

## **Moves and Metadiscourse Markers (MDMs) in the Abstracts of Research Articles (RAs) In Applied Linguistics, Engineering, Medicine, and Business**

Leah Gustilo (De La Salle University, Philippines), Aileen Valle (De La Salle University, Philippines) and Maria Isabel Vergel (De La Salle University, Philippines)

As abstracts are the most visible and 'most evaluated' sections of research articles (RAs) owing to the fact that most conferences judge the relevance of a paper submission using only the abstract section, the present study investigated how researchers/writers structure this section and how metadiscourse markers aid writers in discussing meanings in texts and engage readers in the material through the expression of the writer's stance. This study aims at investigating the metadiscourse markers utilized by authors in the abstract section of RAs in applied linguistics, engineering, medicine and business. Six hundred (600) abstracts from high-impact factor journals published in 2015 to 2018 across four disciplines were sampled. Moreover, the moves of the 300 selected abstracts of RAs across disciplines were also identified. After identifying the moves, the MDMs present in each move were identified and tabulated based on Hyland's (2005) metadiscourse categories. AntConc Concordance software was utilized in order to count the frequency of MDMs across disciplines, while the moves were manually coded by the researchers based on Ken Hyland's (2000) five-move model of abstract section. Inter-rater agreement was employed to ensure reliability of coding and categorization of data. Results in the analysis of moves indicate that most of the writers across disciplines preferred discussing results, purpose, and methodology in the abstract rather than focusing on the background and implications of research. As regards metadiscourse markers, it was clear from our analyses that transition markers are the most frequently used interactive metadiscourse markers across disciplines. Transition markers play a vital role in organizing and connecting the ideas of the writers. The use of interactional metadiscourse markers differed across four disciplines. In the field of applied linguistics and engineering, engagement markers were widely used. Engagement markers were employed to address the readers by either focusing their attention or engaging them in the discourse. On the other hand, in the field of business and medicine, hedges were highly employed as they were used to indicate the writer's reluctance in presenting propositional information. The findings on metadiscourse markers and moves in RA abstracts across disciplines can inform language teaching underpinned by genre-based approach to academic writing. Being the summary or face of research papers that presents the major parts of the paper, it is important that journal article writers are informed with these results so that the conventions of abstract writing based on empirical studies are established.

### References

Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing*. London, UK: Longman.

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