

## Metadiscourse Markers in Master Thesis Abstracts of American and Iraqi English Theses

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### Abstract

The present study is intended to critically examine metadiscourse markers in 24 master thesis abstracts. Twelve of them are written by non-native Iraqi female students and the rest by native American female students. To do so, the researchers have set two aims: examining the types and subtypes of metadiscourse markers in terms of nativity and major and comparing the usages of metadiscourse markers' types and subtypes in terms of nativity. To achieve the present aims, Hyland's model (2005) is adopted. It aids in classifying the types and subtypes of metadiscourse markers in both data. The findings show that the Iraqi and American researchers use the interactive resources more than the interactional ones but the American researchers are capable of engaging their readers since their use of the interactional markers is higher than their counterparts. The field has no effect on the use of metadiscourse markers. There is diversity in the usage of the interactive resources in Iraqi data. Accordingly, the researchers recommend metadiscourse markers to be added to M.A courses as part of abstract writing exercise and the instructors of fourth-year college students to include metadiscourse markers in the writing of their research papers for coherence and clarity.

*keywords:* interactional resources, interactive resources, metadiscourse markers, the reader, the text, the writer

**Cite as:** Hussein, K. A., Khalil, J. A., & Abbas, N.F. (2018). Metadiscourse Markers in Master Thesis Abstracts of American and Iraqi English Theses. *Arab World English Journal*, 9 (4),347-360. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no4.26>

## 1. Introduction

Harris (1959) is the first scholar to coin the term ‘metadiscourse’ which was new to discourse analysis. Hyland (2005) states that “[m]etadiscourse is a widely used term in current discourse analysis and language education, referring to an interesting, and relatively new, approach to conceptualising interactions between text producers and their texts and between text producers and users” (p.1).

Metadiscourse markers consist of two types: verbal and non-verbal. The first kind is concerned with words (Hornby, 2010), which is the main concern of the current study. It involves using words as markers. The second kind, non-verbal, does not involve “words or speech” (ibid., p.1037). It refers to different types of “visual metadiscourse markers” (Kumpf, 2000, p.401; Saadi and Roosta, 2014, p.299), which are used in writing such as the font size, the type of font ...etc. or used in speech as indicated by Craig (2008) such as: intonation, stress, voice quality... etc.

The term ‘metadiscourse markers’ is developed by a number of linguists such as Vande Kopple (1985); Crismore, Markknen and Steffensen (1993); who provide more classifications of the term by dividing it into major and minor types. However, the classification includes many overlaps in its subtypes because of the few categories they offer.

Hyland (2005) makes use of the previous models in generating his own. There are no gaps or overlaps in his model, as the previous ones, because it consists of ten subcategories. The subtypes of this model do not have overlaps in regard to the functions of metadiscourse markers. Zarei and Mansoori (2011) indicated that Hyland’s model is designed specifically for academic writing. For these reasons, the researchers of this study have chosen it.

## 2. What are Metadiscourse Markers

Different linguists offer various definitions of the term. Crismore et al. (1993) define metadiscourse markers as “a linguistic material in texts, written or spoken, which does not add anything to the propositional content, but that is intended to help the listener or reader organize, interpret, and evaluate the information given” (p.40).

The researchers do not totally agree with this belief because if one says that metadiscourse markers do not add anything to the propositional content of the text, then this means that their existence is optional but they are not. One can say they add a very slight meaning that can direct and engage both the reader and the writer in a text.

Crismore (1983 ) presents metadiscourse markers as “the author's intrusion into the discourse, either explicitly or non-explicitly, to direct the reader rather than inform” ( p. 2). She neglects that the writer while writing should take into consideration the readers’ requirements. The readers, in her definition, are viewed as the ones who just read what has been written. Such markers have not only the function of directing and organising. Their main role is represented by engaging writers and readers in a text.

