



## Identity in Academic Writing Established by Indonesian vs Non-Indonesian Writers

### <Identitas dalam Tulisan Ilmiah yang Dibentuk oleh Penulis Indonesia vs Bukan Penulis Indonesia>

Titah Afandi<sup>1</sup> and Ni Gusti Ayu Roselani<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Gadjah Mada

Email: [titahafandi1997@mail.ugm.ac.id](mailto:titahafandi1997@mail.ugm.ac.id)

#### Abstract

Academic writing in the form of international journal articles is primarily read and used as references for many academic communities. Since the writers of an international journal are from different backgrounds and countries, their works have some differences in terms of writing styles. How the writers show authorial identity and authority through the texts is one of the aspects that causes the differences. This study investigates how Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers established their identities in academic writing. This study used the descriptive qualitative research method. Hyland's (2005b) stances theory (hedges, boosters, attitude makers, and self-mentions) was applied as the research approach with the help of the *AntConc* corpus toolkit to analyze the data that were collected from an international journal. The results and discussion show similarities and differences regarding Hyland's stances in journal articles written by Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers. The results and discussion reveal both similarities and differences in how Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers convey authorial identity and authority through their texts.

**Keywords:** *academic writing, identity, stances, Indonesian writers, non-Indonesian writers*

#### Abstrak

Tulisan ilmiah berbentuk artikel jurnal internasional umumnya dibaca dan dijadikan referensi oleh banyak civitas akademika. Dikarenakan penulis jurnal internasional berasal dari latar belakang dan negara yang berbeda, maka karya mereka memiliki beberapa perbedaan dalam gaya penulisan. Cara para penulis menunjukkan identitas dan kewibawaan mereka melalui teks merupakan salah satu aspek yang menyebabkan perbedaan tersebut. Penelitian ini menyelidiki bagaimana penulis Indonesia dan bukan penulis Indonesia membangun identitas mereka dalam penulisan akademis. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode

deskriptif kualitatif. Teori *stances* dari Hyland (2005b) (*hedges, boosters, attitude makers, dan self-mentions*) diterapkan sebagai pendekatan penelitian dengan bantuan aplikasi analisis korpus *AntConc* untuk menganalisis data yang dikumpulkan dari sebuah jurnal internasional. Hasil dan pembahasan mengungkap persamaan dan perbedaan cara penulis Indonesia dan non-Indonesia dalam menyampaikan identitas dan otoritas penulis melalui teks mereka.

**Kata kunci:** tulisan ilmiah, identitas, stances, penulis Indonesia, bukan penulis Indonesia

### Introduction

Academic writing can be considered a cornerstone in the educational journey, especially at the higher education level. It trains students to sharpen their abilities in articulating ideas, analyzing information critically, and communicating effectively. Students are required to delve deeper into their study fields, exploring complex topics and contributing to academic discourse through their original insights. It makes academic writing demand a more sophisticated and nuanced approach. Therefore, students must be able to evaluate and synthesize existing research critically, not just summarize the information. This genre complexity causes the difference between academic writing taught at the high school level and university level (Giltrow et al., 2021). In high schools, academic writing is only introduced to the students to teach them fundamental writing skills in research.

Since academic writing is a formal writing style, it is characterized by a structure, precise, and objective approach. For instance, the writing styles in journal articles are different from the writing styles in novels or other literature manuscripts. Besides, it requires some rules the writers must obey. Writers should write complete sentences in standard language and organize them in a certain way. Those rules make academic writing different from creative and personal writing, which use informal language and other aspects such as slang, abbreviations, and incomplete sentences (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). Students, especially at the university level, must master the academic writing skills designed to meet the rigorous standards of academia. They are expected to display academic writing skills in different subject areas in which they take courses since academic writing is integral to scholarly success (Doenyas et al., 2023). Academic writing is considered a complex communication skill as writers must convey ideas or information from their minds to the broader community. The writers are asked to deconstruct ideas and use deductive reasoning to write a synthesis essay (Teng & Ying, 2023). The writers, however, sometimes face difficulties and challenges in conveying their ideas. This occurs because producing qualified academic writing is a complex process of thinking, drafting,

and revising to represent the ideas from the writers to the readers (Afandi et al., 2021).

