



Engagement Markers in Indonesian Scholars' Academic Writing to Establish Rapport with Readers

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Abstract

This study presents a corpus-based analysis of engagement markers in applied linguistics research articles (RAs) authored by Indonesian scholars. While previous research has explored metadiscourse broadly, this investigation focuses specifically on the strategic use of interpersonal features to build reader rapport. A specialized corpus of 20 RAs (104,110 words) from four Scopus-indexed journals (2020–2024) was compiled and analyzed using a mixed-methods approach. The analysis, conducted with the *Sketch Engine* tool, applied a modified version of Hyland and Jiang's (2016) model of engagement markers. The results indicate a strong preference for knowledge-oriented engagement, with knowledge appeals being the most frequent strategy (1.59 per 1,000 words), predominantly realized through explicit markers of routine conditions. Notably, rhetorical questions were absent from the corpus. Pronominal choice revealed a distinct use of first-person plural pronouns (*we, us, our*) to foster solidarity and direct reader interpretation, while personal asides were employed to clarify arguments. In terms of directives, references to physical acts (e.g., "*see Table 3*") were markedly more common than cognitive or textual acts. These findings suggest a stylistic convention in Indonesian academic writing that prioritizes formality and collective objectivity, potentially at the expense of more direct dialogic interaction. The study concludes by offering practical pedagogical implications for academic writing instruction, suggesting that Indonesian scholars can enhance the persuasive impact and international visibility of their work by strategically diversifying their engagement strategies to foster a more involved reader dialogue.

Keywords: Academic Writing; Engagement Markers; Indonesian Scholars

Introduction

Academic writing not only conveys ideas and knowledge but also reflects the writer's perspectives and emotions, requiring the writer to interact with both the content and the readers (Almakrob, 2023). Establishing the dynamic interaction between the writer and readers in academic writing is fundamental for effective communication and successful knowledge dissemination. The writer, who is also a researcher, shows their perspective on the topic and creates interaction with their readers to increase the accessibility of their findings since research findings are rarely so obvious that everyone will automatically agree with them (Di Carlo, 2015; Hyland, 2010). Therefore, the writer must have the skill to convince the readers of the significance of the writer's arguments based on the results obtained during the research (Tikhonova et al., 2023). Linguistic instruments called engagement markers must be skillfully applied in their academic writing to build communication and transfer knowledge to the readers. These markers play a crucial role in publication success, as studies on metadiscourse in high-impact journals reveal that leading publications employ sophisticated rhetorical strategies (Aziz & Riaz, 2024).

Engagement markers are linguistic devices that concern reader-oriented alignment, achieved through reader mentions, directives, questions, knowledge appeals, and personal asides (Qiu & Jiang, 2021). The purposes of using engagement markers in academic writing can be divided into two, which are (1) inclusion and solidarity, and (2) guiding the readers (Hyland, 2019). The first goal is to make the readers feel included and connected to the topic by using words like "you" or "we" and phrases like "by the way" or "you may notice" to address the readers directly. Meanwhile, the second goal helps steer the readers through the discussion at significant moments. It includes predicting the questions readers may have and guiding them towards specific interpretations by using questions, directives (such as "see" and "consider"), and references to common knowledge.

Involving readers in discussing the subject matter is mainly done by the writers who have published their academic writing in some flagship journals indexed in reputable databases, such as Scopus or Web of Science (WoS) (El-Dakhs et al., 2024). Thus, it is essential to discover more about writer-reader interaction so that novice writers can learn the writing strategy they can apply to publish their academic writing in prestigious journals. This study investigates writer-reader interaction by examining the use of engagement markers in research articles authored by Indonesian scholars and published in Scopus-indexed applied linguistics journals affiliated with Indonesian universities. Given that Indonesian and English differ linguistically and culturally, scholars often need to adapt their rhetorical practices when writing in English (Adila, 2016; Hyland et al., 2021). Such cultural factors shape metadiscourse use, with Indonesian scholars tending to emphasize cohesion, coherence, and persuasion over direct reader engagement,

which leads to a greater reliance on interactive rather than interactional markers (Nur et al., 2021; Zahro et al., 2021). Applied linguistics journals are selected as the focus of this study because they represent the soft knowledge domain, which typically relies more on dialogic involvement compared to hard knowledge fields (Qiu & Jiang, 2021).