Hempel and Degand (2008) elaborate that metadiscourse “concerns the understanding of the ideational meaning and serves to organize the discourse by structuring the propositional

content, by introducing sequences or by referring to the source of the propositional material” (p.679). In their definition, they partly define metadiscourse markers because they are concerned with just how metadiscourse markers are used to organise a text and this can be achieved by using the interactive markers only.

For Craig (2008), “meta-discourse ranges along a continuum from the relatively blatant verbal framing moves . . . to relatively unconscious cues (such as a slightly noticeable word choice, vocal emphasis, or facial expression) in which meta-discourse may be hardly distinguishable from first-level discourse” (p.3108).

In the above definition, Craig includes the two types of metadiscourse markers that are the verbal and non-verbal markers.

### 3. Taxonomies

There are several taxonomies emerge with the aim to classify metadiscourse markers, most of them start from Halliday’s notion (1973) of language who point out that when a person uses a language s/he is going to achieve three functions: the ideational function which refers to the information that one has; the textual function which makes plain the way a certain person is going to organize her/his proposition; and the interpersonal function which shows the interaction that will take place between the producer and the audience through the understanding of what is being said or written.

Some linguists depend on the last two functions in their classification of metadiscourse markers since such markers play a role in organizing the text and engaging the audience. For example, Williams (1981) categorizes them into three groups: hedges and emphatics; sequencers and topicalizers; and attributors and narrators. The first class shows certainty and uncertainty which can be regarded as interpersonal function according to Halliday. The second class of markers helps in directing the readers, while the third class, which tells readers about the source of the information is known as the ‘textual function’ according to Hallidayan taxonomy.

Vande Kopple (1985), who adopts Hallidayan terms totally, categorizes metadiscourse markers into two major types: textual and interpersonal. The subtypes under textual are text connectives, code glosses, illocution markers, and narrators while the interpersonal comprise validity markers, attitude markers, and commentaries. So this taxonomy is more developed than that of William’s but still one can find many overlaps in its subtypes because of its limited sorts.

While Crismore et al. (1993) adopt the same major types of Vande Kopple (1985) but they adapt the subtypes either by adding or deleting classes. They further divide the textual into textual and interpretive in order to separate the organization function (textual) from evaluative function (interpretive) which helps readers to understand the writer’s point of view by offering a further explanation and clarification. So, both of them are used in organizing the text in order to be coherent for the audience. Hyland (2005) argues that there is no need for such a division and merges them under one term which is ‘textual’. Crismore et al. (1993)

include the subtypes: logical connective, sequencers, reminders, topicalizers under textual and the subtypes: code glosses, illocation markers, announcements under the interpretive. While under the major type, interpersonal, comes hedges, certainty markers, attributors, attitude markers, and commentary.

Thompson and Thetela (1995) and Thompson (2001), have influenced the way Hyland shapes his model in 2005. Both of these models are concerned with the major types of metadiscourse markers. The first one, Thompson and Thetela (1995), use the term writer-in-text to denote the textual resources and reader-in-text for interpersonal resources. By writer-in-text, they mean the interaction between the writer and the information that s/he is organizing. While the second term, reader-in-text, they indicate that the writer should take into consideration her/his imagined readers while organizing her/his text. Both of these terms work together and are separated only for the sake of clarity in this paragraph. Thompson (2001) classifies the major categories into interactive markers (textual) and interactional markers (interpersonal) which are later included in Hyland's model (2005).

#### 4-Hyland's model (2005)

The researchers of the present study have adopted Hyland's model (2005). The reason behind this is that this model is designed specifically for academic writing as stated by Zarei and Mansoori (2011) when they describe it as "a model of metadiscourse in academic texts" (p.45). In addition to this, the model includes previous models as stated by Hyland (2005). This means that it overcomes the gaps and overlaps in them. The following table clarifies Hyland's model with all its major and minor types.

