affected the removal of gender-based prejudice. However, this does not suggest that there is no difference in the use of vague words across genders. There is a definite trend that shows female gender has a distinct choice of vague words compared to the male gender that depicts a difference in the socio-linguistic parameters. It just shows that there is not much difference in the power equation between genders as far as linguistic assessment is concerned.

From the discussion in the previous paragraphs, it is quite apparent that metadiscourse is an invaluable tool in the study of linguistics as it provides perspective and meaning to research and should be evaluated critically. However, it is necessary to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages associated with metadiscourse. Many research efforts have proved the necessity of metadiscourse analysis when it is effectively utilized. It leads to better and improved coherence and organization of the main discourse.

The three features of coherence are global goal achievement, local coherence, and thematic coherence (Goldman & Murray, 1992). It also leads to improved management of both written and oral discourse (Almasi J. F., 2001). It causes enhanced metacognitive awareness and an enhanced understanding of the content on the part of the readers and greater resourcefulness in order to articulate an opinion or stance (Hyland, 2005). It also leads to a better understanding of the text in question (Britton, 1982).

It advances comprehension and understanding and enhanced the rhetorical power of the argument presented (Reznitskaya, Anderson, McNurlen, Nguyen-Jahiel, Archodidou, & Kim, 2001). It also causes improved signalling of inference, causing moves by structures like if-then and reader engagement tools ineffective argumentation (Latawiec). It improves the rhetorical aspect of the writing under consideration and improves critical thought processes as well as metacognitive controlling reading of the text in question (Crismore, 1989). Hence, the extensive literature on this topic by numerous doyens in linguistics suggests that metadiscourse and its analysis are incredibly critical for the growth of the readers and students.

## 2.4. Establishing the Research Context

It has always been a matter of interest for the students, teachers, and researchers to understand the strategies that constitute good academic writing. The answer to this question has never been simple, theoretically, or empirically. “Specialised written discourse literacy in academic university settings has just started to be explored in most countries. Thus, one way to access written disciplinary genres employed by academia in varying settings is, to begin with, the assumption that all materials read in these contexts reveal relevant data about the means of written communication and knowledge organizations” (Parodi 2010: 65). Parodi emphasizes the need to study academic discourses’ devices with an assumption that they shed light on the way the message is communicated and organized in the writing or all other forms of communication. His study focuses more on genre studies through the study of lexico-grammatical patterns distinct to each genre. Although genre analyses do not fall under the scrutiny of this proposed paper, the ideas on the metadiscourse are borrowed from the research on this field.

This thesis draws inspiration from the research conducted by Bondi, “Small corpora and language variation” in which she examines “small corpora consisting of abstracts and introductory chapters of textbooks” to discuss the examples of the expressions and their usages that “center on the representation of speech and thought in forms of self-projection or other-projection, with a view to dialogic and argumentative features of academic discourse” (Bondi 2001:135). While her analysis moves towards genre analysis based on corpus findings, this thesis attempts classification before analyzing in terms of the concepts of ‘stance’ and ‘voice’. Her study provides the confidence to move in the direction of the research focusing solely on the discourse markers and/or the words signaling the argumentation.

Her study revolves around two modes of expression, first one “denoting the speech event as argumentative (state) and the second one specifically identifying argumentative roles (show)” (Bondi:139). As a matter of fact, “show” is one of the high-frequency keywords in the corpora BAWE that would be one of the words analyzed in this thesis. She shed light on how simple features as keywords, frequency lists, and their distribution can reveal astonishing features of academic writing. The thesis would use make use of the Hyland’s classification scheme instead,

as it has broader and diverse categories suitable to the larger corpora as BAWE as opposed to highly specific and small corpora that Bondi studied.

For Hyland, the concept of metadiscourse “has enormous potential to include features of language which describe not only how we organize our ideas, but also how we relate to our readers or listeners” (Hyland 2005:16) but it has been hitherto “undertheorized” (Hyland 2005: ix). He foregrounds that the “rhetoricians, applied linguists and composition theorists agree on using metadiscourse in a wider sense, to refer to the various linguistic tokens employed to guide or direct a reader through a text, so both the text and the writer’s stance is understood” (Hyland 2005:18). He provides the typology for the classification of such discourse markers, which is discussed briefly in the methodology section. Using this classificatory scheme opens up the possibility of interdisciplinary interpretation of the corpus findings in terms of semantic, pragmatic, cognitive, and social dimensions of academic writing.

However, the chance of the theoretical spectrum being broad is high. This is simply because the discourse markers associated with metalinguistic awareness have a broad meaning and broader implications. Metalinguistic awareness is an “increased awareness of phonemes, syllables, and rhymes, of meaning-bearing morphemes, words, and phrases, of syntax, and of denotations, connotations, and lexical ambiguities, of homonyms, synonyms, and antonyms, of slang, dialect, and jargon, of academic language and figurative devices like metaphor, idioms, and hyperbole, and more” (Sinar 2018:16). This thesis aims to delimit the broader scope, focusing on the lexical aspects that can be aligned as having metadiscursive roles with corpora’s help.

Pustejovsky et.al. ‘s. study shows “how information concerning lexical presuppositions and preference relations can also be acquired from corpora when analyzed with the appropriate semantic tools” (1993:332). Hanks’ (2013: Abstract) work draws from “hundreds of carefully chosen citations from corpora and other texts” where “he shows how matching each use of a word against established contextual patterns plays a large part in determining the meaning of an utterance”- be it in an oral form or written expression. The research context involves questioning how the students make confident decisions about particular choices using transition markers, evidential, and self-mentions among others. However, it cannot be studied simply by the word search using the corpus because the particular word may not function as a discourse marker or contribute accordingly to the sentence.

Furthermore, Pustejovsky et.al's (1993:354) "framework for lexical knowledge suggests that there are richer relationships among words in the text beyond that of simple co-occurrence that can be extracted automatically". These all point towards matured metalinguistic skills but may or may not manifest with such diversity in most writings. This draws from several discrete as well as interrelated theories and methods. All these research and literature discussed in this context provide the insight for narrowing down the queries so that the results would be manageable to examine manually (as the corpus search may include some inappropriate results).

It is also necessary to look at the few drawbacks and disadvantages of metadiscourse analysis. Too much focus on metadiscourse may lead to a loss of focus from the principal issue or the main discourse, which is the writer's aim. It has been suggested that focus on metadiscourse may lead to so-called wordiness or content less discourse and should be avoided, and metadiscourse should be optimum (Williams J., 1981). From the pedagogic point of view, metadiscourse may be a problematic proposition if it needs to be fitted into content-based models of information processing, and hence, it may be challenging to fit into goals to be achieved in a curriculum in a curriculum based on content. This is especially true in the era where no child should be left behind is a guiding philosophy that drives teaching for test preparation, even though this affects literacy (Dressman, 2008) (Edelsky, 2007) (McCarthy, 2002). These disadvantages and drawbacks need to be nullified intelligently and pragmatically.

One approach that may be applied is to shift the focus on beliefs and ideals, goals, and the attitude and the stance of the young writer and the reader. From the rhetorical, socio-pragmatic, and pragma-linguistic perspectives, the writer's manipulation and treatment of their authorial voices as depicted in the metadiscourse analysis, will provide a perspective on the beliefs, ideals, and goals, and the attitude and the stance. According to Hyland, these authorial voices vary according to writers and readers based on needs and the context of language use (Hyland, 2005).

We have discussed Hyland and Ädel's model of metadiscourse in detail. Henceforth, the model proposed by few other linguists will be analysed for appropriate context and understanding of metadiscourse as a concept. Wunderlich's system focuses on verb operators that contain stance related to an attitude which he referred to as positional factors (Wunderlich, 1979). He identified five categories in which writers may express their positions. These are a) epistemic ( example include, *know, think, suspect*) b) doxastic (example *believe*) c) ability or capacity ( examples

include, *can, should be able to, may*) d) motivational ( example *prefer, want, wish*) e) normative ( *have to, must, should* ). He had tremendous influence in this domain of metadiscourse analysis and is the basis of several researcher's works subsequently.

Crismore et al. found evidence of the truth behind his hypothesis and philosophy and observed that attitude markers include in them verbal modals (Crismore, 1985). As Hyland's study is the frame of reference and the main inspiration for this work, it is necessary to consider the work of Vande Kopple's metadiscourse analysis system. Vande Kopple's study acts as the reference for Hyland's subsequent work (Hyland, 2005). Crismore's hypothesis may have fallacies as it is not very clear why textual metadiscourse is divided into textual and interpretive.

The reason for the classification of textual metadiscourse into textual and interpretive aspects is not apparent because the interpretive attempt by the writer exhibits their interpersonal and not textual communication with the reader of the content. This theory does attempt to balance the anomaly by the introduction of the concept referred to as deontic modality. This concept of deontic modality deals expression of obligation, permission, and prohibition in the category of attitudinal metadiscourse. This concept is an innovative approach, as this was not conceptualized previously. However, due to the anomaly mentioned, Vande Kopple's system was far more acceptable and was adopted as a frame of reference by Hyland, as mentioned. Vande Kopples's approach adopts a pragmatic approach towards metadiscourse analysis, apart from the emotionally attitudinal and the rhetorical structural approach (Kopple, 1997). Even though it has been briefly discussed previously, the context demands its more extensive analysis.

His taxonomical classification changed a little bit from his earlier classification (Vande Kopple, 1985). These refined taxonomical subclasses are respectively text connectives, code glosses, illocution-markers, epistemological, modality- and attitude-markers, evidentials, and commentary. In his earlier iteration in the place of epistemological markers that covered evidential and modality markers, he used to describe validity markers and narrators.

The elegance of this model is revealed by the fact that it accounts for several functions of the metadiscourse, which is not exhibited by the models proposed by other investigators. These functions need to be understood and analysed in detail to evaluate the efficacy and elegance of the Vande Kopple model.

The functions of metadiscourse that were accounted by Vande Kopple's model exhibit and elucidated the relationship that exists between different parts of the text via a) text connectives that may be used to define words, phrases or discreet terms by use of b) code glosses that make it clear what action is being performed at specific parts of the text by c) illocution markers that include sub categorical taxonomic classes like boosters and mitigators. This may point towards the epistemological situation of the text in question by d) epistemological markers that cover two sub taxonomical classes, as mentioned previously) modality markers that explain how committed to the truth the reader and the writer are. This is performed using the epistemic system, not the deontic modality that is more concerned with duties and obligations, leading to the formation of attitude that influences subsequent function. The other subclass consists of the evidential.

Vande Kopple adopted this by the influence of Chafe (2001). The evidential exhibit the reason based on which referential material was adopted. This eventually reveals the attitude or the emotional state of the authors with respect to the referential materials which may be assessed due to e) attitude markers which provide an assessment or commentary, directive or imperative that may be performed by addressing the readers directly by use of f) a commentary that may be in the form of readers' possible mood or feelings, views, and attitudes or the writer may wish to have just a conversation with his or her readers. These are the features of Vande Kopple's model that elegantly display the interrelation between different parts of the text.

The entire effort of this scholarly work is to exhibit that writing is not a simple delivery of information, but it is a social activity that involves engagement with the reader. Vande Kopple has proposed the entire system of metadiscourse as a form of discourse that readers do not just utilize to increase referential material but also allows readers to connect with the content, organize and interpret according to his or her understanding, evaluate and form attitude and opinion towards the content (Kopple, 1985). As mentioned in the previous section, Hyland was heavily influenced by Vande Kopple. Hence, he theorized that metadiscourse might be understood as linguistic expressions that may be considered self-reflective.

The use of metadiscourse markers has been analysed from different perspectives. We have discussed sociolinguistics previously. It has also been analysed with respect to cross linguistics and cross-cultural approaches (Dahl, 2004) (Dafouz-Milne, 2008). It has also been studied with respect to cross-disciplinary (Hyland &Tse, 2004; Lin & Evans, 2012) and across genres (Fu &

Hyland, 2014). Few of these approaches have been discussed previously. However, what has not been discussed was the comparative studies that have been performed in an academic context.

In the academic context, metadiscourse markers have been evaluated both in an individual perspective and comparative approach in research articles published in peer-reviewed journals, published textbooks, and dissertation documents (Hyland K., 1994; Kuhl & Behnam, 2011) (Kawase, 2015). In one of his initial research studies, Hyland looked into the utilization of hedging devices in a series of EAP and ESP textbooks. Later, Kuhl and Behnam investigated the use of metadiscourse in research publications, handbook chapters, chapters, which were part of the textbook and introductory textbooks in the domain of applied linguistics. They found a wide variation in the use of metadiscourse markers. This study has given a clear idea of how writers have used metadiscourse in order to make their content an enriching experience for their readers.

In another study, Fu and Hyland (2014) compared popular science and opinion text to explore the approach writers adopt to engage with their readers. The inference of this study was that despite having similarities with respect to audience and source, authors tend to design their interaction in different manners. A significant observation apparent from these research initiatives was that the use of metadiscourse varies from genres, languages, and disciplines. This investigation leads to the definite conclusion that while designing content, authors implement various metadiscourse markers, which function as social and cultural contexts.

Although discussed in the context of elucidation of some other issues, there is a need to have a proper understanding of the factors that influence the utilization and distribution of metadiscourse markers. The first factor is a genre, as discussed previously in some details. As writing is regarded as a form of engagement, writers attempt to understand their readers' requirements and expectations and try to address those issues. These expectations are a function of the history determined by the previously read texts, and it is a function of specific contexts. To successfully interact with their readers, writers must be sensitive and attentive towards these boundaries of their readers and their contexts. They need to get their job performed through these constraints (Hyland, 2005).

