

An Analysis of Interactive and Interactional Metadiscourse Markers in Applied Linguistics Webinars: The Case of Top-Tier Native vs. Non-Native Speaking Scholars

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Abstract

Within the ecosystem of genres, audiences, and modalities, knowledge dissemination relies on metadiscourse markers that guide and engage academic audiences. Despite digital technologies reshaping communication after the pandemic, their use in academic webinars, especially regarding speakers' linguistic backgrounds, remains an underresearched area of inquiry. Accordingly, this study aimed to comprehensively analyze interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers utilized by both top-tier native and non-native scholars in Applied Linguistics webinars. To this end, a corpus of 24 webinars (24 hours and 35 minutes) conducted by top-tier Applied Linguists over five years was purposively selected and analyzed using Hyland's (2005) metadiscourse model, focusing on the frequency and distribution of interactive and interactional markers. The results showed that native scholars employed metadiscourse markers (both interactive and interactional)

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somewhat more frequently than non-natives, though both groups used them extensively to organize and engage audiences. While natives favored interactional markers over interactive ones, non-natives demonstrated the opposite trend, relying more on interactive than interactional markers. These findings highlight the need for EAP/ESP pedagogy to extend beyond accuracy, fostering non-native scholars' interactional competence through training in hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions, empowering them to communicate confidently, engage audiences, and sustain presence in global academia.

Keywords: Applied Linguistics, interactional metadiscourse markers, interactive metadiscourse markers, genre analysis, metadiscourse markers, webinars

1. Introduction

Academic discourse is essentially a persuasive and communicative activity, functioning within a multifaceted ecosystem of genres, audiences, and modalities. In this ecosystem, the successful dissemination of knowledge relies not only on propositional content but is profoundly influenced by the strategic utilization of linguistic resources that direct, structure, and engage audiences (Hyland, 2005). Metadiscourse, which is language used to talk about the discourse itself, is one of these resources. It is vital to facilitate communication, build rapport, and ensure clarity, especially in the more diverse and globalized domain of academic research (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2022).

The emergence of digital technologies and the significant changes induced by the global pandemic have revolutionized conventional academic communication, giving rise to new formats such as webinars as key platforms for knowledge dissemination and scholarly engagement (Wang et al., 2024). Webinars, which combine elements of lectures, presentations, and online discussions, enable individuals to engage both synchronously and asynchronously, presenting speakers with both new challenges and opportunities to manage their message and connect with a wide, often international, audience. In Applied Linguistics, a field related to language, communication, and social interaction, the ways that scholars use metadiscourse in these digital forums become particularly salient. The discipline often incorporates various linguistic backgrounds, rendering cross-cultural and cross-linguistic communication a primary focus.

Previous studies have extensively examined metadiscourse across various academic genres, including research articles and conference presentations, highlighting its importance within disciplinary norms and rhetorical effectiveness (Hyland & Jiang, 2022; Pearson & Abdollahzadeh, 2023). Valuable insights regarding how speakers manage stance, interaction, and audience engagement in academic contexts have been provided by these studies. However, a significant gap remains in understanding its use in the emerging genre of academic webinars, especially considering the potential influence of speakers' linguistic backgrounds. Nevertheless, academic webinars remain comparatively underexplored as a distinct

genre of scholarly communication. At the same time, even though studies of lectures, conference presentations, and online discourse provide useful points of comparison, they do not completely account for the special communicative conditions of webinars. Webinars are different from traditional lectures because they are delivered to unseen audiences, geographically dispersed, and unlike conference presentations, they typically involve limited text-based interaction, immediate co-presence, and platform-mediated turn-taking. In contrast to many other forms of digital academic discourse, webinars also blend elements of prepared monologic presentation with real-time audience engagement, technological affordances, and institutional framing by hosting organizations. Therefore, existing literature cannot adequately explain metadiscourse utilization in webinars, and findings from adjacent genres cannot be straightforwardly transferred to webinars without closer empirical examination.

In addition, research indicates that Native Speakers (NSs) and Non-Native Speakers (NNSs) of English use metadiscourse differently in both written and spoken academic contexts (e.g., Flowerdew, 2015; Ghazanfari et al., 2018). Nonetheless, these studies primarily focus on learners or early-career scholars. There has been limited attention to the communicative strategies of top-tier scholars—highly skilled experts who have earned substantial recognition in their fields. For these individuals, understanding how their native language (L1) or their proficiency as L2 users affects their metadiscourse choices in a dynamic, real-time online setting such as a webinar warrants further exploration.

While the terms NS and NNS remain common in research on academic discourse, this binary distinction has been extensively critiqued in applied linguistics. It has been argued that the NS/NNS distinction can oversimplify complicated linguistic repertoires and might reflect ideological and social assumptions regarding legitimacy, language ownership, and expertise instead of merely linguistic realities. Therefore, these terms are not considered homogeneous or fixed speaker identities in this study. Instead, they are utilized as broad, literature-based labels that refer to scholars' different language learning strategies and linguistic backgrounds.

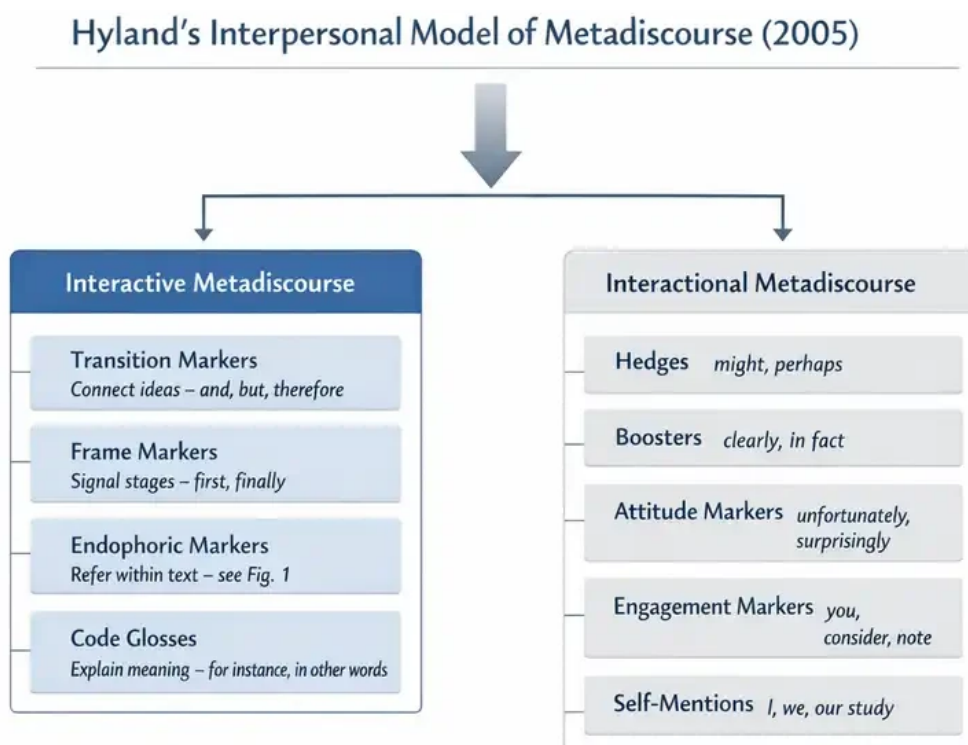
This study seeks to address this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers utilized by both top-tier native

