

## Interactional Metadiscourse Markers in Political Science Journal Articles

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**Abstract.** *Interactional metadiscourse markers allow writers to regulate their presence in their writings and engage with their readers. The study examined the use of interactional metadiscourse markers in political science journal articles. The specific objectives of the study were to: (1) identify the most frequently used category of interactional metadiscourse markers; (2) illustrate the functions of interactional metadiscourse markers; and (3) determine if there are significant differences in categories of interactional metadiscourse markers used across journals. Hyland's (2005) interpersonal metadiscourse model was adapted to analyse 12 political science articles from three refereed journals. The analysis indicates the writers' common tendencies to feature boosters and hedges as their top two functional categories. The boosters commonly used to emphasise the writers' claims are "only", "will", "even" and "significant". The hedges commonly used to withhold the writers' commitment are "would", "could", "may" and "likely". Attitude markers, engagement markers and self-mentions were present in the corpus as well with varying level of distribution. The high-frequency attitude markers are "important", "simply", "unfortunately" and "difficult" whereas the high-frequency engagement markers are in the form of questions, "we", "should" and "see". In contrast, self-mentions are infrequent in some of the political science journal articles where authorial presence was low. However, the researcher identity was more visible in the other half of the articles with first person pronouns. The findings suggest that while the writers viewed hedges and boosters as equally important for their proposition, but not all of them are comfortable with highlighting their presence.*

**Keywords:** *Interactional, metadiscourse, political science, low impact, journal articles*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Fundamentally, metadiscourse represents the functions that language has that allow writers to interact with their readers (Hyland, 2017). Studies on metadiscourse focus on how writers use linguistic items as functional resources to organise their texts, engage with the readers and project their attitude towards their content and the readers (Hyland & Tse, 2004). It is an integral part to any writing and the absence of metadiscourse markers would make it dull and disrupt the flow of information (Hyland, 2005). Academic writers incorporate linguistic items that are relevant and representative of their respective disciplines. In order to attract their audience's attention and influence their perspective, the writers utilise items that are genre-specific as well as those that align with the discipline convention (Hyland, 2005).

Research has shown disciplinary conventions in writings from undergraduates (Ho & Li, 2018; Li & Wharton, 2012), postgraduates (Afshar & Bagherieh, 2014; Akbas, 2012; Lee & Casal, 2014) as well as journal articles (Hu & Cao, 2015; Khedri & Kritsis, 2018). For instance, Khedri and Kritsis (2018) found that chemistry writers use hedges to make general assumptions while applied linguistic writers use them to