Genres are the forms that have been a convention or actions in contexts that a particular community of readers uses to communicate with each other. This hypothesis was proposed by Swale, who is



considered to be a pioneer of Genre Hypothesis (Swales, 1990). According to Swale, text can be classified according to a genre, a function of the linguistic or rhetorical feature. Text may be distributed into different classes with respect to the different kinds of interaction that takes place with the readers and also the different nature of persuasion as demanded by the writers. As an instance, evidential are used by writers to allow them to create a relationship with his or her earlier work or different work in the same domain. Metadiscourse markers depend on these contexts and may be relevant or necessary in some kinds of texts. These features may be extracted classified appropriately and then taught to students to enhance their skills manifold.

Apart from the genre, another critical factor that affects the use and distribution of metadiscourse markers is community. It is a vital parameter. For Swales, a discourse community is a group that has broadly accepted a set of common public goals and has developed a communication method. The participatory protocol is mostly utilized to give information and feedback, uses and thus have multiple genres, possess unique lexis, and has a minimum requirement of content and discursual knowledge (Swales, 1990) to put it simply it is the intended reader for which the author is preparing his content. It functions like a tribe with its regulations.

### **3. Method and Methodology**

#### **3.1. Research Design**

This thesis focuses on the various expressions that signal the argument or play a linguistic role in the academic discourse. This initiated a survey of various corpus, and finally, British Academic Written English (BAWE) has been chosen, primarily because of its large size (6,968,089 tokens) with “proficient assessed student writing” across “evenly distributed disciplinarily areas” ([www.sketchengine.eu/bawe-corpus/](http://www.sketchengine.eu/bawe-corpus/)). Upon making preliminary keyword searches and examination of specific argumentative vocabularies, it became evident that the corpus would yield satisfactory results or show occasions of usages so the research could proceed towards analyzing and interpreting in light of the theoretical models in the field.

The thesis starts with a summary of the corpus (BAWE) and presents the queries made on it. The primary task here is identifying the keywords and their collocations and a brief survey of the frequency distribution of the metadiscourse markers. Thesaurus, word sketch, and word sketch

difference have been used where comparisons seem relevant. The selection of the keywords to be further analyzed are based on their degree to which they have contributed to the discursive function within the text. The corpus results are then classified according to the “Interpersonal model of metadiscourse” (Hyland 2005: 49). A detailed summary of meta-argumentative expressions is provided, covering the theories on metadiscourse, and venturing into illustration and classification of the results according to the theoretical model.

Various factors are to be considered while relying upon an automatic text analyzer. Thus, this proposed study tries to make clever use of the corpus (BAWE), sketch engine (corpus tool), Text Inspector (Web tool), and manual examination of selected discourse markers both their attributes and function. The selected attributes observed from the corpus are further analyzed according to their functions and/or implications based on Ken Hyland’s Interpersonal model of metadiscourse (Hyland 2005: 49).

**Table 3.1** *An Interpersonal model of metadiscourse*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Interactive</b>	<b>Help to guide the reader through the text</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Transitions	express relations between main clauses	in addition; but; thus; and
Frame markers	refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages	finally; to conclude; my purpose is
Endophoric markers	refer to information in other parts of the text	noted above; see Fig; in section 2
Evidentials	refer to information from other texts	according to X; Z states
Code glosses	elaborate propositional meanings	namely; e.g.; such as; in other words
<b>Interactional</b>	<b>Involve the reader in the text</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Hedges	withhold commitment and open dialogue	might; perhaps; possible; about
Boosters	emphasize certainty or close dialogue	in fact; definitely; it is clear that
Attitude markers	express writer’s attitude to proposition	unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly
Self mentions	explicit reference to author(s)	I; we; my; me; our
Engagement markers	explicitly build relationship with reader	consider; note; you can see that

*Illustration 1 An Interpersonal model of metadiscourse*

For Hyland, Interactive and Interactional categories have their own rhetorical features and “perform specific functions” in both written and oral communication (Hyland 2005: 50). The former dimension “will recover the writer’s preferred interpretations and goals” and “addresses ways of organizing discourse, rather than experience”, whereas the latter dimension “concerns the ways writers conduct interaction by intruding and commenting on their message” and their purpose

is to make their “views explicit” and to allow readers to “respond to the unfolding text” (Hyland 2005: 49). Hyland provides the theoretical framework necessary to bind the corpus results and the insights to interpret their rhetorical significance. This thesis would further uncover the usage patterns associated with the selected discourse markers from each of the Hyland’s category. The theoretical framework of Hyland reiterates the experimental context and vice-versa.

### **3.2. Delimiting the Corpus**

The British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus is used for the analysis of metadiscourse markers. Since the whole corpora cannot be analyzed as it has, in some occasions significant frequency of the words that may or may not function as the discourse markers and in such case, it is difficult to eliminate the instances in which certain words do not function as a discourse marker.

Hence, the sub-corpus has been assembled within BAWE, consisting only of the ‘Proposals’ and ‘Case Study’ submitted by students at the various British Universities. The frequency of the query results hence obtained, is quite manageable for individual discourse markers in question for further analysis. However, if all the discourse markers are to be considered for analysis, it would again be too large to accommodate within this thesis. Hence, only some striking attributes and functions as/of the discourse markers are examined for further analyses according to the theoretical framework drawn primarily from Hyland’s model and typology.

Here is a typical example of how the queries can be limited to specific usage patterns and studied accordingly. The initial search of the discourse markers categorized as evidentials on Hyland’s typology done on the corpus of Proposal and Reports within BAWE shows the following first five results out of the total 12 lemmas. Here, all these lemmas are verbs having a frequency from 10 to 20 per million.

	Lemma	↓ Frequency	Per Million	
1	argue	140	20	---
2	believe	104	15	---
3	cite	95	14	---
4	claim	74	11	---
5	demonstrate	110	16	---

*Illustration 2 Simple Query BAWE*

Further, using the word sketch function in the Sketch engine, for the lemma ‘argue’ as a verb, the following usage pattern is displayed.

argue as verb 140x ...

subject object

usage patterns	modifier	pp_against	pp_about
Sfin ...	soberly ...	assertion ...	inclusion ...
quote ...	persuasively ...	case ...	
passive ...	strongly ...		
np_pp ...	recently ...		
it+ ...	instead ...		
SwH ...	however ...		
VPto ...	therefore ...		
	also ...		

*Illustration 3 Word Sketch Function Sketch Engine*

The word sketch function helps reveal the collocations categorized by grammatical relations. For example, it can show the occasions in which the lemma ‘argue’ comes adjacent to the quoted texts. The following result shows the 5 such occasions and all pertaining to the research reports. The proposals do not have any such usage patterns.

CQL quote + argue 5 (1 per million)

Left context KWIC Right context

Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	Research report	ibility of one group in society to shape society in its entirety, as he	<b>argues</b> "elites have the unique ability to smash one structure and set up a
2	Research report	analytical specificity; instead of using the generic term 'power' he	<b>argues</b> that the 3-D view should be defined as "securing the consent to dc
3	Research report	pivotal predictors of achievement. Brown highlights the predictor,	<b>arguing</b> , "no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out w
4	Research report	nists formed in opposition to Farrakhan's Million Man March. She	<b>argued</b> , "No march, movement or agenda that defines manhood in the na
5	Research report	Chinese language. This view is supported by Selmer (2000) who	<b>argues</b> , "Not being able to interact with the host country nationals in daily

### Illustration 4 Concordance BAWE

The examination of each of these results/concordances and, at times, the context of the writing is necessary to determine if the usage functions as a discourse marker or not. The query results with less frequent occasions and usages are easier to examine manually, but if it is high (50 or more) then, it becomes necessary to get the help. The analysis of the sentence or the context would be done with the help of a tool used to identify metadiscourse markers in the Text Inspector (<https://textinspector.com/>), a professional web tool for analyzing texts. It is also based on metadiscourse markers listed by Hyland in his typology. The meticulous manual examination of the sentences is necessary on some occasions, even after using the text inspector tool. For instance, it can be more reliable in analyzing the evidential than the frame markers (words such as first, second, third, and so on may not necessarily always signal the sequence or stages).

## 3.3 Theoretical Framework

### 3.3.1. Hyland's Interpersonal model of Metadiscourse:

Language is the fundamental tool adopted by human beings to communicate among themselves and to articulate and obtain ideas and thoughts. The main reason for discourse among communicators is to disseminate knowledge, to open a channel of communication with the intended audience and to regulate expression of thoughts and ideas in a systematic manner. Hyland refers to metadiscourse as an interpersonal resource that may be used for organization of discourse as well as the writer's approach towards the reader or the content of his work in a meaningful way.

It is a scientific analysis of dissecting and observing language based on the principle that as language is spoken or written, the speaker or the writer observes and anticipates the possible reaction of the intended recipient, who may be an audience or a reader. Based on the observation

the writer or the speaker arrives at a decision regarding the effect of the content on the listener or reader and based on that assessment language is adjusted and optimized so that the purpose of the writer or the speaker is best achieved. Hence, metadiscourse may be considered to be a form of commentary in a content whether written or oral. apThese commentaries may be in the form of written or spoken words as well as phrases like *in other words, possibly, as an instance*. These are extensively used in discourse analysis and teaching of language. Hence there is a need to study metadiscourse in a scientific manner.

Hyland explains metadiscourse as a method that aims to assess the aspects of interactive nature of communication. However as discussed earlier, the concept is not properly codified and there is a fuzzy nature to it and sometime metadiscourse as a concept means different things to different people and may not mean the same thing as should be if a concept is properly defined. The fundamental principle of metadiscourse revolves around the dictum that metadiscourse is ‘discourse about discourse’. Some language researchers confine this to language markers which allow the text to be organized into text. Other researchers adopt a wider point of view according to which writers and speakers present themselves in their created discourse to display their comprehension about their content and their targeted audience.

The first and the restrictive approach is referred to as the reflexive model. Reflexive model restricts the study of metadiscourse to features of discourse provide an idea of the direction in which the discourse is taking shape, its intent and its underlying structure. The other broader approach is referred to as integrative or interactive model. In this model metadiscourse is represented as a comprehensive set of interpersonal options. This broader understanding of metadiscourse represents the content creator’s rhetorical expression in the text. Metadiscourse is a course of action that aims to lay bare the organization of the discourse and signals the message of the discourse. This broader interactive model encompasses the restrictive reflexive model.

The interactive model takes into account the textual aspects of the reflective model as a component of a more comprehensive effort of the writer or speaker to effectively communicate with the intended audience and arrive at a consensus with respect to ideas and thoughts. Textual components allow communication by providing response to the attitudes of the interlocutor and takes into account difficulties and background information. Textual features which clearly connect ideas that lead to formation of coherence in the message and content by clearly delineating and

depicting the content creator's view of his or her target audiences' need. To put it simply, this model views any metadiscourse as interpersonal in nature and takes into consideration the audiences' experience and knowledge.

This broad view of metadiscourse defines it as a group of features which allows the content creator to interact with his or her text and the content creator and his intended audience. It has been observed that in academic discourses that regardless of the level of experience of the writer, where he or she is novice or expert and language background, interpersonal metadiscourse are deployed with enhanced frequency than textual metadiscourse markers. Hence, Hyland has defined Metadiscourse markers (MDMs) to be "linguistic devices that are used to organize discourse or the writer's stance towards either its content or the reader" (Hyland, 2000: 109). This adequately describes the application of metadiscourse and its utility in assessment of the writer and his interaction with the reader's thoughts and possible reaction and expression.

Hyland's framework of metadiscourse has brought the field of linguistics to a new level of maturity. Earlier views of discourse viewed texts mostly to be propositional and expository in nature and are merely responsible for presentation of content. Metadiscourse adopted an audience responsive approach towards communication taking cognizance of the approach adopted for expression of thoughts and ideas. This approach is even more likely to be successful if the needs and expectations of the interlocutors are taken into consideration as well. It is necessary to observe and appreciate the fact that metadiscourse makes a clear distinction between the propositional context of the created content from the unique way it denotes expression. However, it does not represent different levels of significance or meaning.

The created content may however be reorganized and summarized differently, paraphrased, and restructured. The subject matter may not change much but the meaning conveyed may change considerably due to the treatment mentioned. The reason for this is that the inherent meaning of the content is not restricted to the propositional material of the text in question but includes a comprehensive package. It is the final result of a process that involves multiple layers of interaction between the creator of the content and the receiver of the content in which the writer selects the ideal form of the text and expression which will be the ideal depiction of the writer's content, position and attitude.

Hence, metadiscourse is a form of study that provides an appreciation of the fact that statements of the text do not just have an external orientation to the outside world to the text but simultaneously formulate the reader orientation to the outside through the content itself. Thus, according to Hyland language is not simply utilized to provide information about any topic but this information is also presented in a manner that will make sense to the readers and develop engagement with them.

Metadiscourse as a concept and theoretical framework provides a constructive role to the target audience. It reveals the presence and active participation of the hearer or the reader. It makes an attempt to streamline the receiver's perceived notion of the content by utilizing a wide array of techniques. These techniques include explicit organization of the content, creation of an engagement with the content reader and points towards the writer's approach towards the material of the content and the intended reader. This concept may be described use of an example.