and non-native scholars in Applied Linguistics webinars. By examining the metadiscourse profiles of these two groups, the aim is to determine whether established international scholars, irrespective of their native language, adhere to uniform communicative practices influenced by disciplinary conventions or if nuanced, yet identifiable, distinctions related to their linguistic backgrounds endure. The results will help us learn more about academic rhetoric in the digital age, enable advanced scholars to teach more effectively, and contribute to the broader discourse on linguistic diversity and effective communication in global academia.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Metadiscourse: Conceptualizations and Frameworks

Metadiscourse is the term used to describe the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text. It helps the writer (or speaker) express a point of view and engage with audiences as members of a particular community (Hyland, 2005). Hyland (2005) classified metadiscourse into two primary categories within his interpersonal model: interactive and interactional metadiscourse. Interactive metadiscourse helps the writer or speaker guide audiences through the text, shaping the discourse and making it coherent. This group includes transition markers, frame markers, endophoric markers, and code glosses. Interactional metadiscourse, on the other hand, involves engaging audiences in the discourse and reveals the speaker's or writer's perspective or point of view. This category includes hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagement markers, and self-mentions.

Figure 1*Interpersonal Model of Metadiscourse (adapted from Hyland, 2005)*

Hyland's model remains the prevailing framework, although recent research has either refined or innovatively applied it. For example, Hyland and Jiang (2018) examined the diachronic evolution of metadiscourse, proposing dynamic shifts in academic rhetoric. Other researchers have modified Hyland's taxonomy for particular disciplinary contexts or spoken genres (Abusalim et al., 2022; Hyland & Jiang, 2022). Hyland's framework is comprehensive, making it a good choice for examining the subtle ways individuals communicate in academic webinars. As a result, these developments point to the fact that metadiscourse should not be considered as a fixed set of linguistic items, but as a flexible rhetorical system shaped by communicative purpose, mode, and community expectations. This point is especially important for the current study, since webinars represent a setting where audience engagement and textual organization are likely to intersect in distinctive ways.

2.2. Metadiscourse in Academic Discourse Genres

Metadiscourse has undergone a comprehensive examination across diverse academic genres, uncovering genre-specific patterns and rhetorical conventions. In written academic discourse, research articles, dissertations, and textbooks have been the main areas of examination. Research consistently demonstrates that metadiscourse is essential for establishing credibility, directing argumentation, and engaging audiences (Dahl & Fløttum, 2023; Flowerdew, 2015; Hyland, 2004). For instance, research articles in "hard" sciences may prefer boosters and transitions for clarity and directness, whereas those in "soft" sciences may utilize more hedges and engagement markers to encourage dialogue (Hyland & Jiang, 2022). Postgraduate dissertations also tend to have more self-mentions and frame markers as students work through difficult arguments (Afzaal et al., 2025).

Research on lectures and conference presentations in spoken academic discourse has identified unique metadiscourse patterns associated with the real-time, interactive characteristics of these genres. Teachers use frame markers and code glosses to help students understand and organize information. Engagement markers and self-mentions are also common ways to build rapport and get the audience's attention (Kahkesh & Alipour, 2017; Vasheghani Farahani, 2020). Conference presentations, which are more persuasive and time-limited, often use a strategic mix of boosters, hedges, and engagement markers to show confidence while also acknowledging limitations and inviting discussion (Singh et al., 2023). These studies collectively emphasize that metadiscourse is best understood as genre-sensitive rhetorical behavior. Spoken and written academic discourse need both persuasion and coherence, but their difference is in the way these goals are enacted since they emphasize interactivity, immediacy, and audience processing differently. This difference is important for the current study since webinars occupy an intermediate position between established spoken genres such as lectures and conference presentations and newer digitally mediated forms of academic communication.

2.3. Metadiscourse in Online and Digital Academic Contexts

The rise of online learning platforms and digital communication tools has created new types of academic discourse genres, leading scholars to examine metadiscourse in these new contexts. Research has initiated the examination of metadiscourse within Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), online discussions, and virtual classrooms, emphasizing the impact of digital affordances on communicative strategies. For instance, studies on online lectures or asynchronous video content frequently identify a dependence on interactive markers (e.g., transitions, frame markers) to mitigate the absence of real-time interaction, thereby ensuring instructional clarity (Chang & Schleppegrell, 2022; Yazdani & Salehi, 2016). In online discussion forums, interactional markers such as hedges, attitude markers, and engagement markers are frequently employed to foster community, share ideas, and negotiate the meaning of a text (Klisc et al., 2016; Ling, 2023).

These findings show that metadiscourse patterns of traditional genres are not simply reproduced by digital affordances, but they redistribute rhetorical priorities. Where interaction and immediacy are limited, speakers may greatly depend on explicit organizational cues. Where interpersonal negotiation and participation are crucial, interactional features become more salient. So, this emerging line of studies highlights the importance of considering mode not simply as a background variable, but as a factor that actively forms rhetorical choices.

These studies provide important information about digital academic communication, but there is scant research on metadiscourse in webinars compared to traditional lectures or written genres. Webinars are hybrid and dynamic events that combine synchronous delivery and visual aids. They provide a distinctive combination of formal presentation and the potential for spontaneous interaction, connecting traditional oral presentations with fully interactive online discussions (Ädel, 2021). To understand metadiscourse in webinars, it is essential to pay close attention to their unique communication needs.

