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A cross-disciplinary analysis of authorial voice in the rhetorical structures of research article abstracts in the fields of linguistics and economics written by native and non-native English speakers

Abstract. This study aims to offer a cross-disciplinary analysis of authorial voice in the rhetorical structures of research article abstracts in the fields of linguistics and economics written by native and non-native English speakers. The research addresses questions related to the frequency of authorial voice in abstracts, the differences between the author's self-mentioning, cross-discipline-wise and cross-culturally, and its influence on the rhetorical structure of abstracts. The study is based on Hyland's (2000) five-move model and combines quantitative and qualitative methods. The frequency of the author's self-mentioning across thirty-two abstracts from the two selected fields of knowledge was determined by specifying the distribution of the author's visibility among the moves as well the forms of their visibility. The results of the study showcase the similarities and differences in conveying authorial voice in the corpus and are discussed thoroughly. We found that linguistic abstracts are characterised by a low degree of authorial voice while economic abstracts show a much higher frequency of authorial voice in the form of pronouns. We contend that there is a tendency towards higher authorial visibility among Anglo-American academic writers in comparison with non-native speakers.

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1. Introduction

Research article (RA) abstracts as an academic writing genre are characterised by an increasingly growing importance in the academic world. Generally, abstracts serve as a lens through which research outcomes become available to wider target audiences. Therefore, it is critically important for their authors to produce high quality abstracts with a high degree of clarity, informativeness, and scientific value. Aside from their scientific merit, RA abstracts are also endowed with a persuasive function. For example, the decision whether to consider a particular article for publication in a journal, whether to use it for citation in one's own research, or merely whether it is worth continuing to read further is often made at the stage of familiarisation with the title and RA abstract.

In terms of the rhetorical structure in RA abstracts, the role of the author, or group of authors, is crucial in the production of an excellent RA abstract. The preparation of an abstract presupposes academic interaction with the scientific discourse community via the transfer of expertise and the assessment of positions and views. It is due to such an interaction that a favourable space for research appears. An RA abstract typifies a kind of negotiation in which the author attempts to persuade the reader that their research is valid, relevant, and up-to-date. To reinforce such author-reader interactions, the writers strive to establish a solid and visible self-mentioning in the abstract in order to create the space for a dialogue with the target reader.

With the ever-progressing spread of English as the lingua franca of the global academic world, Anglo-American academic literacy has begun to interact with other academic literacies, as many non-native speakers who are striving to become part of the international academic discourse community are forced to publish in English (Hyland 2009; Dontcheva-Navrátilová 2013). The Anglo-American academic linguoculture³, rooted in its specific linguistic axiology and worldview, has its own text-forming as well as stylistic conventions and norms which are desirable to be followed, especially by English non-native speakers, in order to prepare a successful publishing output. Based on our academic experience, long-term empirical observations, as well as the research by Nelson & Castelló (2012), Swales & Feak (2012), Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2013) and Januarto & Hardjanto (2020), Anglo-American writers seem to apply a higher degree of

3 This term was first introduced by Russian linguist V. V. Vorobyev and denotes the relationship between language and culture. Reflecting a linguistic and ethno-cultural flavour, a Vorobyevian understanding of the term helps us to grasp culture from an anthropocentric point of view, language through the prism of cultural values, the position of culture at the top level of language, as well as the penetration of text into a culture and its subsequent interpretation (Ernazarova 2022). We also deem it proper to apply the term to academese based on its linguistic and cultural norms and conventions.

authorial presence and authority for the purpose of proving their statements and negotiating their positions with the reader.

The present study centres on an analysis of the degree of the author's authoritative-ness and visibility in RA abstracts sourced from the fields of economics and linguistics written by Anglophone and non-Anglophone speakers. Our research premise is that an author's self-reference is justified by their need for personal support of their claims, statements, and judgements. As the linguistic form of personal pronouns is taken as the primary indicator of the author's presence, their frequency and place of appearance in particular rhetorical moves within the body of the RA abstract will be explored.

In this study, it is our ambition to deal with authorial voice in the light of academic objectivity. The general academic convention recommends scientific objectivity by avoiding the author's personality (Dontcheva-Navrátilová 2013). However, a vivid change towards an increase in the author's representation in RA abstracts has been observed through the application of personal pronouns to maintain the author-reader negotiation mode (see, e.g., Kuo 1999; Nelson & Castelló 2012; Dontcheva-Navrátilová 2013; Januarto & Hardjanto 2020; Qasim et al. 2021). Shih-ping Wang et al. (2021: 17) write on personal pronouns in the context of academic objectivity: "a single author should avoid overusing subjective expressions of "we," and, instead, employ a variation of impersonal pronouns such as 'This paper', 'This study', or 'This research' to lend an objective voice of authorship to his or her findings".

Striving for a cross-cultural analysis, embedded within different text's "axiospheres", two target groups of authors were considered: native speakers, mainly Anglo-American researchers, and non-native speakers, notably Asian-Arabic authors. The study deals with the approaches applied by the two groups of authors towards their participation in the author-reader academic negotiation.

2. Literature review

In an attempt to elucidate RA as an academic genre, Cate Cross & Charles Oppenheim (2006: 431) provide a most useful and reasonable explanation, as follows:

the abstract is a highly stylised type of condensed document representation. It must follow certain rules of construction for it to fully provide the user with the relevant information to make decisions about accessing or understanding the essential points of the document. There are a number of different types of abstracts that are able to serve the needs of these different users and that can successfully perform differing functions. However, the most prevalent types used by abstracting and indexing services and in scholarly journals are indicative, informative and indicative-informative abstracts.

With a view to the tripartite distinction given above, Rowley (1988) clarifies that while indicative abstracts generally imply the article content and lack indications of any research outcomes or conclusions, informative abstracts present mostly information of a qualitative or quantitative nature and contain this sort of information. As the author claims, informative abstracts “serve the dual function of aiding the assessment of document relevance, and also serve as substitutes for the original when only a cursory knowledge of the subject is needed” (Rowley 1988: 15). Lastly, indicative-informative abstracts give general information, as typical of indicative abstracts, along with concise conclusion-like statements (Cremmins 1996).