The use of imperatives in the content, pronouns that are deployed in second person and evaluative commentary are some of the techniques that are used by the writer to create a connection and involvement in the content to provide information more efficiently and also to create an engagement model with the consumer of the content as someone who is a fellow participant. Removal of the metadiscourse markers will make the content much less personal which will make the content difficult to understand and will generate much less enthusiasm in the reader.

If the metadiscourse features are carefully observed, we will be able to better appreciate the manner in which writers and speakers assume a stance and align their work with their intended audience in a particular scenario. This approach is at the core of the interpersonal model of Hyland that allows us to better understand the perspective of the writer that will allow him or her to be better appreciative of his or her reader's innate requirement and expectation from the content created by the writer.

In order to better understand the theoretical framework of the interpersonal model proposed by Hyland to describe metadiscourse it is vital to understand the interactive dimension associated with the concept. In this interactive dimension, it is necessary for the writer to accommodate with the use of possible information, interests rhetorical expectations from the content and the capacity to appreciate and understand the concept presented on the part of the participating audience. The



application of interpersonal metadiscourse is increasingly acquiring enhanced importance. Hyland mentioned that students should be imparted instruction regarding use of interpersonal metadiscourse. This underlines the importance of study and understanding of the interpersonal model of metadiscourse analysis.

In own words of Hyland and Tse “all metadiscourse is interpersonal in that it takes account of the reader’s knowledge, textual experiences and processing needs and it provides writers with an armory of rhetorical appeals to achieve this” (Hyland and Tse, 2004: 164). This prompted Hyland to adopt the interpersonal model of metadiscourse which he classified into two broad categories- namely interactive and interpersonal resources.

Hyland was of the opinion the so-called interactive resources function as the guiding principle for the writer to better manage the flow of information in order to definitely establish his preferred interpretation. The interactional model focuses on the participant who may be the reader and these interactional resources allow the author to exhibit his attitude and personal and his or her tenor which is in agreement with regulations of the disciplinary community. These ideas form the theoretical bedrock based on which the interpersonal model of Hyland was designed.

### **3.3.2. Selection of sub-categories for the study**

The logic behind the selection of sub-categories for this thesis corresponds to the necessity to understand the sub-categories of the interpersonal model of metadiscourse, as proposed by Hyland. As mentioned earlier in ‘Chapter 3.2 Delimiting the corpus’, the British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus is used to analyze metadiscourse markers and why the whole corpora cannot be analyzed and the need for assembling sub-corpus. The sub-corpus has been assembled within BAWE, consisting only of the ‘Proposals’ and ‘Case Study’ because the frequency of the query results hence obtained, is quite manageable for individual discourse markers in question for further analysis.

However, if all the discourse markers are considered for analysis, it would again be too large to accommodate this thesis. Hence, only some striking attributes and functions as/of the discourse markers are examined for further analyses according to the theoretical framework drawn primarily from Hyland’s model and typology.

As mentioned previously, Hyland makes a clear distinction between interactive and interactional resources. The interactive features represent the writer's view with respect to the requirement of making it clear what to restrict and guide the idea or message that needs to be conveyed. The interactional resources are concerned with the effort that the writer puts to influence the level of personality that a text may possess. The author aims to create a definite relationship with his or her relevant data. The arguments presented to the audience to determine the level of familiarity. Also, the attitude represented, commitments that need to be communicated, and the level of involvement of the reader are presented. It has been observed that the rhetorical strategies adopted depend on the cultural influence that shapes the writer.

To design the theoretical framework of this thesis work, these two broad features will be further classified and analyzed in detail. The interactive resources discussed in detail include transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidential, and code glosses. The interactional resources include hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagement markers, and finally, self-mentions. These subdivisions of the extensive interactive and interactional resources will be discussed and analyzed in detail furthermore in the results and discussion section.

### **3.3.3. Concept of Stance and Voice**

Stance and voice are regarded as two vital parameters of social interaction in the domain of academic writing. However, the concept is not adequately defined and is regarded as somewhat elusive. "Stance is an attitudinal dimension which includes features which refer to the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgements, opinions and commitments, either intruding to stamp their personal authority onto their arguments or stepping back to disguise their involvement" (Hyland, 2009:182). The linguistic understanding of voice and stance is not adequately investigated. Hyland & Guinda (2012:4) mentioned that "stance is subsumed in the broader phenomenon of voice," the two features are regarded as "a reversible flow of the communal into the personal." These are investigated via the use of numerous linguistic features. Also, the conceptual ambiguity associated with voice and stance leads to a problematic situation for scholars and writers as they grapple with a proper manner in which they can express their opinion in academic writing. However, it is agreed that stance and voice are crucial concepts in academic writing, as viewed from a social interaction perspective.

The stance is an expression of a writers' judgment based on their inherent value and natural emotional expression concerning evidentiality and affect. "Overt stance expressions are rare in academic writing when compared to other genres, and that not enough research has been devoted to the choice of evaluative lexis" (Hyland and Guinda, 2012: 229). Evidentiality is the writers' value judgment or level of knowledge. Affect is regarded as the expression of a wide range of personal attitudes. The stance is an inclusive concept that represents how writers express their authority or point of view. In linguistic terms, the stance may be expressed via the metadiscourse markers associated with hedges' interactional resources. "Stance-taking thus becomes a chief element in the writer's voice, not only as an individual but also from a cultural, domain-related and genre-related standpoint" (Bondi, 2012: 102). However, writers do not create such a stance in isolation or from a wide range of possible scenarios. These stances are drawn from the cultural milieu and environment that aligns with a community or appropriate attitude. Thus, a stance represents a writer's attitude and the community's cultural and social value.

This makes it an important decision for the writer as they decide on the voice they should impart to the stance and position they adopt. Voice is represented by markers that position the subject as an agency. "The multiplicity of textual voices in academic writing also includes the virtual voices of readers. Writers often address potential objections by showing temporary agreement with claims, which are then refuted, or subsequently revised" (Bondi, 2012: 102). Authors are in the habit of changing their voices in order to make their stance credible. Hence, voice is responsible for the agency's management that creates the stance or the origin of propositions in the discourse in a manner that will make the readers associate with the text in familiar terms with plausibility and persuasiveness.

Voice is a manifestation that is expressivist in the form of individualism and an impression that the reader ultimately determines. The voice provided by the creator of the discourse to its stance based on information and wisdom needs to be counterbalanced with respect to the beliefs and desires of the readers. The possible objection, previous knowledge, and rhetorical expectations are also needed to be considered. All the voices in discourse are expressed by the creator of the discourse unless attributed to another person or entity to which the voice is attributed.

Essentially writers must present themselves as competent individuals, expressing a point of view by means of a community recognized textual 'voice' to engage with readers in accepted ways.

So, writers evaluate others' work, appraise their own, critique the literature and present their understandings influenced by the conventions and patterns of the genre they are participating in and the relationships these sanctions. (Hyland, 2012: 135)

Hence, it may be stated with adequate confidence that stance and voice point towards the manifestation of the writers' ideas and expression, authority, including authorial presence, leading to the formation of the writers' impression of themselves, which is also referred to as discourse self.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1. Extraction of Corpus Data**

The sub-corpora within BAWE corpus has been created with the 87,903 tokens and 741,177 words which consists of 10.7 % of the total BAWE corpus. The first task in this study consisted of making preliminary searches of the metadiscourse markers. Total number of metadiscourse markers searched were. All the categories of Hyland's metadiscourse markers have been searched (See Table 1). The simple query in sketch engine within BAWE, using the sub-corpus of proposals and case studies have been categorized in tabular form and each one of them are discussed in association with Hyland's insights.

The total metadiscourse markers searched is 296 which occurred in the sub-corpus of proposals and case study. The total frequency of all metadiscourse markers is 74176. Some of the metadiscourse markers did not yield any results. The total number without search query results is 23. Here, the searched queries have not been analysed manually. This data shows the information from the sub-corpus created within BAWE. Only some of the metadiscourse markers have been selected for further study.

Here, the occurrences of the metadiscourse markers are categorised according to Hyland's interactional and interactive model. They are discussed to some extent in this section as well.

### 4.1.1 Interactional Markers

The total number of interactional metadiscourse markers searched is 138 with the total occurrence of 23617.

Interactional markers:

#### 1. Hedges:

Hedges are metadiscourse markers that represent the writer's unwillingness to represent information that is propositional, in a categorical manner. "Hedges are another keyway of toning down criticisms and reflecting a positive relationship with both reader and the author" (Hyland and Diani, 2009:10). A hedge is used for qualification and is used to lower the tonal stringency of any statement, which is a common aspect of speech. In writing, the use of clauses, adverbials, and similar speech figures is used to reduce the severity of the discourse on the readers. It is a form of mitigation approaches to reduce the severity of the text.

"Hedges therefore imply that a statement is based on the writer's plausible reasoning rather than certain knowledge, indicating the degree of confidence it is prudent to attribute to it" (Hyland, 2005: 52). It has been described as words or phrases that depict that there is a lack of surety on the part of the writer regarding the correctness or completeness of the discourse. Examples of hedges are modular auxiliaries like *might*, *should*, and adverbials *such as*, *probably*, *seem*, *as if*. Boosters are also referred to as validity markers that can be deployed to assess the certainty or absence thereof towards a statement. These are lexical devices used to measure definitiveness or certainty.

In this sub-corpus, the following results have been yielded. The total number of hedges that have been searched is 46 and total frequency of those hedges is 8798. The highest occurring metadiscourse marker is *may* with frequency 1627 but all of them may not function as metadiscursive, in a sense that it may not interact with the author, reader or the text. The usage of *may* could be as propositional, that is, carrying the informational content rather than discursive. Nevertheless, simple search query gives an idea of how frequently such words are used. Some of them have been further selected for closer examination. The least frequent hedges are *probable*, *certain extent*, *apparently*, *certain level*, *not understood*, *certain amount*, *presumably*, *plausible*.

*Table 1 Hedges*

S.No.	Hedges	Frequency
1	May	1627
2	Would	1548
3	Could	954
4	Possible	598
5	Likely	453
6	Suggest	406
7	Indicate	346
8	Might	265
9	Often	258
10	Usually	176
11	Relatively	159
12	Little	146
13	Approximately	142
14	Generally	139
15	Mainly	133
16	Estimate	131
17	Assume	130
18	Seems	129

19	Probably	126
20	Unlikely	95
21	Would not	92
22	Almost	74
23	Appear to be	69
24	Could not	62
24	In general	62
26	Frequently	50
27	Largely	50
28	Perhaps	48
29	Sometimes	47
30	Maybe	41
31	Believed	36
32	Mostly	35
33	<i>Doubt</i>	27
34	Unclear	26
35	Uncertain	26
36	Essentially	19
37	Somewhat	18
38	Suspect	11

39	Probable	10
40	<i>Certain extent</i>	9
41	<i>Apparently</i>	7
42	Certain level	7
43	Not understood	3
44	Certain amount	3
45	<i>Presumably</i>	3
46	Plausible	2
		8798

Note: The italicized metadiscourse markers within the table are selected for further examination.

**2. Engagement Markers**

Engagement markers are metadiscourse markers, which, according to Hyland, are directed towards readers by preferentially focusing the reader’s attention on an issue. It also, in some cases, includes the reader as participants in the discourse by use of the pronoun in the second person, imperatives, question forms, and aside. “Engagement markers are devices that explicitly address readers, either to focus their attention or include them as discourse participants” (Hyland, 2005: 53). Readers are involved in the discourse by utilizing commentaries by passing comments towards the readers’ mental attitude or their idea or view of the text. Commentaries allow the writer to create a closer relationship with the reader. Examples are *you may want to consider that, and you may agree that.*

In this sub-corpus of proposals and case studies, the following results have been yielded with a simple query in sketch engine. The total number of engagement markers that have been searched is 20 and total frequency of those hedges is 4023. The highest occurring metadiscourse marker in



this category is *we* with frequency 907 followed by *your and you* with frequencies 610 and 560 respectively. The least frequent engagement markers are *think about, imagine, recall, and incidentally*.

*Table 2 Engagement markers*

S.No.	Engagement Markers	Frequency
1.	We	907
2.	Your	610
3.	You	560
4.	Consider	559
5.	Our	399
6.	Note	278
7.	Determine	223
8.	Us	206
9.	Assume	130
10.	Notice	73
11.	Let	27
12.	<i>Think about</i>	19
13.	<i>Imagine</i>	16
14.	<i>Recall</i>	12
15.	<i>Incidentally</i>	2
16.	Let us	2
17.	By the way	0
18.	Let's	0
19.	Lets	0
20.	One's	0
		4023

Note: The italicized metadiscourse markers within the table are selected for further examination.

### 3. Attitude markers

Attitude markers are metadiscourse markers that denote the writers' understanding of propositional information depicting emotions like a surprise to an event, an obligation to a cause agreement to an issue, and the importance of an issue. "Attitude markers indicate the writer's affective, rather than epistemic, attitude to propositions" (Hyland, 2005: 53). Examples include *amazingly, to my surprise, I agree*. Attitude markers represent the writer's attitude towards a propositional matter that is being discussed in the discourse. These are linguistic devices that define the writer's nature of evaluation towards propositional information.

