The Journal of Teaching Language Skills (JTLS)
6 (1), Spring 2014, Ser. 74/4
ISSN: 2008-8191. pp. 49-72

Meta-discourse Strategies and Citation Patterns as Resources of Authorial Identity in Research Articles across International/Local Journals and Applied Linguistics Sub-disciplines

M. N. Karimi
Assistant Professor, TEFL
Kharazmi University of Tehran
email: karimi_mn@yahoo.com

F. Asadnia *
M.A., TEFL
Kharazmi University of Tehran
email: asadnia.fatemeh@yahoo.com

Abstract

The present study explored the rhetorical representation of authorial identity signaled by interactive/interactional meta-discourse strategies and integral/non-integral citation patterns in international and Iranian local research article discussion sections. The study also examined variation in meta-discourse and citation resources across three sub-disciplines of Language Testing, English Language Teaching, and Discourse Analysis. To this end, a representative sample of 60 discussion sections of articles published in three prestigious international journals and three well-accredited Iranian local journals was collected. The comparisons revealed that Iranian local articles used a greater number of interactive meta-discourse strategies, whereas international articles tended to employ more interactional meta-discourse markers. In the interaction between authorial identity and citation perspectives, it was demonstrated that Iranian local articles employed more integral citation resources, while their international counterparts utilized more non-integral citation patterns. These differences can be attributed to some other factors elaborated on in the paper Furthermore, the findings showed sub-disciplinary variation in the use of interactional meta-discourse strategies and non-integral citation patterns in international RAs. This can be attributed to their distinctive communicative purposes, target readership, scope of investigation, and final research products. The study concludes with some implications for post-graduate students to equip themselves with both macro-level generic and micro-level discoursal properties required for writing research article

Received: 07/06/2013 Accepted: 01/13/2014
* Corresponding author

discussion sections, and, accordingly manifesting their authorial identity.

Keywords: authorial identity, interactive meta-discourse, interactional meta-discourse, integral citation, non-integral citation

1. Introduction

As a practically rhetorical space for foregrounding the significance of findings (Swales, 1990) and constructing the dynamic, evaluative interpretations of the results as shaped by the authorial choices of abstraction (Martinez, 2003), the discussion section of a research article (Henceforth: RA) reflects the ways authors project themselves into the text (Bitchener, 2010). According to Basturkmen (2012, p.135), in this section, "writers stake claims about how their results integrate with and contribute to disciplinary knowledge" by appealing to their research communities, characterizing the importance of their studies, and penetrating into the future lines of investigation rather than managing arguments for the sake of mere discussion. As the discoursal opportunity to reveal the writers' identities, this section of RA locates the presence of interactive and interactional meta-discourse resources to guide the readers and engage them in the text (Hyland, 2005b) for the purpose of argumentatively explaining the results of the study and highlighting their wider significance to the target audience. Furthermore, with the potential of substantiating knowledge-based claims made by the authors (Parkinson, 2011), RA discussion section relies on both integral and non-integral citations to establish the writers' plausible authority by relating the prominence of their works to the present gaps in literature.

The construction of authorial identity in academic writing has attracted increasing interest in the recent past (Hyland, 2011). It emphasizes the value-laden nature of written academic discourse which rejects viewing the fundamental resources of evaluation and interaction in writing as merely factual, neutral, and impersonal (Hunston & Thompson, 2000; Hyland, 2000, 2005b, 2010; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Matsuda & Tardy, 2007; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012). In essence, the representation of evaluation and stance in academic writing has come to be a popular area of research (Biber, 2006; Charles, 2003) mainly motivated by "… a growing recognition that there is room for negotiation of identity within academic writing, and thus academic writing need not be totally devoid of a writer's presence" (Tang & John, 1999, p.23). According to Hyland (1999a, p.101), authorial identity is known "as the ways authors project themselves into their texts to communicate their relationship to subject matter and the readers", whereby they align themselves with socially mediated persona and comply with the norms of evidentiality, affect, and relation. As Warchal (2010, p.140)

maintained, academic authors "seek acceptance for their claims by the rest of the academic discourse community" as the aim behind writing an RA is to interact with readers (Afros & Schryer, 2009; Hyland, 2001; Lewin, 2005). In this avenue of inquiry, the productivity of RAs hinges on communicating relevant facts or ideas and establishing the credible disciplinary status (Charles, 2006; Harwood, 2005; Hirvela & Belcher, 2001; Hyland, 2001, 2002; Sheldon, 2009).

Accordingly, the concept of authorial identity is closely associated with meta-discourse (Crismore, 1989; Hyland, 2005b; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Vande Kopple, 1985) as authorial stance pertains to writers' tendency to consistently adapt status, minimize imposition, and signal commitment for the co-construction of meaning and social engagement through the medium of meta-discourse. In other words, "meta-discourse is the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer or (speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community" (Hyland, 2005b, p.37), whereby authors construct their identities by situating the text in its context and transmitting the depth of their personality, credibility, and audience-sensitivity. In manipulating authors' interactions with the target audience, meta-discourse facilitates communication, advocates writers' positions, and generates insights into their relationships with the potential readers in disciplinary, socio-cultural milieus (Abdi, Tavangar, & Tavakoli, 2010; Crismore, Markkanen, & Steffensen, 1993; Flowerdew, 1997; Hyland, 2005a; Vande Kopple, 1985).

Postulated as another academic authorial recognition source, citation is closely related to the presence, stance, and depth of the authors' orientations (Hyland, 2000; Swales, 1990; Thompson, 2005; Thompson & Tribble, 2001; White, 2004). As Petric (2007) demonstrated, with its non-withstanding nature, citation not only acknowledges previous studies, but also promotes the writers' own claims. According to Hewings, Lillis, and Vladimirou (2010, p.114), citation permits "scholars to show their knowledge of the field, build on or critique the work of others, claim membership of their disciplinary community and stake their own knowledge claims". As Mansourizadeh and Ahmad (2011, p.152) stated, academic writers use citations to position their research in an appropriate context, depict the relevance of their investigation, represent their competence, affirm the legitimacy of their claims, establish their arguments, justify their findings, and persuade the readers.

