Interactional stance markers in English and Arabic research articles written by Arab scholars: A comparative analytical study

Ahmed Ibrahim Alsalami
Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics - Department of Foreign Languages - Faculty of Arts and Humanities - Al-Baha University - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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Abstract: Stance-marking is a primary feature of effective academic communication, and enables writers to convey evaluation, commitment, and authorial presence. This study comparatively examines (a) interactional stance markers that are contextually warranted but unrealized in research articles written by Arab researchers across Science and Humanities and in English and Arabic, and (b) the potential rhetorical implications of their absence. The corpus comprised 60 research articles, namely, 30 in Science and 30 in Humanities, with equal English and Arabic representation. The analysis identified 490 missing stance markers. English texts contained 294 missing markers (143 in Humanities; 151 in Science), compared with 196 in Arabic (87 in Humanities; 109 in Science). Science articles accounted for more missing markers (53.1%) than Humanities articles (46.9%). Across all categories considered, hedges were the most frequently missing devices (182; 37.1%), followed by attitude markers (120; 24.5%), boosters (108; 22.0%), and self-mention (80; 16.3%). These findings demonstrate that the Science articles were more impersonal and less interactionally marked compared to the Humanities articles, a pattern that may reflect differences in disciplinary conventions. The absence of these resources resulted in less explicit expression of qualification, evaluation, commitment, and authorial presence, with potential rhetorical implications for academic discourse. The study recommends explicit instruction in stance-marking for postgraduate writers, incorporating stance features into journal evaluation criteria, and providing exposure to authentic academic models that show effective interactional resources in postgraduate academic writing.

Keywords: Arab researchers - Academic interaction - Interactional metadiscourse - Research articles - Stance markers.

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مؤشرات الموقف التفاعلي في المقالات البحثية المكتوبة باللغتين الإنجليزية والعربية من قِبل باحثين عرب: دراسة تحليلية مقارنة

أحمد بن إبراهيم السلامي
أستاذ اللغويات التطبيقية المشارك ـ قسم اللغات الأجنبية ـ كلية الآداب والعلوم الانسانية ـ جامعة الباحة ـ المملكة العربية السعودية.

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مستخلص البحث: يُعدّ التعبير عن الموقف (Stance-marking) سمة أساسية من سمات التواصل الأكاديمي الفعّال، إذ يمكّن الكتّاب من التعبير عن التقييم، ودرجة الالتزام بالمواقف والادعاءات، وإبراز حضورهم بوصفهم مؤلفين. تقارن هذه الدراسة بين: (أ) مؤشرات الموقف التفاعلي التي يقتضيها السياق ولكنها لم تتحقق لغويًا في المقالات البحثية التي كتبها باحثون عرب في مجالي العلوم والعلوم الإنسانية وباللغتين الإنجليزية والعربية، و(ب) الآثار البلاغية المحتملة لغياب هذه المؤشرات. تكوّنت المدونة البحثية من 60 مقالًا علميًا: 30 في العلوم و30 في العلوم الإنسانية، موزعة بالتساوي بين اللغتين الإنجليزية والعربية. وقد حدد التحليل 490 حالة من مؤشرات الموقف الغائبة. اشتملت النصوص الإنجليزية على 294 حالة (143 في العلوم الإنسانية و151 في العلوم)، مقارنة بـ196 حالة في النصوص العربية (87 في العلوم الإنسانية و109 في العلوم). وشكّلت المقالات العلمية نسبة أكبر من المؤشرات الغائبة (53.1%)مقارنة بمقالات العلوم الإنسانية (46.9%). وعلى مستوى الفئات، كانت أدوات التحوط (hedges) الأكثر غيابًا (182؛ 37.1%)، تلتها مؤشرات الموقف التقييمي (120) (attitude markers؛ 24.5%)، ثم أدوات التعزيز (108) (boosters؛ 22.0%)، وأخيرًا الإشارة إلى الذات (80) (self-mention؛ 16.3%). وتشير هذه النتائج إلى أن مقالات العلوم كانت أكثر تجردًا من الطابع الشخصي وأقل استخدامًا لمؤشرات الموقف التفاعلي مقارنة بمقالات العلوم الإنسانية، وهو نمط قد يعكس اختلافات في الأعراف والتقاليد الخاصة بكل تخصص. كما أدى غياب هذه الموارد إلى تعبير أقل وضوحًا عن التحفظ، والتقييم، والالتزام، والحضور الصريح للمؤلف، بما قد تترتب عليه آثار بلاغية محتملة في الخطاب الأكاديمي. وتوصي الدراسة بالتدريس الصريح لمؤشرات الموقف لطلاب الدراسات العليا، وإدراج خصائص الموقف ضمن معايير تقييم المجلات، وزيادة تعرّض طلاب الدراسات العليا لنماذج أكاديمية أصيلة توضح الاستخدام الفعّال للموارد التفاعلية في الكتابة الأكاديمية.

الكلمات مفتاحية: الباحثون العرب ـ التفاعل الأكاديمي ـ خطاب ما وراء النص التفاعلي ـ المقالات البحثية ـ مؤشرات الموقف التفاعلي.

(*) للمراسلة:
أحمد بن إبراهيم السلامي
أستاذ اللغويات التطبيقية المشارك ـ قسم اللغات الأجنبية ـ كلية الآداب والعلوم الانسانية ـ جامعة الباحة ـ المملكة العربية السعودية.
البريد الإلكتروني:
A.alslamei@bu.edu.sa

(*) **Corresponding Author**:
Ahmed Ibrahim Alsalami
Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics - Department of Foreign Languages - Faculty of Arts and Humanities - Al-Baha University - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
Email: A.alslamei@bu.edu.sa

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1. Introduction

Stance-marking of interaction plays a central role in shaping the quality and communicative effectiveness of academic writing. Scholars argue that academic texts must incorporate metadiscourse markers, since these linguistic resources enable writers to project their stance, clarify their attitudes toward claims, and guide readers through the process of argumentation (Hyland, 2004, 2005b; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Swales, 1984, 2004). As Hyland (2005b) notes, the writer's ability to employ metadiscourse effectively, so as to acknowledge, construct, and negotiate social relations, is a defining characteristic of successful academic discourse.

Over the past two decades, extensive research has examined the use, functions, and distribution of metadiscourse markers across various academic contexts, including PhD theses (Bunton, 1999), textbooks and general academic writing (Hyland, 2004), research articles (Intaraprawat & Steffensen, 1995), lecture comprehension (Pérez & Macià, 2002), and academic lectures (Thompson, 2003). Comparative studies have also explored how metadiscourse features differ across languages and disciplines, such as investigations involving English and Arab non-native writers (Al-Zubeiry, 2019), sociology and English studies (Bruce, 2010), L1 versus L2 English writers (Burneikaitė, 2008), and English and Persian academic discourse (Faghih & Rahimpour, 2009). These studies have offered valuable insights into how metadiscourse functions in academic communication and how its use varies across linguistic and disciplinary contexts.

Despite these contributions, a need remains for deeper investigation into interactional stance-marking in academic writing, particularly in English and Arabic research articles written by Arab scholars. While previous studies have examined stance and metadiscourse across different languages, disciplines, and genres, limited attention has been given to how interactional stance markers are used, or omitted, across languages and disciplinary domains. Hyland (2005b) argues that stance-marking plays an important role in expressing the writer's position, evaluation, and relationship to claims. To address this gap, this study aims to: (a) examine and compare patterns of contextually warranted stance absence across disciplines in research articles written by Arab researchers in both English and Arabic; and (b) consider the potential rhetorical implications of such absence for the expression of qualification, commitment, evaluation, and authorial presence. Guided by these aims, the study addresses the following research questions.