Qualified academic writing requires a depth of comprehension and a dedication to intellectual rigor. It is the distinguishing feature of scholars and students who aim to communicate their ideas effectively enough within the academic community. This type of writing stands out for its strict adherence to established norms, meticulous attention to detail, and unwavering search for consistency and clarity. Some examples of qualified academic writing can easily be found in scholarly manuscripts, for instance, educational books, research papers, published journal articles, and many more. The most regularly published manuscripts are journal articles since a journal can publish one or more issues in a year. Even though many journal articles exist, not all can be considered qualified academic writing. It happens as every journal has been indexed from the lowest to the highest database released by a journal accreditation database such as Sinta for Indonesian journals or Scopus for international journals. The writers of Sinta- or Scopus-indexed journals must fulfill the requirements of the journals to maintain the quality of the articles that will be published. Besides, the papers must be reviewed by professionals from a particular field of study.

One of the international journals from Indonesia that has been indexed in the Scopus database is the TEFLIN Journal. The Association publishes the TEFLIN Journal for Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia (TEFLIN) through its publication division, based in Universitas Negeri Malang (UM), Indonesia (Syahid & Mukminatien, 2021). This journal focuses on teaching English as a second or foreign language, teaching and learning, teachers' training and education, and English language and literary studies. As the TEFLIN Journal is indexed in a reputable database, the writers' contributions are from Indonesia and foreign countries. Foreign countries have different cultures from Indonesia. It might affect how the writers write the articles in the TEFLIN Journal since culture and language are bound inseparably, so culture potentially influences how people communicate (Hayland et al., 2021). Because of the differences in writers' backgrounds and identities, this paper analyses how Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers in the TEFLIN Journal establish their identities through academic writing.

Many previous studies have addressed identity analysis in academic writing. Still, there is no comparison of identity analysis in academic writing written by Indonesians and by other non-Indonesian writers. Some previous studies related to identity and academic writing are mentioned as follows. The first is the study of identity and academic discourse, which analyzes how second/foreign language writers enact, construct, and invent themselves through academic writing (Rahimivand & Kuhi, 2014). The results of this study reveal that identity is a crucial aspect of writing, and it must be brought into the mainstream of second or foreign-language writing pedagogy through consciousness rising or the specific teaching of certain features. The second

previous study is about the authorial presence in English research articles by native and non-native English scholars (Januarto & Hardjanto, 2020). The researchers aim to compare the frequencies of authorial presence and examine the discourse functions of authorial presence in the native and non-native English scholars' research articles. The most recent previous study is about discursal scholarly identity and its construction in research writing practices (Qi & Zhao, 2023). This study aims to demystify the discursal scholarly identity concept often implied in previous research yet never quite explicated as a unique concept. Unlike previous studies, the novelty of this study is a comparison between Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers establishing their identities in the international Scopus-indexed journal, TEFLIN Journal.

This study aims to analyze the differences in established identity in academic writing written by Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers. This study has three research questions: (1) How do Indonesian writers establish identity in the TEFLIN Journal? (2) How do non-Indonesian writers establish identity in the TEFLIN Journal? (3) What are the differences between Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers establishing their identity in TEFLIN Journal? Thus, this paper is theoretically expected to give new insight into the identity theory in academic writing. Besides, this study is practically expected to find the best way to establish identity in academic writing.