In practice, recent years have witnessed a surge of interest in meta-discourse analysis, where several cross-disciplinary studies have been conducted on the role of meta-discourse resources in RAs (Dahl, 2004;

Khedri, Heng, & Ebrahimi, 2013; Li & Wharton, 2012; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012; Rubio, 2011). Some other fresh studies examined the importance of meta-discourse patterns in RAs along cross-linguistic boundaries (Hu & Cao, 2011; Kim & Lim, 2013; Mur Duenas, 2011). In another investigation, the cross-temporal perspectives of meta-discoursal features in Applied Linguistics RAs were shown (Gillaerts & Van de Velde, 2010). In the Iranian context, the critical avenues of meta-discourse studies have been recently opened up. For instance, Abdi (2011) explored the application of interactive and interactional meta-discourse markers in the entire RAs written in Social Sciences and Natural Sciences with IMRD structural patterns. This study showed that RAs in both disciplines had the tendency to used more interactive than interactional metadiscourse strategies. Along this line, Abdollahzadeh (2011) compared the use of interpersonal meta-discourse resources in the conclusion section of RAs written by Anglo-American and Iranian writers. The results exhibited higher frequency of emphatics and attitude markers in the former and frequent applications of hedges or certainty avoidance markers by the latter. Jalilifar (2011) also studied the authorial presence realized by hedges and boosters in RA discussion sections and manifested how they differed in their frequency, type, and function along cross-disciplinary and cross-linguistic boundaries in English and Persian RAs in English Language Teaching and Psychiatry.

As another device for signifying the authors' presence in academic texts, citation patterns have been recurrently accentuated in terms of their construction of disciplinary knowledge on the basis of contextual variability (Hyland, 1999b), their visible and occluded properties in post-graduate second language writing (Pecorari, 2006), their phraseological patterns in reporting clauses (Charles, 2006), and their rhetorical functions in M.A. theses (Petric, 2007). In the context of Iran, Shooshtari and Jalilifar (2010) investigated the sub-disciplinary distinction made between integral and non-integral citation patterns in the discussion section of local and international EGP and ESP RAs. The findings demonstrated that local EGP and ESP RAs employed more citations in general and favored the use of integral over non-integral forms in particular. It was further revealed that international writers in ESP articles paid closer attention to integral citation patterns, whereas EGP articles enjoyed higher frequency of non-integral citation features. Similarly, Jalilifar (2012) compared the role of integral and non-integral citations in the introduction section of Iranian master's theses and international RAs. Findings of this investigation demonstrated the higher frequency of citations in master's theses than RAs, where integral citation distribution outnumbered the non-integral citation.

In spite of many studies separately conducted on meta-discourse and citation resources in RAs, the simultaneous examination of meta-discourse markers and citation patterns employed for the purpose of signaling the role of authors and keeping track of their communicative traces in the discussion sections of international and Iranian local RAs of Applied Linguistics has escaped the attention of discourse analysts. Furthermore, the analysis of the sub-disciplinary variation of these two authorial identity norms in international Testing, English Language Teaching and Discourse Analysis RAs has been relatively ignored in literature. This exploration of intra-disciplinary diversity was further motivated by the way it influences the authors' meta-discoursal choices (Jalilifar, 2011). With the dearth of studies carried out on the sub-disciplinary orientations of meta-discourse features (Crismore & Abdollahzadeh, 2010) and citation patterns, the researchers attempted to shed lights on these relatively marginalized areas. In addition, instead of concentrating on the specific properties of meta-discourse or citation patterns in isolation, this study presented a comprehensively holistic image of authorial presence by integrating the relevance of its mainstream resources. This inquiry also facilitated the contribution of meta-discourse and citation markers to the realization of the communicative purpose and specification of the rhetorical organization of the generic structure embedded in RA discussion sections. This relationship could be more tangibly identified in terms of reporting results along with capitalizing on their wider scope on the one hand, and referring to the previous credible studies in comparative terms on the other hand. To bridge the existing gaps in the literature of authorial identity studies, the following research questions were proposed:

1. Is there any statistically significant difference in the type and frequency of meta-discourse strategies used in the international and Iranian local RA discussion sections?
2. Is there any statistically significant difference in the type and frequency of citation patterns used in the international and Iranian local RA discussion sections?
3. Is there any statistically significant difference in the type and frequency of meta-discourse strategies used in the discussion sections of articles across sub-disciplines of Applied Linguistics: Testing, English Language Teaching, and Discourse Analysis?
4. Is there any statistically significant difference in the type and frequency of citation patterns used in the discussion sections of articles across sub-disciplines of Applied Linguistics: Testing, English Language Teaching, and Discourse Analysis?

2. Methodology

2.1 Corpus

The corpus of the present study included a total of 60 RAs from three prestigious international journals, i.e. *Language Testing*, *Language Teaching Research*, and *Discourse Studies* on the one hand, and three well-accredited Iranian local journals, i.e. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics* (IJAL), *Journal of Teaching Language Skills* (JTLS), and *Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies* (IJALS) on the other hand. These peer-reviewed journals were selected for their internationally or locally prestigious status (Swales, 2004), representativity, reputation, and accessibility (Nwogu, 1997), demonstration of a separate discussion section, and similar publication date within a three-year range from 2009 to 2011. This selection was further motivated by concentrating on data-based RAs (Gao, Li, & Lu, 2001; Swales, 2004) and excluding theoretical or review ones. It is worth acknowledging that the rigorous quality of top English-medium RAs and the strict review process demands of world-level prestigious journals require the international authors, whether native or non-native speakers of English, to adhere to the expected discursive norms in order to publish their papers (Swales, 2002). From this perspective, this investigation placed the international writers into one category in order to scrutinize the way authors reveal their identities, attitudes, and point of views as they are inevitably influenced by the international status and writing styles of RAs in general and their sub-disciplinary requirements in particular. By pursuing simple randomization sampling, 30 of RAs were selected from international journals and 30 others from Iranian local journals. As one of the aims of this study was to explore the sub-disciplinary variation in meta-discourse and citation patterns, 30 international articles included 10 RAs in the sub-discipline of Testing, 10 related to the sub-discipline of English Language Teaching and 10 others pertained to the sub-discipline of Discourse Analysis. This being the case, three internationally leading SAGE journals that published RAs in specialized areas of Testing, English Language Teaching, and Discourse Analysis were taken into account. This process was facilitated by focusing on the major criteria of aim, scope, and readership that the journal description profiles maintained (Hyland &Tse, 2009). In this light, the specific orientations of *Language Testing*, *Language Teaching Research*, and *Discourse Studies* journals could encourage the interested academic readers to look for the most recent studies carried out in these particular areas and guide the novice researchers to decide on the proper venues for their papers or professional researchers to publish their latest relevant works in these journals. However, since Iranian local RAs published a variety of areas in Applied Linguistics with the blurring