2.4. Native vs. Non-Native Speaker Differences in Academic Discourse

A significant corpus of literature has examined the disparities in metadiscourse utilization between NSs and NNSs of English within academic settings. Initial research frequently indicated that NNS writers utilized fewer interactional features, a phenomenon occasionally ascribed to a more direct, propositional style shaped by their L1 rhetorical conventions or a lack of pragmatic competence in English (Ajideh et al., 2024; Çakır, 2016). From this perspective, metadiscourse was considered both as a genre-sensitive phenomenon and as one formed by differential access to the pragmatic norms of academic English.

Some studies still find differences, like writers who are NNSs of English use fewer hedges or engagement markers (Appel & McKay, 2025; Papangkorn & Phoocharoensil, 2021) or prefer certain types of boosters over others (Öz, 2022). However, many studies also show that academic discourse regarding NNSs is becoming more like NSs' norms, especially among highly proficient L2 users (Flowerdew, 2015; Hyland, 2017). Factors influencing these disparities and possible convergences encompass:

- **L1 Transfer:** Rhetorical patterns and conventions from the speaker's native language can influence metadiscourse choices (e.g., a preference for more explicit linking in some languages leading to higher transition marker use).
- **Pedagogical Influences:** Exposure to and instruction in academic English rhetoric can shape the use of metadiscourse by NNSs.
- **Disciplinary Norms:** Highly specialized fields often develop their own shared communicative practices, which can override some L1 influences among experienced scholars (Hyland & Jiang, 2022).
- **Proficiency Level:** Crucially, most studies on NS/NNS differences have focused on students or early-career researchers. The assumption is often that as proficiency increases, the differences diminish. However, even advanced L2 users may retain subtle L1-influenced pragmatic choices (Taguchi & Ishihara, 2018).

The use of metadiscourse by top-tier scholars remains largely unexamined. These individuals, whether they are NSs or NNSs, are by definition highly proficient in

communicating in their fields. They have mastered the rules of academic discourse to reach the highest levels of scholarship. Consequently, juxtaposing NSs and NNSs who are top-tier scholars within a modern genre such as webinars presents a distinctive opportunity to examine whether linguistic background remains a pivotal factor in metadiscourse selections, even at the highest levels of L2 academic communication, or if disciplinary and professional acculturation results in a near-total homogenization of rhetorical practices.

This study aims to enhance the understanding of advanced academic communication in the digital age by examining interactive and interactional metadiscourse in Applied Linguistics webinars conducted by both native and non-native top-tier scholars, thereby making a substantial contribution to metadiscourse theory and Applied Linguistics pedagogy. Therefore, the current study tried to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the overall frequencies and distribution patterns of metadiscourse markers used by native and non-native scholars of Applied Linguistics in their webinars?
2. How do native and non-native scholars of Applied Linguistics differ in their use of interactive metadiscourse markers in their webinars?
3. How do native and non-native scholars of Applied Linguistics differ in their use of interactional metadiscourse markers in their webinars?
4. Are the observed differences in the frequencies of metadiscourse markers between native and non-native scholars statistically significant?

3. Methodology

3.1. Corpus

In fact, comparing NSs' and NNSs' use of metadiscourse markers reveals cross-linguistic and cultural patterns, highlighting how speaker background shapes academic communication strategies in webinars, which is of utmost significance. To examine these differences systematically, the criteria of speech type and genre were

used to guide the selection of the corpus. A total of 24 webinars in Applied Linguistics/TESOL (12 from native speaking top-tier scholars and 12 from non-native speaking top-tier scholars) were selected for analysis. This selection was guided by the judgment of an expert panel of competent professors of Applied Linguistics. To operationalize the notion of “top-tier,” multiple objective indicators were considered, including (a) citation impact (e.g., h-index and citation counts in major academic databases such as Scopus and Web of Science), (b) sustained and prolific scholarly output, (c) leadership roles in international associations and editorial boards, and (d) widely acknowledged theoretical or methodological contributions to the advancement of Applied Linguistics. Each panel member independently nominated scholars meeting these criteria, after which a consensus-based discussion was conducted to finalize the list. Only scholars receiving majority agreement among the panel were included in the corpus. Webinars from non-natives included Farhady (2022), Riazi (2020), Canagarajah (2021), Ortega (2022), Tsimpli (2025), Kubota (2020), Wei (2021), Dewaele (2021), Mauranen (2022), Cenoz (2021), Bayyurt (2020), and Hua (2022), and webinars from natives included Ellis (2022), Hyland (2020), Nation (2020), Krashen (2022), Crystal (2023), Ur (2020), Mercer (2020), Cummins (2020), Walsh (2020), Seedhouse (2023), Gray (2020), and Escamilla (2020). These webinars were drawn non-randomly from a pool of webinars published online over a five-year period in 2025 to account for the state-of-the-art factor. This period was deliberately regulated to minimize temporal fluctuations associated with genre, as it may undergo changes and developments over time (Dudley-Evans, 2002).

To ensure thematic comparability, the selection process also controlled for topic, focusing on webinars that addressed issues in the broad scope of Applied Linguistics/TESOL. The webinars were accessed online, and those most relevant to the focus of this study were chosen and stored electronically for later analysis.

The final corpus amounted to 24 hours and 35 minutes of spoken material, with native speakers contributing around 12 hours and non-native speakers providing around 12 hours and 35 minutes. The transcripts from the webinars resulted in a total of 174269 words (excluding the host's and audience's remarks). The content from native speakers comprised 90751 words, with the average length of each webinar

being 7562.33 words. In contrast, the content from non-native speakers included 83518 words, averaging 6959.83 words per webinar. The webinars were thus rather homogeneous in terms of length and topic, which enhanced the validity of cross-cultural comparison.

All the gathered data were academic webinars, a genre that holds significance in shaping public discourse. Indeed, as noted by Fadlelmola et al. (2019), webinars are a regular part of most academic networks, helping to spark idea exchange, encourage collaboration across different fields, and create opportunities for researchers to share their latest work and stay connected with ongoing developments. As such, academic webinars were consulted for the purpose of this study, as they effectively communicate knowledge to knowledge-receiving attendees through specific linguistic and discourse strategies (Abdulsada, 2021). It is worth noting that webinars that were not available online or were outdated were excluded from the sampling and subsequent analysis.