**Table (4.1): Hyland's model of Metadiscourse Markers**

Types of Markers	Function	Examples
<b>Interactive Markers</b>		
Transitions	To express relation between main clauses.	Therefore, and, but, thus ... etc.
Frame markers	To limit and frame the proposition content.	My purpose is, first,...etc.
Endophoric markers	To direct readers to information in other parts of the text.	As noted earlier,see figure1,...etc.
Evidentials	To direct readers to information outside the text.	X (2005) states, According to Z,...etc.
Code glosses	To expand the propositional meaning.	In other words, such as, is defined as,...etc.
<b>Interactional Markers</b>		
Hedges	To withhold writers' commitment to the proposition	Might, perhaps, possible,...etc.

Boosters	To emphasize certainty	It is a fact that, certainly,...etc.
Attitude markers	To express writers' attitude	Fortunately, surprising...etc.
Self-mentions	To explicitly refer to writers	I, me, my,...etc.
Engagement markers	To explicitly involve readers	You can see that, note that,...etc.

### 5- Data collection and Analysis

The researchers have selected 24 abstracts divided into 12 abstracts written by non-native Iraqi female students and the other 12 abstracts written by native American female students. The twelve abstracts likewise were divided into six abstracts taken from the linguistic field (representing different genres, namely, pragmatics and semantics ) and six abstracts from the literature field (also representing different genres, namely, poetry and novel). The abstracts in each discipline are selected in an arbitrary way but with a focus on years only to ensure the fairness of the comparison between native and non-native data for which the researchers did the same. The scope of the years was from 2005 till 2015. The researchers restrict themselves with this scope because writing changes over time. This means new forms of metadiscourse markers may start to be employed, specifically when one knows that metadiscourse markers are an open category.

#### 5.1. The Analysis

The researchers classify and discuss metadiscourse markers' types and subtypes in terms of nativity and major. The researchers start with the literary and linguistic fields of Iraqi data then with the American ones. The study shows the frequency of occurrence of metadiscourse markers' subtypes in each field by counting them manually. Their percentage is calculated according to the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{The score number of the sub-type}}{\text{The total number of the major type}} \times 100$$

After that, the study lists and pinpoints the similarities and the differences in the use of metadiscourse markers' types, subtypes and sub-subtypes in terms of nativity. The researchers manually count the markers and put the numbers which show the frequency of their use between two parentheses immediately after the marker.

The following table (5.1) classifies the types and subtypes of metadiscourse markers used in the linguistic and literary Iraqi data:

**Table (5.1): Types and subtypes of metadiscourse markers used in the linguistic and literary Iraqi data**

Linguistics	Score Number	Percentage	literature	Score Number	Percentage
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<b>Interactive Markers</b>			<b>Interactive Markers</b>		
Transitions	99	61.11	Transitions	121	64.70
Frame markers	40	24.69	Frame markers	28	14.97
Endophoric markers	10	6.17	Endophoric markers	23	12.29
Evidentials	6	3.70	Evidentials	12	6.41
Code glosses	7	4.32	Code glosses	3	1.60
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>162</b>		<b>Total Number</b>	<b>187</b>	
<b>Interactional Markers</b>			<b>Interactional Markers</b>		
Hedges	13	81.25	Hedges	9	52.94
Boosters	3	18.75	Boosters	3	17.64
Attitude markers			Attitude markers	1	5.88
Self-mentions			Self-mentions	2	11.76
Engagement markers			Engagement Markers	2	11.76
<b>Total number</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>Total number</b>	<b>17</b>	

The above table shows that the Iraqi students use interactive markers more than interactional ones in the linguistic field. They exploit all of the interactive resources' sub-types. More specifically, they frequently use transitions and frame markers, then come the other sub-categories: endophorics, code glosses and evidentials. Iraqi researchers use only two sub-types of the major type, interactional markers; they have low frequencies as the table above indicates. In the literary field, the Iraqi students employ all the sub-types of interactive and interactional resources as the table above shows.