*Table 3 Attitude Markers*

S.No.	Attitude markers	Frequency
1.	Important	764
2.	Have to	477
3.	Must	452
4.	Even	273
5.	Interest	237
6.	Prefer	47
7.	Prefer	47
8.	Unfortunately	34
9.	Hopefully	33
10.	<i>Appropriately</i>	26
11.	Correctly	19
12.	Importantly	19
13.	Disagree	12
14.	Pleased	9
15.	Remarkable	9

16.	<i>Fortunately</i>	8
17.	<i>Interestingly</i>	8
18.	Ought	8
19.	Disappointing	7
20.	Unfortunate	7
21.	Surprisingly	6
22.	<i>Understandably</i>	4
23.	Unusually	2
24.	I agree	1
25.	Admittedly	0
26.	Amazingly	0
27.	Curiously	0
		2509

#### 4. Boosters

Boosters are metadiscourse markers that writers use to denote certainty and emphasizes the power of propositions like, in fact, it is quite apparent, absolutely. Hyland mentions that boosters are interactional resources. Boosters are definitive and express certainty. Boosters and hedges form the two most essential features of interactional metadiscourse.

Their use strengthens an argument by emphasizing the mutual experiences needed to draw the same conclusions as the writer. The balance of hedges and boosters in a text thus indicates to what extent the writer is willing to entertain alternatives and so plays an important role in conveying commitment to text content and respect for readers. (Hyland, 2005: 52)

Boosters are a form of communication that either causes a reduction or enhancement of the power of the statement being presented. Through boosters, the writer's level of confidence in the statement being presented is expressed, and the writer's attitude towards the audience is also depicted.

*Table 4 Boosters*

S.No.	Boosters	Frequency
1	Should	1780
2	Show	791
3	Must	452
4	Know	313
5	Determine	223
6	Establish	220
7	Always	146
8	Essential	139
9	Will not	127
10	Clearly	125
11	Demonstrate	108
12	The fact that	97
13	Prove	96
14	Never	83
15	True	78
16	Obvious	68
17	In fact	67

18	Obviously	64
19	Indeed	60
20	Certainly	54
21	Sure	52
22	Definitely	48
23	Actually	47
24	Apparent	28
25	Of course	25
26	It is clear	22
27	Even if	20
28	I believe	19
29	No doubt	13
30	Certain that	10
31	Undoubtedly	10
32	Well known	10
33	By far	7
34	Certainty	2
35	Conclusively	1
36	Doubtless	1
37	It is known that	1

38	Beyond doubt	1
39	Decidedly	0
		5408

## 5. Self-Mention

The final category of interactional metadiscourse markers is the self-mention markers. “Writers cannot avoid projecting an impression of themselves and how they stand in relation to their arguments, their community and their readers” (Hyland, 2005: 53). These denote the authors’ degree of involvement and is represented by the use of pronouns in the first person and possessives. Examples include *I, We, My*.

*Table 5 Self-mention*

S.No.	Self-Mention	Frequency
1.	I	1121
2.	We	907
3.	Our	399
4.	My	335
5.	Me	107
6.	Mine	10
		2879

### 4.1.2 Interactive Markers

The total number of interactive metadiscourse markers searched is 158 with a total occurrence of 50559.

#### 1 Frame markers

Frame markers are considered the boundaries of the discourse or components of schematic text structure that includes features that may be used to denote chronology, annotate phases define the goal of the central discourse, and indicate if there is any proposed change of topic. They are also sometimes referred to as illocution markers and are defined by researchers as metadiscourse markers that are used to explicate the act of discourse undertaken by the writer. These markers make the reader aware of the fact that the writer is aiming to round off. Examples include *in the conclusion, finally, I suggest*.

#### 1.1 Announce Goals

In this sub-corpus of proposals and case studies, the following results have been yielded with a simple query in sketch engine. The total number of frame makers (announce goals) that have been searched is 17 and total frequency of those announce goals is 122. The highest occurring metadiscourse marker in this category is *the aim* with frequency 84 followed by *in this section and I suggest* with frequencies 11 and 8, respectively. The least frequent engagement markers are *I discuss, I intend, in this chapter and I will focus on*.

*Table 6 Announce Goals*

S.No.	Announce goals	Frequency
-------	----------------	-----------

1	<i>The aim</i>	84
2	<i>In this section</i>	11
3	<i>I suggest</i>	8
4	<i>I would like to</i>	6
5	<i>I propose</i>	5
6	I wish	3
7	I discuss	2
8	I intend	1
9	In this chapter	1
10	I will focus on	1
11	My purpose	0
12	We will focus on	0
13	I will emphasise	0
14	We will emphasise	0
15	My goal is	0
16	Here I do this	0
17	Here I will	0
		122

## 1.2 Topic Shifts



In this sub-corpus of proposals and case studies, the following results have been yielded with a simple query in sketch engine. The total number of frame makers (topic shifts) that have been searched is 7 and total frequency of those topic shifts is 747. The highest occurring metadiscourse marker in this category is *well* with frequency 672 followed by *with regard to and in regard to* with frequencies 61 and 10 respectively. The least frequent engagement markers are *to move on and to come back to*.

*Table 7 Topic Shifts*

S.No.	Topic shifts	Frequency
1	Well	672
2	With regard to	61
3	In regard to	10
4	To move on	3
5	To come back to	1
6	To look more closely	0
7	To digress	0
		747

### **1.3. Label Stages**

In this sub-corpus of proposals and case studies, the following results have been yielded with a simple query in sketch engine. The total number of frame maker (label stages) that have been searched is 12 and total frequency of those label stages is 272. The highest occurring metadiscourse marker in this category is *overall* with frequency 178 followed by *so far and in*

*conclusion* with frequencies 22 and 18 respectively. The least frequent engagement markers are *to conclude, all in all, to repeat and in sum*.

*Table 8 Label Stages*

S. No.	Label stages (Frame marker)	Frequency
1	Overall	178
2	So far	22
3	In Conclusion	18
4	Summarise	18
5	To Sum Up	8
6	Summarize	8
7	On the whole	7
8	To Conclude	5
9	All in all	5
10	To repeat	2
11	In Sum	1
12	Thus far	0
		272

#### 1.4. Sequencing

In this sub-corpus of proposals and case studies, the following results have been yielded with a simple query in sketch engine. The total number of frame markers (sequencing) that have been searched is 21 and total frequency of those sequencing is 4023. The highest occurring metadiscourse marker in this category is *two* with frequency 568 followed by *first and three* with frequencies 512 and 372 respectively. The least frequent engagement markers are *thirdly, fifty, to start with and fourthly*.

Table 9 Sequencing

S.No.	Sequencing (Frame marker)	Frequency
1	Two	568
2	First	512
3	Three	372
4	Last	280
5	Second	213
6	Next	208
7	Four	199
8	Five	189
9	Third	91
10	Finally	91
11	<i>Firstly</i>	48

12	<i>Subsequently</i>	40
13	Secondly	34
14	Fourth	24
15	<i>To begin</i>	14
16	Lastly	12
17	Thirdly	10
18	Fifty	5
19	<i>To start with</i>	3
20	Fourthly	1
21	Fifthly	0
		2914

**2. Code Glosses**

Code glosses may be referred to as words that act as signals for readers to understand and internalize the ideational materials’ principles and concepts. Examples of code glosses include words and phrases like, such as, as an instance. Code glosses are interactive resources that reinforce the fact that given information has been reiterated. Code glosses allow the reader of a particular writer to understand and appreciate the intended purpose and meaning of a particular discourse. Faghieh and Rahimpour (2013) explained that code glasses are devices that depict ideational information’s restatements.

In this sub-corpus of proposals and case studies, the following results have been yielded with a simple query in sketch engine. The total number of code glosses that have been searched is 18 and total frequency of those code glosses is 2194. The highest occurring metadiscourse marker in

this category is such as with frequency 816 followed by *e.g and for example* with frequencies 280 and 227 respectively. The least frequent engagement markers are specifically, *defined as, in other words and that is to say*.

*Table 10 Code Glosses*

S.No.	Code glosses	Frequency
1.	Such as	816
2.	e.g.	280
3.	For example	227
4.	That is	186
5.	i.e.	183
6.	<i>This means</i>	72
7.	Called	70
8.	<i>In fact</i>	67
9.	Known as	57
10.	<i>For instance</i>	51
11.	Which means	49
12.	Namely	38
13.	Specifically	37
14.	Defined as	37
15.	In other words	18
16.	<i>That is to say</i>	6
17.	Viz.	0
18.	Put another way	0
		2194

### **3. Endophorics**

These are considered extra features that are salient and present for the readers in understanding the writer's intent. This is performed by referencing other portions of the discourse. Examples

*include, as mentioned previously, see table, as.* Endophoric markers guide the reader to introspect and dive deeper into the discourse to determine the content that is being referred.

In this sub-corpus of proposals and case studies, the following results have been yielded with a simple query in sketch engine. The total number of endophorics that have been searched is 14 and total frequency of those endophorics is 2524. The highest occurring metadiscourse marker in this category is *see* with frequency 869 followed by *figure and example* with frequencies 519 and 314 respectively. The least frequent engagement markers are *fig and chapter*.

Table 11 Endophorics

S.No.	Endophorics	Frequency
1	See	869
2	Figure	519
3	Example	314
4	Table	284
5	Section	230
6	Page	148
7	Noted	69
8	Fig	44
9	Chapter	31
10	<i>Discussed above</i>	7
11	<i>Discussed earlier</i>	4
12	<i>Discussed later</i>	4

13	<i>Discussed below</i>	1
14	Discussed before	0
		2524

**4 Transitions**

Transitions, as defined by Hyland, are a series of devices that are mainly conjunction used to annotate additive, consequential and contrastive steps present in the discourse in contrast to the external environment. Examples of transitions are words and phrases like in *addition to, even more, but, and, then, and the likes*. As transitions are mostly considered to be conjunctions, there is a necessity to evaluate and understand the conjunction. Few transitions like *now, as for, by the way, with reference to*, leads to new levels in the chain of thoughts and introduce new concepts in the discourse. Conjunction, as defined by Halliday, may be considered to be a series of possible features that fall in the domain of elaboration, an extension of the discourse, and embellishment that is represented by the selection of conjunctive adjuncts.

A conjunctive adjunct a group of adverbial, or it may be a prepositional phrase. Also, words like *firstly, secondly*, and similar words are utilized to obtain external temporal. External temporal are sequential relationships that introduce the chain of events mentioned and indicate the trajectory of the argument. It also depicts the connectedness of the components of the text to each other. Transition may be further subdivided into three parts. These are consequences- *then, next*, reminders- *as stated before, as was made apparent*, and finally topicalizers- *with respect to*. Hence transitions are an essential class of interactive resources that is a part of this thesis’s investigative process.

In this sub-corpus of proposals and case studies, the following results have been yielded with a simple query in sketch engine. The total number of transitions that have been searched is 39 and total frequency of those transitions is 37,574. The highest occurring metadiscourse marker in this category is *and* with frequency 25,788 followed by *or and also* with frequencies 2945 and 2032

respectively. The least frequent engagement markers are *as a consequence, likewise, on the contrary and by contrast*.

Table 12 Transitions

S.No.	Transitions	Frequency
1	And	24,788
2	Or	2945
3	Also	2032
4	But	1373
5	However	1115
6	So	850
7	Therefore	686
8	Since	530
9	Because	523
10	Although	470
11	Thus	311
12	While	272
13	Result in	222
14	Though	185
15	Hence	173
16	As a result	130



17	In addition	123
18	Furthermore	110
19	Yet	109
20	Moreover	72
21	Whereas	66
22	Even though	63
23	On the other hand	57
24	Consequently	54
25	Nevertheless	51
26	Leads to	39
27	Similarly	35
28	Accordingly	33
29	Besides	29
30	In contrast	28
31	Equally	27
32	Nonetheless	24
33	<i>So as to</i>	20
34	<i>Thereby</i>	15
35	<i>As a consequence</i>	9
36	<i>Likewise</i>	2

37	On the contrary	2
38	By contrast	1
39	The result is	0
		37,574

**5. Evidentials**

Evidentials are metadiscourse markers that provide an idea about the origin of the information of the discourse that has source outside of the text. They function as referential markers that act as a reference to the origin of the discourse that is present outside of the text. Evidentials are markers that are employed by writers that act as directional features for readers and allow them to understand the intent of the writer. Evidential metadiscourse markers function as interlink between a writer’s statements with those of the statements of other writers. This creates a form of intertextuality that allows writers to establish their reputation as it depicts the fact the discourse that is created by the writer aligns with the more significant field of knowledge that exists outside the realm of the present discourse. Therefore, academic content possesses concepts and ideas of other discourses apart from the current text under consideration. “The texts they produce while conducting these activities reflect this concern with evaluation and its expression pervades research articles, lectures, conference presentations, textbooks and student assignments” (Hyland and Diani, 2009: 1). These are considered to be metalinguistic and/or metadiscursive representations corresponding to the ideas from other sources.

In this sub-corpus of proposals and case studies, the following results have been yielded with a simple query in sketch engine. The total number of evidentials that have been searched is 29 and total frequency of those evidentials is 4212. The highest occurring metadiscourse marker in this category is *research* with frequency 897 followed by *show and suggest* with frequencies 791 and 406 respectively. The least frequent engagement markers are *proves, points out, points to and cites*.