3.2. Theoretical Framework

This section provides the theoretical foundation underlying metadiscourse markers, which were utilized in this study.

3.2.1. Metadiscourse Model

Hyland (2005) holds that "metadiscourse embodies the idea that communication is more than just the exchange of information, goods or services, but also involves the personalities, attitudes, and assumptions of those who are communicating" (p. 3). He further explains that metadiscourse refers to "the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with audiences as members of a particular community" (p. 46).

Although alternative models of metadiscourse have been proposed, Hyland's interpersonal model was selected for this study because of its clear distinction

between interactive and interactional resources, its applicability to written and spoken academic discourse, and its wide adoption in Applied Linguistics research. It integrates discourse organization and stance-taking, making it suitable for analyzing webinars, and has been widely validated in academic genre studies, ensuring comparability with previous research. Thus, the analysis of metadiscourse markers was conducted on the selected webinars, drawing upon Hyland's interpersonal model of metadiscourse, as it is a strong, clear, and practical model of metadiscourse. Table 1 presents the model.

Table 1

An Interpersonal Model of Metadiscourse (Hyland, 2005, p. 49)

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive	Help to guide the reader through the text	Resources In addition; but; thus; and Finally, to include; my purpose is Noted above, see Figure; in section 2 According to X; Z states Namely; e.g.; such as; in other words
Transitions		
Frame markers	Express relations between main clauses	
Endophoric markers	Refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages	
Evidentials	Refer to information in other parts of the text	
Code glosses	Refer to information from other texts	
Interactional	Elaborate propositional meaning	
Hedges		
Boosters		
Attitude markers		
Self-mentions	Involve the reader in the text	Resources Might; perhaps; possible; about In fact; definitely; it is clear that Unfortunately; I agree; Surprisingly I; we; my; me; our Consider; note; you can see that
Engagement markers	Withhold commitment and open dialogue Emphasize certainty and close dialogue Express writers' attitude to proposition Explicit reference to author(s) Explicitly build relationship with reader	

3.3. Data collection and Data Analysis Procedures

To build the corpus, a total of 24 webinars were electronically retrieved from the Internet. The recorded webinars were transcribed to help facilitate the coding procedure. All the transcribed webinars were documented in Microsoft Word format and stored securely on a computer. Every transcription was carefully categorized into

folders designated for specific sources to avoid mixing the transcriptions from different webinars. Data was collected in August 2025, and webinars published over a five-year period (i.e., from 2020 to 2025) were documented. It is worth noting that concerning the topic, we carefully selected webinars to include only those covering topics within the realm of Applied Linguistics/TESOL, since, as Hyland (1999) points out, the subject matter can influence the type, frequency, and use of metadiscourse markers. An additional aspect that required regulation was the originality of the scholars holding the webinars, specifically ensuring that native scholars were indeed native English speakers, while non-native scholars were not originally from Inner Circle countries. To address this, the chosen scholars ended with a short biography of themselves. Furthermore, effort was put into ensuring that the webinars in both groups were almost comparable, with each roughly lasting a similar duration and maintaining similar average word counts.

The coding procedure was subsequently implemented in two phases. In the first phase, the researchers reviewed each transcribed webinar individually to become familiar with the topic as a whole. In the second phase, the same researchers deductively assigned the emerged metadiscourse markers to one of the predefined codes based on Hyland's (2005) model mentioned in Table 1. Given that metadiscourse markers often serve multiple functions, it was necessary to carry out a precise, manual analysis of each transcription. Indeed, Hyland emphasizes the fluid nature of metadiscourse, observing that "what can be a metadiscourse in one rhetorical context can express propositional content in another rhetorical context, and the study should constantly analyze each element individually to specify their function" (p. 24). Consequently, the context surrounding each marker (i.e., verbal and nonverbal context) was meticulously analyzed to avoid confusion regarding its function, either as propositional content or as a marker of metadiscourse. Each marker was also examined in relation to its corresponding metadiscourse category. The codes assigned to the metadiscourse markers in the transcribed webinars were subsequently cross-checked by all the researchers involved in the study to ensure the accuracy of the coding. Discrepancies in the codes were identified and resolved through discussion among the researchers.

Additionally, to enhance the authentication and ensure an honest representation of

the data, an expert in the field of Applied Linguistics/TESOL was invited to independently code the metadiscourse markers. To assess inter-rater reliability, a simple percentage agreement measure was calculated. The results indicated a high level of agreement, with a 94.9% agreement rate between the researchers' codes and the independent rater's codes.

Finally, the coded data were entered into SPSS software (version 28) following a thorough review to confirm that there were no errors in the entries. Subsequently, descriptive statistics regarding the metadiscourse markers were computed. Furthermore, a nonparametric test, the chi-square test of independence, was run to examine the statistical significance of differences in the frequency of the variables.

4. Results

As revealed in Table 2, the overall distribution of metadiscourse markers used by native and non-native scholars amounted to 10017 and 8333, respectively. Although native scholars showed a slightly higher overall frequency, both groups demonstrated a substantial use of metadiscourse to organize and engage audiences. Regarding interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers, native and non-native scholars showed differences in the overall use. Natives employed a higher total of interactive markers (3893) compared to non-natives (3739). Also, natives used more interactional markers, with a total of 6124, while non-natives used 4594 instances. Further analysis of specific categories is provided in the following paragraphs.

Table 2

Distribution of Interactive and Interactional Metadiscourse Markers in Native and Non-Native Scholars' Webinars