boundaries lying between the sub-disciplines, the comparison between international and local RAs occurred at general levels. But, the sub-disciplinary variation was made specific in international journals.

2.2 Instrumentation

To identify meta-discourse strategies and citation patterns employed in the corpus, the following models were used:

2.2.1 Metadiscourse model (Hyland, 2005b)

Hyland (2005b) divided meta-discourse strategies into interactive and interactional dimensions. This taxonomy was selected for its recent, simple, transparent, classified, objective, and comprehensive properties (Abdi, 2011; Abdi et al., 2010). In addition, the researchers used this interpersonal meta-discourse model as the most appropriate classification for meeting the requirements of the study in establishing the interaction between authorial identity and meta-discourse devices in the discussion section of RAs. The detailed specification of this model is listed as follows.

Table. Interactive and interactional meta-discourse (Hyland, 2005b, p.49)

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive	**Help to guide the reader through the text**	**Resources**
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 part of the text	***Noted above; see figure; in section 2***
Evidentials	Refer to information from other text	***According to X; Z states***
Code glosses	Elaborate propositional meaning	***Namely, e.g.; such as; in other words***
Interactional	**Involve the reader in the text**	**Resources**
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 authors	***I;we;my;me;our***
Engagement markers	Explicitly build relationship with reader	***Consider; note; you can see***

2.2.2 Citation model (Thompson & Tribble, 2001)

To identify the integral and non-integral citations employed in the corpus, Thompson and Tribble's (2001) citation model was used. This selection was triggered by the clarity of the citation categories and the specificity of their functions in reference previous lines of inquiry. Apparently, this classification could track the authorial identity sources in the discussion section replete with different forms of citation, where the writers attempt to confirm their claims by crediting their findings and taking tangible positions in reference to other works. The description of the model accompanied by the representative examples taken from the corpus itself will follow.

1.Integral Citation: It involves the integration of research report with the name of the cited author by foregrounding the researcher. The subcategories of this dimension include:

- ***Verb controlling:*** The citation acts as the agent that controls a verb, in active or passive voice.

Example: *As Attenborough (2011) points out, resisting a request… (Lester & Paulus, 2011, Discourse Studies Journal, p.681)*

- ***Naming:*** The citation is a noun phrase or a part of a noun phrase.

Example: *With regard to interactive listening, the findings supported those of Galaczi (2004) in that... (Ducasse & Brown, 2009, Language Testing, p.437)*

- ***Non-citation*:** There is a reference to another writer, but the name is given without a year reference. It is most commonly used when the reference has been supplied earlier in the text and the writer does not want to repeat it.

Example: *While Dann indicated that self-assessment would have greater value if ... (Butler & Lee, 2010, Language Teaching Research, p.26)*

2.Non-integral Citation: It addresses the specification of the researcher's name separated from the sentential structure with the content of the cited work gaining momentum. The subcategories of this dimension include:

- ***Source:*** This function is to attribute a proposition to another author. The proposition might be an assertion, such as what is revealed in the factive report of findings in other research, or attribution of an idea to another.

Example: *In this respect, faculties were able to balance the multiple goals of questioning university leadership …. (Shotter, 1993).*
(Caster, 2009, Discourse Studies Journal, p.193)

- ***Identification:*** It identifies an agent within the sentence it refers to.

Example: *While giving praise…, it has been found that this has only a limited effect on students learning per se (Black and Wiliam, 1998).*
(Butler & Lee, 2010, Language Testing Journal, p.26)

- ***Reference:*** This type of citation is usually signaled by the inclusion of the directive.

Example: *Indeed, he might not even have realized what he was doing (see Alford, 2001).*
(Tholander, 2011, Discourse Studies, p.89)

- ***Origin:*** The citation indicates the originator of a concept or a product.

Example: *One explanation for the difference…might derive from the Involvement Load Hypothesis (Laufer and Hulstijn, 2001)*

(Walters& Bozkurt, 2009, Language Teaching Research, p.417)

2.3 Procedure

After the selection of the sample RAs with separate discussion sections, word count was run to specify the length and ensure the comparability of the corpus. Then, the researchers employed the color-coding strategy, practiced careful word-by-word manual examination of sample texts, identified the authorial identity patterns, and administered chi-square tests to pinpoint areas of similarities and differences in international/local and sub-disciplinary comparisons. To guarantee the inter-coder agreement, one-third of the corpus was given to the second coder and the inter-coder reliability was calculated to be about .91. The average text length of international and local RA discussion sections was placed within the range of 700-1200 words. The following table shows the length of the corpus in details.

Table2. Total word length in international and local RAs

RAs	Testing	Teaching	Discourse	Total
International	11762	11707	12119	35588
Local	9869	10491	11791	32151

3. Results

In order to investigate the first two research questions proposed, four chi-square tests were administered. The results follow:

3.1 Meta-discourse strategies

3.1.1 Interactive meta-discourse strategies

The discussion sections of international and local RAs revealed a statistically significant difference in frequency of interactive meta-discourse markers as demonstrated by the chi-square test, χ^2 (4, N= 60)= 47.29, *P*=.00. In contrast to international RAs, Iranian local RAs had the tendency

to use more transition markers and evidentials on the one hand and fewer frame markers, endophoric markers, and code glosses on the other hand. This may indicate that local RAs paid specific attention to readers' interpretation of the pragmatic features of text connectivity and their consideration of negotiable meanings on the basis of in-text references, whereas international RAs highlighted readers' identification of discoursal boundaries, their reconceptualization of authors' intentions in light of text-internal evidence and their comprehension of the intended meanings directed by further explanations.