In the context of characterising the abstract as a genre, we consider it necessary to also pay heed to so-called structured abstracts, which after the meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group in 1987, the majority of scientific journals in the fields of medicine and psychology decided to introduce (Hartley 1997; Santos 1996). More recently, RA as an academic genre has made progress with the so-called graphical abstract, which, as Pferschy-Wenzig et al. (2016: 1) maintain, epitomizes a work of art that is “intended to summarize the article’s main findings for readers at a single glance, to attract audience attention, and to make readers pick out one’s article from a plethora of potentially interesting literature”.

Our desk-research has revealed that a relatively large amount has been written in the extant literature on the issues of the analysis of RA abstracts in the interdisciplinary domain, as well as on the origins of authors producing abstracts and their authorial voice therein. In order to contextualise our research better and be able to draw out its merits, the following offers an overview of the most important achievements in RA abstract research. Overall, it seems fair to say that research models which foreground a comparative quantitative-qualitative analysis prevail.

With regard to investigations into cross-cultural variations in academese, Povolná (2016) analysed conference abstracts. Her corpus comprises non-native speakers of Slavic origin, mainly from Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine. Despite the different origins of the non-native speakers in our research in comparison with Povolná (2016), we found that there are comparable differences between the RA abstracts written by native speakers and non-native speakers. Moreover, Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2013) dealt with authorial voice in academic discourse. Even though she focused only on linguistic abstracts, we agree with her that it is relevant to analyse authorial presence through the analysis of author-reference pronouns. Focusing on a contrastive analysis of microstructures in RA abstracts, Galaidin has explored the fields of medicine (2021a) and engineering (2021b), albeit leaving authorial presence aside.

Tracing considerable scholars’ merits within “classic” RA research, Hyland (2001, 2003) placed focus on the use of self-citation and exclusive first-person pronouns based on a corpus of 240 research articles in eight academic domains such as electrical

engineering, marketing, mechanical engineering, sociology, philosophy, microbiology, applied linguistics, and physics. Paying heed to pronouns, the author drew the conclusion that authorial presence appears in particular places within the article where the authors seem to be most able to promote themselves and their contributions. In another work from 2003, he revealed that authorial presence was lower in abstracts than in papers. Four primary objectives were identified for authorial presence: stating a goal or outlining the structure of the paper; explaining a procedure; stating results or making a claim; elaborating an argument. We will adhere to this useful organizational approach in our qualitative analysis (see section 4.2). Moreover, Santos (1996) worked out his own model, ontologically and protocolary similar, consisting of the following five moves: situating the research, presenting the research, describing methodology, summarizing the findings, and discussing the findings. With English studies journals in mind, Doró's research (2013) unveiled that only a few abstracts followed the full structure by Santos (1996). Intriguingly enough, the analysed linguistics journals showed a high degree of resemblance to the literature journals in terms of rhetorical structure (*ibid.*).

Taking account of salient distinctions playing a role in authorial voice, Elena Filimonova (2005: ix) gives the following definition of “inclusive” and “exclusive” pronouns: “the terms “inclusive” and “exclusive” are traditionally used to denote forms of personal pronouns which distinguish whether an addressee (or addressees) are included in or excluded from the set of referents which also contains the speaker”. Moreover, Michael Daniel (2005: 3) elucidates “inclusive” and “exclusive” pronouns in this manner:

the “inclusive” is traditionally explained as an elaboration of the meaning of the first-person plural pronoun “we”. When present in a language [...], the opposition of “we” inclusive and “we” exclusive, it is said, is intended to specify whether the reference of “we” includes (inclusive) or excludes (exclusive) the addressee.

In sum, we would wager that the more recent research seems to concentrate on the following three main strands: analysis of RA rhetorical move structures; analysis of RA abstracts written by native-speakers and non-native speakers; and analysis of authorial voice in RA abstracts.

In regard to the first identified strand, the past half-decade saw an upsurge of interest in the analysis of RA rhetorical move structures, as attested by the research of Ngai et al. (2018), Raeisi et al. (2019), Ashofteh et al. (2020), Tamela (2020), Qasim et al. (2021), Rahayati & Herlina (2021), and Ramadhini et al. (2021). Following the researchers' findings, we will try to check whether native authors followed the rhetorical structure of RA abstracts in a more rigorous way than non-native ones. Using a selective lens with a view to the above-mentioned pieces of research, the study by Ashofteh et al. (2020) showed

that the majority of RA abstracts contained three obligatory moves (PTR, DTM, and STF) according to Pho (2008). However, we do not entirely agree with the notion of “obligatory moves”, since obligation does not arise from any official document and the decision on the structure of the abstract belongs to its author, unless specifically required by a particular scientific journal⁴. On the other hand, we find relevant the research by Tamela (2020), who investigated the move structure in RA abstracts in national and international Scopus indexed journals. We concur that there is a range of meaningful nouns and verbs that reinforce authorial voice in the abstract. She found that there are specific linguistic forms used in the Purpose move (verbs such as investigated, reports, examined, aims, etc., and nouns such as the analyses, the results, the findings, etc.), the use of the active voice in the Product move, and the present tense form in the Conclusion move.

Another strand in contemporary research with a focus on RAs is based on the perspective of the origin of their authors. More concretely, Al-Khasawneh (2017), on the basis of Hyland’s (2000) model, found that native speakers adhered to the international convention of the academic discourse community, while non-native authors did not literally observe this convention. Next, Noorizadeh-Honami & Chalak (2018) analysed RA abstracts written by English and Persian authors. They ascertained that native speakers paid more attention to the Method move, whereas non-native speakers were more informative in the Introduction and Discussion moves. Furthermore, Çakir & Fidan (2015) analysed native and non-native writers’ use of stance adverbs in English RA abstracts written by Turkish and Anglo-American academic writers. They found that Anglo-American authors placed more emphasis upon their role in the abstract. In sum, the common denominator of the majority of the latest papers seems to be the fact that there are significant differences in RA abstracts written by native and non-native speakers. However, they also differ in the degree of these differences, mainly due to the particular geographic origin of the native speakers as well as their cultural and educational backgrounds.