Applied linguistics, as a discipline, often addresses practical issues related to language use and education, requiring a high quantity of interaction with its readers. Some studies have shown that engagement markers, such as reader pronouns, personal asides, appeals to share knowledge, directives, and questions, are more prevalent in soft knowledge fields like applied linguistics compared to hard sciences since they help create a conversational tone and foster a sense of rapport with readers (Saidi & Karami, 2021). In addition, Bagherkazemi et al. (2021) stated that applied linguistic research articles, especially qualitative ones, are more concerned with expressing their stance and establishing relationships with their readers. The interpersonal emphasis of applied linguistics is further highlighted by using engagement markers in research articles to control readers' attention and reference common knowledge (Tikhonova et al., 2023).

The current study has theoretical and practical significance. First, the theoretical significance of this study is to contribute to the field of linguistics, especially in the Indonesian context, about the knowledge of writer-reader interaction used by the writers in flagship journals. Knowing how the writer interacts with readers in their academic writing using engagement markers can present new knowledge about negotiating social roles and persuade readers to accept their claims and views since academic writing is a highly specialized language (Dontcheva-Navrátilová, 2023). Second, the practical significance of this current study is to guide writers, especially novice writers, who will publish their research papers in reputable indexed journals. This practical significance is necessary for them since many researchers worldwide are increasingly expected to publish in top-tier journals for various reasons, such as getting promoted and contributing to the ranking of their universities (Diab, 2022; El-Dakhs, 2018).

Some previous researchers have studied engagement markers' roles in establishing rapport with their audiences in multimodal academic discourse. Based on their material objects, studies about engagement markers can be divided into three parts: written, spoken, and comparisons of both. In the group of written academic discourse, Hyland and Jiang (2016) analyzed engagement markers in research articles from four different disciplines: applied linguistics, sociology, electrical engineering, and biology. Jiang and Ma (2018) compared the use of engagement markers in PhD students' final reports and published research articles. Still about comparison, Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2021) compared Anglophone and Czech research articles in linguistics and economics. Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2023) also researched writer-reader interaction in master's theses of Czech students. In the same year, Tikhonova et al. (2023) compared engagement markers in the discussion section of medical and foreign language teaching research articles. Then,

Almakrob (2023) analyzed the interaction of Arab writers with their readers in research articles. Last, research on the comparison of engagement marker use in academic and popular explainers related to Covid-19 was done by Zou & Hyland (2024).

Meanwhile, a study that analyzed engagement markers in spoken academic discourse was done by Hyland and Zou (2022), who analyzed 3MT (3-Minute Thesis) presentations. Zou and Hyland (2021) compared both of them in terms of written and spoken discourse. They compared the role of engagement markers in written academic blogs and spoken 3MT (3-Minute Thesis) presentations. Most of those previous studies were conducted by foreign researchers, and their material objects were discourses produced by native English speakers or speakers of languages other than English, such as Arabic, Czech, and Hong Kong. However, there are limited or no studies focusing on engagement markers in applied linguistic research articles written by Indonesian scholars. This study, therefore, focuses on engagement markers that have been largely overlooked in previous studies and examines research articles written by Indonesian scholars as its material object, an area that remains underexplored. Through an in-depth analysis of engagement markers, this study aims to reveal how Indonesian scholars establish rapport with their readers in research articles published in prestigious journals. Based on that problem statement, two research questions can be formulated as follows:

1. What are the frequency and distribution of engagement markers in Indonesian scholars' applied linguistics articles?
2. How do the engagement markers imply the way Indonesian scholars establish rapport with readers through academic writing?

Theoretical Framework

Interactional Metadiscourse Markers

According to Hyland (2005, 2019), metadiscourse markers can be divided into two categories, which are interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers. The distinction between those types is based on their purposes: while interactive metadiscourse markers guide readers through the text, interactional metadiscourse markers are designed to engage readers with the text (Al-Subhi, 2022). Since this study explores how the writers of applied linguistic research articles in Indonesia established rapport with their readers, interactional metadiscourse markers are the appropriate analytical framework for analyzing the data.