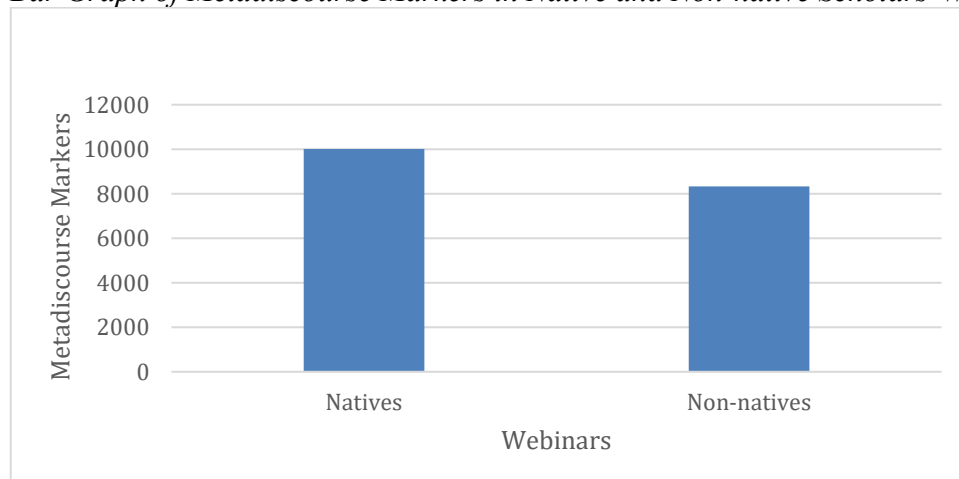
Macro-category	Subcategory	Native scholars	Non-native scholars
Interactive	Transitions	3334	3083
	Frame markers	97	130
	Endophoric markers	33	49
	Evidentials	96	148
	Code glosses	333	329
	Total	3893	3739
Interactional	Hedges	824	701

Macro-category	Subcategory	Native scholars	Non-native scholars
	Boosters	519	370
	Attitude markers	210	129
	Self-mentions	1881	1548
	Engagement markers	2690	1846
	Total	6124	4594
	Grand total	10017	8333

The distribution of all metadiscourse markers in native and non-native scholars' webinars is graphically depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Bar Graph of Metadiscourse Markers in Native and Non-native Scholars' Webinars



An analysis of chi-square was run to compare the native and non-native groups' use of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers. Before discussing the results, it should be noted that any standardized residuals (Std. Residual) higher than 1.96 indicate that the observed frequency was significantly beyond what was expected, while values lower than -1.96 indicate that the observed frequency was significantly below what was expected.

As shown in Table 3, NSs ($n = 6124$, 51.7%, Std. Residual = 3.6 > 1.96) employed interactional metadiscourse markers significantly more than interactive metadiscourse markers ($n = 3893$, 51.0%, -4.2 > -1.96). On the other hand, NNSs (n

= 3739, 49.0%, Std. Residual = 4.6 > 1.96) employed interactive metadiscourse markers significantly more than interactional ones (n = 4594, 42.9%, -3.9 > -1.96).

Table 3

Frequencies, Percentages, and Standard Residuals for Metadiscourse Markers by Group

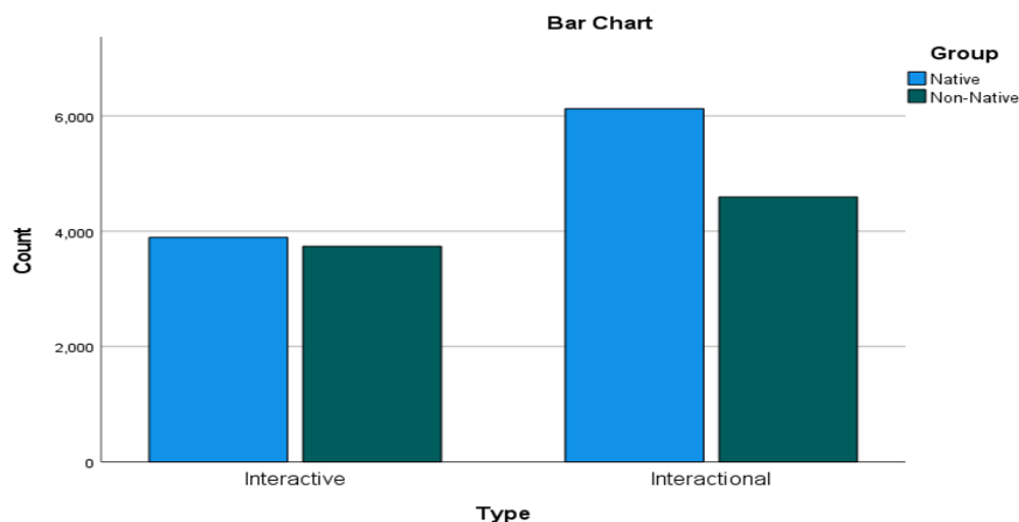
		Group Native	Non-Native	Total
Interactive	Count	3893	3739	7632
	%	51.0%	49.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-4.2	4.6	
Interactional	Count	6124	4594	10718
	%	57.1%	42.9%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	3.6	-3.9	
Total	Count	10017	8333	18350
	%	54.6%	45.4%	100.0%

Table 4 shows the results of the chi-square. The significant results ($\chi^2 (1) = 67.29$, $p < .05$, Cramer's $V = .061$ representing a weak effect size) indicated that the difference observed in Table 3 was statistically significant, although the results should be interpreted cautiously due to the weak effect size value of .061. Figure 3 shows the frequencies discussed in the previous section.

Table 4

Chi-Square Tests for Meta-discourse Markers by Group

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	67.542 ^a	1	.000		
Continuity Correction ^b	67.295	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	67.504	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	67.538	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	18350				
Cramer's V = .061					
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3465.80.					
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table					

Figure 3*Frequencies for Metadiscourse Markers by Group*

Regarding the distribution of interactive metadiscourse markers, Table 5 shows that natives used a slightly greater overall number of markers (3,893) compared to non-natives (3,739). In particular, natives employed more transition markers (3,334 vs. 3,083) and code glosses (333 vs. 329). Conversely, non-natives made greater use of frame markers (130 vs. 97), endophoric markers (49 vs. 33), and evidentials (148 vs. 96).

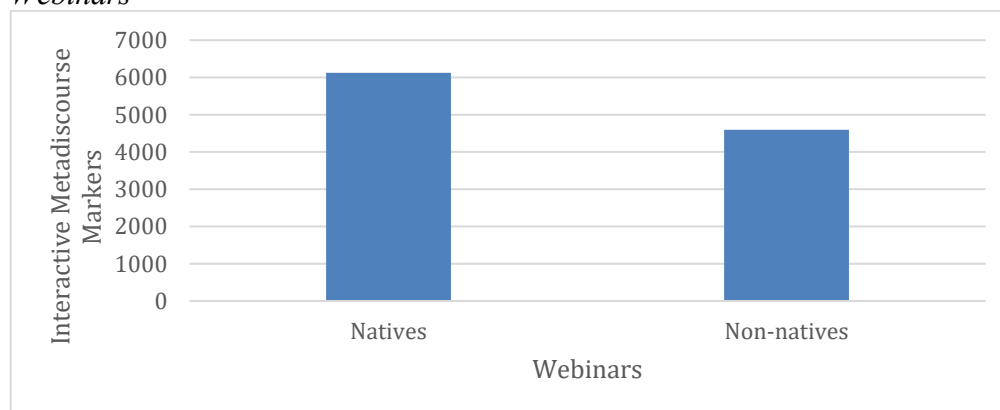
Table 5*Distribution of Interactive Metadiscourse Markers in Native and Non-Native Scholars' Webinars*