Lastly, of late there has been heightened enthusiasm from scholars with regard to exploring authorial voice in RA abstracts. The literature is replete with (empirical) evidence that authorial voice is useful for the purpose of achieving different objectives in academic writing, e.g., authority and authenticity (Nelson & Castelló 2012), or appraisal perspective (Zhang & Cheung 2018). More concretely, Januarta & Hardjanto (2020) established that the degree of the author’s visibility is influenced by nativeness. Raeisi et al. (2019) dealt with a lexico-grammatical analysis of native and non-native abstracts based on Halliday’s SFL model, and found that there was a minor difference between native and non-native abstracts in terms of lexical density.

4 However, “obligatory moves” are justified to a considerable extent in hard science abstracts, whose structure tends to be more strict (see, e.g., Ramadhini et al. 2021).

Admittedly, it is also true that there are a few scholars who have explored the issue of RA abstracts in economics and linguistics. In particular, Fløttum et al. (2006), focusing on cultural identities in academic discourse, provided a comprehensive contrastive analysis of 450 English, French and Norwegian RAs from economics, linguistics and medicine. More recently, Ebrahimi & Chan (2015) analysed and compared the discourse functions of grammatical subjects used in RA abstracts in the disciplines of applied linguistics and economics. In another study, Ebrahimi & Saadabadi Motlagh (2017) carried out a cross-disciplinary and linguistic study of context frames in 200 research article abstracts from applied linguistics, economics, biology, and mechanical engineering.

As this literature review showcases, there has been ample research in terms of investigation of the issue of authorial voice in RA abstracts. However, the majority of the studies were focused rather narrowly on a selected aspect, be it only one academic discipline (e.g., experimental psychology or engineering), variations between natives and non-natives, or particular personal pronouns. Hence, despite the rather modest corpus, the relevance of our research lies in its comprehensiveness, embracing cross-disciplinarity of analysis (two disciplines: linguistics and economics), its cross-culturality (native and non-native English speakers) and a specified linguistic context with a focus on rhetorical structures. The choice of the attendant fields underpinning a cross-disciplinary analysis was also informed by other reasons. While linguistics constitutes a shared research interest of both authors of this paper, representing the proverbial “common ground”, the selection of economics was motivated by the first author’s deep interest in the given field of knowledge due to his further higher education studies with a focus on economics in progress, supplementing his existing philological education. In addition, economics as a social science is believed to represent a stimulating point of comparison with humanities, represented by linguistics in our case. Since economics is not as widely remote from linguistics as natural sciences such as chemistry, biology or physics, the selection of these fields could potentially yield intriguing research results.

3. Research design and methodology

3.1 Aim and research questions

This study aims to explore the differences and similarities between English-language RA abstracts from the fields of economics and linguistics in terms of authorial presence. The goal of the paper is also to find out whether, and if so to what extent, the fact that the author is native or non-native affects their authorial voice in the abstracts. By keeping this in view, three research questions were formulated, namely:

- (1) What is the frequency of authorial appearances in the abstracts in the fields of economics and linguistics written by native and non-native speakers of English?

- (2) In what way does authorial voice in the abstracts differ between those written by native speakers and non-native speakers, as well as between the disciplines of economics and linguistics?
- (3) How does the rhetorical structure of abstracts affect authorial voice in the abstracts under study?

3.2 The corpus

The corpus underlying this study is made up of 32 abstracts selected from four academic journals. With regard to economics, 16 RA abstracts were selected from *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* and *Journal of Asian Economics*—8 written by native speakers and 8 by non-native speakers. With a view to linguistics, 16 abstracts were chosen from *Applied Linguistics* and the *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies*—8 written by native speakers and 8 by non-native speakers. All four journals are indexed in the Scopus database, which is supposed to testify to the quality of the academic articles. The abstracts were selected from journal issues between the years of 2019 and 2022, meeting the criterion of contemporariness in the research material. The total number of words in economic abstracts by native speakers is 1,249 whilst by non-native speakers it is 1,155. The total number of words in linguistic abstracts by native speakers reaches 1,194 words, and by non-native writers it is 1,531 words. Thus, the entire analysed corpus totals 5,129 words.

When choosing the abstracts, considerable emphasis was placed upon the aspect of selecting the articles by the author, either a native or non-native speaker of English. For the sake of the best possible identification of the author's origin, each and every author of the aforementioned 32 research articles was subject to identification by checking their personal website, the website of the institution to which they are affiliated, including their ORCID and Google scholar accounts, as well as personal biography and CV. While taking into account all of the inclusion criteria aspects (e.g., the author's name and surname, place of birth, educational background, and work experience), the main clue was the educational background. We presupposed that if the author had gained education at the secondary and university level in an English-speaking country, we could consider such an author a native speaker.

When it comes to the specific countries of origin, no differentiation was made in the case of native speakers. These were mainly from the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. However, an attempt was made to adhere to such a differentiation in the case of non-native authors. Therefore, 8 abstracts selected from the *Journal of Asian Economics* were penned by Asian authors, coming mainly from Japan, China, and India. On the other hand, the 8 abstracts picked from the *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies* were authored by Arabic researchers, mainly from Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Arabic authors were selected in order to extend the group of abstracts by

non-natives to a broader geographical Asian-Arabic region and, in doing so, to try to make the research more representative.

The distribution of analysed abstract types is given in Table 1. As can be deduced from the data, the majority of both linguistic as well as economic abstracts rank among informative types of abstracts.