Interactional metadiscourse has two sub-categories: stance and engagement markers (Paltridge, 2022). Stance markers consist of hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions. Engagement markers include reader pronouns, personal asides, appeals to share knowledge, directives, and questions. The concept of interactional metadiscourse can be seen in Figure 1.

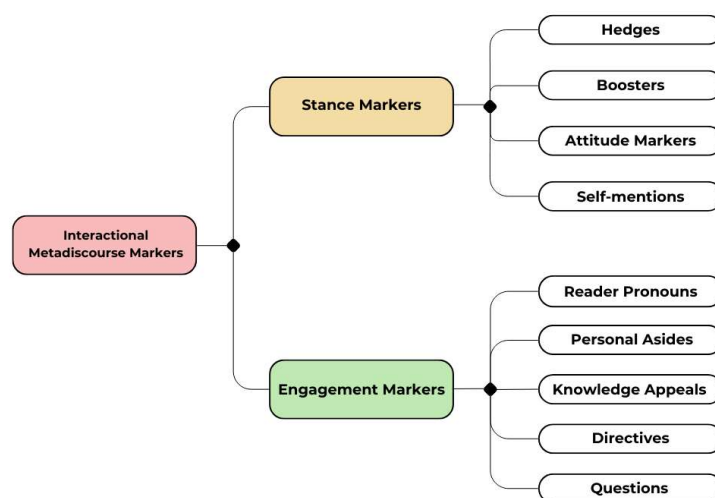


Figure 1. Interactional metadiscourse markers

Based on Figure 1 above, it can be seen that stance markers refer to how writers express their position, attitude, and commitment toward their claims, encompassing four linguistic resources: hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions. Hedges indicate uncertainty or tentativeness, boosters strengthen claims with certainty, attitude markers convey subjective evaluation or emotion, and self-mentions explicitly signal authorial presence through first-person pronouns. Meanwhile, engagement markers relate to how writers involve readers in discourse, guiding them through the text and acknowledging their presence. This category includes reader pronouns, personal asides, appeals to share knowledge, directives, and questions.

Engagement Markers

Engagement markers are tools that specifically speak to readers to direct their attention or involve them in the conversation (Hyland, 2019). These markers can be broken down into five sub-categories: (1) reader pronouns, (2) personal asides, (3) appeals to share knowledge, (4) directives, and (5) questions. According to Hyland and Zou (2022), ***reader pronouns*** are the most explicit way to bring readers into a discourse, which can be identified as shared engagement and directing interpretation. ***Personal asides*** briefly break the argument to comment on the preceding discussion. ***Appeals to share knowledge*** explicitly prompt readers to recognize specific ideas as familiar or widely accepted by drawing on tradition, logic, or common practices. ***Directives*** provide instructions to readers that guide them to (a) refer to another section of the text or an external source, (b) perform a specific action in reality, or (c) interpret an argument in a particular way. Meanwhile, ***questions*** create direct engagement by addressing readers as individuals interested in the topic and capable of following the writer's reasoning. The summary of those five engagement markers sub-categories can be viewed in

Table 1.

Table 1. Sub-categories of engagement markers		
Sub-categories	Functions	Examples
Reader pronouns	help include the reader in the discussion	• Therefore, we may conclude that • This method, however, made it easier for us to locate certain information.
Personal asides	show the writer's friendly attitude by sharing personal thoughts	• ... the target market – inside and outside Korea – which gave advantages ... • ... the teaching of reading strategies (mainly cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies) for English as a second/foreign language
Appeals to share knowledge	encourage readers to agree by referring to familiar ideas, experiences, or traditions	• ... in social communication, obviously seen in speech acts. • ... they normally think about it before teaching. • ... closely linked to problems commonly faced by EFL students.
Directives	instruct readers using commands, necessity words, or phrases highlighting the importance	• Look at the file, which contains the comprehensive results • ... the reader's prior domain knowledge should be specifically considered as well. • Thus, it is important to investigate teachers' perceptions of SET.
Questions	engage readers directly, making them part of the discussion and guiding their attention to key points	• Is it the right time to move beyond traditional grammar instruction? • Is it possible to teach someone a language without any experience?