The following table (5.2) categorizes the types and subtypes metadiscourse markers as used in the linguistic and literary field of American data:

**Table (5.2): Types and subtypes metadiscourse markers as used in the linguistic and literary field of American data:**

Linguistics	Score Number	Percentage	literature	Score Number	Percentage
<b>Interactive Markers</b>			<b>Interactive Markers</b>		
Transitions	89	87.25	Transitions	41	80.39
Frame markers	9	8.82	Frame markers	7	13.72
Endophoric markers			Endophoric markers		

Evidentials			Evidentials	1	1.96
Code glosses	4	3.92	Code glosses	2	3.92
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>102</b>		<b>Total Number</b>	<b>51</b>	
<b>Interactional Markers</b>			<b>Interactional Markers</b>		
Hedges	15	62.5	Hedges	1	12.5
Boosters	2	8.33	Boosters		
Attitude markers	1	4.16	Attitude markers		
Self-mentions	6	25	Self-mentions	6	75
Engagement Markers			Engagement Markers	1	12.5
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>Total Number</b>	<b>8</b>	

The native American students, in the linguistic field, use three subtypes of interactive markers which are transitions, frame markers and code glosses. They employ four subcategories of interactional ones, namely, hedges, boosters, self mentions and attitude markers. The literary field indicates that the native American students frequently exploit transitions, frame markers, code glosses and evidentials of the interactive markers. They use only three subtypes of interactional resources, namely, engagement markers, hedges and self mentions.

The following tables list the points of the similarities and the differences in the use of types and subtypes of metadiscourse markers in terms of nativity:

**Table (5.3): Transitions**

<b>Native Transitions</b>	<b>Non-native Transitions</b>
<b>Additive markers:</b> and (59) , also (13), as well as (3), or (20), whether or(1)	<b>Additive markers:</b> and (115), also (23), as well as (3); besides (2), furthermore (2), moreover (1), further (10), in addition (1), either or (3), whether..or (2).
<b>Consequent markers:</b> Thus (1), so (2)	<b>Consequent markers:</b> Thus (4), accordingly (3), hence (4), therefore (1), so (2).
<b>Causative markers:</b> because (3), in order to (6).	<b>Causative markers:</b> because (8), in order to (4), that's why (2), since (3), due to (9).
<b>Contrastive markers:</b> conversely (1), by contrast (1), despite (1), otherwise (1), while (6), however (3), but (4), although (2).	<b>Contrastive markers:</b> otherwise (1), while (2), however (1), but (9), although (2), though (1), on the other hand (1).

<b>Comparative markers:</b> rather than (3)	<b>Comparative markers:</b> just as .. so too (1)
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In the above table, both of the Iraqi and native American students use 'and' with high frequency. This is due to the importance of that marker in organizing, stating and creating semantic and syntactic connections. There are certain markers, as the table shows, which are exploited by Iraqi students only. This result can be attributed to the desire of Iraqi students to be tautologies. They divide their abstracts into more than one paragraph unlike the native American who are in most of the cases write their abstract as one paragraph.

The native American students use only two markers from consequent and causative markers while their counterparts, in addition to these markers, employ other markers as the table indicates. Iraqi students in their abstract try to direct and guide their readers to extra details about their theses. The native American in many cases gives just headlines about what their theses will be about. Both use the contrastive and comparative markers with slight differences as indicated above. The Iraqi and native American students tend to show the uniqueness of their study required to compare and contrast theirs with others.