1. Which interactional stance markers are contextually warranted but unrealized in research articles written by Arab researchers across disciplines (Science and Humanities) and languages (English and Arabic)?
2. What are the potential rhetorical implications of contextually warranted stance absence in English and Arabic research articles written by Arab researchers?

In line with Hyland's (2005b) call for a model of interpersonal discourse that integrates linguistic features essential to persuasive academic communication, the present study adopts Hyland's stance and engagement model as its analytical framework, focusing specifically on stance. This model has been widely used in applied linguistics research due to its clarity, comprehensiveness, and effectiveness in capturing authorial voice and evaluative positioning (Abdi et al., 2010; Al-Zumor, 2021; Çandarli et al., 2015; Sayah & Hashemi, 2014).

2. Literature review

2.1 Stance and interaction in academic writing

Academic writing is no longer viewed as a neutral or purely objective mode of communication; rather, it is increasingly understood as a persuasive and socially situated practice. In this regard, Ken Hyland (2005b) contends that academic writing functions as "a persuasive endeavor that entails social interaction between writers and their potential readers/ audience" (p. 173). This perspective challenges the traditional assumption of impersonality in academic discourse and highlights its inherently interactive character. From this standpoint, academic writing is understood as a space where meaning is constructed through writer-reader interaction rather than simply transmitted as fixed information. Within this interactional view, successful academic persuasion depends on the writer's capacity to engage readers through strategic language use. An effective academic text is therefore expected to show sensitivity to audience expectations and potential interpretive responses. As Hyland (2005b,

p. 173) further notes, a "successful academic text displays the writer's awareness of both its readers and its consequences." Persuasive academic writing involves not only argument construction but also careful management of reader interpretation and response. In this framework, writers must employ linguistic resources that construct authorial stance and support engagement with readers, as these interactional features play a fundamental role in shaping writer-reader relationships and are widely recognized as essential components of academic communication (Al-Zumor, 2021; Alotaibi & Arabi, 2020).

A substantial body of research has extensively demonstrated that writers and speakers use various linguistic resources to express evaluation, attitude, and judgment in academic discourse. These resources have been described in different but related terms across the literature, reflecting diverse theoretical traditions. For example, they are referred to as appraisal (Martin, 2000; White, 2003), attitude (Halliday, 1994), epistemic modality (Hyland, 1998), evaluation (Hunston & Thompson, 2000), metadiscourse (Crismore, 1989; Hyland & Tse, 2004), stance (Biber & Finegan, 1989; Hyland, 1999; Johnstone, 2009), and writer identity (Ivanič, 1998; Hyland, 2002; Sanderson, 2008). Despite this terminological diversity, there is a strong consensus that these frameworks share a common focus on how linguistic choices reflect writers' beliefs, values, and evaluative positions. They explain how such choices enable writers to negotiate and sustain interpersonal relationships with their readers. Shen and Tao (2021, pp. 1-2) state: "their common interests are to explore how linguistic devices reflect authors' beliefs and values and help authors establish effective interpersonal relationships with their readers."

2.2 Stance and engagement in academic writing

The representation of interpersonal relationships in writing has been widely investigated in two influential traditions: Systemic Functional Linguistics and social constructionist approaches (Hyland, 2005b). These perspectives strongly emphasize that academic discourse is shaped by social, cultural, and institutional contexts, rather than as an autonomous or purely objective system. Accordingly, writers' linguistic choices are understood as socially motivated, especially in the way they construct relationships with readers while presenting and evaluating their claims. From this viewpoint, academic writers actively use linguistic resources to establish interpersonal connections, particularly when commenting on their propositions and aligning their texts with audience expectations (Hyland, 2005b). Within Systemic Functional Linguistics, Martin's (2000) appraisal framework is widely regarded as a comprehensive model for describing evaluative language in English. It aims to explain how writers express evaluation, adopt stances, construct authorial identity, and manage interpersonal positioning within discourse (Wei et al., 2015, p. 235).

However, Ken Hyland (2005b) critiques this framework, noting that it does not fully account for "how far these resources are used in certain registers and to what extent they are realized having specific meanings in given contexts of use" (p. 175). In other words, although appraisal theory provides a useful descriptive foundation, it does not sufficiently capture variation across disciplines and genres in actual academic practice.

To address this limitation, Hyland (2005b) developed a more context-sensitive model of evaluative discourse, grounded in empirical analysis rather than in purely theoretical categorization. Drawing on a corpus of 240 research articles across eight disciplines, he examined how academic writers express stance and construct relationships with readers in authentic academic contexts. Based on his findings, he proposed a dual framework in which writer-reader interaction is analyzed through two main dimensions: stance and engagement. This model has since become a central reference point for the analysis of interactional features in academic discourse.

2.3 Model of analysis

Ken Hyland (2005b) defines "stance" as the writer-oriented dimension of interaction, referring to the ways in which writers present themselves in the text and express their judgments, commitments, and evaluations toward propositions and readers. Stance thus reflects how authors position themselves in relation to the content they present, thus shaping the interpretive frame through which readers understand academic claims.

In contrast, engagement is described as the reader-oriented dimension of interaction, which concerns how writers directly involve and address readers in the discourse. It denotes the linguistic strategies used to establish a relationship with the audience and guide them toward particular interpretations of the text (Hyland, 2005b). Hyland's interactional framework thus presents academic writing as a dialogic space in which meaning is negotiated between writers and readers.

The overall structure of the model is illustrated in Figure 1, which presents the key resources of academic interaction (Hyland, 2005b, p. 177).

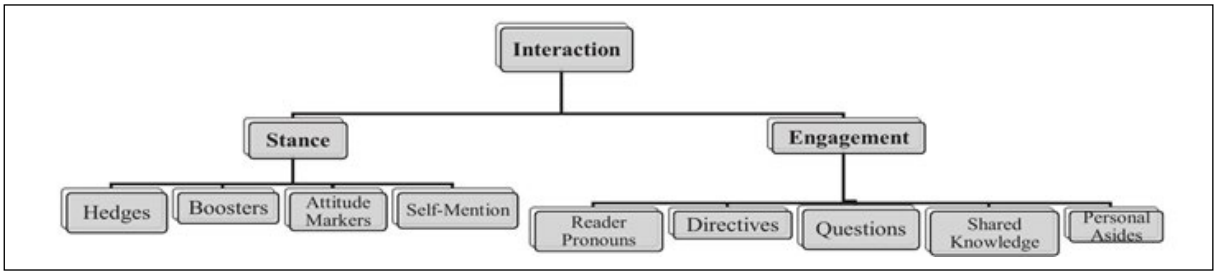

Figure 1. Key resources of academic interaction (Hyland, 2005b, p. 177).

In line with the analytical focus of the present study, attention is directed specifically to stance-marking as a writer-oriented dimension of interaction. Engagement features are therefore not included in the scope of analysis. Engagement resources refer to textual strategies for addressing readers, whereas actual reader engagement refers to readers' responses and is not measured in this study. The analysis focuses primarily on the absence of stance markers and their potential rhetorical implications for the text. Stance is operationalized through four main categories: hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mention.

Hedges are linguistic resources, such as possible, might, and perhaps that signal tentativeness and reduce the writer's level of commitment to a proposition, thus allowing room for alternative interpretations. Boosters, in contrast, include items such as clearly and obviously, which express strong certainty and reinforce the author's commitment to claims. Attitude markers such as interesting or important are used to convey the writer's evaluative stance and affective judgment toward propositions, highlighting notions such as significance, surprise, or agreement. Finally, self-mention refers to the explicit or implicit presence of the writer in the text through first-person format, such as I, we, or the researcher, thus indicating the degree of authorial visibility and personal involvement in the argument (Hyland, 2005a, 2005b).