Table 1. Distribution of analysed abstract types

Group of abstract	Type of abstract		
	Indicative	Informative	Indicative-informative
Linguistics—Native speakers	2 / 8	4 / 8	2 / 8
Linguistics—Non-native speakers	2 / 8	4 / 8	2 / 8
Economics—Native speakers	2 / 8	4 / 8	2 / 8
Economics—Non-native speakers	1 / 8	5 / 8	2 / 8

3.3 Methods

In the present study, Hyland’s (2000) five-move model was applied as a methodological tool for the purpose of the identification of the rhetorical structure in the assembled corpus. The model includes five moves, i.e., Introduction, Purpose, Method, Product, and Conclusion, as Table 2 shows. Each of these moves represents the implementation of a particular communicative purpose. Hyland’s (2000) five-move model distinguishes the Purpose move from the Introduction move in order to highlight clearly the description of the purpose of the study. We think that the advantage of Hyland’s model, in contrast to, e.g., Halliday’s systemic-functional linguistics (SFL) (1994) model or Santos’s model (1996), rests in its level of elaboration and clarity. In comparison to these two models, we consider Hyland’s model to be the most suitable for the present research as it contains all of the elements commonly perceived as mandatory in modern academia.

Table 2. Linear order of Hyland’s five-move model (adopted from Hyland 2000: 67)

Moves	Function
Introduction (M1)	Establishes context of the paper and motivates the research or discussion
Purpose (M2)	Indicates purpose, thesis, or hypothesis, outlines the intention behind the paper
Method (M3)	Provides information on design, procedures, assumptions, approach, data, etc.
Product (M4)	States main findings or results, the argument, or what was accomplished
Conclusion (M5)	Interprets or extends results beyond scope of paper, draws inferences, points to applications or wider implications

As for Hyland's move content, the Introduction move is where the author gets in contact with the target audience for the very first time, and therefore he/she is highly likely to appear. The Purpose move, however, is where the focus is rather shifted to the study per se, its aims and objectives. Therefore, authors remain rather invisible in this section. The Method move deals with the instruments and approaches applied in the study, which does not require the direct appearance of the author. The Product move, however, is where the author's self-reference highlights their achievements, and therefore strengthens their scientific role in the research. The Conclusion as a rhetorical move is often omitted by the authors or is presented in the form of not more than one sentence without the author's representation in it.

Furthermore, the study employs a mixed methodology, relying on quantitative and qualitative approaches with an emphasis on the latter. The quantitative method consisted of the calculation of the occurrences of the author's representation in the corpus. For this purpose, we split each of the 32 abstracts manually into separate tables. We labelled each and every sentence of the abstract using Hyland's (2000) five-move model and subsequently we inserted the data into the respective box of the table. Having split all abstracts into the tables, we calculated the cases of authorial presence. Finally, the data were translated into a summary table divided among 5 moves (Introduction (M1), Purpose (M2), Method (M3), Product (M4), Conclusion (M5)), academic discipline (economics and linguistics), and category of authors (native speaker, non-native speaker). The ultimate tabular structure, reflecting all analysed data, is given in Table 3 (see section 4.1).

With a view to the ways of manifesting authorial voice in the RA abstract, three strategies of the author's self-reference in scientific articles are commonly identified: (a) explicit mentioning through personal pronouns (first person singular, or, more frequently, plural); (b) agent hidden behind passive forms; (c) agent hidden behind personification structures (e.g., 'This study starts with...') (Rossini Favretti & Bondi Paganelli 1988). In our corpus, the author's presence is referred to predominantly via explicit mentioning through personal pronouns such as *I/my/me*, *we/our/us*. In the cases of a lack of author's representation in the abstract, we attempted to explain such a phenomenon, as well as to show how it is substituted or compensated for.

For the sake of identifying the reason behind the author's intention to appear in a particular abstract and move and/or its part, we offer further information, presented in Tables 4 and 5 (see section 4.2). The personal pronouns are put together with the verbs following them in a particular move, where the first line contains the most frequently used ones, and the subsequent lines contain those employed more rarely.

Therefore, the quantitative method in this study results from a mathematical calculation of assigning frequencies to the linguistic features identified in the corpus and serves as the basis for further qualitative methods used. In sum, a descriptive method

and discourse analysis were used when subjecting the data to qualitative content analysis. The data serve as the foundation for the identification and description of aspects of academic language use, giving authentic instances of a particular linguistic phenomenon under study.

3.4 Research suppositions

The below-mentioned suppositions deserve some further elucidation for the sake of clarity since we will attempt to offer explicit explanations for them in the qualitative part of the study.

The author's writing tradition⁵ mainly refers to the style of academic writing that the researcher has been mastering throughout the years of their academic career. The writing tradition may be influenced by their educational, cultural or professional background, as well as the author's fellow researchers, co-authors, or even supervisors, who each also follow their own academic styles.

The academic discipline has a bearing on the general structure of the abstract, and authorial presence in particular. For example, some disciplines, such as medicine or engineering, are generally characterised by a more rigorous structure, whereas soft sciences tend to have a looser structure.

The particular country of origin has to do with the cultural and behavioural background of the author. In some cultures, like Japan, for instance, it is considered the norm to behave in an overtly modest and reserved way, which may have its translation in the lack of authorial voice of such a writer in the abstract.

Last but not least, the style of the journal to which the author is submitting can be of supreme importance. Generally, prior to submitting one's work to the selected journal, the author is required to become familiar with the author guidelines. It is also highly recommended to have a look at a range of already published articles in order to gain a more concrete idea of the journal content, topics, and structure. This preliminary familiarisation may have an ultimate effect on the form and content of a prospective article to be submitted, including the author's presence surfacing in its abstract.