Table 13 Evidentials

S.No.	Evidentials	Frequency
1.	Research	897
2.	Show	791
3.	Suggest	406
4.	According to	314
5.	Shows	290
6.	Studies	185
7.	Believe	152
8.	Established	145
9.	Suggests	115
10.	Demonstrate	108
11.	Cite	101
12.	Prove	96
13.	Said	94
14.	Argue	84
15.	found that	62
16.	Claim	57
17.	Literature	55
18.	Believes	37
19.	Point out	36
20.	Claims	31
21.	Says	30
22.	Argues	29
23.	Demonstrates	25
24.	Quote	23
25.	Point to	19
26.	Proves	12
27.	Points out	8

28.	Points to	6
29.	Cites	4
		4212

#### 4.2 Findings and Presentation of Selected Metadiscourse Markers and Their Distribution

In this section, the metadiscourse markers from each categories are selected for further study. Using the concordance function of the sketchengine, the distribution of the metadiscourse markers have been extracted and categorized on the basis of how words function: meta-discursive or propositional. The distribution has been manually read and classified. Here, simple query frequency is the number of occurrences of the word in the chosen sub-corpora. Frequency per million gives an idea of how frequently or how rarely they have been used by the students. The most important decision was to categorize the usage of the selected markers reading the sentences and context of the usage. The actual frequency as the meta-discursive function refers to those occurrences in which the voice and stance of the author can be realized clearly. While the propositional function is simply functioning within the content and the author's voice or stance is silent or latent.

#### Selected Announce Goals and Their Distribution

*Table 14 Selected Announce Goals and Their Distribution*

S. No.	Announce goals	Simple Query Frequency	Frequency per million	Actual Frequency as Metadiscursive Function	Frequency as Propositional function	Frequency in Proposals	Frequency in Case Study

1	<i>The aim</i>	84	94.6	31	53	15	16
2	<i>In this section</i>	11	12.39	11	0	1	11
3	<i>I suggest</i>	8	9.01	8	0	1	7
4	<i>I would like to</i>	6	6.76	4	2	1	3
5	<i>I propose</i>	5	5.63	5	0	1	4

Five of the metadiscourse markers have been selected for further study. These are the highest frequency markers found in the sub-corpus of proposals and case study.

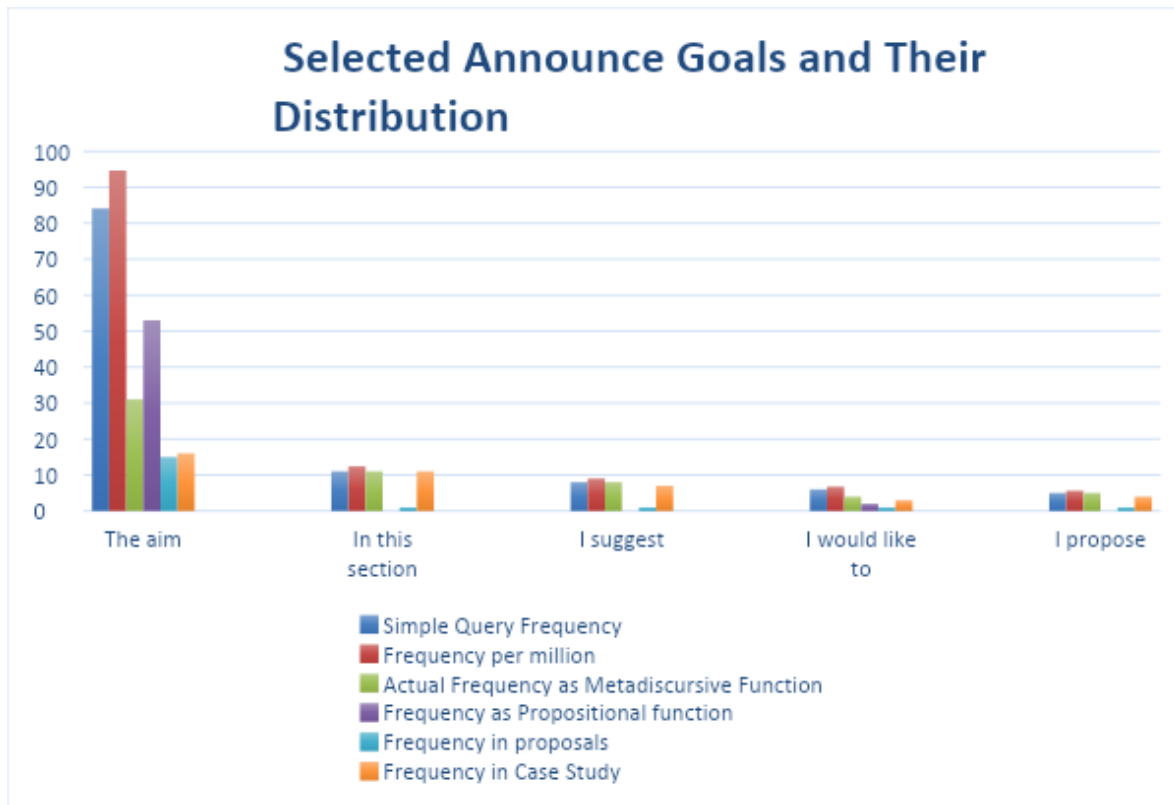


Figure 1 Selected Announce Goals and Their Distribution

### Selected Topic Shifts and Their Distribution

Table 15 Selected Topic Shifts and Their Distribution

S. No	Topic shifts	Simple Query	Frequenc y per million	Actual Frequency as	Frequency as	Frequenc y in	Frequenc y in Case Study
.							

		Frequency		Metadiscourse Markers	propositional function	Proposals	
1	<i>with regard to</i>	61	68.7	7	54	0	7
2	<i>in regard to</i>	10	11.26	0	10	0	0
3	<i>To move on</i>	3	3.38	0	3	0	0
4	<i>to come back to</i>	1	1.13	0	1	0	0

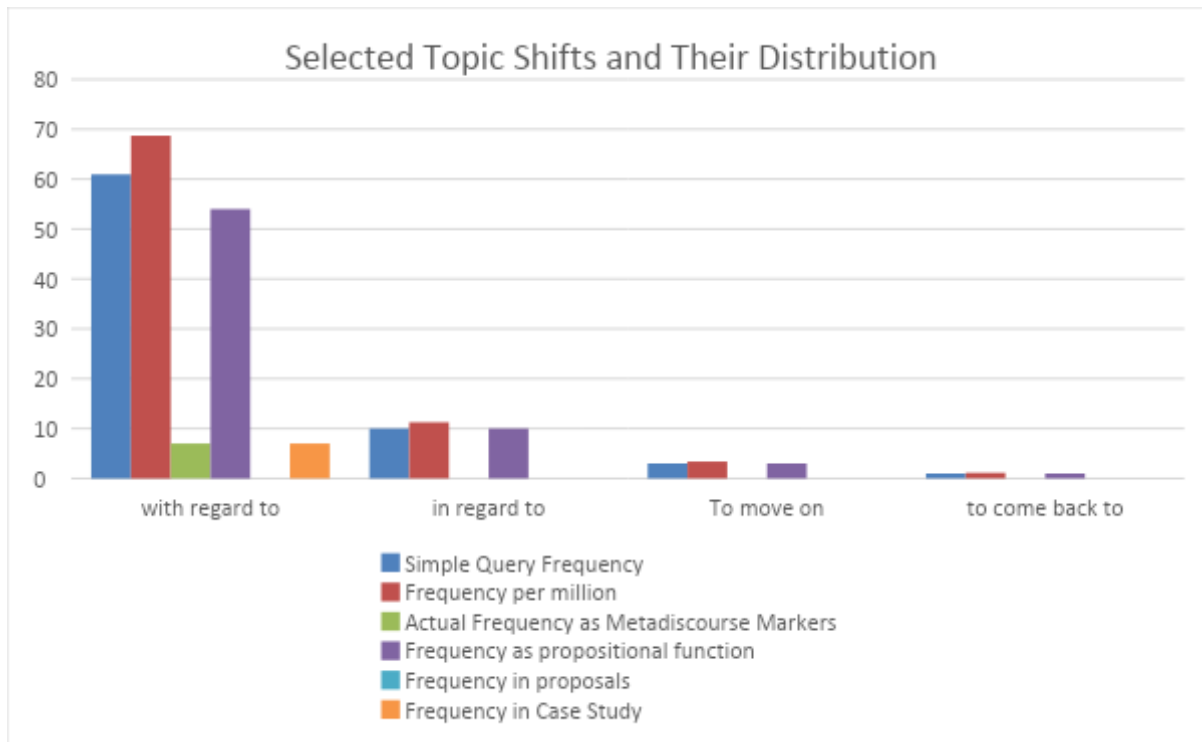


Figure 2 Selected Topic Shifts and Their Distribution

## Selected Label Stages and Their Distribution

Table 16 Selected Label Stages and Their Distribution

Label stages (Frame marker)	Simple Query Frequency	Frequency per million	Actual Frequency as Metadiscourse Markers	Frequency as propositional function	Frequency in Proposals	Frequency in Case Study
<i>In Conclusion</i>	18	20.27	18	0	0	18
<i>Summarise</i>	18	20.27	18	0	3	15
<i>To Sum Up</i>	8	9.01	8	0	3	5



<i>To</i>	5	5.63	4	1	2	2
<i>Conclude</i>						

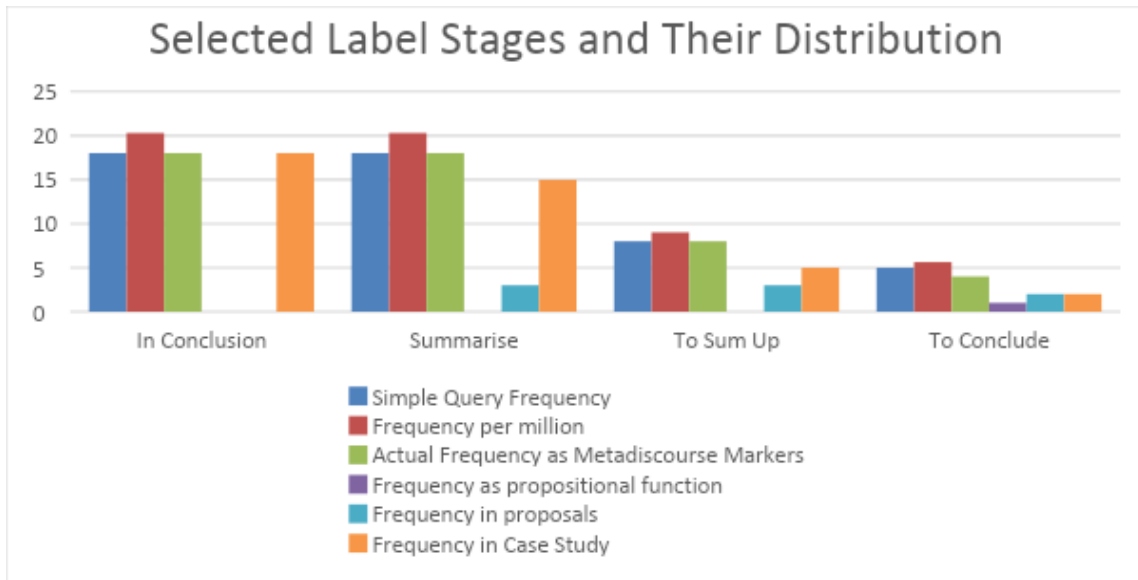


Figure 3 Selected Label Stages and Their Distribution

## Selected Sequencing and Their Distribution

Table 17 Selected Sequencing and Their Distribution

Sequencing (Frame marker)	Simple Query Frequency	Frequency per million	Actual Frequency as Metadiscourse Markers	Frequency as propositional function	Frequency in Proposals	Frequency in Case Study
<i>Firstly</i>	48	54.06	41	7	13	28
<i>Subsequently</i>	40	45.05	9	3	6	6
<i>To begin</i>	6	6.76	5	1	0	5
<i>To start with</i>	3	3.38	1	2	1	0