Table 3. Frequency and percentage of interactive meta-discourse markers in international and local RAs

Interactive Metadiscourse Strategies		Transition	Frame marker	Endophoric marker	Code gloss	Evidentials	Total
RAs	International	1526(%66)	123(%5.32)	167(%7.22)	167(%7.22)	328(%14.19)	2311(%100)
	Local	1625(%69.5)	97(%4.14)	82(%3.5)	131(%5.6)	403(%17.23)	2338(%100)

3.1.2 Interactional meta-discourse strategies

By analyzing the occurrence of interactional met-discourse strategies, the chi-square test, χ^2 (4, N= 60) = 34.8, *P*=.00, showed that there was a statistically significant difference between international and Iranian local RA discussions regarding their use of these meta-discourse strategies. International RAs employed more hedges, attitude markers, self-mentions, and engagement markers, but fewer boosters in comparison to their Iranian local counterparts. This may underline the tendency of international RAs to pinpoint the subjective position of authors, their affective, emotional attitudes, their stance in relation to the proposed arguments, and their direct engagement with the readers. However, their local counterparts outlined high certainty level of the authors' arguments in establishing reciprocal interactions with the readers.

Table 4. Frequency and percentage of interactional meta-discourse markers in international and local RAs

Interactive Metadiscourse Strategies		Hedge	Booster	Attitude marker	Self-mention	Engagement marker	Total
RAs	International	1528(%37)	601(%14.58)	1838(%44.61)	117(%2.83)	36(%0.87)	4120(%100)
	Local	1378(%36.81)	655(%17.49)	1640(%43.81)	57(%1.52)	13(%0.34)	3743(%100)

3.2 Citation patterns

3.2.1 Integral citation patterns

In examining the frequency of integral citation patterns, the chi-square test, χ^2 (2, N= 60) = 7.72, *P*=.02, showed that there was a statistically significant difference in frequency of these citation resources in the international and Iranian local RA discussion sections. Iranian local RAs employed more verb-controlling and naming citations in comparison to their international counterparts in order to accentuate the authority of the cited researchers themselves for crediting, stabilizing, and consolidating their own findings in reference to previous studies in literature.

Table 5. Frequency and percentage of integral citation patterns in international and local RAs

Integral Citation Patterns		**Verb controlling**	**Naming**	**Non-citation**	**Total**
RAs	International	52(%46.42)	49(%43.75)	11(%9.82)	112(%100)
	Local	140(%61.13)	78(%34)	11(%4.8)	229(%100)

3.2.2 Non-integral citation patterns

By specifying the frequency of non-integral citation patterns, the chi-square test, χ^2 (3, N= 60) = 32.89, *P*=.00, illustrated that there was a statistically significant difference in international and Iranian local RA discussion sections. In this case, identification was the only non-integral citation pattern used more frequently in Iranian local RAs. This may show how international RAs put emphasis on the content of the cited works as integrated with their own discussions for the purpose of shedding lights on the importance of the findings and strengthening the authorial positions more concretely.

Table 6. Frequency and percentage of non- integral citation patterns in international and local RAs

Non-integral Citation Patterns		**Source**	**Identification**	**Reference**	**Origin**	**Total**
RAs	International	122(%56.74)	50(%23.25)	28(%13)	15(%6.97)	215(%100)
	Local	107(%61.49)	63(%36.2)	0(%0)	4(%2.29)	174(%100)

3.3 Sub-disciplinary variation

In order to find the answer to the other two proposed research questions, four hypotheses were specified and four chi-square tests were run to explore the sub-disciplinary variation of authorial identity on the basis of met-

discourse strategies and citation patterns in international Testing, English Language Teaching, and Discourse Analysis RA discussion sections. The following results were obtained:

3.3.1 Meta-discourse strategies

3.3.1.1 Interactive meta-discourse strategies

RAs published in *Language Testing*, *Language Teaching Research*, and *Discourse Studies* did not significantly differ in the application of interactive meta-discourse strategies as shown by the chi-square test, χ^2 (8, N= 30)= 9.25, *P*=.32. Except for evidentials, the highest frequency of transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, and code glosses belonged to English Language Teaching RAs. This may illustrate how English Language Teaching RAs attempted to put the readers on the right track by connecting propositional meanings and discoursal stages on the one hand, and explicating the arguments on the basis of in-text signposts and additional elaboration of unknown concepts on the other hand.

Table 7. Frequency and percentage of interactive metadiscourse markers in international RAs

Interactive Meta-discourse Strategies	Transition	Frame marker	Endophoric marker	Code gloss	Evidentials	Total
Language Testing	454(%66.47)	30(%4.39)	57(%8.34)	43(%6.29)	99(%14.49)	683(%100)
Language Teaching Research	567(%66.39)	50(%5.85)	65(%7.6)	65(%7.61)	107(%12.52)	854(%100)
Discourse Studies	505(%65.32)	43(%5.56)	45(%5.82)	59(%7.63)	121(%15.65)	773(%100)

3.3.1.2 Interactional meta-discourse strategies

By the comparative investigation of sub-disciplinary variation regarding the use of interactional meta-discourse strategies, the chi-square test, χ^2 (8, N= 30) = 72.9, *P*=.00, demonstrated significant differences in Testing, English Language Teaching, and Discourse Analysis RAs. Testing RAs enjoyed the highest levels of hedges and boosters and Discourse Analysis RAs had the highest frequency of attitude markers and self-mentions. However, English Language Teaching RAs showed the most frequent occurrence of engagement markers (see Table 8). This may highlight how Testing RAs foregrounded the authorial commitments by leaving their arguments open to readers' alternatively interpretive perspectives without ignoring the importance of ensuring the readers about some aspects of the findings. Discourse Analysis RAs also guaranteed the importance of expressing

attitudes and taking explicit, personal positions. However, English Language Teaching RAs directly addressed the readers, drew their attentions and involved them in the discussions.