5 The author's writing tradition may be Saxonian (UK and USA), Teutonic (Germany), Gallic (France, Spain, Italy, Portugal and Latin America) or Nipponic (Japan). The Saxonian intellectual style is characterised by powerful organization and data collection which is often a result of team effort. The Teutonic intellectual style is marked by a focus on theory formation and promotes deductive reasoning instead of data analysis and inductive thinking. The Gallic intellectual style is commonly perceived as elegant and artistic. The Nipponic style is characterised by its fact orientation, and the emphasis is laid on using paradigms and propositions (see Galtung 1985: 822–841 for more detail).

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Quantitative analysis

As can be inferred from Table 3, economic abstracts show a higher density of author's reference in comparison with linguistic abstracts. In the case of economic abstracts, both native and non-native speakers employ mostly the Method move and Product move. In the case of linguistic abstracts, native speakers use predominantly the Purpose move and Method move. Interestingly, there is not a single case of authorial self-reference in linguistic abstracts written by non-native speakers. On the one hand, we suppose that such a distribution of author's reference across the analysed abstracts may be quite random without necessarily having any justification behind it. On the other hand, such distribution may be explained by several factors, such as move content, the author's writing tradition/school, the nature of the academic discipline, the particular country of origin, the author's personal attitude, or even the style of the journal to which the author has submitted the article. We are well aware of the fact that more systematic research based on much larger corpora is needed in order to be able to confirm or refute the possible explanations.

None of the analysed abstracts has all of the 5 moves as indicated in Hyland's five-move model (Hyland 2000: 67). We wish to reiterate here that the point of this research is to zoom in on authorial voice in the abstracts rather than to analyse their rhetorical structure.

Table 3. Frequency of authorial voice by moves

Move	Abstracts from the domain of linguistics		Abstracts from the domain of economics	
	Native speaker	Non-native speaker	Native speaker	Non-native speaker
Introduction (M1)	0/8 (0%)	0/8 (0%)	1/8 (12.5%)	0/8 (0%)
Purpose (M2)	2/8 (25%)	0/8 (0%)	3/8 (37.5%)	3/8 (37.5%)
Method (M3)	2/8 (25%)	0/8 (0%)	5/8 (62.5%)	4/8 (50%)
Product (M4)	1/8 (12.5%)	0/8 (0%)	4/8 (50%)	6/8 (75.5%)
Conclusion (M5)	0/8 (0%)	0/8 (0%)	0/8 (0%)	2/8 (25%)

To compare our findings with other scholars' research, Al-Khasawneh (2017) applied Hyland's (2000) model to reveal that native speakers observe the structure of RA abstracts more systematically and comprehensively than non-natives. However, it should be pointed out that Al-Khasawneh (2017) did not specifically study authorial presence in his article. Based on the juxtaposition of our research findings (see Table 3) and those by Al-Khasawneh (2017), we can draw a preliminary conclusion that there seems to be no direct interdependence between the rhetorical structure of an RA abstract and authorial

voice in it. On the other hand, we can see that particular moves, such as Purpose, Method, and Product, are more likely to contain the author's self-mentioning, whereas moves such as Introduction and Conclusion are often left without authorial voice.

Furthermore, Ebrahimi & Chan (2015) found that there are disciplinary differences as to the discourse functions of the grammatical subject in the disciplines of applied linguistics and economics. At the same time, the study by Ebrahimi & Saadabadi Motlagh (2017) revealed that the context of the frame's selection, frequency and discourse functions are influenced by the academic discipline and the genre of RA abstracts.

In addition, we analysed the use of the first-person plural pronoun "we" in the corpus. We found that "we" was used as exclusive 10 times and twice as ambiguous in the economic abstracts written by native speakers. There were 9 cases of "exclusive we" in the economic abstracts written by non-native speakers. In the latter group of abstracts, there were 8 incidences of the possessive pronoun "our" indicating its exclusivity, as well and only one suggesting its ambiguity. "Exclusive we" and "exclusive our" appeared in the linguistic abstracts written by native speakers only once. Thus, this part of the analysis brings us to the conclusion that authors predominantly apply "exclusive we" to highlight their importance, as well as the significance of their input in the research. These few (i.e., 3) cases of ambiguous "we" were the ones where some space was left for interaction with the target reader, however negligible.

In terms of the applied quantitative approach, our study resonates with that by Fløttum et al. (2006) with a view to the vagueness of determining the exclusivity and inclusivity of first-person plural pronouns. Fløttum et al. (2006: 101) expatiate upon the issue in the following manner:

We have been at some pains to clarify the referential possibilities of first-person plural pronouns and would not be surprised to learn that some readers disagree with certain interpretations. One aim [...] has been to illustrate the difficulties of hard and fast classification. It can be quite difficult to distinguish between ordinary inclusive 'we', inclusive 'we' for 'you' and inclusive 'we' for 'I'. The distinction between inclusive 'we' for 'I' and exclusive 'we' for 'I' is also elusive.

Similarly, in our study, the classification of "we" and "our" into exclusive or ambiguous is rather subjective and based upon the scientific experience of the authors, so-called academic intuition. Simultaneously, the linguistic context in which a given pronoun is found also plays a role. However, our classification could be questioned in some cases by other researchers or target readers, thus pointing out the risks of neat compartmentalization of language material by means of black-and-white binary oppositions.

Another interesting commonality of our study with that by Fløttum et al. (2006) is that they found that economics is the discipline which shows the highest overall figure (with

medicine in second place and linguistics in third place) when it comes to the percentage of abstracts that encompass a personal pronoun indicating authorial presence. Although Fløttum et al. (2006) explored the issue between three languages, i.e., English, Norwegian and French, the similarity remains valid when considering our results presented in Table 3. The table clearly shows the quantitative prevalence of authorial voice in economic abstracts over those in linguistics, with no authorial self-representation whatsoever in the latter group of abstracts written by non-native speakers.

4.2 Qualitative analysis

For the sake of transparency, Tables 4 and 5 demonstrate through which linguistic means authorial voice in the selected RA abstracts is manifested in accordance with Hyland’s (2003) division, i.e., stating a goal or outlining the structure of the paper; explaining a procedure; stating results or making a claim and elaborating an argument. Using this division, an attempt will be made at providing a qualitative explanation for the discourse functions of the author’s surfacing (see sections 4.2.1–4.2.4). Tallying with the data in Table 3, Table 4 does not give any information on non-native speakers.