	Transitions	Frame markers	Endophoric markers	Evidentials	Code glosses	Total
Natives	3334	97	33	96	333	3893
Non-natives	3083	130	49	148	329	3739

The distribution of interactive metadiscourse markers in native and non-native scholars' webinars is graphically represented in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Bar Graph of Interactive Metadiscourse Markers in Native and Non-native Scholars' Webinars



Additionally, a chi-square analysis was conducted to compare the use of subcategories of interactive metadiscourse markers between the native and non-native groups. The results indicated that none of the observed frequencies were statistically significant for the NSs, except for the fourth subcategory ($n = 96$, 2.5%, Std. Residual = $-2.6 > -1.96$). The results also indicated that none of the observed frequencies were statistically significant for the NNSs, except for the fourth subcategory ($n = 148$, 4.0%, Std. Residual = $2.6 > 1.96$).

Table 6

Frequencies, Percentages, and Standard Residuals for Interactive Metadiscourse Markers by Group

		Sub2					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
Native	Count	3334	97	33	96	333	3893
	%	85.6%	2.5%	0.8%	2.5%	8.6%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	1.1	-1.7	-1.4	-2.6	-.3	
Non-Native	Count	3083	130	49	148	329	3739
	%	82.5%	3.5%	1.3%	4.0%	8.8%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-1.1	1.8	1.4	2.6	.3	
Total	Count	6417	227	82	244	662	7632
	%	84.1%	3.0%	1.1%	3.2%	8.7%	100.0%

Table 7 shows the results of the chi-square test. The significant results ($\chi^2 (4) = 25.74$,

$p < .05$, Cramer's $V = .058$ representing a weak effect size) indicated that the difference observed in Table 6 was statistically significant. However, the results should be interpreted cautiously due to the weak effect size value of .058. Figure 5 shows the frequencies discussed.

Table 7

Chi-Square Tests for Interactive Metadiscourse Markers by Group

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.746 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	25.861	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.885	1	.009
N of Valid Cases	7632		
Cramer's $V = .058$			

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 40.17.

Figure 5

Frequencies for Interactive Metadiscourse Markers by Group

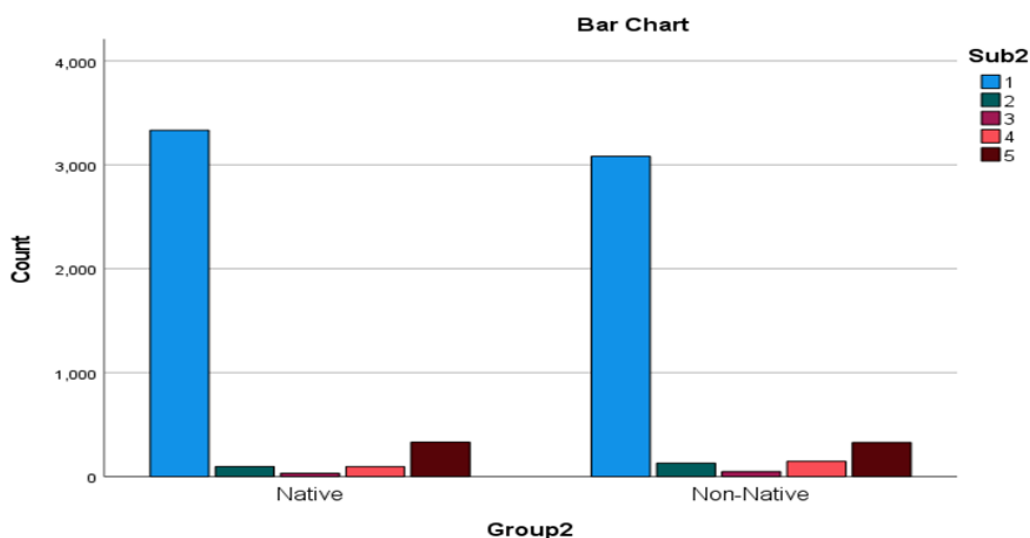


Table 8

Distribution of Interactional Metadiscourse Markers in Native and Non-Native Scholars' Webinars

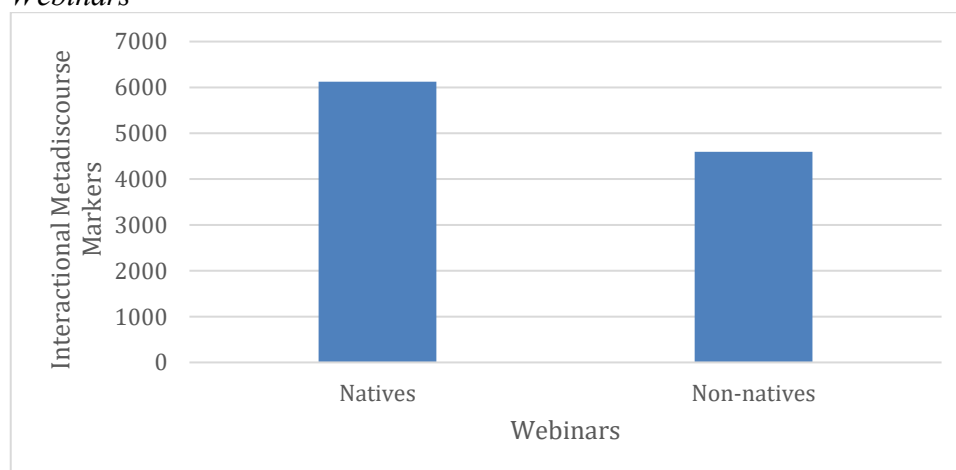
	Hedges	Boosters	Attitude markers	Self-mentions	Engagement markers	Total
Natives	824	519	210	1881	2690	6124
Non-natives	701	370	129	1548	1846	4594

With respect to interactional metadiscourse markers, Table 8 demonstrates that natives employed a considerably higher overall frequency of these markers (6,124) than non-natives (4,594). Specifically, natives showed greater use of hedges (824 vs. 701), boosters (519 vs. 370), attitude markers (210 vs. 129), self-mentions (1,881 vs. 1,548), and engagement markers (2,690 vs. 1,846).