Table 8. Frequency and percentage of interactional meta-discourse markers in international RAs

Interactional Meta-discourse Strategies	Hedge	Booster	Attitude marker	Self-mention	Engagement marker	Total
Language Testing	547(%40.72)	230(%17.12)	523(%38.94)	34(%2.53)	9(%0.67)	1343(%100)
Language Teaching Research	503(%38.63)	207(%15.89)	547(%42)	29(%2.22)	16(%1.22)	1302(%100)
Discourse Studies	478(%32.4)	164(%11.11)	768(%52)	54(%3.66)	11(%0.74)	1475(%100)

3.3.2 Citation patterns

3.3.2.1 Integral citation patterns

With respect to the frequency of integral citation patterns, there was no significantly sub-disciplinary distinction as demonstrated by chi-square test, χ^2 (4, N= 30) = 6.72, *P*=.15.At this level, Discourse Analysis RAs had the highest frequency of verb-controlling, English Language Teaching RAs enjoyed the most frequent occurrence of naming, and Testing RAs used more non-citations. Thus, the RAs published in the sub-disciplines of Applied Linguistics focused on the role of the cited researchers to gain credibility and substantiate the scholarly status of their works.

Table 9. Frequency and percentage of integral citation patterns in international RAs

Integral Citation Patterns	Verb controlling	Naming	Non-citation	Total
Language Testing	13(%44.82)	11(%37.93)	5(%17.24)	29(%100)
Language Teaching Research	19(%38)	27(%54)	4(%8)	50(%100)
Discourse Studies	20(%60.6)	11(%33.33)	2(%6)	33(%100)

3.3.2.2 Non-integral citation patterns

As the chi-square test, χ^2 (6, N= 30) = 16.7, *P*=.01, illustrated, the sub-disciplinary representation of non-integral citation pursued relatively different patterns in Testing, English Language Teaching, and Discourse Analysis RAs. The results demonstrated that Discourse Analysis RAs had the highest frequency of source and reference citations, Testing RAs highlighted the role of identification, and English Language Teaching RAs concentrated more closely on origin. Accordingly, the subdisciplinary variation in making references to the supportive evidential basis of the cited studies in literature made itself transparent at this level.

Table 10. Frequency and percentage of non-integral citation patterns in international RAs

Non-integral Citation Patterns	Source	Identification	Reference	Origin	Total
Language Testing	42(%60)	19(%27.14)	6(%8.57)	3(%4.28)	70(%100)
Language Teaching Research	27(%47.36)	13(%22.8)	7(%12.28)	10(%17.54)	57(%100)
Discourse Studies	53(%60.22)	18(%20.45)	15(%17)	2(%2.27)	88(%100)

4. Discussion

4.1 Authorial identity and meta-discourse resources

The findings revealed that Iranian local RAs totally exploited more interactive meta-discourse resources compared with their international counterparts. This may highlight the Iranian authors' stronger tendency to carefully navigate the readers through the text, implicitly draw a guiding map for the sake of their full comprehensibility of arguments, persistently attempt to eradicate the intricacy of any complex explanation, and adequately compensate for their physical absence in discussions. More specifically, Iranian local RAs employed more transition markers to help the audience integrate the stretches of discourse, interpret the rationality of pragmatic interactions between different forms of reasoning, follow the depth of the discussion, and pursue the detailed flow of arguments marked by connective devices. However, international RAs tended to use frame markers more frequently by encouraging the readers to go through the staged, schematic patterns of text organization in order to grasp a more holistic view of what goes on at different phases of arguments. Furthermore, it was shown that international RA discussion sections made consistent use of endophoric markers in order to equip the readers with additional information to retrieve the writers' arguments, make a connection between the preceding and following text-based reasoning, and come up with their own interpretations. This could be the result of international authors' desire

for removing any confusion caused by textual, tabular, and figure-based density in this section. Such findings were in line with Abdi's (2011) study which supported the provision of transitions and elusiveness of endophoric markers in Iranian local RA discussion sections in Social Sciences. In case of code glosses, international RAs actively provided additional information for complicated concepts and phenomena on the basis of their prediction of readers' knowledge base and contextual background. In addition, Iranian local RA discussions were more inclined to use evidentials to establish a more credible identity by relying on other resources to support their positions, identify the existing gaps, and convince the readers that the present study is inevitably required.

From interactional meta-discourse perspectives, international RAs used these strategies more regularly in order to carefully institutionalize the dialogic co-construction of meanings, consistently establish the interactive writer-reader relationships, authentically engage the readers in texts, dynamically specify authorial stance and attitude in conveyance of arguments, and adequately leave the space open for the readers' own reasonable interpretations. More specifically, the use of hedges was more frequent in international RAs for the purpose of acknowledging the subjectivity of the writers' arguments, their openness to negotiation, and their degree of confidence associated with plausibility than absolute certainty. In other words, these epistemic, discursive devices signaled the international authors' commitments to the propositional content of discussion and simultaneous concern for the target audience's interpretive conceptualization of arguments. However, local RA authors employed more boosters by constraining different alternative views and coming up with a more confident voice indicative of explicit certainty. As Jalilifar (2011) contended, academic writing is generally marked by the application of more hedges and less boosters, but Iranian authors make untactful use of more boosters to forcefully support their claims, directly address the audience, and unconsciously leave no room for readers' evaluation and reasoning. At this level, in contrast to international RAs, Iranian RAs were found to relatively diverge from the conventional requirement of academic writings by assuredly constraining the scope of possibilities in their discussions. Attitude marker had also a more important contribution to the affective expressions of propositions in the discussion sections of international RAs. This strategy could be transmitted by writers' attitudes and opinions to strengthen their own status and reject the inflexibly constant, monolithic and non-communicative nature of RA discussion sections. In this case, the results were consistent with those established by Abdollahzadeh (2011) in identifying higher frequency of attitude markers in international RAs.