Table 4. Authorial voice collocates in linguistic journals

	Personal pronoun	Introduction (M1)	Purpose (M2)	Method (M3)	Product (M4)	Conclusion (M5)
Native speakers	I / we	call	develop	develop		
			identify	take	argue	
			explore			
			examine			
	Our		interviews			

Table 5. Authorial voice collocates in economic journals

	Personal pronoun	Introduction (M1)	Purpose (M2)	Method (M3)	Product (M4)	Conclusion (M5)
Native speakers	I / we	show	ask	estimate	find x 3	
		develop	test	use x 2	have	
		call	show	examine	estimate	
				run	discuss	
				test		
Non-native speakers	I / we		think	find	find	
			examine	conduct	determine	
				analyze	show	
				estimate	identify	
	Our		paper		paper	
					results x 2	results
					set up	
			review			
			findings			

The analysis below focuses on the selected Moves which can be logically related to their linguistic means (as indicated by the respective section headings 4.2.1-4.2.4). For this reason, e.g., Move 1 (Introduction) and Move 5 (Conclusion) were omitted in the analysis as they are neither about a goal/structure, procedure, or results, nor elaboration of an argument.

4.2.1 Stating a goal or outlining the structure of the paper: Move 2 (Purpose)

Academic authors use personal pronouns to highlight the objective of the abstract and/or to present the structure of the paper to the reader—its composition and organisation—more explicitly. This goal is accomplished when the author outlines the subject of their discussion. According to Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2013: 18), the use of personal structures for expressing research aims and purposes supports “a high level of author visibility and presupposes a certain level of threat of criticism or rejection of the choice, scope or claimed novelty of the research problem”.

(4) *This essay intends to explain what **I think of** as the essence of his economics and his contributions to Asia Pacific economics. (Economic journal, RA 1, non-native speaker)*

(5) *Using the opening and extensions of a high-speed rail, Shinkansen, in Kyushu, Japan, **we examine** its effects on land prices in urban agglomerations, which would reflect changes in the distribution of economic activities across urban agglomerations. (Economic journal, RA 7, non-native speaker)*

(6) ***We ask** whether equalizing search rates by motorist race would reduce contraband yield. (Economic journal, RA 6, native speaker)*

(7) *To identify how literacy practices can be seen as social remittances, **I identify** how Usman, the key respondent in this study, goes about describing his first six months in the UK by tracing the meaning-making trajectories in our interviews together. **I then explore** the language and literacy choices that his family and friends make on Facebook as they remit ideas, beliefs, and practices in their transnational literacies. **I examine** how these practices are shaped by beliefs about language. (Linguistic journal, RA 7, native speaker)*

In examples (1)–(3), the author surfaces in the abstract, underlining his/her role in determining the goal of the study presented in the abstract. The personal pronoun “we” is used when the article is written by more than one author and therefore indicates the importance, equality, and solidarity of all authors in terms of their contribution to the given work. In example (1) the author combines both hidden and explicit self-reference by showing the importance of the essay itself and at the same time exhibiting his own representation. Instance (4) exhibits an overt author’s self-reference in the three subsequent sentences merging the purpose function and the method function.

In the provided examples we can observe a high degree of the author's self-mentioning distributed within the Purpose move. Both native (in both fields) and non-native speakers (only in the field of economics) use personal pronouns to support their statements. Example (1) refers to the author's personal opinion, whereas example (4) is a case of a triple subsequent authorial voice underlining the author's coherent and step-by-step methodology of research. Example (2) states the goal in the form of the author's descriptive explanation, whereas in example (3) the goal is stated through the research question posed by the group of authors.

The collocates of the personal pronoun with the verbs "develop, identify, explore, examine" are used by native speakers in the Purpose move in linguistic abstracts to explain the objective of their research. These are semantically strong verbs allowing them to underline the authors' importance in the preparation, identification and exploration necessary for the given study.

The collocates of the personal pronoun with the verbs "ask, test, show, think, examine" are used by native and non-native speakers in the Purpose move in economic abstracts to better present the objectives set out in the study. The verbs "ask, test, think, examine" also refer to the author's striving and searching for the best possible purpose of the study.

4.2.2 Explaining a procedure: Move 3 (Method)

Authorial voice is frequently used by researchers in order to explain a scientific methodology and procedure to the target readers. By doing so, the writers aim to emphasise their role and importance in the research process, in particular experiments, data collection and analysis, research design, datasets, and approaches applied. It is crucial for a professional academic to skilfully and appropriately use the methodology of research. Proper planning and implementation of the methodology facilitates the process of RA abstract perception for the target audience.

The relatively common application of author pronouns for the description of procedure by non-native speakers (example 6) may be explained as an attempt to conform to the Anglo-American conventions of the RA genre, which require an explicit description of methodological procedures.

(8) **I examine** a field experiment randomizing property tax collection across 356 neighborhoods of a large Congolese city. (Economic journal, RA 4, native speaker)

(9) **We analyze** green productive efficiency in relation to polluting emissions using a large dynamic panel dataset of 229,491 Chinese manufacturing firms from 1998 to 2012. (Economic journal, RA 6, non-native speaker)

(10) **I take** a critical discourse analytic approach to analyze videotaped interviews with six hearing mothers. (Linguistic journal, RA 5, native speaker)

In this connection, the research by Doğan-Uçar & Akbaş (2022) attests that explaining a procedure is the most commonly used discourse function in RA abstracts in hard sciences. The given examples show that authors explain the procedure of their research in the Method move. By doing so, they attempt to present their powerful academic identity by means of making their abstracts more explicit, clear, and understandable.