**Table (5.4): Frame Markers**

<b>Native</b>	<b>Non-native</b>
<b>Frame markers</b>	<b>Frame markers</b>
<b>Label stages:</b> primarily (1), lastly(1), eventually (1), At this point (1)	<b>Label stages:</b> primarily (3), eventually (1), ultimately(1), finally (4), in this case(1)
<b>Limit text boundaries:</b> especially (1), only (1), today (1), specifically(1)	<b>Limit text boundaries:</b> especially (7), specifically (3), only (6), nowadays (1), now (2).
<b>Denote sequences:</b> first (1), then (1), before (1).	<b>Denote sequences:</b> first (3), then (3), before (1), second (3), third (1), fourth (1), after(1), after that(1).
<b>Announce goals:</b> an additional objective of this study was..., The purpose of this study was...	<b>Announce goals:</b> the objective of this study is... , the aim of the study is(3)... , the main purpose of this study is... , The aim of this thesis is... . (8)
<b>Delineate a text:</b> this thesis focuses particularly on..., my thesis seeks to..., This study identifies and focuses on...,	<b>Delineate a text:</b> the conclusion sums up..., this study pins down..., this thesis exposes..., This study seeks to..., It is hypothesized that ... , The present study investigates..., This study is carried out to give..., The present thesis falls into..., The most general conclusions are..., This study attempts to..., This study undertakes..., The study highlights..., Section one deals... .

The Iraqi and native American students make use of frame markers to label stages as first or final stage in the discussion of the aspects of their theses with slight differences. For example, the use of 'at this point' in native American data and the use of 'in this case' in Iraqi data is to direct their readers to a specific stage in their argument.

The Iraqi and American students also limit the boundaries of their text to certain points, events, concepts ...etc. through the use of markers such as ‘especially’, ‘only’, ‘specifically’, but ‘today’ is used only in native American data and ‘nowadays’ and ‘now’ only in Iraqi data.

There is an overuse of the markers that show sequence, announce goals and delineate a text in the Iraqi data. Iraqi students state the objectives and some details of their theses in sequence which requires the use of such markers. Native American students tend to be precise and avoid details which justify the low frequency of occurrence of these types of frame markers.

**Table (5.5): Code Glosses**

Native	Non-native
<b>Code glosses</b>	<b>Code glosses</b>
In other words (1), such as (3), namely (1), which is called (1),	In terms of, In other words (1), such as (1), namely (2), like (1), for instance (1), defined (2), means (1),

There is diversity in the use of code glosses in Iraqi data to elaborate, expand and exemplify or to illustrate facts in other ways. In addition to what has been used in native American data, there are other markers such as ‘in terms of’, ‘like’, ‘for instance’ and they also use verbs to offer further clarifications such as ‘defined’ and ‘means’ with the exception of ‘which is called’ that is used in native American data only.

**Table (5.6): Endophoric Markers**

Native	Non-native
<b>Endophoric markers</b>	<b>Endophoric markers</b>
No use of any of these markers	Chapter one (5)- two (5), -three (5),- four (4), -five (4), the first- (2) the second- (2), the third- (2), the fourth- (2) chapter, the above results (1), to the questions above (1).

A noticeable result in native American data is that there is no use of any of endophoric markers while there are different uses of them in the Iraqi data. Iraqi students survey in their abstract what each chapter in their theses will be about unlike their counterparts who avoid such details trying to increase their readers' curiosity to read more.

**Table (5.7): Evidentials**

Native	Non-native
<b>Evidentials</b>	<b>Evidentials</b>
(name of scholar, year) 1	(name of scholar, year, page) 18

Evidentials are represented by mentioning the name of the scholar followed by year and sometime the page number. In the Iraqi and native American data, ‘evidentials’ are used to direct readers to sources such as scholars’ books outside the text to ensure the reliability of their arguments and to direct readers for more information.

Hyland (2005) states that this sub-type is used to guide readers to reliable sources other than a text and aid a writer to support her/his argument.

This technique is used once in American data. The low frequency of the occurrence of this marker in the American data is represented by the nature of abstracts that should be written in most of cases with students' words. Most of the Iraqi students do not know or follow this rule.

**Table (5.8): Self-Mentions**

Native	Non-native
<b>Self-mentions</b>	<b>Self-mentions</b>
My (6) , I (6)	Me (1), my (1)

The use of the possessive adjective 'my' and the first personal pronoun 'I', instead of using words such as the 'writer's thesis' or 'the researcher', explicitly reflect the researcher personally. This sends a message to readers that what follows these pronouns will distinguish the researcher's work from that of others.