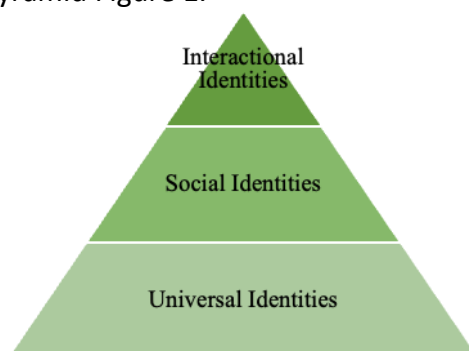
## Literature Review

### *Discourse and Identity*

The term discourse can be defined as using language and multimodal resources to accomplish actions, negotiate identities, and construct ideologies (Waring, 2018) across the humanities and social sciences (Hayland et al., 2021). Multimodal resources here can be in the form of facial expressions, gestures, body movements, material settings, and many more. Meanwhile, discourse analysis is defined as the study of language above the level of a sentence (Handford & Gee, 2023) to examine language patterns across texts and consider the relationship between language and the contexts where it is used (Paltridge, 2012).

One of the discourse objectives above is to negotiate identities. Identities in discourse are the things constructed by discourse itself. It is not natural nor fixed and remains the same throughout a person's life (Paltridge, 2012). Identities are socially constructed and actively brought into a human being by the language (the discourse) they use and through other semiotic systems, such as clothing, hairstyles, et cetera (Vásquez & Liska, 2023). Waring (2018) divides the term identities into three categories: universal, social, and interactional. Universal identities are relevant to all human interaction regardless of the context, so the considerations in these identities are face and politeness. Meanwhile, social identities are how such identities are built or used in actual interaction. Social identities, therefore, consist of some efforts that can develop

systematic means of these identities, such as membership categorization, performed social identity and co-membership, and social acts and stances. The last one is interactional identities, local phenomena within specific interactional encounters. Besides positioning theory, interactional identities are elucidated in footing, alignment, and participation framework. These three identity categories can be drawn in the pyramid Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** *Pyramid of Identities in Discourse*

From the definitions of discourse, discourse analysis, and identities above, it can be concluded that there is a strong relation between discourse and identities. Using language in the form of discourse can build the identities a person wants to show in some contexts beyond the language itself.

**Concept of Identity in Academic Writing**

Identity in academic writing refers to how the writers represent themselves to the readers and show their perspectives. It is a complex and dynamic phenomenon in which the writer’s interaction with the text, the readers, and the context is reflected. The writers can choose how they represent themselves in a text, their relationship with the readers, and their relationship to the knowledge they are discussing in a range of alternative ways (Ivanič, 1998) to express their attitude towards a proposition (Hyland, 2005a).

Linguistic resources used by the writers to express their attitudes, opinions, judgments, or assessments of propositions or arguments in their texts are stance features that consist of four main categories: hedges, boosters, attitude makers, and self-mentions (Hyland, 2005b). The explanations and examples of these four categories can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Hyland’s (2005b) Stance

Stance	Functions	Example
Hedges	to avoid overgeneralization, acknowledge alternative views, and show respect for the reader’s opinion	<i>may, might, possible, suggest, perhaps, etc.</i>
Boosters	to express commitment, persuade	<i>clearly, definitely,</i>

	the reader, and establish the authority	<i>obviously, prove, in fact, etc.</i>
<b>Attitude makers</b>	to convey the evaluation, appreciation, or criticism of the topic and engage the reader's interest	<i>surprising, important, interesting, unfortunately, fortunately, etc.</i>
<b>Self-mentions</b>	to express personal involvement, responsibility, or ownership of the research and establish the identity and voice	<i>I, we, my, our, myself, ourselves, etc.</i>

### Methodology

The data was collected from TEFLIN Journal Volume 34, Number 1, 2023, or the latest publication of TEFLIN Journal. While the data from a single journal issue may not be representative, they are expected to reflect current practices in authorial identity and authority. The TEFLIN Journal was selected to be analyzed because it is one of the reputable journals from Indonesia that has been accredited by Sinta 1 and indexed by Scopus. The writers, therefore, are not only from Indonesia but also from other countries globally. It is suitable for this study, which aims to analyze the differences between Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers in establishing their identities in academic writing. The researchers took four of the eleven articles published in this volume. Indonesian writers initially wrote two articles, and non-Indonesian writers wrote the other two. The articles were selected after identifying the writers' affiliations and the background of the writers. The researchers only chose two articles written by Indonesian writers because only two of eleven articles were entirely written by Indonesian writers; the others were written by foreign writers or in collaboration with Indonesian and foreign writers.