Method

Research Design

This study employs mixed methods since the aim of this study is to analyze the role of engagement markers in applied linguistic research articles written by Indonesian scholars. Mixed methods fit with the objectives of this study since the data need to be calculated at the first stage; then, the data can be explained further to reveal detailed reasons why Indonesian scholars use metadiscourse markers in that way. That type of research design is called an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, in which the researcher conducts quantitative research, analyzes the data, and then builds on the results to explain them in more detail with qualitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Data Collection

Data analyzed in this study were taken from four prestigious journals in the applied linguistic discipline and indexed in the Scopus database (Q1-Q2). These prestigious journals are published by some universities in Indonesia; those are *International Journal of Language Education (IJoLE)* from Universitas Negeri Makassar, *Studies in English Language and Education (SiELE)* from Universitas Syiah Kuala, *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics (IJAL)* from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, and *Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia (TEFLIN) Journal* from Universitas Negeri Malang.

In total, 20 research articles were taken from those journals published between 2020 and 2024, with a total number of words in the corpus of 104,110. The 2020-2024 timeframe is justified as it provides a recent and relevant snapshot of current academic discourse, ensuring the analysis reflects the latest terminology and trends. This five-year window offers a sufficiently large and manageable corpus for robust linguistic analysis without introducing the complications of major historical shifts in language.

Focusing on this contemporary period allows for a tight, focused study on how language is used now, rather than tracking its evolution over a longer, more variable timeframe. Even though the corpus sample for each of these applied linguistic journals is small (only four articles per year), it is adequate to represent the distribution of engagement markers written by Indonesian scholars in five years since discourse features, such as metadiscourse markers, are systematic and can be generalized if the sample is strategically selected (Biber et al., 2007).

Those research articles were randomly selected by taking one article from each journal per year. All authors of these research articles were native Indonesians, as verified through (1) institutional affiliation (Indonesian universities), (2) author biographies stating Indonesian nationality, and (3) ORCID/Scopus profiles listing Indonesia as their country of origin. The reason for choosing Indonesian authors was that English is not their *lingua franca*, so they experienced two different cultural backgrounds when they wrote research articles in English. Since language

and culture are inseparably bound, Indonesian culture potentially influences how Indonesian scholars communicate in English through academic writing (Hyland et al., 2021).

Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the researchers converted the data from *.pdf* format into *.txt* format. Converting the data is to make it compatible with the corpus linguistic software. Before the researchers input the data into the corpus linguistic software, the data must be cleaned from direct quotations, such as interviewees' answers or participants' perspectives toward the subject matter. The reason for doing so is that the data analyzed must be purely from the authors' perspectives.

When the data were immaculate from direct quotations, they were input into the corpus linguistic software. This study used *Sketch Engine*, a leading text analysis tool and corpus manager software created by Adam Kilagarriff in 2003 (Sharipova, 2019). The raw data from the *Sketch Engine* corpus software were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The data were quantitatively analyzed to know the frequency of each engagement marker per 1,000 words. After knowing the frequency, the researchers analyzed the data qualitatively using content analysis. It is suitable because content analysis emerged from studies of achieved texts, allowing the researchers to conduct an inductive analysis of textual data (Tunison, 2023).

The corpus analysis has been recognized for its validity and reliability in linguistic studies. The reliability of corpus analysis relies on consistent coding and annotation, which is tested with intercoder agreement, while inter-rater reliability verifies data consistency, temporal stability, and homogeneity across contexts (Bannigan & Watson, 2009; Larsson et al., 2020; Spooren & Degand, 2010). Validity is obtained by verifying the corpus's representation of the target domain through content and construct validity, expert judgments, statistical evidence, and external and internal representativeness to properly represent discourse and linguistic variation (Bannigan & Watson, 2009; Kemp, 2024; Miller & Biber, 2015). Construct validity was strengthened by aligning marker classifications with Hyland's (2019) framework, while content validity was ensured via peer debriefing with three applied linguistics experts who reviewed the coding scheme.