We concur with Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2013) that a slightly more authoritative role is the one that authors adopt when describing procedure and involvement in the research process. We found the similarities between our research and that by Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2013) in the hypothesis that exclusive personal forms indicating the alignment of researchers with the methodology adopted and the description of data collection, selection, and processing are typically found in the Methods section of research articles.

For illustration, in example (5) the author exhibits his/her specific role in the examination of the experiment by using the personal pronoun “I”. Instance (6) emphasises the correct choice of the database for the study whereas instance (7) underlines the proper selection of an analytical approach by the author. In examples (5) and (6), native and non-native English authors of economic abstracts use verbal collocates “pronoun + examine/analyze” to explain the methodological procedure undertaken explicitly, while simultaneously emphasising the author’s crucial role in the process. Example (7) showcases the responsibility taken by a native speaker of a linguistic abstract for applying a particular critical approach to his research.

Based on the analysed data (see Table 4 and Table 5), it is possible to argue that the collocates are distributed relatively equally among the native and non-native speakers in the Method moves.

The collocates of the personal pronoun with the verbs “develop, take” in the Method move in linguistic abstracts written by native speakers refer to working out a specific methodology or taking a particular approach to the study. Thus, they bring the readers’ attention to the significance of the methodology applied.

The collocates of the personal pronoun with the verbs “estimate, use, examine, run, test, find, conduct, analyze, estimate” are used by native and non-native speakers in the Method move in economic abstracts to explain the practical application of the used methodology

4.2.3 Stating results or making a claim: Move 4 (Product)

Hyland (2002: 1103) states that “using the first-person plural pronoun to show results is the most self-assertive and face-threatening use of a we-oriented authorial presence since it is bold to state that ‘we found’ and this might not be a method of presentation chosen by many authors”.

The application of rhetorical functions is a matter of the author's choice. However, revealing research outcomes is a great chance for authors to display their in-depth knowledge of the study matter, personal attitude, and scientific input. The instances below illustrate the way the selected authors state their results and make claims:

(11) **We find** little displacement of municipal expenditure due to a federal grant. (*Economic journal*, RA 5, native speaker)

(12) **We also determined** that economic and social activities have restarted in some regions in many countries. (*Economic journal*, RA 3, non-native speaker)

(13) **Our review** of emissions data suggests that the amount of air pollutants emitted decreased in most subnational regions from 2019 to 2020. (*Economic journal*, RA 3, non-native speaker)

(14) **We show** that if the skill-productivity augmenting effect of better quality of ICT dominates its adverse wage-cost effect, then the quality of the export of ITeS will be upgraded if the government switches from deficit financing to balanced budget financing (through an input tariff) of its expenditure on ICT development. (*Economic journal*, RA 5, non-native speaker)

Based on the analysed data, only one of the linguistic abstracts under study contains authorial visibility with the function of result or claim statement. In the case of both native speakers and non-native speakers, this may be explained by the fact that authors tend to adhere to the academic convention by shifting the focus of importance to the study per se and hiding the author in second place.

Examples (8), (9) and (11) from economics written by native and non-native speakers exhibit the author's pride in their collective effort resulting in substantive research outcomes. We consider example (10) interesting since the authors place the study at the centre of focus while putting the authors' authority at the forefront in an ostentatious manner by adding the possessive pronoun "our".

The collocates of the personal pronoun with the verbs "find, have, estimate, find, determine, show, identify" are used by native and non-native speakers in the Product move in economic abstracts to show what outcomes of the research they have obtained.

The collocates of the plural possessive pronoun "our" with the nouns "results, findings, review" are employed by non-native speakers in the Product move in economic abstracts to stress the authorship of the study as well as its original results.

4.2.4 Elaborating an argument: Move 4 (Product)

When elaborating an argument in academic discourse, Dontcheva-Navrátilová (2013: 27) states that "a high level of dialogicity and carefully elaborated argumentation enables the authors of the research articles [...] to anticipate possible criticism and thus gives them a better chance of persuading readers to accept their novel claims".

Writers use personal pronouns for the purpose of the involvement of target readers in their argumentation. At the same time, such involvement may account for possible criticism.

(15) *Hearing mother interviewees displayed ambivalent shifts in footing, in particular, mode-switches, which, **I argue**, paralleled the ambiguous subject positions of their deaf children who they perceive as both deaf (without implants) and hearing (with implants). (Linguistic journal, RA 5, native speaker)*

(16) ***Our paper** provides a comprehensive judgment involving both average and dynamic price discovery contribution measurements on assessing the efficiency of Chinese agricultural futures markets. (Economic journal, RA 8, non-native speaker)*

In the examples above, the authors vividly align themselves with their positions and views, while assuming an authoritative position justified by a solid command of their arguments. In example (12), the author's presence may seem overt and redundant as it interrupts the part of the abstract in between. The author signifies the importance of his opinion and even invites a possible disagreement with his statement. Example (13) showcases the placement of the paper itself in the central position with the author's self-mentioning in the form of the possessive pronoun "our".

Overall, elaborating an argument is the least used function out of the four analysed in this study. Only one example was found in a linguistic journal by a native speaker and one in an economic journal by non-native speaker, unanimously in the Product move. The reason for such minor use may lie in the fact that abstracts are conventionally limited in terms of length by journal guidelines, and prospective contributors try to include the moves perceived as generally mandatory rather than elaborate an argument, which is not common in abstracts and could be interpreted as additional.

The collocate of the singular personal pronoun "I" with the verb "argue" in linguistic abstracts written by native speakers signals the author's strong position in the presentation of the study results.

The collocate of the plural possessive pronoun "our" with the noun "paper" is used by non-native speakers in the Product move in economic abstracts to highlight the relevance of the paper in the given field of expertise.

4.3 Summary of results

Based on the performed analysis, we found that the frequency of the author's self-mentioning was relatively equally distributed among the Purpose, Method, and Product moves. In economic abstracts, both native and non-native authors appeared in the form of personal pronouns, mostly in the Method and Product moves. In linguistic abstracts, native authors mostly employed the Purpose and Method moves.