Moreover, international RAs followed the higher frequency of self-mention markers, whereby the authors could explicitly represent their stance, prominently project their impressions, and clearly illustrate the way they stand in relation to their arguments, community, and target readers. At the next stage, international RA authors paid more attention to engagement markers to explicitly address the readers as the major participants of the discourse community, where the readers could assume themselves as members with disciplinary solidarity who could play a critically pivotal role in what the authors present.

Accordingly, both international and Iranian local RAs employed more interactional meta-discourse markers than interactive ones which, according to Abdi (2011), seem to work towards establishing a more productive interaction with the readers in academic contexts. In other words, based on the meta-discourse framework provided by Crismore et al. (1993), interpersonal meta-discourse played a more salient role than textual meta-discourse markers.

4.2 Authorial identity and citation pattern

The results showed that Iranian RAs employed more integral citation patterns to establish the authorial sense of commitment, plausibility and credibility in the process of confirming the role of the cited researcher in support of their own findings. This could be indicative of the conventional norms and contextual priorities in local academic community that encouraged the RA writers to gain credit and enhance the position of their works by concentrating more closely on the cited researchers. With respect to integral citations, verb-controlling was shown to be more common in Iranian local RAs. This could be ascribed to the strategy of referring to previous works for the purpose of advocating the authors' claims, guaranteeing their academic prestige, assigning credit to the cited researcher and avoiding plagiarism (Shooshtari & Jalilifar, 2010). Furthermore, Iranian local RAs more transparently applied naming citation pattern to synthesize their own arguments with the cited work for the purpose of establishing the essence of a strong, evidence-based, and coherent discussion of the findings. Surprisingly, a relatively similar proportion of non-citation pattern was found in both international and local RAs. This may be the consequence of the growing sensitivity of international and local reviewers to the academic unpleasantness of plagiarism and the concomitantly increasing awareness of the international and local authors to the prominence of making precise references for conforming to the strict gatekeeping protocols practiced by prestigious journals.

As another citation pattern, non-integral citations were employed more frequently in international RAs. For instance, the employment of source had a higher frequency in international discussions. This could be traced to the tendency of these authors to attribute the information to another researcher and adduce evidence for their expressed propositions which could be either supported or challenged by subsequent arguments. Furthermore, Iranian RAs used more identification citation patterns. Therefore, these authors focused more closely on the agents of argument than its core concerns. Apparently, international RAs exploited more reference by explicitly addressing the readers to refer to other sources for getting the detailed information about the argument. This condition highlighted reader-writer relationship which could bring about inter-textual dependence in deciding whether the readers need to be more responsible for capturing the whole picture of further discussion or not (Pecorari, 2006). In reflection of origin, international RAs were again one step forward in signifying the roles of the originators of theories or inventions.

In essence, "citation as an overarching feature in academic writing brings to surface those social structure variation that exist and determine the way writers shape their intentions" (Jalilifar, 2012, p.39). With more frequency of non-integral citation patterns in international RAs and more emphasis on integral citations in Iranian local RAs, the distinctive strategies for the reinforcement of authorial identity were identified. The former advocated the significance of research-based arguments and propositions in the discussion sections, whereas the latter attempted to transparently substantiate the prominence of researchers. The findings of the overall distribution of integral as well as non-integral citation patterns were consistent with those obtained by Shooshtari and Jalilifar (2010).

4.3 Sub-disciplinary variation

With relatively similar patterns of authorial identity in *Language Testing*, *Language Teaching Research*, and *Discourse Studies*, interactive meta-discourse strategies were more consistently used by English Language Teaching RAs. The higher frequency of transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, and code glosses in English Language Teaching RAs may illuminate the sub-disciplinary tendencies of coherently organizing the discoursal propositions and adequately convincing the target readers to acknowledge the significance and effectiveness of a specific methodological or skills-based instruction. Discourse Analysis RAs also addressed interactive meta-discourse strategies to navigate the readers through qualitative discourse-based studies mainly concerned with studying language-discourse-society nexus in its natural context by cogently

integrating different lines of arguments. However, Testing RAs were found to mainly use statistical data to steer the readers' comprehension of the arguments instead of employing different forms of interactive meta-discourse strategies to locate the evaluative discussion of second language testing processes, methodologies, and assessments.

In reference to interactional meta-discourse resources in representing the distinctive, intra-disciplinary authorial status, the employment of hedges and boosters enjoyed the highest frequency in Testing, English Language Teaching, and Discourse Analysis RAs. This order was reversed in specifying attitude markers. Additionally, self-mention was employed more regularly in Discourse Analysis RAs. With respect to engagement markers, English Language Teaching RAs occupied the topmost position. Overall, the most common use of interactional meta-discourse strategies was found in Discourse Analysis RAs. This tendency might conform to the epistemological assumptions and socio-cultural priorities practiced by discourse analysis studies in expressing authors' views and reflecting the close writer-reader communications through analyzing the way language is used by people in context. Testing and English Language Teaching RAs were at the next levels of using interactional meta-discourse for encouraging the writers to construct bidirectional engagements with the readers, draw their attentions, acknowledge their uncertainty, and play pivotal roles in putting them on the right track.

In characterizing the integral citation patterns, no significant difference was found at sub-disciplinary levels. However, the highest frequency of integral citations belonged to English Language Teaching RAs. Considering non-integral citation patterns, Discourse Analysis RAs had the highest frequency of source and reference, whereas English Language Teaching RAs employed more origin in contrast to their counterparts. In general, the sub-disciplinary variation of authorial presence in RAs could be more transparently demonstrated by non-integral citation patterns than integral ones. In contrast to Testing and English Language Teaching RAs, Discourse Analysis RAs had the highest frequency of integral and non-integral citation patterns. This may be associated with the exploratory, informative nature of discourse studies and their inductive reasoning which require supportive resources in literature for solidifying the authorial position.