Results and Discussion

The Writers' Preference of Engagement Marker Sub-categories

Based on the analysis using *Sketch Engine* corpus software, research articles written by Indonesian scholars in the applied linguistic field show various frequencies, especially in the use of engagement markers. Table 2 presents Indonesian scholars' frequency of engagement markers sub-categories (reader pronouns, personal asides, appeals to share knowledge, directives, and questions) in their academic writing.

Table 2. Frequency of engagement markers sub-categories usage

Sub-categories	Token	f/1k words
Reader pronouns	19	0.18
Personal asides	55	0.53
Appeals to share knowledge	166	1.59
Directives	104	0.99
Questions	0	0
Total	344	3.29

Congruent to Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2021), appeals to share knowledge were the most predominant sub-categories among the other ones, with 1.59 per thousand words. Both studies showed that non-native English writers predominantly used appeals to share knowledge and to engage with their readers through research articles. In the second position, Indonesian scholars preferred to use directives in their research articles, with 0.99 per thousand words. The frequency of directives in this current study was dissimilar to the findings of Tikhonova et al. (2023), who found that writers from non-English-speaking countries predominantly used directives in their linguistic research articles. Then, contrasting with the findings of Jiang & Ma (2018), which placed personal asides in the last rank, this current study presented the frequency of personal asides in third place, with 0.53 per thousand words.

Next, the frequency of reader pronouns was the fourth most frequent engagement marker, constituting 0.18 per thousand words. It differed from the findings of Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2021), which found that reader pronouns were the second most frequent engagement markers sub-category used by Czech writers in the linguistic field. Similar to the findings of Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2021) and Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2023), this study found questions in the last position among other sub-categories, with zero frequency per thousand words. In other words, Indonesian scholars did not employ any questions – especially rhetorical questions – in their research articles. Questions found in research articles written by Indonesian scholars were only research questions.

The Implication of Engagement Markers for Establishing Rapport with Readers ***(a) Reader pronouns***

Directly addressing the readers indicates that the writer acknowledges engaged audiences in their argument (Hyland & Jiang, 2016). This current study found that reader pronouns constituted 0.18 per 1,000 words, which put them in fourth place. Even though this finding was in contrast with the finding of Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2021), which found that reader pronouns were the second most frequent engagement marker sub-category used by non-native English speakers in the research articles, both findings still had similarity in the type of pronouns used. These studies revealed that first-person plural pronouns (*we/us/our*) were predominantly found in research articles instead of second-

person pronouns (*you/your*). Table 3 shows the types of reader pronouns in research articles by Indonesian scholars.

Table 3. Types of reader pronouns

Reader pronouns	Token	f/1k words
we	15	0.14
us	2	0.02
our	1	0.01
one	1	0.01
Total	19	0.18

According to Table 3, no second-person pronouns were used in applied linguistic research articles written by Indonesian scholars. Even though using second-person pronouns is the most direct way to talk to the reader, it is not common except in philosophy; thus, using inclusive first-person plural pronouns to establish a connection between the writer and the reader is preferred in academic writing (Hyland & Jiang, 2016).

In Indonesian academic writing, Indonesian scholars normally use inclusive first-person plural pronouns (*we/us/our*) as a stylistic device to build engagement and solidarity with their readers. This preference aligns with the cultural value of collectivism, where knowledge is seen as a collaborative endeavor rather than an individual pursuit. Besides, Indonesian scholars use inclusive first-person plural pronouns in academic writing following pedagogical norms within Indonesia, wherein instructors and academics prefer to address discussions as common intellectual endeavors rather than one-sided knowledge dissemination.

Reader pronouns within the corpora of this current study fulfill two primary functions, which are (1) establishing shared engagement between the writer and readers and (2) guiding the readers' interpretation of the subject matter (Hyland, 2005). From the total number of reader pronouns identified within this current study's corpora, eight were identified as shared engagement, and the other 11 were identified as those that explicitly guide readers' interpretive process. See excerpts (1) and (2) below to identify the differences.