Hyland (2005) argues that self mentions refer "to the degree of explicit author presence in the text measured by the frequency of first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives" (p.53).

The above table indicates a very low frequency in the occurrence of self-mentions in the Iraqi data. This could be justified due to the fact that these markers are regarded as forbidden in the Iraqi abstracts, in spite of their importance in distinguishing a researcher's work from that of others and creating solidarity with readers.

**Table (5.9): Attitude Markers**

Native	Non-native
<b>Attitude markers</b>	<b>Attitude markers</b>
Essentially (1)	Unfortunately (1)

Attitude markers are used only once in each data as in the above table. The 'attitude markers' are represented by 'unfortunately' and 'essentially' which for the first investigation indicates how the writers are keen to build a relationship with readers to the extent that they show their emotion. The researchers in their reaction towards the proposition do not only show their attitudes but they express them from the readers' perspective so they can experience the same emotions. These markers are followed by logical facts which are difficult to dispute about. This gives a reason for their low frequency.

This can be supported by Hyland (2005) also who argues that "[b]y signalling an assumption of shared attitudes, values and reactions to material, writers both express a position and suck readers into a conspiracy of agreement so that it can often be difficult to dispute such judgements" (pp.149-150)

Martin and White (2005) state that when writers exploit 'attitude markers', they do not only intend to show their feelings towards the proposition but also "... invite others to endorse and to share with them the feelings, tastes or normative assessments they are announcing. Thus declarations of attitude are dialogically directed towards aligning the addressee into a community of shared value and belief" (p.95).

**Table (4.10): Hedges**

<b>Native</b>	<b>Non-native</b>
<b>Hedges</b>	<b>Hedges</b>
Often (5), sometimes (1), sort of (1), seemingly (1), possible (1), could be (2), might (3), may be (2)	Often (2), sometimes (1), about (1), almost (1), presumably (1), kind of(2), somehow (3), could be (3), might (4), may be (4)

Hedges are used equally in both data with some differences in the use of markers. For example, the native American students use ‘sort of’, ‘seemingly’, ‘possible while the Iraqi use ‘about’, ‘almost’, ‘presumably’, ‘kind of’, ‘somehow’. The other markers are found in both data.

The existence of these markers in both data shows respect to the readers’ alternative point of views. The researchers of both data reveal their uncertainty and release their responsibility about what follows which will avoid forcing certain opinion on their readers. That is why some scholars such as Mauranen (1993) argue that the use of such markers view the writers as being polite since they take their readers’ points of view into consideration. Sehwat (2014) states “these markers [hedges] perform an important interpersonal function: they allow the writer to avoid absolute statements, which makes the text more polite by giving readers the opportunity to form their own judgments. This involves the reader more deeply in the processing of the text” (P.380).

**Table (5.11): Boosters**

<b>Native</b>	<b>Non-native</b>
<b>Boosters</b>	<b>Boosters</b>
Should (1), must be (1)	Should (1), never (1), it is not precise to say that (1), clearly (1), indeed (1), in fact (1),

“Emphatics [boosters] are used by a writer to persuade readers to ‘believe me’ ” (Crismore, 1983, P.40). The Iraqi students sometimes show certainty and responsibility to what they argue about through the use of boosters unlike the native students who, in most cases, release their commitment to what they discuss. Hyland (2005) states that “[b]oosters suggest that the writer recognizes potentially diverse positions but has chosen to narrow this diversity rather than enlarge it, confronting alternatives with a single, confident voice”( pp.52-53)

**Table (5.12): Engagement Markers**

<b>Native</b>	<b>Non-native</b>
<b>Engagement markers</b>	<b>Engagement markers</b>
Question (1)	Questions (2)