The distribution of interactional metadiscourse markers in native and non-native scholars' webinars is graphically illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Bar Graph of Interactive Metadiscourse Markers in Native and Non-native Scholars' Webinars



The chi-square was performed to compare the native and non-native groups' use of subcategories of interactional metadiscourse markers. The results indicated that

none of the observed frequencies were statistically significant for the NSs—all Std. Residuals were within the ranges of ± 1.96 . However, the NNSs' use of fourth subcategory ($n = 1548$, 40.2%, Std. Residual = $2.0 > 1.96$) was significantly beyond what was expected; while their use of the fifth subcategory ($n = 1846$, 40.2%, Std. Residual = $-2.2 > -1.96$) was significantly below what was expected.

Table 9

Frequencies, Percentages, and Standard Residuals for Interactional Metadiscourse Markers by Group

		Sub2					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
Native	Count	824	519	210	1881	2690	6124
	%	13.5%	8.5%	3.4%	30.7%	43.9%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-1.6	.5	1.2	-1.8	1.9	
Non-Native	Count	701	370	129	1548	1846	4594
	%	15.3%	8.1%	2.8%	33.7%	40.2%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	1.9	-.6	-1.4	2.0	-2.2	
Total	Count	1525	889	339	3429	4536	10718
	%	14.2%	8.3%	3.2%	32.0%	42.3%	100.0%

Table 10 shows the results of the chi-square. The significant results ($\chi^2(4) = 25.74$, $p < .05$, Cramer's $V = .049$ representing a weak effect size) indicated that the difference observed in Table 3 was statistically significant, although the results should be interpreted cautiously due to the weak effect size value of .049. Figure 7 shows the frequencies discussed above.

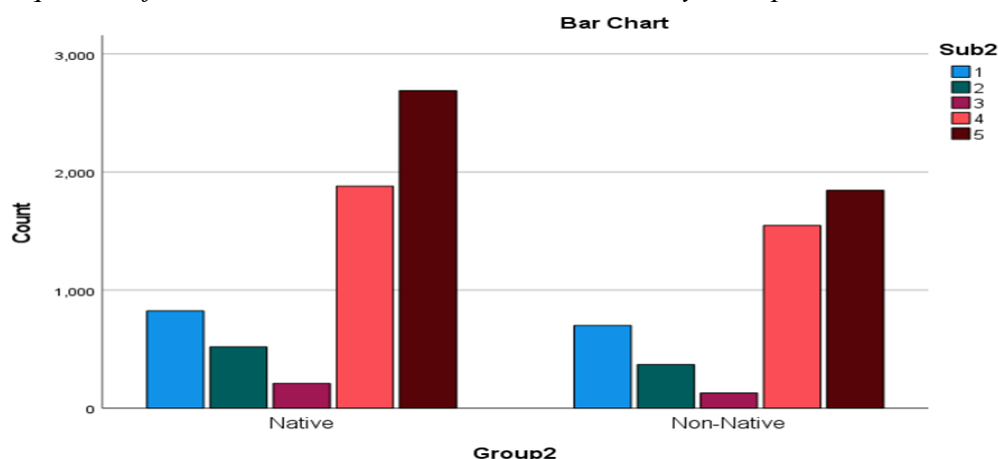
Table 10

Chi-Square Tests for Interactional Metadiscourse Markers by Group

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.743 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	25.758	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.661	1	.006
N of Valid Cases	10718		
Cramer's V = .049			

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 145.30.

Figure 7

Frequencies for Interactional Metadiscourse Markers by Group

5. Discussion

This study aimed to examine the utilization of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers by top-tier native and non-native scholars during Applied Linguistics webinars. The results show that these two groups employ different rhetorical strategies, indicating that they structure their arguments, manage the flow of information, and interact with their audiences in a semi-formal, pedagogical setting in distinct ways.

The most significant finding is the inverse relationship in the overall preference for metadiscourse types: NSs significantly preferred interactional metadiscourse markers over interactive ones, whereas NNSs exhibited the contrary trend, utilizing interactive metadiscourse markers significantly more than interactional ones. This general trend indicates a divergence in primary communicative objectives. NSs appear to value engaging audiences, persuading them, and articulating their stance in a nuanced manner. This finding aligns with Hyland's (2005) definition of metadiscourse as "the linguistic resources used to organize a discourse or the writer's stance towards its content or the audience" (p. 37). On the other hand, NNSs seem to focus more on making sure that their writing is clear, logically coherent, and well-organized, which could be because they care more about information transmission

and structural transparency. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Tang (2017) and Ahmadi et al. (2021), which frequently indicates that NNSs prioritize explicitness and structural markers in academic discourse. However, the present findings add an important dimension to this discussion. Most of the existing studies have examined more traditional academic genres or student writing, but the scholars' webinars were examined in this study, which suggests that limited proficiency can not be the only reason for these preferences. Rather, they may show long-lasting rhetorical habits formed by pedagogical practices, disciplinary training, or culturally informed approaches to academic communication. In this sense, the results point to variation in rhetorical orientation rather than differences in competence.

When it comes to interactive metadiscourse markers, the NSs used them slightly more frequently, but the specific distribution within categories provides more insightful differences. The fact that NSs use transition markers and code glosses more often suggests that they can manage information in a smooth and advanced way. Transition markers like "however," "therefore," and "in addition" help ideas flow smoothly and logically, showing that the speaker is ready to lead audiences through complicated arguments (Hyland, 2017). Code glosses ("in other words," "that is to say") are used by NSs to explain or clarify potentially complicated ideas to reach a wide range of audiences and ensure they understand without losing intellectual depth. This finding suggests that they are confident in their ability to make complex information easy to understand.