- (1) **We** can apply cooperative learning and collaborative learning.
 (2) This lends credence to what **we** already knew to be true.

Excerpt (1) is the function of "we" to share engagement between the writer and readers because the pronoun "we" constructs the writer and readers as engaged in a mutual understanding of educational strategies. Meanwhile, excerpt (2) shows the function of "we" to direct interpretation since the pronoun "we" here leads the reader to a particular interpretation or conclusion by suggesting that the data validates an existing knowledge or view. The other reader pronouns – *us*, *our*, and *one* – can be identified as follows.

- (3) *This method, however, made it easier for **us** to locate certain information.*
- (4) *Omer and Al-Khaza'leh (2021) reminded **us** that teachers should decide to what extent a reading passage is appropriate for learners.*
- (5) *Indonesia is known to the world as a friendly nation, which adds value to foreigners and **our** diversity.*
- (6) *Last, as **one** can see, the nature of a qualitative study like the one presented here always brings conflicts on biased views and personal issues during interviews with participants.*

Excerpt (3) belongs to shared engagement because the pronoun “us” here includes the reader in the process of understanding. It implies that the reader is on the same page as the writer, experiencing the process of discovering information. However, excerpt (4) is identified as guiding readers’ interpretative process because the pronoun “us” here means the writer is reminding the reader to understand and agree with this idea. Excerpt (5) shows the possessive pronoun “our” as shared engagement since this pronoun creates a sense of shared identity and pride, showing that both the writer and reader belong to the Indonesian community and value its diversity. Last, excerpt (6) directs interpretation because “one” is used as a generalized pronoun, directing the reader to a particular understanding or conclusion that the writer is presenting. It invites the reader to view the information from a specific perspective.

(b) Personal asides

The corpora of this current study revealed some personal asides employed by Indonesian scholars in academic writing. They employed personal asides to help them add a personal voice, explain key points, and guide their readers’ understanding. These functions were congruent with the definition of personal asides initiated by Hyland & Jiang (2016), which explained that writers interrupt the ongoing discussion to offer a meta-comment on an aspect of what has been said.

Personal asides were fairly abundant in the current study’s corpora, which makes sense given that this type of link is more prevalent in disciplines like the social sciences and humanities, even though this finding contradicts that of Jiang and Ma (2018). Since these fields deal with complex and uncertain topics, writers must actively involve readers in the conversation more than in scientific writing (Hyland, 2005). In this current study, Indonesian scholars employed two styles of personal asides: personal asides using parentheses and dashes. Below are the excerpts of personal asides taken from the corpora of this study.

- (7) *The factors that influence the use of the language of speakers such as individual differences (**differences in social status and differences in age**) can also be found in the teacher and student interaction.*
- (8) *The word ‘knock’ here phonologically imitated the sound – **or onomatopoeia** – of a knocking, which was supported by the non-existing subject before it.*

Excerpt (7) shows a personal aside employed by the writer using parentheses, and excerpt (8) is an example of a personal aside with dashes. In terms of their functions, excerpt (7) offers clarification since the phrase in parentheses clarifies what is meant by “*individual differences*.” The author provides specific examples to enhance the reader’s understanding of the broader concept. This clarification helps to contextualize the factors influencing language use, making the information more accessible and comprehensible. Meanwhile, excerpt (8) provides a comment because the phrase “*or onomatopoeia*” acts as a comment that elaborates on the term “*phonologically imitated*.” This personal aside provides additional information about the discussed linguistic concept, helping readers understand the relationship between the word “*knock*” and its sound representation. By including this comment, the author enriches the explanation and invites readers to consider the significance of sound symbolism in language.

(c) *Appeals to share knowledge*

Occupying the first position or being the most predominant compared to other engagement markers sub-categories, the finding of this current study related to the use of appeals to share knowledge was in line with the finding of Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2021). The reason appeals to share knowledge used often in the linguistic field is that it helps make readers feel like they are on the same level as the writer. It creates a sense that the writer and readers are experts who understand the same ideas, methods, and rules of the field.