2.4 Previous studies on interactional stance-marking

2.4.1 Contextual variation in interactional stance-marking

A considerable body of research has examined interactional stance-marking across a range of academic and institutional contexts, showing that the use of stance resources is shaped by factors such as disciplinary conventions, genre expectations, educational settings, and communicative purposes. These studies collectively suggest that stance-marking is a central feature of academic communication and that its realization varies according to the contextual demands of specific discourse communities.

Early work by Hyland and Milton (1997) examined the writing of British and Chinese students in English examination scripts. It showed that hedges and boosters play a significant role in expressing epistemic certainty and uncertainty. Their findings showed that non-native writers often face difficulties in appropriately controlling stance resources, which may weaken the effectiveness of academic argumentation. Similarly, Bunton (1999) emphasized the importance of authorial presence in academic writing, arguing that self-representation contributes to the organization of arguments and to the guidance of reader interpretation. Afzaal et al. (2025) more recently found that the use of stance markers varied according to writing proficiency among Saudi EFL learners, with novice writers

overusing self-mentions and more advanced writers relying more heavily on modal hedges. These findings underline the developmental nature of stance construction in academic writing.

Research has further shown that disciplinary conventions shape the distribution and functions of stance markers. Sayah and Hashemi (2014) examined stance and engagement across sociology, linguistics, and education and found that disciplinary norms strongly shape rhetorical choices. Their results showed that both the frequency and the type of stance markers reflect the communicative expectations of individual disciplines. Similar findings were reported by Babaii et al. (2015), who investigated stance-marking in English research abstracts and found that disciplinary conventions shape how writers construct interpersonal meanings and authorial stances. Likewise, Qomariana and Soetama (2021) examined stance markers in English research articles written by Indonesian scholars across the social science and science disciplines. Their qualitative analysis of sixteen journal articles showed that social science writers employed stance markers more extensively than science writers, whereas self-mention was the least frequently used stance category.

In addition to disciplinary variation, stance-marking has been widely investigated across different academic and institutional genres. Moini and Salami (2015) analyzed journal author guidelines and found that interactional metadiscourse resources are systematically embedded in academic publishing discourse. They argued that such resources play a key role in ensuring clarity and guiding authors in academic communication. Studies of book reviews have likewise underlined the evaluative nature of academic genres. For example, Nayernia and Ashouri (2019) found that writers frequently employ stance resources to express judgment and critical evaluation, while Hyland (2004) showed that book review writers rely on evaluative and interactional features to convey criticism, appreciation, and disciplinary values while engaging readers.

Comparable findings have been reported in other institutional contexts. Diani (2009) showed that university promotional texts make extensive use of interpersonal resources to establish credibility and to foster positive relationships with intended audiences. More recently, Riansih et al. (2025) investigated interactional metadiscourse in Indonesian and international EFL and ESL textbooks and found variation in the distribution of interactional resources, namely hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions. Their findings further emphasize the role of stance-related features in facilitating writer-reader interaction and enhancing communicative effectiveness across educational materials.

These studies demonstrate that interactional stance-marking is not confined to a single genre, discipline, or educational setting. Instead, the use of stance resources varies according to contextual factors such as disciplinary affiliation, genre conventions, communicative goals, and writers' levels of experience. The findings collectively highlight the importance of stance-marking as a flexible interpersonal resource through which writers construct authority, express evaluation, and negotiate relationships with their audiences across various academic contexts.

2.4.2 L1 vs L2 Academic writing and cross-linguistic variation

A substantial body of research has examined differences between native and non-native academic writing with respect to stance-marking. Hyland and Milton (1997) found that nativeness significantly influences the use of hedges and boosters, particularly in the expression of certainty and uncertainty. Darwish (2019) similarly reported that British MA students used more hedges and attitude markers than their Egyptian counterparts in the discussion sections of their theses, indicating a stronger orientation toward caution, evaluation, and rhetorical balance. Comparable findings were reported by Messabhia (2020), who examined the use of stance markers in the literature review sections of research articles written by native (British) and non-native (Algerian) English writers. The findings showed that non-native writers used fewer stance markers than native writers, indicating a more limited awareness of their rhetorical functions in academic argumentation. Similarly, Barbara et al. (2024) found that non-native engineering students employed significantly fewer approximative hedges, self-mentions, evidential verb hedges, and boosters than native English-speaking students, pointing to differences in the construction of academic stance and authorial presence. Taymaz (2021) conducted a corpus-based comparison of hedges and boosters in

MA theses and PhD dissertations written by Turkish EFL students. The findings showed that PhD writers used more boosters. In contrast, MA students relied more on hedges, indicating that greater academic experience is associated with stronger confidence and authorial commitment in academic writing.

Cross-linguistic differences have also been reported in comparisons of English and Arabic academic discourse. Mohamed (2019) examined metadiscourse markers in English and Arabic linguistic research articles and found that Arabic research articles employed a higher overall frequency of metadiscourse resources than English articles. The study further showed that interactive markers outnumbered interactional markers in both corpora, pointing to a stronger emphasis on textual organization and coherence than on interpersonal positioning. Mohamed attributed these differences to cultural and rhetorical variation in academic writing practices. Evidence from non-academic genres also indicates systematic cross-linguistic variation in stance construction. Alghazo et al. (2024) compared English and Arabic newspaper editorials using Hyland's stance framework and found notable differences in the distribution of stance markers. The English editorials relied primarily on hedges, whereas the Arabic editorials used attitude markers and boosters more frequently, showing a stronger preference for explicit evaluation and certainty. These findings suggest that linguistic and cultural conventions shape how writers construct authorial stance across languages.

Similar findings were reported by Al-Rickaby (2020), who investigated stance and engagement markers in English and Arabic newspaper opinion articles. Although the overall frequency of interpersonal resources was comparable across the two corpora, English writers used more hedges, whereas Arabic writers relied more heavily on boosters. The study further reported that self-mentions formed the most frequent stance category in both languages, underlining the role of authorial presence in persuasive discourse. Further evidence of cross-linguistic variation has been reported in studies of interactive metadiscourse. Ahmed and Rezk (2025, 2026) found that the Arabic argumentative texts contained more code glosses and frame markers than comparable English texts. Their findings indicate that Arabic writers tend to use more explicit rhetorical guidance and elaboration, whereas English writers favor more concise and implicit organizational choices. These studies indicate that differences between English and Arabic writing extend beyond stance markers to broader metadiscourse practices.

Similar patterns have been reported among Arab academic writers. Al-Zubeiry and Assaggaf (2023) and Sanosi and Mohammed (2024) reported a limited and imbalanced use of interactional resources among Arab academic writers, indicating that challenges in the deployment of stance-related features may affect writer-reader interaction and interpersonal positioning in academic discourse. These findings further support the view that the writers' linguistic and educational experiences shape their ability to construct effective interpersonal relationships with readers in academic texts. Comparable evidence was reported by Alia and Jomaa (2023), who found that Arab EFL postgraduates showed limited familiarity with modality markers and with appropriate linguistic conventions for expressing authorial stance in thesis writing, pointing to challenges in the construction of an effective academic voice. Al-Zubeiry (2019) additionally found that native English researchers used a wider range of interactional resources in a corpus of forty scientific research articles than Arab researchers.

Beyond linguistic background, recent studies indicate that stance construction is also shaped by writers' level of expertise and academic culture. Hamdan and Ahmad (2023) found that novice scientific writers used stance resources less strategically than expert writers, underlining the role of hedges, boosters, and self-mention in constructing authorial voice. Dontcheva-Navratilova et al. (2025) similarly found that the use of self-mention and hedging varied according to both academic culture and level of expertise, with published research articles showing greater writer visibility and more developed interactional metadiscourse practices than learner writing. Collectively, these studies indicate that linguistic background, academic culture, and writing expertise play a significant role in shaping stance construction in academic writing.