The articles were dissected into five parts: abstract, introduction, method, findings and discussion, and conclusion. Each part was analyzed using the *AntConc* corpus toolkit (Anthony, 2011) to find Hyland's (2005b) stance theory: hedges, boosters, attitude makers, and self-mentions. Before inputting the text into the *AntConc* corpus analysis toolkit, the data were cleaned from direct quotations, such as interviewees' answers or participants' perspectives toward the subject matter. It is applied to analyze the writers' purely academic writing. After finding the results, the researchers calculated the percentage of those four stance classifications. They compared the differences between articles written by Indonesians and those written by non-Indonesian writers. The percentage was then analyzed using qualitative research methods to explain why Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers wrote their academic articles that way.

## Results and Discussion

According to the analyses done using the *AntConc* corpus analysis toolkit, Indonesian writers' abstracts of journal articles show two words of Hyland's stance, which are the word *likely* that belongs to attitude makers and the word *might* that belongs to hedges. Meanwhile, the abstracts written by non-Indonesian writers show 12 words of Hyland's stance. Four words belong to hedges: *may*, *partially*, *recommend*, and *suggesting*; one word belongs to boosters: *accurately*; six words belong to attitude makers: *appropriate*, *complex*, *confident*, *crucial*, *sufficient*, and *potentially*; and the word *we* that belongs to self-mentions. All of those words appear once only in the abstract.

In the introduction section, the articles written by Indonesian writers show 14 different words of Hyland's stance. Meanwhile, the articles written by non-Indonesian writers show 18 different words of Hyland's stance in this introduction section. Each word belongs to the four categories, and they have different frequency of use. The complete list of those words can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Hyland's Stance Words in the Introduction

Stance Categories and Frequency								
	Hedges	<i>f</i>	Boosters	<i>f</i>	Attitude makers	<i>f</i>	Self-mentions	<i>f</i>
Ind.	may	3	undoubtedly		arguably	2	we	1
	various	3			carefully	2	researchers	1
	almost	2			enough	1		
	expected	2			negatively	1		
	often	2			unfortunately	1		
	several	1						
Non-Ind.	may	16	clearly	2	sufficient	3	we	5
	expected	6	must	1	importantly	2	us	1
	several	5	strongly	1	complex	1		
	could	3			consistently	1		
	many	2			firmly	1		
	might	2			interestingly	1		
	often	1						

From the introduction section, the researcher then analyzed the method section of the journal articles. While writing the method section, Indonesian writers used only six words of Hyland's stance on hedges, boosters, and self-mentions. There is no word for attitude makers in the method section from Indonesian writers. Meanwhile, non-Indonesian writers wrote nine words about Hyland's stance in the method section. The words that belong to Hyland's stance categories and their frequency of use can be seen in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Hyland’s Stance Words in the Method

Stance Categories and Frequency								
	Hedges	<i>f</i>	Boosters	<i>f</i>	Attitude makers	<i>f</i>	Self-mentions	<i>f</i>
<b>Ind.</b>	might	1	must	1			researchers	9
	several	1					we	7
							researcher	1
<b>Non-Ind.</b>	could	4	obviously	1	potential	1	I	9
	several	4					researcher	1
	may	3					we	1
	almost	1						

According to the findings and discussion, there are nine words for hedges, one for boosters, 13 for attitude makers, and two for self-mentions written by Indonesian writers. Furthermore, in the findings and discussion section, non-Indonesian writers wrote five different words for hedges, five for boosters, six for attitude makers, and three for self-mentions. The complete words and their frequency of appearance in the article are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Hyland’s Stance Words in the Findings and Discussion