The data relating to appeals to share knowledge in this current study were varied. Three broad categories – logical reasoning, routine conditions, and familiarity with tradition – can be used to group these data (Hyland & Zou, 2022). Logical reasoning concerns the coherence of the argument; routine conditions concern the usual circumstances or behavior of real-world objects, and familiarity with tradition concerns usual community practices and beliefs (Hyland & Jiang, 2016). Table 4 presents the frequency of appeals to share knowledge based on those three categories.

Table 4. Frequency of appeals to share knowledge

Knowledge appeals	Token	f/1k words
Logical reasoning	19	0.18
Routine conditions	127	1.22
Familiarity with tradition	20	0.19
Total	166	1.59

Based on Table 4, it is clear that the routine conditions category is the most predominant compared to the others. This finding is congruent with the findings of Hyland & Zou (2022), who also found that the routine conditions category was the most used by authors in the social sciences. The second position was familiarity

with the tradition category, with 0.19 per thousand words, followed by the logical reasoning category, with a slight difference in number – 0.18 per 1,000 words. The excerpts of appeals to share knowledge employed by Indonesian writers can be seen as follows.

- (9) *Someone who learns a foreign language **of course** meets constraints.*
 (10) *In short, to anticipate this kind of encounter, when a teacher plans a lesson, they **normally** think about it before teaching.*
 (11) *Another way that is also **commonly** mentioned by experts is to score the students' writing twice at different times by the same scorer (intra-rater).*

Excerpt (9) belongs to the logical reasoning category since the sentence contains the phrase “*of course*.” This phrase implies that meeting constraints are a well-known and accepted aspect of foreign language learning. It suggests a shared understanding within the community of language learners or linguists that this is a typical experience. It relies on assumed knowledge about the realities of language acquisition. Excerpt (10) is an example of routine conditions. The word “*normally*” describes a standard practice or procedure in lesson planning. It refers to teachers' usual or expected behavior, suggesting that thinking about the lesson beforehand is a typical routine. Meanwhile, excerpt (11) fits familiarity with the tradition category because the word “*commonly*” implies that this method is a recognized and accepted technique within the community of experts, indicating a tradition of practice.

Indonesian scholars, especially in applied linguistics, predominantly use the routine conditions category in their research articles because Indonesian academic writing tends to focus on describing everyday behaviors and situations. It shows a cultural preference for real-life examples and things we can see happening. The routine conditions category fits this well because it describes typical circumstances. A study of Indonesian students' essays conducted by Handayani et al. (2020) found that they often use appeals to shared knowledge, including routine conditions, which suggests they like to use common knowledge to make their arguments.

(d) Directives

Directives tell readers what to do and how to perceive things in a way the author has chosen (Hyland, 2001). In this current study, directives were in the second place under appeals to share knowledge, constituting 0.99 per thousand words, because directives continue to be the commonly used strategy for engaging readers in academic writing (Hyland & Jiang, 2016). Directives in the corpora of this study are expressed through an imperative (12), a modal verb of obligation directed at the reader (13), and a predicative adjective conveying the writer's assessment of necessity or importance, followed by a *to*-clause (14):

- (12) *Both of these prominent elements follow the modified CARS model, **see** Table*

1, developed by Swales and Feak (2004).

(13) Another way is that we **must** accept that innovative culture must no longer be a luxury idea for the teachers' pedagogical development.

(14) **It is important** to explore what and how the students perceive the feedback given by the teachers.

According to Hyland (2002), directives prompt readers to perform one of three actions. They can direct them to a different section of the text or another source through **textual acts** (e.g., see Smith 1999, refer to the slide), instruct them to complete **physical acts** in the real world (e.g., open a bottle, put it in the oven), or guide them through a thought process using **cognitive acts** (e.g., note, concede, or consider). The frequency of those three acts found in applied linguistic research articles written by Indonesian scholars can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Frequency of directive acts pattern

Pattern	Token	f/1k words
Textual acts	27	0.26
Physical acts	62	0.56
Cognitive acts	15	0.14
Total	104	0.99

From Table 5, we can see that the most frequent pattern used by Indonesian scholars was physical acts, with 0.56 per thousand words. In the second position were textual acts, constituting 0.26 per 1,000 words. Then, the last one was cognitive acts, with 0.14 per 1,000 words. The excerpts of directives based on the patterns can be identified as follows.