The observed differences in stance construction may reflect the impact of educational experiences, disciplinary conventions, feedback practices, and writers' self-efficacy beliefs in academic writing (Hyland, 2004, 2011; Hyland & Hyland, 2006;

Pajares, 2003). Non-native writers, in particular, may prioritize propositional clarity over interpersonal positioning, which can result in a reduced use of evaluative and stance-marking resources (Hyland, 2005b; Lee & Casal, 2014), whereas recent work also points to variation in the use of metadiscourse markers across different research genres and methodologies (Bagherkazemi et al., 2022). This tendency may reflect differences in academic socialization and the extent to which interactional meanings are explicitly taught in second-language writing contexts (Bunton, 1999; Casanave, 2002; Tardy, 2009).

Further evidence of the challenges associated with stance construction in L2 academic writing was provided by Raissi and El-Khatib (2018), who examined evidential marking in the literature review sections of MA theses in the field of linguistics. Their findings showed uneven competence in the use of evidential strategies, with students showing greater proficiency in reporting and inferential markers than in sensory and belief-based markers. These findings indicate that challenges in stance construction may extend beyond hedging and boosting to broader forms of epistemic positioning in academic discourse.

Overall, previous studies indicate that stance-marking is shaped not only by linguistic competence but also by pedagogical, cultural, and social factors, including writers' engagement with disciplinary communities and their academic learning trajectories (Hyland, 2004, 2019). Collectively, the literature shows that interactional stance-marking is shaped by disciplinary conventions, genre expectations, and linguistic background. A critical review of the literature, however, reveals a significant gap in studies of English and Arabic research articles written by Arab scholars. However, some studies have compared English and Arabic discourse (e.g., Mohamed, 2019; Alghazo et al., 2024; Al-Rickaby, 2020). They have focused either on different linguistic groups or on non-academic genres. As a result, limited attention has been given to interactional stance-marking across English and Arabic research articles and across disciplinary domains such as science and humanities. The present study, therefore, addresses this gap through a comparative analysis of interactional stance-marking in English and Arabic academic writing. Examining contextually warranted but unrealized stance opportunities, this study extends previous frequency-based research beyond markers that are explicitly present in academic texts.

3. Methods

3.1 Corpus of the study

This study examines how Arab researchers employ interactional stance markers in academic writing, following Hyland's (2005b) framework of four categories: hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mention. The corpus comprised 60 research articles (30 from Science and 30 from Humanities), with each disciplinary group equally divided between English and Arabic (15 articles each). This balanced cross-disciplinary and cross-linguistic sampling enabled comparison of stance-marking across Science and Humanities and between English and Arabic academic writing produced by Arab researchers.

Articles were selected based on three primary criteria: publication between 2020 and 2024, a comparable amount of text for analysis, and publication in non-highly-indexed journals (excluding SCI/Scopus). The latter criterion was intended to reduce the potential influence of extensive linguistic editing and reviewer-driven revision on the authors' original rhetorical choices. To maintain reasonable quantitative comparability across the English and Arabic corpora, approximately 2,800-3,000 words were analyzed from each article. The analysis focused on sections and passages in which authorial voice was typically present or contextually warranted, including the Abstract, Analysis, Results, Discussion, Conclusion, and Implications sections. Relevant passages elsewhere in the articles were also examined when they contained, or were contextually warranted to contain, expressions of stance.

3.2 Procedure of data analysis

The study employed a descriptive-analytic procedure to assess the absence of interactional stance markers in the corpus. Each of the 60 articles was read and analyzed manually, with the analysis focusing on sections and passages in which authorial voice was present or contextually warranted. The aim was to identify contextually warranted but unrealized stance opportunities across the corpus.

The analysis followed Hyland's (2005b) model of interactional stance markers, which includes four subcategories.

1. Hedges (e.g., *might, may, possible, perhaps* / قد، ربما، من المحتمل)
2. Boosters (e.g., *clearly, obviously* / بوضوح، من الواضح)
3. Attitude markers (e.g., *interestingly, importantly* / من المثير للاهتمام، من المهم)
4. Self-mention (e.g., *I, we, my, our* / أنا، نحن، أرى، نقترح)

Since the corpus included articles written in both English and Arabic, the analysis applied equivalent stance categories to both languages. Arabic forms that were functionally parallel to English stance markers were identified and matched to Hyland's taxonomy to ensure methodological consistency.

In this study, a missing stance marker refers not to a grammatically obligatory item but to a contextually warranted yet unrealized stance opportunity. The sentence or clause served as the unit of analysis. A case was coded only when the context clearly warranted qualification, commitment, evaluation, or authorial positioning, but the corresponding stance meaning was not explicitly realized (Hinkel, 2004; Hyland, 2005a). The possibility of inserting a marker alone was insufficient for coding. Each case was assigned to its primary rhetorical function. Ambiguous cases without sufficient contextual evidence were excluded. For example, an unqualified interpretive claim was coded when its context clearly warranted epistemic qualification. In contrast, a factual or descriptive statement was not coded merely because a hedge could be inserted. To enhance coding consistency, two Assistant Professors specializing in Applied Linguistics, both bilingual in English and Arabic and each with more than eight years of experience, independently reviewed a sample of the identified cases using the same analytical criteria. Any difference in classification was discussed until a consensus was reached.

In Arabic, self-mention was identified functionally and included first-person reference realized through verbal morphology, even when no independent pronoun was present. Evaluative items, such as significantly, were classified as attitude markers only when their contextual function expressed the writer's evaluation rather than a technical or statistical meaning.

All identified instances were subsequently classified into the four stance categories and counted across both disciplines and languages. This procedure enabled a systematic comparison of stance-marker absence between English and Arabic texts and between the Science and Humanities disciplines. The reported frequencies represent contextually warranted but unrealized stance opportunities rather than the overall frequency of realized stance markers in the corpus.

4. Results and Discussions

This section presents the findings and discussion in relation to the study's two research questions. It first examines the frequencies and distribution of missing stance markers across disciplines and languages. Then it considers their potential rhetorical implications for expressing certainty, evaluation, authorial presence, and rhetorical positioning. The findings illustrate patterns of absence of stance markers in the interpersonal dimension of Arab scholars' academic writing.

4.1 Analysis of stance-marking of interaction across disciplines and languages

This section addresses the first research question by examining missing stance markers, namely hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mention, in Arab researchers' academic writing. It compares their absence across the English and Arabic research articles in the Science and Humanities disciplines. The findings reveal variation in the absence of stance markers across disciplinary and linguistic contexts.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of stance marker lack by discipline (Humanities vs Science) within the same language

Discipline	**Science**		**Humanities**		**Total**	
language	**English**		**English**			
Stance Markers	**Freq.**	**Per%**	**Freq.**	**Per%**	**Freq.**	**Per%**
Hedges	48	31.78	64	44.75	112	38.09
Boosters	29	19.20	33	23.07	62	21.08
Attitude Markers	46	30.46	27	18.88	73	24.82
Self-Mention	28	18.54	19	13.28	47	16.00
Total	151		143		294	
Percentage	**51.40%**		**48.60%**		**100%**	

Discipline	**Science**		**Humanities**		**Total**	
language	**Arabic**		**Arabic**			
Stance Markers	**Freq.**	**Per%**	**Freq.**	**Per%**	**Freq.**	**Per%**
Hedges	37	33.95	33	37.94	70	35.71
Boosters	24	22.02	22	25.28	46	23.47
Attitude Markers	29	26.6	18	20.69	47	23.98
Self-Mention	19	17.43	14	16.09	33	16.84
Total	109		87		196	
Percentage	**55.61%**		**44.39%**		**100%**	

As shown in Table 1, the English corpus contained 294 instances of missing stance markers, whereas the Arabic corpus contained 196 instances. These figures suggest a greater tendency toward stance marker omission in English academic writing. This overall underuse indicates that Arab researchers tend to minimize expressions of evaluation, commitment, and authorial presence. These findings are in line with the observations of Hyland and Milton (1997), who reported that non-native academic writers often find it difficult to signal certainty and evaluation effectively. Similarly, Al-Zubeiry (2019) and Darwish (2019) found that Arab researchers employ fewer interactional resources than their native-English counterparts.