4.4 Authorial identity in RA discussion sections: From meta-discourse markers to citation patterns

According to Hyland (1998, p.154), "It is in Discussion that authors make their claims, consider the relevance of results, and speculate about what they might mean, going beyond their data to offer the more general interpretation

by which they gain the academic credibility". In comparison of international and local RA discussion sections, it was revealed that international RAs exploited more interactional meta-discourse and non-integral citation resources, whereas their local counterparts tended to use more interactive meta-discourse and integral citation patterns. This distinction may show that Iranian authors do not properly conform to the conventional supremacy of authorial presence common among the international academic discourse community members. This could be attributed to the strict denial of the writers' transparent visibility in academic texts at post-graduate level studies, lack of explicit instruction or adequate consciousness-raising on the importance of academic writer-reader relations, specific attention to the national audience that follow the standards set by local journals' reviewers and gatekeepers, mere concentration on the genre-based, move-step patterns of RAs at the expense of ignoring the micro-level linguistic features and clear categorization of their functional properties, and the inevitable dominance of certain sociocultural orientations operationalized by academic writers in the context of Iran.

The sub-disciplinary variation in international RAs revealed itself in interactional meta-discourse and non-integral citation patterns. This may be associated with these specialized journals' sub-disciplinary orientations, communicative purposes, socialized target readers, specific writing styles, scope of investigation, qualitative and quantitative nature of studies, and final research products.

5. Conclusion, Limitation and further Research Suggestions

Hyland and Tse (2012, p.156) defined academic identity in terms of what writers do in text as the given concept is " implicated in the texts we engage in and the linguistic choices we make, thus relocating it from the private to the public sphere, and from hidden processes of cognition to its social and dynamic construction in discourse". This highlights how authorial identity is constructed under the rubrics of language, discipline, and culture (Jalilifar & Hoseini Marashi, 2011). This study illustrated the importance of authorial identity in RA discussion sections and how it is shaped by target discourse communities, contextual norms and audience expectations. In addition to its pedagogical concern with initial consciousness-raising of the writers' visibility in academic texts based on meta-discourse and citation patterns, this investigation highlighted the instruction of authorial identity perspectives in post-graduate EGP and ESP classrooms as the students at M.A. and PhD levels are in urgent need of getting familiar with research-based authorial presence conventions formed in response to their disciplinary discourse communities.

The present study was limited in its scope and generalizability level due to small sample size and intrusion of certain degree of subjectivity common in qualitative studies. This paved the way for conducting more large-scale studies on academic authorial identity in future. Future studies could specify other resources of authorial identity in RAs and determine their comparative importance along cross-disciplinary and cross-linguistic boundaries. Along this line, the phenomenon of authorial identity could be further investigated by comparatively addressing the role of distinctive resources of writers' presence in different sections of RAs. Additionally, the authorial presence could be explored in comparison of single-authored and multiple-authored RAs. Researchers could also identify the authorial identity markers in other oral or written academic events beyond the scope of RAs.

References

Abdi, R. (2011). Meta-discourse strategies in research articles: A study of differences across subsections. *Journal of Teaching Language Skills, 3*(1), 1-16.

Abdi, R., Tavangar, M., & Tavakoli, M. (2010). The cooperative principles in discourse communities and genres: A framework for the use of meta-discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics, 46*(6), 1669-1679.

Abdollahzadeh, E. (2011). Poring over the findings: Interpersonal authorial engagement in applied linguistics papers. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43*(1), 288-297.

Afros, E., & Schryer, C. F. (2009). Promotional (meta) discourse in research articles in language and literary studies. *English for Specific Purposes, 28*(1), 58-68.

Basturkmen, H. (2012). A genre-based investigation of discussion sections of research articles in Dentistry and disciplinary variation. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 11*(2), 134- 144.

Biber, D. (2006). Stance in spoken and written university registers. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 5*(2), 97-116.

Bitchener, J. (2010). *Writing an Applied Linguistics thesis or dissertation: A guide to presenting empirical research*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Charles, M. (2003). "This mystery. . .": A corpus-based study of the use of nouns to construct stance in theses from two contrasting disciplines. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 2*(4), 313-326.

Charles, M. (2006). The construction of stance in reporting clauses: A cross-disciplinary study of theses. *Applied Linguistics, 27*(3), 492-518.

Crismore, A. (1989). *Talking with readers: Meta-discourse as rhetorical act*. New York: Peter Lang.

Crismore, A., & Abdollahzadeh, E. (2010). A review of recent meta-discourse studies: The Iranian Context. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, *9*(2), 195-219.

Crismore, A., Markkanen, R., & Steffensen, M. (1993). Meta-discourse in persuasive writing: A study of texts written by American and Finnish university students. *Written Communication, 10*(1), 39-71.

Dahl, T. (2004). Textual meta-discourse in research articles: A marker of national culture or of academic discipline? *Journal of Pragmatics, 36*(10), 1807-1825.

Flowerdew, L. (1997). Interpersonal Strategies: investigating inter-language corpora. *RELC Journal*, *28*(1), 72-88.

Gao, Y., Li, l., & Lu, J. (2001). Trends in research methods in applied linguistics: China and the west. *English for specific purposes*, *20*(1), 1-14.

Gillaerts, P., & Van de Velde, F. (2010). Interactional meta-discourse in research article abstracts. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *9*(2), 128-139.

Harwood, N. (2005). We do not seem to have a theory. The theory I present here attempts to fill this gap: Inclusive and exclusive pronouns in academic writing. *Applied Linguistics*, *26*(4), 343-373.

Hewings, A., Theresa, L., & Vladimirou, D. (2010). Who's citing whose writings? A corpus- based study of citations as interpersonal resource in English medium national and English medium international journals. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *9*(2), 102-115.

Hirvela, A., & Belcher, D. (2001). Coming back to voice: The multiple voices and identities of mature multilingual writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *10(1-2)*, 83-106.

Hu, G., & Cao, F. (2011). Hedging and boosting in abstracts of applied linguistics articles: A comparative study of English- and Chinese-medium journals. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *43*(11), 2795-2809.