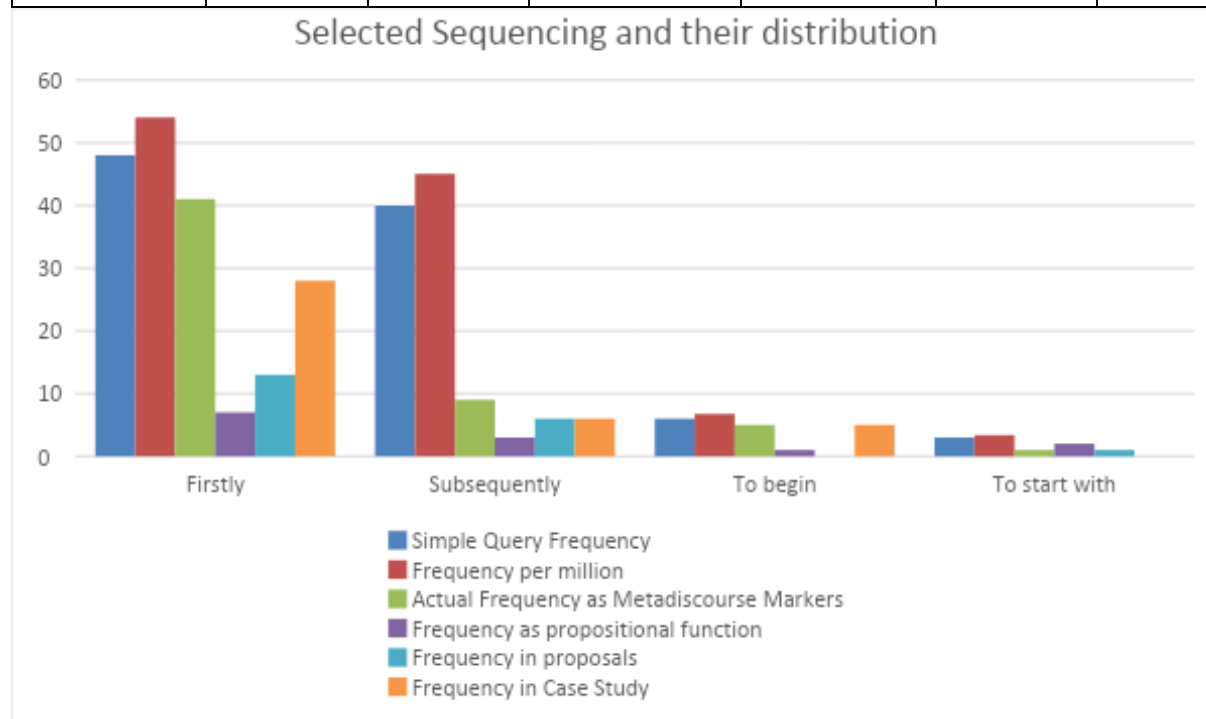


Figure 4 Selected Sequencing and Their Distribution

## Selected Code Glosses and Their Distribution

Table 18 Selected Code Glosses and Their Distribution

Code glosses	Simple Query Frequency	Frequency per million	Actual Frequency as Metadiscourse Markers	Frequency as propositional function	Frequency in Proposals	Frequency in Case Study
<i>This means</i>	72	51.81	66	6	15	46
<i>In fact</i>	67	75.46	56	11	5	51
<i>For instance</i>	51	57.44	57.44	0	5	46
<i>That is to say</i>	6	6.76	6	0	0	6

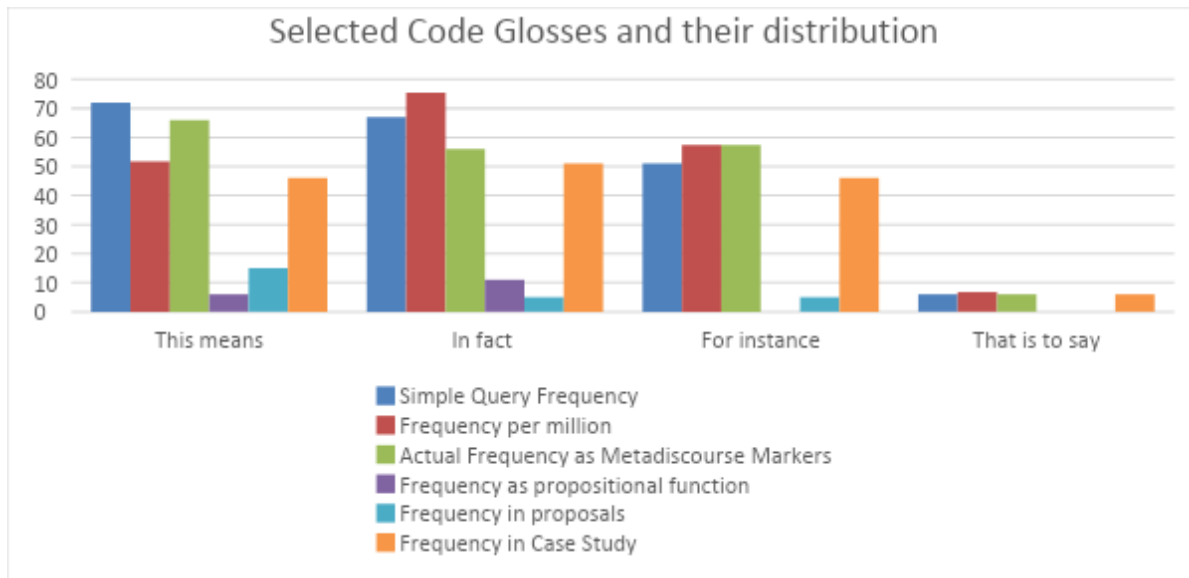


Figure 5 Selected Code Glosses and Their Distribution

### Selected Emphatics and Their Distribution

Table 19 Selected Emphatics and Their Distribution

Emphatics (Boosters)	Simple Query Frequency	Frequency per million	Actual Frequency as Metadiscourse Markers	Frequency as propositional function	Frequency in Proposals	Frequency in Case Study
<i>It is clear</i>	22	24.78	13	9	3	10
<i>Even if</i>	20	22.52	6	14	0	6
<i>I believe</i>	19	21.4	19	0	0	0
<i>By far</i>	7	7.88	7	0	0	7

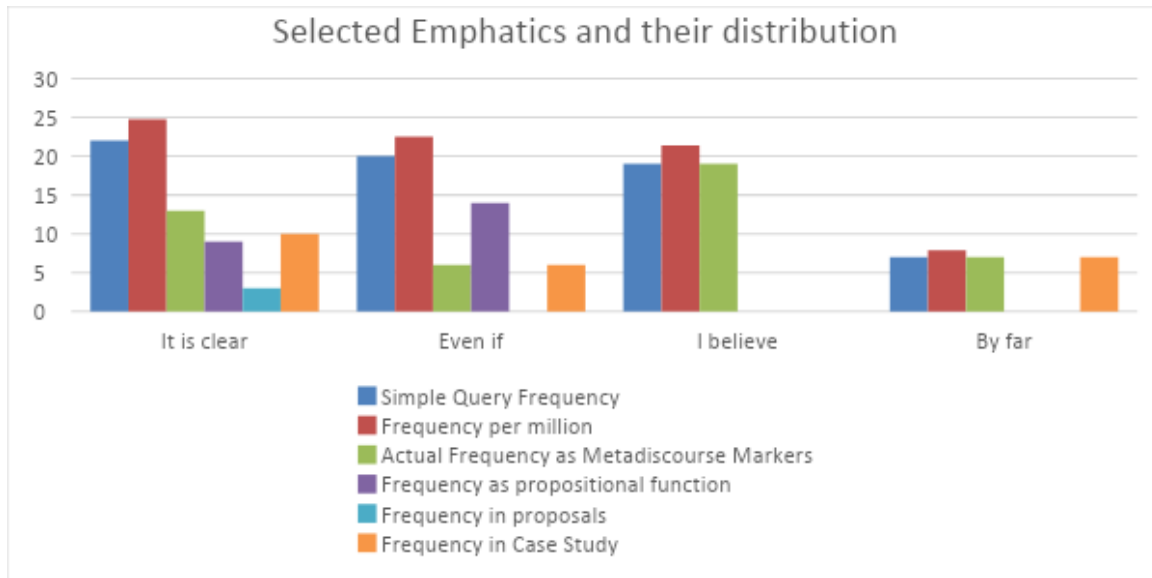


Figure 6 Selected Emphatics and Their Distribution

## Selected Evidentials and Their Distribution

Table 20 Selected Evidentials and Their Distribution

Evidentials	Simple Query Frequency	Frequency per million	Actual Frequency as Metadiscourse Markers	Frequency as propositional function	Frequency in Proposals	Frequency in Case Study
<i>Demonstrate</i>	108	121.63	39	69	18	21
<i>Argue</i>	84	94.6	83	1	36	47
<i>Argues</i>	29	32.66	29	0	24	5
<i>Demonstrates</i>	25	28.16	6	19	1	5
<i>Quote</i>	23	25.9	7	16	1	6
<i>Proves</i>	12	13.51	1	11	0	1

<i>Cites</i>	4	4.5	0	4	0	0
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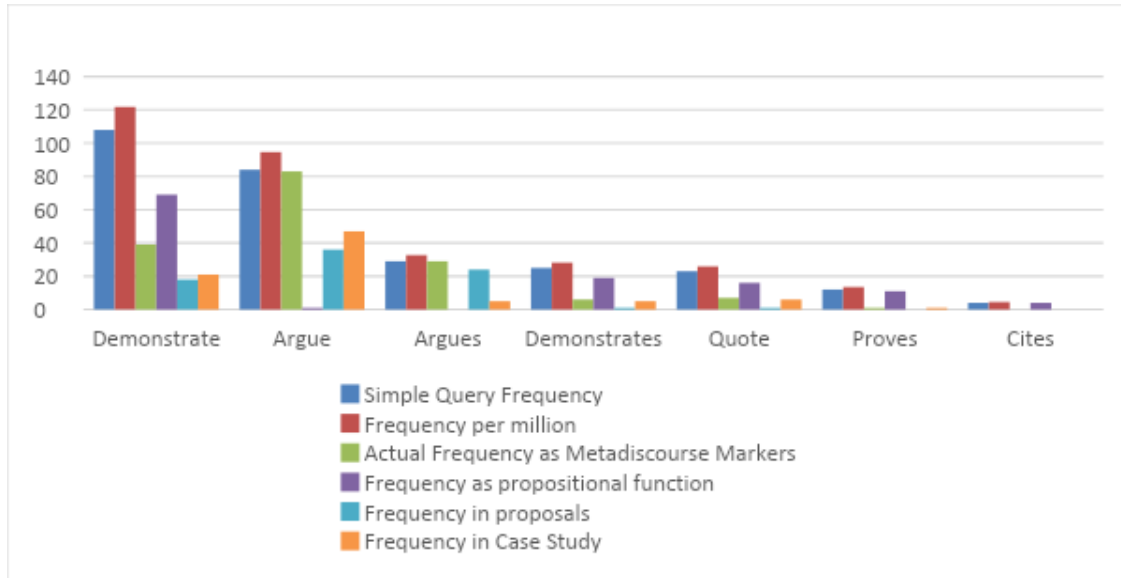


Figure 7 Selected Evidentials and Their Distribution

### Selected Self-Mentions and Their Distribution

Table 21 Selected Self-Mentions and Their Distribution

Self-Mentions	Simple Query Frequency	Frequency per million	Actual Frequency as Metadiscourse Markers	Frequency as propositional function	Frequency in Proposals	Frequency in Case Study
<i>Mine</i>	10	11.26	1	9	1	0

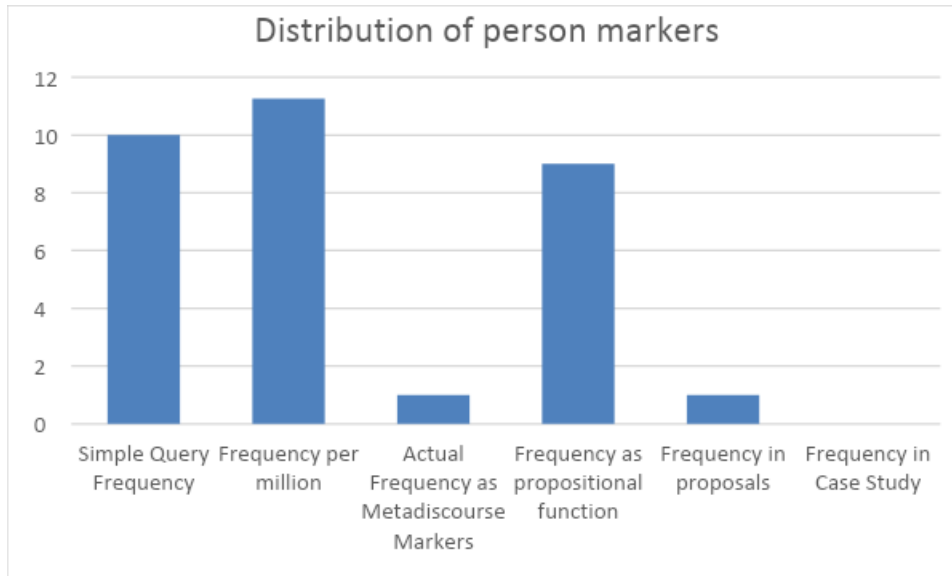


Figure 8 Selected Self-Mentions and Their Distribution

## 5. Discussion

Language is the fundamental tool adopted by human beings to communicate and articulate and obtain ideas and thoughts. The main reason for discourse among communicators is to disseminate knowledge, open a channel of communication with the intended audience, and systematically regulate thoughts and ideas. Hyland refers to metadiscourse as an interpersonal resource that may be used for the organization of discourse and the writer's approach towards the reader or the content of his work in a meaningful way. It is a scientific analysis of dissecting and observing language based on the principle that as language is spoken or written, the speaker or the writer observes and anticipates the intended recipient's possible reaction, who may be an audience or a reader.

It turns out, in fact, that engineers show, philosophers argue, biologists find and linguists suggest. These preferences reflect broad disciplinary purposes. So, the soft fields largely use verbs which refer to writing activities, like discuss, hypothesize, suggest, argue. These involve the expression of arguments and allow writers to discursively explore issues while carrying a more evaluative element in reporting others' work. Engineers and scientists, in contrast, prefer verbs which point to the research itself like observe, discover, show, analyse and calculate, which represent real world actions. This helps scientists represent knowledge as proceeding from impersonal lab

activities rather than from the interpretations of researchers.  
(Hyland, 2009:183)

Based on the observation, the writer or the speaker arrives at a decision regarding the effect of the content on the listener or reader, and based on that assessment, language is adjusted and optimized so that the purpose of the writer or the speaker is best achieved. Hence, metadiscourse may be considered a form of commentary in a content that has been included while the content is being spoken or written. These commentaries may be in the form of written or spoken words and phrases like, in other words, possibly, as an instance. These are extensively used in discourse analysis and teaching of language. Hence there is a need to study metadiscourse scientifically.