In the English corpus, Science accounted for 51.40 percent of the missing markers, compared with 48.60 percent in Humanities; in the Arabic corpus, Science accounted for 55.61 percent, while Humanities accounted for 44.39 percent. This disciplinary variation may reflect differences in academic conventions. For instance, Hyland (2004) found that scientific discourse tends to employ fewer interactional devices than soft fields such as applied linguistics. Humanities writing, in contrast, often involves greater interpretation and evaluative positioning (Hyland, 2011). Overall, the patterns observed here may therefore be associated with both disciplinary and linguistic conventions. This interpretation is broadly consistent with Mohamed (2019), who reported cross-linguistic variation in the use of metadiscourse resources between English and Arabic research articles. The findings are also in agreement with recent research on variation in stance construction (Afzaal et al., 2025; Barbara et al., 2024; Hamdan & Ahmad, 2023; Dontcheva-Navratilova et al., 2025).

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of stance marker lack by language (Arabic vs English) within the same discipline

Discipline	Science				Total	
language	English		Arabic			
Stance Markers	Freq.	Per%	Freq.	Per%	Freq.	Per%
Hedges	48	31.78	37	33.95	85	32.70
Boosters	29	19.20	24	22.02	53	20.38
Attitude Markers	46	30.46	29	26.60	75	28.85
Self-Mention	28	18.54	19	17.43	47	18.07
Total	151		109		260	
Percentage	**58.08%**		**41.92%**		**100%**	
Discipline	**Humanities**				**Total**	
language	**English**		**Arabic**			
Stance Markers	**Freq.**	**Per%**	**Freq.**	**Per%**	**Freq.**	**Per%**
Hedges	64	44.75	33	37.94	97	42.17
Boosters	33	23.07	22	25.28	55	23.91
Attitude Markers	27	18.88	18	20.69	45	19.57
Self-Mention	19	13.28	14	16.09	33	14.35
Total	143		87		230	
Percentage	**62.17%**		**37.83%**		**100%**	

Table 2 shows that, in the Science discipline, the total number of missing stance markers reaches 260 instances, of which 151 occur in English texts and 109 in Arabic. This means that English Science articles account for 58.08% of all missing markers in this discipline, whereas Arabic Science articles account for 41.92%. A similar pattern emerged in the Humanities, where the total number of missing stance markers is 230, with 143 instances found in English articles and 87 in Arabic. Thus, English Humanities texts show 62.17% of the missing markers, compared with 37.83% in Arabic. These findings indicate that Arab scholars writing in English tend to adopt a more impersonal and informational style, with fewer interpersonal resources, than when writing in Arabic.

The disciplinary pattern may also reflect differences in academic genre conventions. Science articles, with 260 missing instances overall, show a greater absence of stance markers than Humanities articles (230). This finding is consistent with Hyland's (2004) observation that scientific discourse often favors more impersonal forms of expression associated with empirical reporting. By contrast, Humanities writing often involves greater interpretation and evaluative positioning (Hyland, 2011). These results suggest a possible association between disciplinary conventions and the absence of stance markers rather than a direct causal relationship. The higher number of missing markers in English also indicates a greater absence of stance in the English texts examined here, consistent with findings by Hyland and Milton (1997), Al-Zubeiry (2019), and Darwish (2019).

4.2 Rhetorical Implications of Stance-Marker Absence

This section addresses the second research question by examining the rhetorical implications of the absence of stance markers in English and Arabic research articles. The analysis focuses on how such absence relates to the expression of certainty, evaluation, and authorial presence. It is organized around the four stance-marking categories proposed by Hyland (2005b): hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mention.

4.2.1 Hedges

Hedges signal a writer's degree of commitment to a claim. As Hyland (1995, p. 34) notes, they allow writers to "acknowledge the reader's role in ratifying claims," thus softening assertions and inviting dialogue.

Table 1 shows that hedges are the most frequently missing stance marker. In the English texts, they were absent 112 times (64 in Humanities and 48 in Science), accounting for 38.09% of all missing stance markers. This finding supports previous studies (Al-Zubeiry & Assaggaf, 2023; Al-Mudhaffari et al., 2020; Messabhia, 2020), which reported that non-native writers often produce unhedged claims in their academic writing. In Arabic texts, hedges are absent 70 times (33 in Humanities and 37 in Science), representing 35.71% of all missing stance markers. The Humanities texts showed a greater absence of hedges, despite their reliance on evaluative and interpretive argumentation, which typically requires hedging in order to manage uncertainty (Hyland, 2004).

Table 2 compares the absence of hedging across languages within each discipline. In Science, 85 hedges are missing (32.70% of all missing stance markers), including 48 in English texts (31.78%) and 37 in Arabic texts (33.95%). In the Humanities, 97 hedges are missing (42.17%), including 64 in English (44.75%) and 33 in Arabic (37.94%). Across both disciplines, the English texts consistently showed more missing hedges than the Arabic texts. These findings are generally consistent with Hyland's (2004) observation of disciplinary variation in the use of hedging devices.

Tables 1 and 2 indicate a systematic lack of hedges across languages and disciplines, with English texts showing the highest overall absence. This disciplinary variation is consistent with Hyland's (2004) distinction between scientific and Humanities writing, in which argument-driven fields typically require greater qualification of claims. In line with Hyland's (2005b) framework, the following sections examine three hedging subtypes, namely lexical verbs, modal verbs, and epistemic devices. This finding supports Al-Zubeiry and Assaggaf's (2023) observation that Arab non-native English writers often lack stance markers.

Drawing on Hyland's (2005b) classification, hedges can be grouped into three subtypes: lexical verbs (e.g., suggest (يقتـرح), appear (يبـدو), and seem (يبـدو كأنّ)), modal verbs (e.g., may (قـد), might (ربمـا), and could (يمكـن أن), and epistemic devices (e.g., likely (مـن المحتمـل), probably (علـى الأرجـح), and approximately (تقريبًـا)). The subsequent sections examine these subtypes and their role in expressing degrees of certainty and interpretive flexibility in English and Arabic research articles.

- **Lexical verbs**

Lexical verbs are central hedging devices in academic discourse. Verbs such as suggest (يقتـرح), appear (يبـدو), indicate (يشـير), and seem (يبـدو كأنّ) enable writers to present claims tentatively and to acknowledge the need for further interpretation or verification (Hyland, 1995).

The present analysis shows that Arab researchers writing in both English and Arabic often omit lexical-verb hedges when they present findings or generalizations. This absence results in more categorical formulations with less explicit qualification. Consider the following English Examples (1) and (2), and Arabic Examples (3) and (4) drawn from the corpus.

The present analysis shows that Arab researchers writing in both English and Arabic often omit lexical-verb hedges when they present findings or generalizations. This absence results in more categorical formulations with less explicit qualification. Consider the following English Examples (1) and (2), and Arabic Examples (3) and (4) drawn from the corpus.

(1) The implementation of digital assessment increases learner motivation in EFL classrooms. (Humanities, article 4)

(2) The treatment inhibits bacterial growth in infected samples. (Science, article 9)

Both statements above present categorical claims that convey absolute certainty. These arguments could be softened by adding hedging verbs that convey a sense of tentativeness, for instance:

(1)a The implementation of digital assessment seems to increase learner motivation in EFL classrooms.