(15) **Have a look at** the Chart 5 that contains data indicating the students sometimes practice English dialogue.

(16) Citations and references **should be organized** in American Psychological Association (APA) style, using Microsoft Word Reference Manager.

(17) As the world embraces limitless means of communication in globalized education, one **might need to think about** the strategies of a more reflective method in preparing lesson plans.

Excerpt (15) belongs to textual acts since the directive "have a look" instructs the reader to engage with a specific element within the text (Chart 5). It calls to direct their attention to a part of the document. Excerpt (16) is physical acts because this sentence directs the reader to perform a physical act in the real world, organizing the citations and references based on specified formatting. Last, excerpt (17) fits with cognitive acts as the phrase "might need to think about" directly prompts the reader to engage in a mental process. It encourages consideration and

reflection on the strategies of a reflective method.

The predominant use of physical acts in applied linguistic research articles written by Indonesian scholars can be attributed to cultural and educational factors. Indonesian academic settings strongly emphasize practical application and empirical research, leading writers to frequently instruct readers to perform specific physical actions or procedures. On the other hand, cognitive acts were the lowest pattern of directives employed by Indonesian scholars because inviting readers to develop their mental process of understanding has not been well-established in Indonesian academic culture (Ishak et al., 2021).

(e) Questions

Questions serve as engagement markers that encourage readers to participate in the discourse, guiding them toward the writer's perspective (Hyland, 2002). The writer effectively employs questions to capture readers' interest and stimulate curiosity, with most questions in the corpus being rhetorical, intended to provoke thought rather than elicit a direct response (Sahragard & Yazdanpanahi, 2017). Even though the role of questions in engaging the readers is advantageous, the corpora of this current study found that Indonesian scholars employed no rhetorical questions in writing applied linguistic research articles. The questions stated in their research articles were only research questions. This omission is noteworthy, especially considering that questions can draw readers into the discourse and encourage active participation in the presented argument.

Indonesian scholars might prioritize a formal and objective tone, perceiving direct questions as potentially informal or intrusive. Additionally, the educational context in Indonesia often emphasizes the presentation of information in a straightforward manner, which may lead to reduced use of rhetorical questions that invite reader interaction. This practice contrasts with academic writing traditions in other cultures, where engaging readers through direct questions is more common. The absence of questions as engagement markers in Indonesian applied linguistics research articles suggests a potential area for development, as incorporating such strategies could enhance reader engagement and foster a more interactive discourse.

Conclusion

This current study attempts to deepen the understanding of engagement markers in applied linguistic research articles by Indonesian scholars. Some facts related to how Indonesian scholars established rapport with their readers are revealed through the findings of this study. Indonesian scholars mostly used appeals to share knowledge in their research articles, but they never used rhetorical questions to engage with the readers in academic writing. First-person plural pronouns were the most widely used for addressing readers. Personal asides were also fairly common in academic writing, mainly to explain a subject matter or complicated terms. Regarding knowledge appeals, Indonesian scholars tended to

like using routine conditions, and in the directive sub-category, they mostly used physical acts rather than cognitive ones. These preferences for engagement markers employed by Indonesian scholars were motivated by Indonesian academic culture.

By discovering how Indonesian scholars employed engagement markers, this study enhances our understanding of academic discourse and improves scholarly communication and visibility in international academia. The findings of this study are expected to give new insights regarding academic writing in the Indonesian context so that the following published academic writing will be even better. Since this study only investigated academic writing written by Indonesian scholars in applied linguistics, future researchers are expected to conduct research on engagement markers, which is still rare in other fields of science. Future researchers can also focus on one of the engagement marker sub-categories for a better and deeper understanding. It may pave the way for more Indonesian scholars to improve their academic writing skills and publication in reputable journals.

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