Hyland explains metadiscourse as a method that aims to assess the aspects of the interactive nature of communication. However, as discussed earlier, the concept is not correctly codified, and there is a fuzzy nature to it, and sometimes, metadiscourse as a concept means different things to different people and may not mean the same thing as should be if a concept is adequately defined. The fundamental principle of metadiscourse revolves around the dictum that metadiscourse is ‘discourse about discourse.’ Some language researchers confine this to language markers, which allow the text to be organized into text. Other researchers adopt a broader point of view according to which writers and speakers present themselves in their created discourse to display the comprehension of their content and target audience.

The first and restrictive approach is referred to as the reflexive model. The reflexive model restricts the study of metadiscourse to features of discourse provides an idea of the direction in which the discourse is taking shape, its intent, and its underlying structure.

The other, broader approach is referred to as an integrative or interactive model. In this model, metadiscourse is represented as a comprehensive set of interpersonal options. This broader understanding of metadiscourse represents the content creator’s rhetorical expression in the text. Metadiscourse is a course of action that aims to lay bare the organization of the discourse and signals the message of the discourse. This broader interactive model encompasses the restrictive reflexive model.



The interactive model considers the textual aspects of the reflective model as a component of a more comprehensive effort of the writer or speaker to effectively communicate with the intended audience and arrive at a consensus with respect to ideas and thoughts. Textual components allow communication by responding to the interlocutor's attitudes and takes into account difficulties and background information. Textual features that connect ideas and lead to the formation of coherence in the message and content by clearly delineating and depicting the content creator's view of his or her target audiences' needs. To put it simply, this model views any metadiscourse as interpersonal and considers the audiences' experience and knowledge.

This broad view of metadiscourse defines it as a group of features that allows the content creator to interact with his or her text and the content creator and his intended audience. It has been observed that in academic discourses that regardless of the writer's level of experience, where he or she is novice or expert and language background, interpersonal metadiscourse is deployed with enhanced frequency than textual metadiscourse markers. Hence, Hyland has defined Metadiscourse Markers (MDMs) to be "linguistic devices that are used to organize discourse or the writer's stance towards either its content or the reader" (Hyland, 2000: 109). This idea adequately describes the application of metadiscourse and its utility in assessing the writer and his interaction with the reader's thoughts and possible reactions and expressions.

Hyland's framework of metadiscourse has brought the field of linguistics to a new level of maturity. Earlier views of discourse viewed texts mostly to be propositional and expository and are merely responsible for the presentation of content. Metadiscourse adopted an audience responsive approach towards communication taking cognizance of the approach adopted for expression of thoughts and ideas. This approach is even more likely to be successful if the interlocutors' needs and expectations are taken into consideration.

It is necessary to observe and appreciate that metadiscourse makes a clear distinction between the propositional context of the created content from the unique way it denotes expression. However, it does not represent different levels of significance or meaning. The created content may, however, be reorganized and summarized differently, paraphrased, and restructured. The subject matter may not change much, but the meaning conveyed may change considerably due to the treatment mentioned. The reason for this is that the inherent meaning of the content is not restricted to the text's propositional material in question but includes a comprehensive package.

It is the final result of a process that involves multiple layers of interaction between the creator of the content and the receiver of the content in which the writer selects the ideal form of the text and expression, which will be the ideal depiction of the writer's content, position, and attitude. Hence, metadiscourse is a form of study that provides an appreciation of the fact that statements of the text do not just have an external orientation to the outside world to the text but simultaneously formulate the reader orientation to the outside through the content itself. Thus, according to Hyland, language is not merely utilized to provide information about any topic but also presented in a manner that will make sense to the readers and develop engagement with readers.

The use of imperatives in the content, pronouns that are deployed in the second person, and evaluative commentary are some of the writer's techniques to create a connection and involvement in the content. This is to provide information more efficiently and to create an engagement model with the consumer of the content as someone who is a fellow participant. Removal of the metadiscourse markers will make the content much less personal, making the content difficult to understand and generating much less enthusiasm in the reader.

To better understand the theoretical framework of the interpersonal model proposed by Hyland to describe metadiscourse, it is vital to understand the interactive dimension associated with the concept. In this interactive dimension, the writer must accommodate the use of possible information, interest rhetorical expectations from the content, and the capacity to appreciate and understand the concept presented on the part of the participating audience. The application of interpersonal metadiscourse is increasingly acquiring enhanced importance. Hyland mentioned that students should be imparted instruction regarding the use of interpersonal metadiscourse.

The expression of personal opinions and assessments is a ubiquitous feature of human interaction and, despite its apparently impersonal facade, central to academic writing. It could be argued, in fact, that among all the activities of the academy, what academics mainly do is evaluate. Their research and publishing is a continual round of comparing methods, assessing sources, weighing up outcomes, contrasting claims and considering data. They are constantly making judgements about whether samples are representative, findings are accurate and interpretations valid. (Hyland and Diani, 2009: 1)

This insight underlines the importance of study and understanding of the interpersonal model of metadiscourse analysis.

In Hyland and Tse's own words, "all metadiscourse is interpersonal in that it takes account of the reader's knowledge, textual experiences and processing needs and it provides writers with an armory of rhetorical appeals to achieve this" (Hyland and Tse, 2004: 164). This discourse prompted Hyland to adopt the interpersonal model of metadiscourse, which he classified into two broad categories- namely interactive and interpersonal resources. Hyland believed the so-called interactive resources function as the guiding principle for the writer to better manage the flow of information to establish his preferred interpretation.

The interactional model focuses on the participant who may be the reader, and these interactional resources allow the author to exhibit his attitude and personality and his or her tenor, which is in agreement with the disciplinary community's regulations. These ideas form the theoretical bedrock based on which the interpersonal model of Hyland was designed.

### **5.1 Dominant Features and Discussion of Selected Usages**

The five of the metadiscourse markers (announce goals) have been selected for examination. It shows that *the aim* has occurs more frequently than others. The sub-corpus (proposals and case study within BAWE) has 84 results in simple query search but on closer examination of each shows that almost two-third of them have been used more in the propositional manner than metadiscursive.

While the other announce goal (makers) like *in this section*, *I suggest*, *I would like to*, *I propose* have lower frequencies but mostly they function as metadiscursive markers. This is simply because these phrases are referential often attributing to the author or the text explicitly. The first-person pronoun (I) mostly tend to refer to the author and the phrase *in this section* clearly refers to the text itself. *The aim* is evenly distributed among the proposals and case study while the other announce goals occur mostly in case study. (Refer Table 14, Figure 1)

Here are some of the examples of the usage of *the aim* from the BAWE sub-corpus created for this thesis.

*The aim* of this project is to predict and design molecules which can selectively block certain domains then studying inter-pathway TCS systems will be possible. (Proposals)

In this example, it is apparent that the student is clearly expressing the aim of the project to the reader of the proposal (possibly to his supervisor). The usage is metadiscursive as the student-writer is trying to convey the aim of the project that he is proposing. Such usages are dominant in proposals and case studies primarily because it is expected from the students that they write their aim or goal for conducting research explicitly. It is essential to announce the writer's goals clearly.

In line with this we will seek to make a clear statement of the Aim, Objectives and Scope of the project. (Case Study)

The above example it can be seen the usage of *the Aim* functions as the heading for the content of the case study. In this example, *the Aim* comes as an intra-textual reference and thus has metadiscursive function.

The aim of the present study is to investigate the perception and implementation of nationalistic education since 1997 among Hong Kong secondary schools, in the hope of suggesting the direction of nationalistic education in the future. (Case Study)

In above example, *the aim* of the study is made explicit and functions as metadiscursive. However, the example below can be considered more propositional than discursive. The following example is propositional because *the aim* refers to some clinical procedure rather than the authorial voice or stance.

The aim of intervention is to: minimise or eliminate symptoms maximise lung function, prevent exacerbations minimise the need for medication facilitate self-management of asthma ... (Case Study)

Similarly, the four of the metadiscourse markers (topic shifts) have been selected for examination. It shows that *with regard to* occurs more frequently than others. The sub-corpus (proposals and case study within BAWE) has 61 results in simple query search but on closer examination of each shows that only 7 of them function as the actual metadiscourse markers while rest of others (54) function in the propositional manner. All that function as metadiscourse markers occur in case studies. Also, the remaining other metadiscourse markers *in regard to*, *to move on*, *to come back to* all occur as propositional. (Refer Table 15, Figure 2)

Some of the examples of the usage of *with regard to* are discussed briefly below.

The serial approach of only starting an activity once the preceding one has ended is both unnecessary and highly inefficient with regards to this project. (Case Study)

The above example is one of the example with metadiscursive function where *with regards to* is used in the context of the project and the authorial position can be realized in the context. However, the examples given below are all propositional in manner since, the usage of the words tend to contribute more to the content of the text than the discourse outside it.

Mr should be advised *with regard to* his blood glucose control once he is at home.

Explanation to the patient how his drinking leads to these symptoms and what will happen *with regards to* his health should he continue to drink.

The HSE inspects and informs farmers *in regard to* health and safety within agriculture.

The internal labour market but may be separated into management and operative stage owing to the hierarchal structure in France where it is nearly impossible *to move on* to a higher level (Trouvé 1994).

Considering the last example, *to move on* can be considered if the author is navigating the readers through his ideas or the sections of writings itself but in this context *to move on* is simply the mobility from one level to another in the most literal sense.

Moreover, the four of the metadiscourse markers (label stages) have been selected for inspection. It shows that *in conclusion* occurs more frequently than others. The sub-corpus (proposals and case study within BAWE) has 18 results in simple query search and all of them function as the

actual metadiscourse markers. These label stages have been mostly found in case studies. (Refer Table 16, Figure 3)

Some of the usage of the examples of label stages are discussed below. They also function in the metadiscursive manner. The use of such kinds of conclusive words are appreciated and the lack of them in academic writing is frowned upon. The examples of use of *in conclusion* shows that in both of these either the report or the author himself is introduced to the reader clearly. The example of the usage of *To sum up* does not have author explicit in the sentence but it can be realized that the author has incorporated the opinions of contesting academic theories. (Refer Table 17, Figure 4)

*In conclusion* the financial report did contain useful information about the future of the PLC; The acquisition of SAS has made an immediate impact with "sales 40% higher" in the automotive sector in the first half of the year.

*In conclusion* I have found, whilst looking at health promotion services for breastfeeding, many options are an excellent source of support for women like Jane.

*To sum up* opinions about the value of these two theories differ among academics.

(Case Studies)

Out of the four frame markers investigated, it shows that *firstly* is the most occurring word with 41 instances as metadiscourse markers and 7 occurrences as propositional within the sub-corpus of BAWE. Almost the double occurrences of *firstly* can be seen in case studies than the proposals. However, in case of *subsequently*, only 9 usages function as metadiscursive whereas the rest 31 are simply used in the propositional manner. The least used framer markers are *to begin with* and *to start with*. These can be simply considered to be synonymous to *firstly*. (Refer Table 18, Figure 5)

Among code glosses, *this means*, *in fact* and *for instance* have actual frequencies as metadiscourse markers 66, 56 and 51 respectively. Only few of the usages have been found as propositional and most of the occurrences are in case studies. In case of *for instance* and *that is*

to say, all the usages have been found to have metadiscursive functions. (Refer Table 19, Figure 6)

In case of emphatics in the sub-corpus of proposals and case studies within BAWE, it has been seen that most of the functional as metadiscursive in investigating their usage with the exception of *even if*. Most of the emphatics occur in the case studies. No occurrences of *even if*, *I believe*, and *by far* have been found in proposals. (Refer Table 20, Figure 7)

In case of evidentials, *demonstrate* occurs mostly as propositional, 69 out of 108 occurrences. *Argue* occurs mostly as discursive except on one occasion, where “father argues with mother” so considered as propositional. (Refer Table 21)

*Mine* has been examined among the self-mentions and it was observed that most usages were pertaining to the propositional function and only 1 occurrence was found to be metadiscursive. (Refer Table 22, Figure 8).

## 5.2 Anomalies

In the sub-corpus of the BAWE, created of proposals and case studies, some of these metadiscourse markers searched did not yield any results. These have not been used by the students. It is interesting to see 22 examples of metadiscourse markers were not found. Here, are the metadiscourse markers without any search queries categorized according to Hyland’s classificatory model. The category with most number of searches without search results is announce goals. 6 of the metadiscourse markers that were not found are *my purpose*, *we will focus on*, *I will emphasise*, *we will emphasise*, *my goal is*, *here I do this*, *here I will*. The reason could be there are other alternative and direct ways of expressing besides the above given examples. Since, the sub-corpus consisted of proficient level of writing by university students, it can be assumed that they may have preferred to used others words and phrases. The preference could be due to the availability of concise word or phrases, more academic sound words or phrases and the availability of synonymous choices. Relational markers like *by the way*, *let’s*, *lets* and *one’s* were also not found. Similarly, attitude markers like *admittedly*, *amazingly* and

*curiously* did not yield any results. However, all the examples of metadiscourse markers of the category Hedges, Evidentials and Person Markers have been found.