(2)a The treatment appears to inhibit bacterial growth in infected samples.

Arabic examples drawn from the corpus, with their English translations (ET).

(3) يؤثر الخطاب الإعلامي بشكل مباشر على تشكيل الرأي العام في المجتمعات العربية . (Humanities, article 13)
(3) ET: Media discourse directly influences the formation of public opinion in Arab societies.

(4) يفسر العلماء ظاهرة الاحتباس الحراري بأنها نتيجة مباشرة لزيادة انبعاثات الغازات الدفيئة . (Science, article 8)
(4) ET: Scientists explain global warming as a direct result of increased greenhouse gas emissions.

Both Arabic statements above convey strong, definitive claims. Adding hedging lexical verbs, however, would make the claims more tentative. The revised examples are presented below.

(3)b تشير الدراسات إلى أن الخطاب الإعلامي يؤثر بشكل مباشر على تشكيل الرأي العام في المجتمعات العربية.
(3) ET: Studies indicate that media discourse directly influences the formation of public opinion in Arab societies.
(4)b يفسر العلماء ظاهرة الاحتباس الحراري بأنها تبدو أنها ناتجة عن زيادة انبعاثات الغازات الدفيئة .
(4) ET: Scientists argue that global warming appears to result from increased greenhouse gas emissions.

Lexical-verb hedges enable writers to present claims cautiously while maintaining their argumentative force. Their recurring absence in the corpus indicates that Arab writers across both languages and disciplines tend to favor more assertive formulations. This finding is in line with Hyland's (2005b) account of hedging as a means of balancing commitment with openness to alternative interpretations.

- **Modal verbs**

Modal verbs such as may (قد), might (ربما), could (يمكـن أن), and would (مـن الممكـن أن) are frequently used in academic discourse to express caution, probability, or limitation. They enable writers to soften categorical statements and to signal awareness that their claims are subject to interpretation rather than presented as facts. As Hyland (1998) points out, modals are vital for constructing an authorial stance that balances authority with scholarly humility.

The analysis of the present corpus shows that many Arab researchers writing in English and Arabic omit these modal markers, opting instead for direct and assertive formulations. Consequently, uncertainty is less explicitly marked, and claims are expressed more categorically. Consider the following English (5-6) and Arabic (7-8) examples drawn from the corpus:

(5) Parental involvement influences adolescents' academic resilience in secondary schools. (Humanities, article 6)

(6) The catalyst increases the reaction speed under controlled laboratory conditions. (Science, article 2)

Both statements convey a high degree of certainty. Adding modals would reduce this degree of commitment and make the claims more tentative. For example:

(5)a Parental involvement might influence adolescents' academic resilience in secondary schools

(6)a The catalyst could increase the reaction speed under controlled laboratory conditions.

Examples drawn from the Arabic corpus, with accompanying English translations (ET).

(7) تسهم الترجمة الأدبية في نقل القيم الثقافية بين المجتمعات المختلفة . (Humanities, article 15)
(7) ET: Literary translation contributes to transferring cultural values between different societies.
(8) يساهم التحليل الجيني في تحديد الطفرات المرتبطة بالأمراض الوراثية . (Science, article 11)
(8) ET: Genetic analysis contributes to identifying mutations linked to genetic diseases.

Both Arabic statements convey strong certainty and leave no space for nuance. Adding modal verbs would soften the degree of certainty expressed in the claims, as shown in the revised versions below.

(7)b ربما تسهم الترجمة الأدبية في نقل القيم الثقافية بين المجتمعات المختلفة .

(7) ET: Literary translation might contribute to transferring cultural values between different societies.

(8)b قد يُسهم التحليل الجيني في تسهيل تحديد الطفرات المرتبطة بالأمراض الوراثية.

(8) ET: Genetic analysis may facilitate identifying mutations linked to genetic diseases

These revisions show how modal verbs enable writers to recognize the provisional nature of research findings while preserving academic confidence. Their absence results in a more categorical expression of the propositions. This finding is in line with Hyland's (2005b) stance framework, which underlines the role of modals in balancing commitment and openness in academic writing.

- **Epistemic devices**

Epistemic devices play a central role in academic communication because they enable writers to indicate the level of confidence or probability associated with their claims. As Hyland (2005a, p. 98) notes, these expressions are "crucial to negotiating knowledge claims with a potentially skeptical audience." By signaling tentativeness through adverbs, such as probably (علـى الأرجـح), possibly (مـن المحتمـل), likely (مـن المرجـح), or apparently (علـى مـا يبـدو), writers can present claims as open to interpretation rather than as final truths." Such markers also contribute to politeness and rhetorical balance by reducing the author's personal responsibility for absolute statements (Rhee, 2011).

The present study shows recurring absence of epistemic devices in contexts where qualification was warranted in both English and Arabic texts. This absence results in more categorical statements with less explicit qualification. Consider the following English Examples (9-10) and Arabic Examples (11-12) from the corpus:

(09) Teacher feedback enhances learners' writing performance in EFL classrooms (Humanities, article 15)

(10) Quantum particles behave according to probabilistic laws in this experiment. (Science, article 3)

In both cases, the writers' certainty is categorical, leaving no room for possible exceptions or for further interpretation. Adding epistemic markers would make these statements more tentative, as shown in the revised examples below:

(09)a Teacher feedback possibly enhances learners' writing performance in EFL classrooms.

(10)a Quantum particles apparently behave according to probabilistic laws in this experiment.

Arabic corpus extracts, accompanied by English translations (ET).

(11) التحولات الاجتماعية في المجتمعات العربية مرتبطة بعمليات التحديث والتغير الاقتصادي . (Humanities, article 9)

(11) ET: Social transformations in Arab societies are linked to modernization and economic change.

(12) يساعد استخدام المجسات الحيوية في الكشف المبكر عن الأمراض المعدية . (Science, article 5)

(12) ET: The use of biosensors helps in the early detection of infectious diseases.

Both of the examples above show categorical certainty. However, the inclusion of epistemic expressions such as مـن المحتمـل (possibly) or علـى الأرجـح (probably) would moderate the tone and make the claims more tentative, as shown in the revised illustrative examples below:

(11)b التحولات الاجتماعية في المجتمعات العربية يُحتمل أنها مرتبطة بعمليات التحديث والتغير الاقتصادي .

(11) ET: Social transformations in Arab societies are likely to be linked to modernization and economic change.

(12)b **ربما** يساعد استخدام المجسات الحيوية في الكشف المبكر عن الأمراض المعدية.

(12) ET: Biosensors possibly help in the early detection of infectious diseases.

These revisions illustrate how epistemic devices can introduce tentativeness and make alternative interpretations more explicit. This finding supports the conclusions of Hyland and Milton (1997), Darwish (2019), and Messabhia (2020), who observed that non-native writers often find it difficult to use hedging expressions appropriately.

4.2.2 Boosters

Boosters are linguistic resources that allow writers to express strong conviction and certainty in their statements. Expressions such as clearly (بوضـوح), undoubtedly (بلا شـك), and obviously (مـن الواضـح) enable writers to emphasize the validity of their claims, to project confidence, and to reinforce the authority of their arguments (Hyland, 2005a, p. 53).

Table 1 shows that boosters represent a moderate proportion of the missing stance markers in both languages. In the English corpus, boosters were absent 62 times (33 in Humanities and 29 in Science), accounting for 21.08% of all missing stance markers. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Al-Zubeiry & Assaggaf, 2023; Barbara et al., 2024; Serholt, 2012; Al-Zumor, 2021), which reported limited use of boosters among non-native academic writers. It is also consistent with Alia and Jomaa (2023), who reported limited familiarity with modality and stance conventions among Arab EFL postgraduates, and with Sanosi and Mohammed (2024), who reported a lack of interactional resources in academic discourse. In the Arabic corpus, boosters were absent 46 times (22 in Humanities and 24 in Science), representing 23.47% of all missing stance markers. These findings suggest less explicit use of linguistic resources for expressing certainty and authorial commitment.