One of the techniques to engage readers is to raise a question without answering it, leaving a space for readers to give their own responses. It is used only once in native data and twice in Iraqi data. The low frequency of this marker could be due to the lack of the sufficient knowledge about its significance in engaging readers. There is no use of any other devices of engagement markers in both data. This can be justified due to the nature of other markers. The writer usually uses the second personal pronoun ‘you’ and the ‘imperatives’ such as ‘note’, ‘consider’, ...etc. to engage her/his readers. The use of ‘you’ and ‘imperatives’ in texts other

than books and manual, where a writer has authority, can be regarded as offensive as clarified by Kuo (1999, p.126) “**you** [emphasis mine] could sound offensive or detached since it separates readers, as a different group, from the writer” and “imperatives are frequently used in textbooks or manuals where a writer would like to sound authoritative.” “[H]owever, imperative you would sound offensive and impair the reader–writer relationship.” (ibid, p.127)

## 6. Discussion of Results

The results show that the interactive resources are highly used by the Iraqi researchers compared to the interactional ones. More specifically, in the linguistic field, transitions subtype has been used (99) times and the frame markers subtype (40) times, then comes the other markers. As for the interactional markers, hedges have been used (13) times and boosters only (3) times. The other subtypes are neglected. This indicates that the Iraqi researchers are able to organize their information more than engaging their readers.

In the American data, only 3 subcategories of interactives have been used; transitions (89) times, frame markers (9) times and code glosses (4) times. The interactional ones are represented by 4 subtypes that are hedges (15) times, boosters twice, attitude markers only once and self-mentions (6) times.

Concerning the literature field in the Iraqi data, one can notice that the percentages for interactional resources increased slightly. There is the use of hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions and engagement markers while in the interactive ones still the transitions and the frame markers take the first places according to the percentages then comes the other categories. In the American literature data, the transitions and frame markers come first then the code glosses and evidentials. Besides, one can detect that there is a reduction in the use of the interactional resources in this field in comparison with the linguistic one. Hedges and engagement markers are used (only once) and self-mentions (6) times.

## 7-Conclusion

Concerning the first objective of the study, which is about examining the types and subtypes of metadiscourse markers in terms of nativity and major, the researchers find that the American and Iraqi researchers’ use of interactive markers’ subtypes are nearly high in both fields. When it comes to the interactional markers’ subtypes that are related to readers’ engagement in the text, there are great differences between American and Iraqi data. The total number of American researchers’ use of interactional markers in linguistics is 24 while in Iraqi data is 16. Concerning the literature field, the American researchers use interactional markers only 8 times while their use in the Iraqi data is 17 times. This leads to conclude that the field has no effect on the use of metadiscourse markers. This may be proved through the rise in the percentage of interactional markers when they are used in the Iraqi literary field more than the linguistic field, but when it comes to the American data, the result is completely the opposite. The American researchers use the interactional markers in the linguistic field more than the literary field. This leads us to conclude that the use of metadiscourse markers is something that is highly related to the producers’ understanding and their ability to employ them in a text, i.e., being non-natives.

With regard to the second objective of the study, which is comparing the usages of metadiscourse markers’ types and subtypes in terms of nativity, the researchers find that there

is diversity in the use of metadiscourse markers' subtypes, specially the interactive resources, in the Iraqi data more than the American ones. This is due to the tendency of Iraqi researchers to give more details about their theses. Logically, this will lead them to use more markers to make their tautology clear. This appears clearly in the use of endophoric markers. One can notice that these markers are used (33) times in the Iraqi data whereas there is no use of them in the American ones. The Iraqi researchers direct their readers to what each chapter in their theses will be about which will ultimately need the use of endophorics. Moreover, the frame markers are used (68) times in Iraqi data while used only (16) times in the American ones. This leads us to conclude that the American tend to be precise and avoid details in their abstracts which will require low variety in the use of metadiscourse markers' types and subtypes.

**Acknowledgements:** The researchers of the present study are grateful to the College of Education for Women, University of Baghdad, Al-Jadiriyya, for conducting this study.

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