The findings have evidenced that authorial visibility differs cross-culturally and cross-disciplinarily in the RA abstracts written by the two studied groups of authors in the selected academic domains. In the case of economic journals, the distribution of the author's appearance in the abstracts was relatively equal. This can be justified by non-native economic writers striving to conform to the generally accepted convention of an objective scientific study with a considerable emphasis on the author's person, which is typical of the English-speaking academic community. In the case of linguistic abstracts by non-native authors, none of them contained an explicit author's representation in the form of personal pronouns. This may be due to the Arabic linguoculture, which may exert an influence on its academic writing conventions. Another explanation could be that the selected journals have their own style, characterised by placing focus on the study in the first place and hiding the role of the author. In regard to the Applied Linguistics journal with a focus on native writers, it contained far fewer cases of the author's self-referencing. This brings us to the preliminary conclusion that linguistics as a science tends to be more research matter-oriented rather than author-oriented, but more research, based on much larger corpora, needs to be done in order to be able to validate this hypothesis empirically.

As far as the move structure vs. the author's visibility is concerned, both native and non-native authors of economic journals highlighted their presence mostly in the Method and Product moves. In the case of native speakers this may be related to the Anglo-American academic convention, which is strongly based on a vivid author-reader interaction and negotiation. Academic authors attempted to declare their direct appearance in these moves in order to highlight the relevance of the study, their personal input, as well as the appropriate selection of methodological tools for data analysis and their results. In the case of the non-native authors of economic journals, the frequent employment of the Method and Product moves confirms our supposition that non-native speakers strive to adhere closer to the Anglo-American academic tradition. Such choice of appearances in the two subsequent moves could be made for the purpose of reinforcing the author's presence in the text as well as highlighting their choice of methods resulting in the author's significant research findings. Linguistic abstracts by native authors contained their authors' representation in the Purpose and Method moves, in particular.

As regards academic objectivity, linguistics abstracts written by non-native speakers seemed to be the most objective. Following the conclusions by Wang et al. (2021), it is possible to claim that this group of abstracts was devoid of authorial self-representation in the form of personal pronouns. This gap was compensated for with the use of impersonal pronouns such as "This study, This article, This paper". Linguistic abstracts written by native speakers appeared to be rather objective in terms of their authorial voice. This is because the number of the authorial voice cases in the form of personal

pronouns was rather low, i.e., 8 appearances, out of which “I” appeared six times, “we” appeared once, and “our” once as well. The impersonal pronoun “this”, being a collocate of the nouns “article, study, paper” was used fairly frequently, reinforcing the academic objectivity of the abstracts. In both groups of economic abstracts, the linguistic forms “we/our” prevailed over “I”, thus giving space for the assumption that these abstracts were less objective given the fact that the vast majority of “we/our” was exclusive.

4.4 Limitations of the study

Admittedly, the conducted research is not free from limitations. These concern limitations in terms of size in particular and the attendant generalisability of the research results. However, a relatively small corpus of 5,129 words such as ours seems beneficial for comparative research of academic discourse conventions as they enable researchers to carry out more detailed and focus-driven analyses. Another limitation resides in the choice of domains (economics and linguistics), which, on the one hand are quite specific, but narrowed down to two academic disciplines. On the other hand, the disciplines of economics as well as linguistics are so broad within themselves that it is most challenging to refer to all sub-branches of the analysed domains in the present research results. The next limitation concerns the level of academic literacy, as the authors were selected based on their origin criterion. There is no doubt, though, that an RA abstract produced by a PhD. student, novice researcher and an experienced professor should differ significantly, with a direct influence on the abstract’s quality. Last but far from least, certain compositional choices by the academic authors when producing their RA abstracts are merely idiosyncratic, and are thus beyond an objective researcher’s control. However, these authorial decisions also have a bearing on the interpretation of the data, which should thus be taken with caution.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, the thrust of this study was threefold: to determine the frequency of authorial appearances in abstracts in the domains of economics and linguistics written by native and non-native-speakers of English; to find out how authorial presence in the abstracts differs between the abstracts written by native speakers and non-native speakers as well as between the disciplines of economics and linguistics; and to reveal the way the rhetorical structure of abstracts affects authorial presence in the abstracts under study.

This study is yet another contribution to a rather intense stream of the most recent publications (see, e.g., Zhang & Cheung 2018; Januarto & Hardjanto 2020; Doğan-Uçar & Akbaş 2022) focusing on the issue of author visibility. However, its merit rests in the fact that we analysed authorial voice taking into account the authors’ origin (native vs. non-native), academic discipline, as well as the interdependency between the rhetorical structure followed by the author and the writer’s self-mentioning in particular moves.

Overall, the results of this comparative study may be instrumental in disclosing certain patterns of academic discourse conventions in the selected professional domains and linguacultures. With a view to academia and its thriving publishing business, the insights drawn from linguistic explorations of this kind can significantly add to a deeper grasp of the reasons existing behind the heterogeneity of contemporary academic discourse and its writing conventions, with a special focus on authorial voice, across various professional domains and cultures.

With regard to future avenues of research in the given area, it would be worthwhile to focus on a greater academic discipline variation (for example, medicine and technical sciences) and draw out summary comparative analyses. Likewise, it would be relevant to look at possible variations within humanities, too, and zoom in on in-between comparisons in, e.g., linguistics, literature or translation studies, and then compare these results with other academic disciplines in hard sciences. The investigations could also be widened to other linguistic categories such as, e.g., the passive, modals, or academic discourse markers and so forth, and their incidence in RA abstracts. With cross-cultural variations in mind, it would also be apt to channel research avenues into comparisons of various linguacultures, e.g. Anglo-American, Slavic or German, depending on a researcher's linguistic skills and potential, reflecting various writing styles and traditions. In this way, the wealth of possible research directions testifies to the untapped potential of the research topic, to which we strove to contribute with the present study.

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