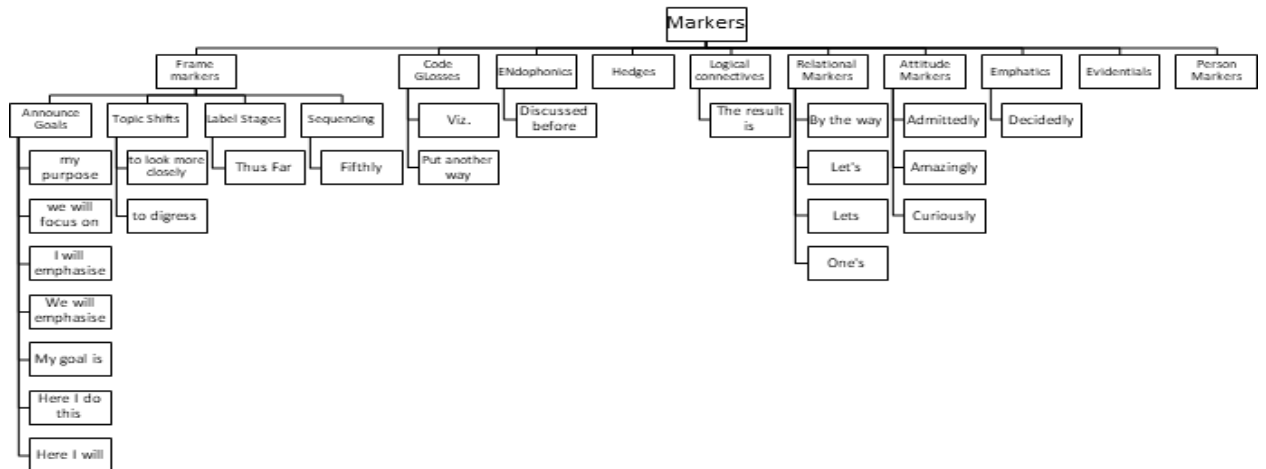


Figure 9: Metadiscourse Markers Without Query results in the BAWE Sub-Corpus

As expected in the preliminary search, not all the occurrences of metadiscourse markers were found in the BAWE sub-corpus and among the noted occurrences not all functioned in the metadiscursive manner. The categorization as discursive and propositional have been done considering the concept of ‘stance’ and ‘voice’.

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1. Summary



Metadiscourse, as a concept and theoretical framework, provides a constructive role to the target audience. It reveals the presence and active participation of the hearer or the reader. It attempts to streamline the receiver's perceived notion of the content by utilizing a wide array of techniques. These techniques include the explicit organization of the content, creating engagement with the content reader, and pointing towards the writer's approach towards the material of the content and the intended reader.

This thesis tries to study the attributes and function of the discourse markers used in the proposals and research reports by investigating the corpora of written works at British universities by students of undergraduate and graduate levels. The motivation for this thesis came out of the inquisitiveness about the role of meta-argumentative expressions, particularly the discourse markers in academic writing. The immediate question arises - what constitutes a good writing in an academic context and how the underlying features can be studied? How does the student-writer engage with the form and content of the academic writing? What kind of functions and usage patterns of metadiscourse markers can be seen in the proposals and research reports (of native writers)? Hence, the research question is posed- how do student writer negotiate (linguistically) with the topic and the reader simultaneously and what are the grammatical patterns associated with the common discourse markers? The meticulous study of literature in this field of research pointed out towards the interesting yet not fully explored field of metadiscourse employing the corpus methodology. For Hyland, "Metadiscourse is an intuitively attractive concept as it seems to offer a principled way of collecting under one heading the diverse range of linguistic devices writers use to explicitly organize their texts, engage readers and signal their attitudes to their material and their audience" (Hyland 2005: ix).

The thesis is corpus-driven research which examined academic writing. Here, the corpus linguistics is meant to be understood as a research tool that reveals the information and provides the perspectives on the research through the different tools assorted in the corpus engine. It definitely helps to analyze the large number of written texts with certain ease and confidence. This thesis focuses on the various expressions that signal the argument or play linguistic role in the academic discourse. This initiated a survey of various corpus and finally, British Academic Written English (BAWE) has been chosen, primarily because of its large size (6,968,089 tokens) with "proficient assessed student writing" across "evenly distributed disciplinary areas"

([www.sketchengine.eu/bawe-corpus/](http://www.sketchengine.eu/bawe-corpus/)). Upon making preliminary key word searches and examination of specific argumentative vocabularies, it became evident that the corpus would yield sufficient results or show occasions of usages so the research could proceed towards analyzing and interpreting in light of the theoretical models in the field.

The research is done primarily through the analysis of selected words and phrases, and their frequencies, categories and usages in the proposals and research reports of the BAWE corpus. This thesis at times draws from the concept of metalinguistic awareness to explain and comment upon the modes and strategies of academic writing. Here, the term metalinguistic awareness is treated as a holistic term referring to the skill to reflect upon and operate both the structural and functional features of the language. Metalinguistic awareness is “the ability to reflect upon and manipulate the structural features of spoken language, treating language itself as an object of thought, as opposed to simply using the language system to comprehend and produce sentences” (Tunmer and Herriman 1984: 12). It involves the awareness that language itself is an “object of thought” which can be manipulated. For instance, one can go back and forth in oral conversation or writing to amend the mistakes. Also, metalinguistic awareness enables an individual to comment upon one’s own or use of other’s language. It is a language used to talk about the language itself. It requires a deeper consciousness than simply producing or understanding the language/ linguistic units in an act of writing or speaking.

The thesis introduced a brief summary of the corpus (BAWE) and presented the queries made on it. The primary task here, was the identification of the keywords and their collocations and a brief survey of the frequency distribution of the metadiscourse markers. Thesaurus, word sketch and word sketch difference have been used where comparisons seem relevant. The selection of the metadiscourse markers to be further analyzed were based on their degree to which they have contributed to the discursive function within the text. The results from the corpus have been then classified according to the “Interpersonal model of metadiscourse” (Hyland 2005: 49). Then, a detailed summary of meta-argumentative expressions has been provided, covering the theories on metadiscourse, and venturing into illustration and classification of the results according to the theoretical model. Furthermore, taking out examples from the classificatory scheme, the corpus results have been discussed and analyzed drawing from the concepts of “stance and voice” as

exemplified by Gaudin and Hyland (2005). They bring together the ideas from several authors and their researches and put forward that “the two features as a reversible flow of the communal into the personal” and discuss their role in “particular rhetorical situations” (Gaudin and Hyland 2005: 4). “We can see voice as more reader-oriented, concerning the use of a disciplinary-appropriate system of meanings by recognizing ‘how things are done’, whereas stance is more author-oriented, concerning how writers actually use this to say things” (Hyland 2012: 134). The corpus results and classification have been analyzed with reference to these. The purpose of the thesis was not to make any generalizations but to reflect upon some of the interesting findings. The thesis writing process has been interesting in itself -to engage with keywords, observe patterns, classify functions and interpret discursive practices prominent in the academic writing of the students in the BAWE corpus. It has both implication on pedagogical and research level.

Everyone is interested in what constitutes good academic writing. As discussed earlier in “1. Introduction”, metadiscourse markers have always been a matter of interest for the students, teachers and researchers. Many research have put an emphasis on the need to study the devices of academic discourses and understand how they reveal the message and the way it is communicated among other aspects like ideological stance and interactional manners. The notion of uniqueness, or voice as a kind of individual imprint on a text, has persisted both in the literature and in writing textbooks (Tardy 2012: 35). This thesis has made an attempt to search, record, present, and discuss metadiscourse markers used but university level students, particularly in writing proposals and case study. Both of these are the essential academic requirement in most university courses.

The arguments we make, the positions we take and the ways we try to connect and fit in with others, all contribute to the presentation of ourselves and so influence how others respond to us. Every text therefore provides writers with an opportunity to construct a disciplinary-aligned presence and shape a credible self. Writing is always embedded in wider social and discursive practices which carry assumptions about participant relationships and how these should be structured and negotiated. (Hyland 2012: 135)

This thesis shows how simple features as keywords, frequency lists and concordance can help reveal astonishing features of the academic writing. This thesis has made use of Hyland’s

classification scheme for metadiscourse markers as it has broader and diverse categories suitable to the larger domain of study. For the research writer, metadiscourse contributes to a writer's voice which balances confidence and circumspection, facilitates collegial respect, and seeks to locate propositions in the concerns and interests of the discipline (Hyland 2012: 112). The typology for the classification of such discourse markers has already been discussed in methodology section (See Chapter 3). Using this classificatory scheme opens up the possibility of interdisciplinary interpretation of the corpus findings in terms of semantic, pragmatic, cognitive and social dimensions of academic writing.

## **6.2. Relevance**

The research during the thesis writing has been interesting in itself -to engage with wide array of metadiscourse markers, observe patterns, classify functions, and interpret discursive practices prominent in the academic writing of the students in the BAWE corpus. It has both implication on pedagogical and research level. Metadiscourse markers are not only found in academic and scholarly texts but also in everyday life. That may include blog posts, news stories, reviews, newsletters, and even fictional work. We can better understand the text and become more effective learners, so it is of interest to many linguists. The use of metadiscourse markers contributes to better readability and understanding. It will enable the teachers, examiners, and the larger audience to grasp the meaning being part of the discursive regime.

For students, learning these metadiscourse markers and using them helps them to internalize their own understanding, clearly express their mode of thought and at times enjoy the playfulness in writing (talking to the reader of their texts). Due to the academic, intellectual, and creative clarity in the writing with the use of metadiscourse marker, students tend to get rewards in terms of better grades. It has been interesting to observe the usage of large number of metadiscourse markers. The texts were written students who scored good grades. Such studies clarify students' academic writings across genres, disciplines, class, grades and so many other aspects. The studies on metadiscourse markers is helpful for both native and non-native language learners, students, academicians, journalists, linguists, and researchers. The students need to be exposed

to metadiscourse markers from the early schooling. It has slowly gained prominence in academia and would hopefully be incorporated in the pedagogic practice, from primary school to the university students.

If the metadiscourse features are carefully observed, we will be able to appreciate better how writers and speakers assume a stance and align their work with their intended audience in a particular scenario. This thesis draws from the interpersonal model of Hyland that allows us to understand better the perspective of the writer that will allow him or her to be better appreciative of his or her reader's innate requirement and expectation from the content created by the writer.

As mentioned, the author must consider the norms, wishes, and responses determined by the community. Hence discourse community is a vital parameter that the writer must consider critically. Metadiscourse entails the reality that knowledge is the social justification of ideas. Hence, considering the norms and the perspectives of the community are necessary for the writer to create works that will be appreciated by the community. Hence, it is vital for the writer to consider the community's opinion and aspirations to be a successful author.

This thesis would be a matter of interest to the students, researchers, and teachers who seek to know to employ discursive awareness in the texts. Since the thesis examines such occasions in the proposals and case studies, it can provide a perspective on learning and teaching academic writing. The relevance of the research lies in bridging the academic fields of linguistics with the computational fields enriching the scope and disseminating in the diverse disciplines.

The relevance lies in the transdisciplinary implications of the inferences made from the research and paving the way for setting up the larger corpora dedicated to further research. It helps to understand how corpus-driven research can be useful to comprehend strategies used in academic writing. Corpus analysis would facilitate the understanding of students' writing abilities and the anomalies and, thus, would help teachers/ language instructors consider these factors. For instance, the more extensive prospect of this kind of research would be, for example, to initiate a research project, such as the corpora of the English textbooks in Norway from primary school to university level, and study how effective the texts are in engaging the students in the discourse of its own.

### **6.3 Outlook**

The primary aim of this thesis was to investigate the frequency and distribution of the selected metadiscourse markers in the sub-corpus of proposals and case studies with the BAWE corpus. Since, the BAWE corpus was too large and the search queries needed to be analyzed with manual reading/examination, it was not possible to take into consideration the whole corpus. Also, even within the sub-corpus created only selected metadiscourse markers from the Hyland's classificatory schemes were further examined and their distribution recorded. This delimiting of the corpora and the findings is largely due to the time, resources and scope pertaining to the master's thesis. It would have been interesting to observe the distribution of all metadiscourse markers across genres in the whole BAWE corpus. More striking patterns and more interesting associations/comparisons can be expected out of such large corpus.

Also, the availability of corpus-engine (here the default engine was sketch engine for BAWE) customized for researching metadiscourse markers would have been very useful in the study like this. The present available search engines help to locate the metadiscourse markers but not find out the manner in which they are used. It has been evident that not all metadiscourse markers function in a discursive manner. Some words or phrases can simply bear literal meaning or bearing propositional function within the content. However, it can be still be argued whether the certain usage is metadiscursive or not. The theoretical framework has still not been specific despite the rigorous works of linguists like Ken Hyland. The subjective analysis thus becomes central in the process of investigation.

The large corpus, more extensive investigation, more objective framework, and a dedicated corpus-engine would make the study more desirable and impactful. Hopefully, these would be achievable for some students, teachers or researchers interested with the attributes of metadiscourse markers in academic writing. Also, the small self-built corpora (for instance, taking 20 proposals submitted by master's students (Literacy Studies) at University of Stavanger) can reveal a lot of features about the student's academic writing. The study of metadiscourse markers would be self-reflexive, and it would be helpful for both the students and the teachers. The academic writing of humanities can be compared with other disciplines and among the different genres, it would undoubtedly help to improve student's academic writing and help teachers devise pedagogical tools accordingly.

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