Table 2 offers further clarity by showing the distribution of missing boosters within each discipline across the two languages. In Science, a total of 53 missing boosters are reported (20.38% of all missing stance markers in this discipline), of which 29 occur in English (19.20%) and 24 in Arabic (22.02%). In the Humanities, a total of 55 missing boosters (23.91%) are identified, with 33 in English (23.07%) and 22 in Arabic (25.28%). These findings indicate slightly higher booster absence in the Humanities texts than in the Science texts across both languages.

Across both tables, missing boosters were identified in both languages and disciplines. Although Hyland (2004) notes that scientific writing may occasionally use emphatic expressions to highlight empirical clarity, the observed pattern of booster absence may reflect a tendency toward more neutral, descriptive exposition rather than explicit assertive positioning. Examples (13)-(16) illustrate this tendency in the English and Arabic corpora.

(13) Multimodal learning environments enhance students' engagement in blended university courses (Humanities, article 1)

(14) Coral reef degradation is driven by rising sea temperatures and ocean acidification. (Science, article 7)

Both statements present the authors' viewpoints without explicit linguistic reinforcement of certainty. Adding suitable boosters would make the writers' commitment more explicit, as illustrated below.

(13)a Multimodal learning environments clearly enhance students' engagement in blended university courses.

(14)a Coral reef degradation is undoubtedly driven by rising sea temperatures and ocean acidification.

Examples drawn from the Arabic corpus, presented with English translations.

(15) يثبت التحليل أن وسائل الإعلام الرقمية أصبحت المصدر الرئيسي للمعلومات لدى الشباب العربي (Humanities, article 7)

(15) ET: Analysis proves that digital media has become the main source of information for Arab youth.

(16) تُظهر البيانات المخبرية أن التفاعل الكيميائي يحدث بسرعة أعلى عند استخدام المحفز الجديد. (Science, article 12)

(16) ET: The laboratory data show that the chemical reaction occurs at a higher rate when the new catalyst is used.

Both of these Arabic statements lack explicit linguistic cues of certainty. Adding boosters would make the degree of authorial commitment more explicit, as illustrated below.

(15)b يثبت التحليل أن وسائل الإعلام الرقمية أصبحت من الواضح المصدر الرئيسي للمعلومات لدى الشباب العربي .

(15) ET: Analysis obviously proves that digital media has become the main source of information for Arab youth.

(16)b تُظهر البيانات المخبرية بوضوح أن التفاعل الكيميائي يحدث بسرعة أعلى عند استخدام المحفز الجديد.

(16) ET: The laboratory data clearly show that the chemical reaction occurs at a higher rate when the new catalyst is used.

Boosters such as undoubtedly (بلا شك), clearly (بوضوح), and obviously (من الواضح) allow writers to express a stronger commitment to their claims. The pattern of booster absence observed in the corpus may reflect a tendency toward more neutral and descriptive expression rather than explicit authorial commitment.

4.2.3 Attitude markers

Attitude markers are linguistic devices that enable writers to express personal evaluations, emotions, or value judgments about the propositional content of their statements. Words such as fortunately (لحسن الحظ), importantly (من المهم أن), and hopefully (بأمل) reflect the writer's stance toward the information presented and help to establish solidarity with readers (Hyland, 2005b). These markers serve not only to convey evaluation but also to position readers in relation to the writer's perspective (Hyland, 2005b, p. 180). These markers serve not only to convey evaluation but also to position readers in relation to the writer's perspective (Hyland, 2005b, p. 180).

Table 1 shows that attitude markers represent a substantial proportion of the missing stance markers in both English and Arabic texts. In the English corpus, 73 attitude markers were missing (27 in Humanities and 46 in Science), representing 24.82% of all missing stance markers. This finding is consistent with previous studies by Al-Zubeiry and Assaggaf (2023), Al-Zubeiry (2019), and Messabhia (2020). In the Arabic corpus, 47 attitude markers are missing (18 in Humanities and 29 in Science), accounting for 23.98% of all missing stance markers. These findings indicate more neutral, fact-oriented formulations with less explicit evaluation. The similar percentages across the two languages suggest that this pattern is not confined to one language.

Table 2 offers further clarity by comparing the absence of attitude markers within each discipline across the two languages. In Science, attitude markers were missing 75 times (28.85% of all missing stance markers in this discipline). Of these, 29 occurred in Arabic Science texts (26.60%) and 46 in English Science texts (30.46%). In Humanities, a total of 45 missing attitude markers were identified (19.57%), with 18 found in Arabic texts (20.69%) and 27 in English texts (18.88%).

The difference is especially pronounced in the English Science texts, which contain the highest

number of missing attitude markers overall (46 cases). Taken together, the results of Tables 1 and 2 show that attitude-marker absence occurs across both languages and disciplines, with Science texts, particularly in English, showing the greatest absence. This pattern results in less explicit expression of the writers' evaluative stance. Examples (17)-(20) illustrate this feature in the English and Arabic corpora.

(17) Heritage language loss among bilingual children is a significant cultural issue in immigrant communities. (Humanities, article 8)

(18) Plastic accumulation in marine ecosystems threatens biodiversity and ecosystem stability. (Science, article 13)

Both statements report findings directly but omit explicit linguistic signals of the authors' evaluative perspectives. Adding attitude markers would make these perspectives more explicit, for instance:

(17)a Heritage language loss among bilingual children is unfortunately a serious cultural issue in immigrant communities.

(18)a Plastic accumulation in marine ecosystems is deeply concerning for biodiversity and ecosystem stability.

Illustrative Arabic examples from the corpus, with corresponding English translations (ET).

(19) بدأت الدراسات التاريخية الحديثة تعيد قراءة الأحداث من منظور نقدي جديد . (Humanities, article 6)

(19) ET: Modern historical studies have begun to reinterpret events from a new critical perspective.

(20) تشير النتائج إلى أن استخدام تقنية النانو في توصيل الدواء يحسن من كفاءة العلاج مقارنة بالطرق التقليدية (Science, article 1)

(20) ET: Results indicate that the use of nanotechnology in drug delivery improves treatment efficiency compared to traditional methods.

Both Arabic statements convey strong certainty and leave no space for nuance. Adding attitude markers, however, would make the writers' evaluative positions more explicit, as illustrated below

(19)b بشكل مثير للاهتمام، بدأت الدراسات التاريخية الحديثة تعيد قراءة الأحداث من منظور نقدي جديد.

(19) ET: Interestingly, modern historical studies have begun to reinterpret events from a new critical perspective.

(20)b من المهم أن تشير النتائج إلى أن استخدام تقنية النانو في توصيل الدواء يحسن من كفاءة العلاج مقارنة بالطرق التقليدية.

(20) ET: Importantly, the results indicate that nanotechnology improves treatment efficiency compared to traditional methods.

The findings from the corpus suggest a tendency toward neutrality and factual presentation. As Hyland (2005a, p. 70) notes, attitude markers make the author's evaluative voice more explicit.

4.2.4 Self-mention

Self-mention refers to the use of first-person forms and other explicit self-references that mark the writer's presence in the text, and that convey propositional, affective, or interpersonal meanings (Hyland, 2005b). Hyland (2005b) notes that self-mention enables writers to construct an academic persona and make their role in the argument explicit. In English academic writing, authors commonly use forms such as "I argue," "we propose," "our analysis shows," and "my study demonstrates" to mark their scholarly contribution. Arabic writers similarly often use expressions such as "أرى" (I believe), "نقترح" (we propose), "أود أن أوضح" (I would like to clarify), and "يهدف هذا البحث إلى…" (this study aims to…). Some also use third-person self-reference, such as "the researcher argues…" or "يرى الباحث…", to establish authorial presence while maintaining formality.