Hunston, S., & Thompson, G. (Eds.). (2000). *Evaluation in text: Authorial stance and the construction of discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hyland, K. (1998). Persuasion and context: The pragmatics of academic metadiscourse. *Journal of Pragmatics,30*(4),437-455.

Hyland, K. (I999a). Disciplinary discourses: writer stance in research articles. In C. Candlin & K. Hyland (Eds.). *Writing: Texts, processes and practices* (pp.99-121). London: Longman.

Hyland, K. (1999b). Talking to students: meta-discourse in introductory textbooks. *English for Specific Purposes*, *18*(1), 3-26.

Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary Discourses: Social Interactions in Academic Writing.* London: Longman.

Hyland, K. (2001). Humble servants of the discipline? Self-mention in research articles. *English for Specific Purposes, 20*(3), 207-226.

Hyland, K. (2002). Authority and invisibility: authorial identity in academic writing. *Journal of Pragmatics, 34*(8), 1091-1112.

Hyland, K. (2005a). Stance and engagement: A model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies, 6*(2), 173-191.

Hyland, K. (2005b). *Meta-discourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. London: Continuum.

Hyland, K. (2010). Community and Individuality: Performing Identity in Applied Linguistics. *Written Communication, 27*(2), 159-188.

Hyland, K. (2011). The presentation of self in scholarly life: Identity and marginalization in academic homepages, *English for Specific Purposes, 30*(4) , 286-297.

Hyland, K., & Tse, P. (2004). Meta-discourse in academic writing: A reappraisal. *Applied Linguistics, 25*(2), 156-177.

Hyland, K., & Tse, P. (2009). 'The leading journal in its field': evaluation in journal descriptions. *Discourse Studies, 11*(6), 703-720.

Hyland, K., & Tse, P. (2012). "She has received many honors": Identity construction in article bio statements. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 11*(2), 155-165.

Jalilifar, A.R. (2011). World of Attitudes in Research Article Discussion Sections: A Cross- Linguistic Perspective. *Journal of Technology & Education, 5*(3), 177-186.

Jalilifar, A.R. (2012). Academic attribution: citation analysis in master's theses and research articles in applied linguistic. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 22*(1), 23-41.

Jalilifar, A. R., & Hoseini Marashi, M. (2011). Authorial presence in single-authored research article introductions in English and Persian: A cross-disciplinary and cross-linguistic study, *ESP Across Cultures, 8*, 65-88.

Khedri, M., Heng, C.S., & Ebrahimi, S.F. (2013). An exploration of interactive meta-discourse markers in academic research article abstracts in two disciplines, *Discourse Studies, 1*5(3), 319-331.

Kim, L.K., & Lim, J.M.H. (2013). Meta-discourse in English and Chinese research article introductions, *Discourse Studies, 1*5(2), 129-146.

Lewin, B. A. (2005). Contentiousness in science: The discourse of critique in two sociology journals. *Text, 25*, 723-744.

Li, T., & Wharton, S. (2012). Meta-discourse repertoire of L1 Mandarin undergraduates writing in English: A cross-contextual, cross-disciplinary study. *English for Academic Purposes, 11*(4), 345-356.

Mansourizadeh, K., & Ahmad, U. K. (2011). Citation practices among non-native expert and novice scientific writers. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 10*(3), 152-161.

Martinez, I. A. (2003). Aspects of theme in the method and discussion sections of biology journal articles in English. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 2*(2), 103-123.

Matsuda, P. K., & Tardy, C. M. (2007). Voice in academic writing: The rhetorical construction of author identity in blind manuscript review. *English for Specific Purposes, 26*(2), 235-249.

McGrath, L., & Kuteeva, M. (2012). Stance and engagement in pure mathematics research articles: Linking discourse features to disciplinary practices. *English for Specific Purposes, 31*(3), 161-173.

Mur Duenas, P. (2011). "I/we focus on…:"A cross-cultural analysis of self-mentions in business management research articles, *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 6*(2), 143-162.

Nwogu, K.N. (1997). The medical research paper: structure and functions. *English for Specific Purposes, 16*(2), 119-138.

Parkinson, J. (2011). The discussion section as argument: The language used to prove knowledge claims. *English for Specific Purposes, 30*(3), 164-175.

Pecorari, D. (2006). Visible and occluded citation features in postgraduate second-language writing. *English for Specific Purposes, 25*(1), 4-29.

Petric, B. (2007). Rhetorical functions of citations in high- and low-rated master's theses. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 6*(3), 238-253.

Rubio, M. (2011). A pragmatic approach to the macro-structure and metadiscoursal features of research article introductions in the field of Agricultural Sciences. *English for Specific Purposes, 30*(4), 258-271.

Sheldon, E. (2009). From one I to another: Discursive construction of self-representation in English and Castilian Spanish research articles. *English for Specific Purposes, 28*(4), 251- 265.

Shooshtari, Z. G., & Jalilifar , A. R.(2010). Citation and the construction of sub-disciplinary knowledge. *Journal of Teaching Language Skills, 2*(1), 45-66.

Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swales, J.M. (2002). On models in applied discourse analysis. In C.N. Candlin (Ed.). *Research and Practice in Professional Discourse* (pp. 61-77). Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press.

Swales, J. (2004). *Research genres: Exploration and applications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tang, R., & John, S. (1999). The 'I' in identity: Exploring writer identity in student academic writing through the first person. *English for Specific Purposes, 18*(1), 23-39.

Thompson, P. (2005). Points of focus and position: Inter-textual reference in PhD theses. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 4*(4), 307-323.

Thompson, P., & Tribble, C. (2001). Looking at citations: using corpora in English for academic purposes. *Language Learning & Technology, 5*(3), 91-105.

Vande Kopple, W. J. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication, 36*, 82-93.

Warchal, K. (2010). Moulding interpersonal relations through conditional clauses: Consensus- building strategies in written academic discourse. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 9*(2), 140-150.

White, H. D. (2004). Citation analysis and discourse analysis revisited. *Applied Linguistics, 25*(1), 89-116.