On the other hand, NNSs used frame markers, endophoric markers, and evidentials more often. NNSs used frame markers like "firstly," "my next point," and "to conclude" more frequently, which indicates that they structured the presentation more clearly and directly. The use of frame markers could be a deliberate way to make up for any language or rhetorical insecurity and ensure that the audiences can easily follow the argument's flow. It could also be a result of teaching methods that put a lot of emphasis on explicit structural signaling in L2 academic training (Livingstone, 2019). Likewise, using more endophoric markers (as I mentioned earlier) shows a commitment to textual cohesion and clear cross-referencing, making sure that no information is left to be inferred. The growing use of evidentials by NNSs, like "according to X" and "research has shown," suggests that they are trying

to strengthen their claims by clearly linking information to external sources. Evidentials are essential in academic discourse for establishing credibility; however, their increased prevalence among NNSs may suggest a perceived necessity to enhance the authority of their arguments, potentially due to a less established academic identity within the English-speaking scholarly community or a cultural inclination towards external validation (Wang & Li, 2024).

The most notable difference was in the use of interactional metadiscourse markers, where NSs used them much more often in all categories. Within Hyland's (2005) framework, these markers are crucial to the interpersonal dimension of discourse since they allow speakers to position themselves regarding their claims and audiences. Their frequent use by NSs shows a more dialogic approach to presenting research, in which audience engagement, argumentation, and evaluation are closely intertwined.

In several respects, this pattern supports previous findings that emphasize the greater utilization of stance and engagement markers by NSs in academic discourse (Flowerdew, 2015; Hyland, 2005). For instance, NSs use more hedges ("may," "suggests," "it seems likely") and boosters ("clearly," "undoubtedly," "I contend that") than NNSs, indicating that they have a good understanding of rhetorical nuance. Hedges let speakers show that they are careful and humble by admitting the limitations of their claims. Boosters, on the other hand, show that they are sure and committed to certain positions. The balanced use of both shows that the writer knows how to argue in an academic way and where to make claims with the right amount of certainty and uncertainty (Hyland, 2008). This characteristic differs from the lower usage by NNSs, which could mean that the findings are presented in a more direct and less nuanced manner due to linguistic insecurity or a different rhetorical tradition where overt hedging or boosting is less common.

The considerably higher utilization of attitude markers ("unfortunately," "surprisingly," "it is important to note") by NSs indicates their readiness to articulate their affective stance regarding the propositional content overtly, demonstrating that they are experts at interpreting and evaluating data, which lends a scholarly personality and critical engagement that is often characteristic of established scholars.

Moreover, NSs' increased utilization of self-referential phrases ("I argue," "my research indicates," "we believe") signifies a more robust and assertive authorial voice. This direct involvement in the discourse demonstrates that the person is confident in themselves, owns their ideas, and is willing to take responsibility for their claims (Hyland, 2005). The reduced frequency among NNSs may arise from a preference for a more objective, depersonalized academic style, commonly emphasized in L2 academic writing programs, or a cultural tendency toward humility and collective attribution instead of individual assertion.

Lastly, NSs use engagement markers like "you can see," "consider this," and "let me explain" a lot more than NNSs do, which is especially important in the context of a webinar. These markers actively engage audiences in the discourse, fostering a sense of dialogue and shared understanding, promoting interaction, and sustaining attention, which is particularly important for the educational purpose of webinars, as it transforms a one-way conversation into a more interactive learning experience. This rhetorical strategy, intended to build rapport and facilitate audience understanding, appears to be a common feature of NSs' communication in this genre. The relative absence of engagement markers among NNSs may suggest a more unilateral, transmission-focused methodology, possibly indicating an emphasis on efficient information delivery rather than fostering active audience participation in the co-construction of knowledge.

6. Conclusion

The findings necessitate a more sophisticated comprehension of "effective" academic communication, advocating for L2 pedagogy to move beyond mere grammatical accuracy and explicit structural indicators, and to foster a comprehensive spectrum of rhetorical and pragmatic competencies essential for navigating the complex and challenging realm of global scholarship. As academic discourse becomes increasingly international, it will be crucial to understand and address these subtle differences in metadiscourse in a manner that fosters truly inclusive, engaging, and valuable scholarly exchange. The findings support a deliberate pedagogical initiative to enhance the interactional competence of NNS scholars, thereby empowering them

to convey their expertise with increased confidence and interpersonal efficacy.

These results have important effects on English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teaching, especially for scholars who do not speak English as their first language. NNSs are very good at organizing and making their content clear, but they need to be taught how to use interactional metadiscourse. Training should emphasize cultivating a nuanced comprehension and proficient application of hedges and boosters to communicate suitable degrees of certainty, alongside promoting the utilization of attitude markers to articulate scholarly evaluation. More importantly, NNSs could utilize self-mentions and, for genres like webinars, active audience engagement markers to help them develop a more confident and engaging authorial voice, which would enable NNSs to not only communicate information effectively but also to persuade, encourage interaction, and establish a lasting academic presence in the global scholarly community (Ajideh et al., 2024).

It is crucial to recognize the limitations of this study, particularly the designated discipline (Applied Linguistics) and genre (webinars), which may affect metadiscourse selections. Subsequent research may investigate these patterns across various disciplines and academic genres (such as conference presentations, lectures, and written articles) and with larger, more diverse groups of scholars. Longitudinal studies could also monitor the evolution of metadiscourse selections among NNS scholars over time.

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Appendix

Webinars Selected for the Study

Scholar (Webinar Presenter)	Group	Year of Presentation	Webinar URL
1. Bayyurt	Non-native	2020	YouTube link
2. Canagarajah	Non-native	2021	YouTube link
3. Cenoz	Non-native	2021	YouTube link
4. Dewaele	Non-native	2021	YouTube link
5. Farhady	Non-native	2022	YouTube link
6. Hua	Non-native	2022	YouTube link
7. Kubota	Non-native	2020	YouTube link
8. Mauranten	Non-native	2022	YouTube link
9. Ortega	Non-native	2022	YouTube link
10. Riazi	Non-native	2020	YouTube link
11. Tsimpli	Non-native	2025	YouTube link

12. Wei	Non-native	2021	YouTube link
13. Crystal	Native	2023	YouTube link
14. Cummins	Native	2020	YouTube link
15. Ellis	Native	2022	YouTube link
16. Escamilla	Native	2020	YouTube link
17. Gray	Native	2020	YouTube link
18. Hyland	Native	2020	YouTube link
19. Krashen	Native	2022	YouTube link
20. Mercer	Native	2020	YouTube link
21. Nation	Native	2020	YouTube link
22. Seedhouse	Native	2023	YouTube link
23. Ur	Native	2020	YouTube link
24. Walsh	Native	2020	YouTube link

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