Table 1 shows that self-mention is the least frequently missing stance marker across the corpus. In the English texts, 47 instances were missing (19 in Humanities and 28 in Science), representing 16.00% of all missing stance markers. This finding is broadly consistent with Hyland's (2004) observation that scientific disciplines generally make less use of self-mention than Humanities disciplines. In Arabic texts, self-mention was missing 33 times (14 in Humanities and 19 in Science), accounting for 16.84% of all missing stance markers.

Table 2 compares the English and Arabic texts within the same discipline. In Science, self-mention was missing 47 times, representing 18.07% of all missing stance markers in that discipline. From among these, 28 cases occurred in the English Science texts (18.54%) and 19 cases in Arabic Science texts (17.43%). In the Humanities, the absence of self-mention was lower overall, with 33 missing cases, accounting for 14.35% of all missing stance markers in this discipline. Of these, 19 cases appeared in the English Humanities texts (13.28%) and 14 cases in Arabic Humanities texts (16.09%).

Although self-mention is less frequently absent than other stance markers, the findings indicate less explicit authorial presence in the English texts examined. This finding is consistent with previous research (e.g., Darwish, 2019; Qomariana & Soetama, 2021), which reports a reduced use of explicit stance resources and variation in the construction of authorial identity across disciplinary and cultural contexts. Self-mention remains absent in contexts where it was warranted across both disciplines and languages, with the greatest absence occurring in English Science texts. This distribution may reflect disciplinary conventions, as scientific writing often favors impersonal structures and passive constructions associated with objectivity. In contrast, Humanities writing generally allows greater authorial presence and interpretive positioning.

Taken together, the results show that self-mention is the least frequently missing stance category in the corpus. However, its absence remains more evident in Science, particularly in the English texts. The absence of self-mention often appears in two recurring patterns. Consider the following English Examples (21) and (22) and Arabic Examples (23) and (24) from the corpus.

(21) This study examines discourse strategies used by university students in argumentative essays. (Humanities, article 5)

(22) This research investigates microbial resistance patterns in hospital-acquired infections. (Science, article 8)

This finding may reflect a preference for objectivity and formality over explicit authorial visibility.

(21)a I examine discourse strategies used by university students in argumentative essays.

(22)a We investigate microbial resistance patterns in hospital-acquired infections.

In Example 21, the absence of self-mention produces an impersonal formulation. Recasting the sentence as 'We examine discourse strategies used by …' would make the authors' role more explicit. Example 22 similarly omits explicit authorial presence through the expression 'This research investigates …'. A version such as 'We investigate microbial resistance …' would make the researchers' presence more explicit."

Representative Arabic examples from the corpus, with parallel English translations (ET).

(23) توضح الدراسة أهمية المناهج النقدية الحديثة في تحليل النصوص الأدبية المعاصرة . (Humanities, article 2)

(23) ET: The study explains the importance of modern critical approaches in analyzing contemporary literary texts

(24) توضح النتائج أن استخدام المجسات الحيوية يسهم في الكشف المبكر عن الأمراض المعدية. (Science, article 4)

(24) ET: Results show that the use of biosensors contributes to the early detection of infectious diseases.

Both Arabic examples present the researchers' work impersonally. Rewriting them with explicit self-mention would make authorial presence more explicit. The revised versions are presented below.

(23)b أود أن أوضح أهمية المناهج النقدية الحديثة في تحليل النصوص الأدبية المعاصرة .

(23) ET: I would like to clarify the importance of modern critical approaches in analyzing contemporary literary texts.

(24)b يُظهر تحليلنا للنتائج أن استخدام أجهزة الاستشعار البيولوجية يساهم في الكشف المبكر عن الأمراض المعدية.

(24) ET: Our analysis of results show that the use of biosensors contributes to the early detection of infectious diseases.

Overall, the absence of self-mention may reflect a preference for impersonal academic expression. As Hyland (2005a, p. 72) argues, self-mention is an important resource for distinguishing one's contribution from that of others and for constructing an explicit authorial identity.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the stance-marking of interaction in research articles written by Arab researchers across two disciplines (Science and Humanities) and two languages (English and Arabic), to identify patterns of interactional stance absence and their potential rhetorical implications. By analyzing four key stance categories, namely hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mention, the study identified recurring instances of contextually warranted but unrealized stance opportunities throughout the corpus. Across the sixty research articles, a total of 490 missing stance markers were identified. When comparing disciplines within the same language, the English articles in both Science and Humanities contained 294 missing markers (≈60%), whereas the Arabic articles in the two disciplines contained 196 missing markers (≈40%). This distribution shows more missing stance markers in the English articles than in the Arabic articles. A further comparison across languages within each discipline showed that Science articles contained 260 missing markers (≈53.1%), whereas Humanities articles contained 230 missing markers (≈46.9%). These findings suggest that the Science articles were more impersonal and less interactionally marked than the Humanities articles, which may reflect differences in disciplinary conventions.

Analysis of the stance categories showed that hedges were the most frequently missing devices (182; ≈37.1%), indicating that claims were often presented with greater certainty and less explicit qualification. Attitude markers (120; ≈24.5%) and boosters (108; ≈22.0%) were also frequently missing, resulting in less explicit evaluation and commitment. Self-mention accounted for the fewest missing instances (80; ≈16.3%), yet even here, the absence of explicit authorial reference, often through passive constructions, was evident. Collectively, these patterns reflect information-focused and impersonal discourse rather than explicit interactional expression. They may also have rhetorical implications for how qualification, commitment, evaluation, and authorial presence are expressed in academic texts. Unhedged claims express greater certainty; missing boosters make commitment less explicit; missing attitude markers reduce explicit evaluation; and limited self-mention makes authorial presence less visible. Overall, the results indicate a tendency toward factual and impersonal expression, with less explicit authorial positioning across both languages and disciplines.

5.1 Pedagogical and research implications

The present study has several methodological, pedagogical, and editorial implications. From a research perspective, future studies should adopt discourse-analytic approaches that account for language-specific features. Comparative research is also needed to assess whether and how L1 rhetorical strategies transfer into L2 writing and shape rhetorical choices in academic writing. Such research could deepen understanding of the linguistic challenges faced by bilingual writers. The development of metalinguistic awareness also remains important, and curricula should include training in a range of discourse markers to enhance cohesion and communicative effectiveness. Building on these insights, several pedagogical and editorial implications can be identified. Explicit instruction in stance-marking should be integrated into postgraduate academic writing courses, particularly for novice Arab scholars. Exposure to authentic texts from high-impact journals can help writers understand how stance markers are used to express authorial positioning. Journal policies

and peer-review guidelines could also benefit from encouraging clearer expression of authorial stance. Finally, writing centers and academic support units could provide targeted training on interactional resources to strengthen academic writing skills.

5.2 Limitations and future research

The present study has some limitations. The dataset comprised 60 research articles from two broad disciplinary areas, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research should further broaden the scope by including more specialized sub-disciplines and scholars from a wider range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds so as to strengthen cross-cultural comparisons. It could also extend the analysis to further interactional features, such as reader pronouns, directives, and rhetorical questions, in order to capture writer-reader engagement more comprehensively. Longitudinal studies would further help to examine how stance-marking practices develop over time with growing academic experience and exposure to academic publishing conventions. The findings indicate recurring patterns of stance marker absence across languages and disciplines, resulting in less explicit expression of qualification, commitment, evaluation, and authorial presence. Future research could examine how the absence of such a stance is perceived by readers and whether it influences clarity, persuasiveness, or reader engagement.

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