Stance Categories and Frequency								
	Hedges	<i>f</i>	Boosters	<i>f</i>	Attitude makers	<i>f</i>	Self-mentions	<i>f</i>
<b>Ind.</b>	could	8	surely	2	complicated	2	we	2
	often	4			easily	2	our	1
	expected	3			friendly	2		
	might	3			comfortable	1		
	seemed	3			comfortably	1		
	various	3			crucial	1		
	several	2			diligently	1		
	appeared	1			exciting	1		
	may	1			extremely	1		
					important	1		
					unfortunate	1		
					unfortunately	1		
					unique	1		
<b>Non-Ind.</b>	may	8	accurate	2	enough	3	we	6
	could	4	strongly	2	adequately	1	researchers	1
	might	4	clearly	1	appropriately	1	ourselves	1
	seems	2	valid	1	important	1		
	suggests	1	validly	1	significant	1		
				significantly	1			

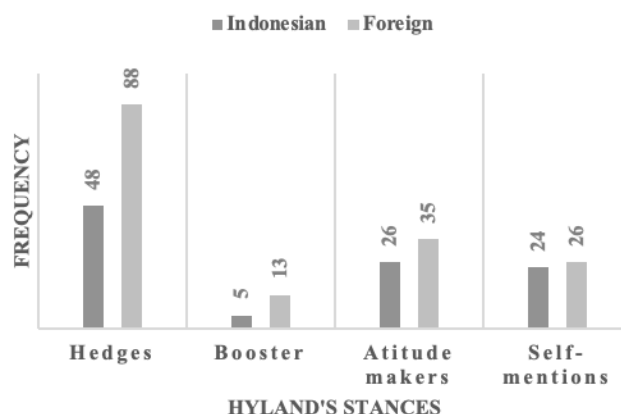


The last is the conclusion section. In this section, Indonesian writers wrote three different words for hedges, one for boosters and two for attitude makers. In comparison, non-Indonesian writers wrote eight different words for hedges and nine different words for attitude makers. The complete list of those words can be seen in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Hyland's Stance Words in the Conclusion

Stance Categories and Frequency								
	Hedges	<i>f</i>	Boosters	<i>f</i>	Attitude makers	<i>f</i>	Self-mentions	<i>f</i>
<b>Ind.</b>	various	2	should	1	emotionally	1		
	expected	1			significant	1		
	few	1						
<b>Non-Ind.</b>	may	8			effectively	2		
	might	2			sufficient	2		
	suggest	2			adequate	1		
	various	2			adequately	1		
	believed	1			complex	1		
	could	1			essentially	1		
	partially	1			important	1		
	relatively	1			interesting	1		
					significant	1		

The frequency of Hyland's stance categories is different in articles written by Indonesians and those written by non-Indonesian writers. Hedges are the highest category in articles written by Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers. In articles written by Indonesian writers, there are 48 words for hedges, and there are 88 words for hedges in articles written by non-Indonesian writers. In the second place, there are attitude makers. Indonesian writers wrote 26 words, and non-Indonesian writers wrote 35 words for attitude makers in their articles. In the third place is self-mentions. There are 24 words of attitude makers found in articles written by Indonesian writers and 26 words written by non-Indonesian writers in their articles. Last, boosters are the lowest Hyland's stance category in the articles. Only five booster words were found in the articles written by Indonesian writers and 13 words from non-Indonesian writers. The description of this frequency is presented in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** *Frequency Differences*

Based on the data findings, Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers used hedges more frequently than other Hyland's stance categories. It means that the writers wanted to avoid overgeneralization, acknowledge alternative views, and show respect for the readers' opinions. The use of hedges which is the highest one among other stance categories is in line with the finding of Rahimivand and Kuhl (2014) which also proved that hedges are used for about 39.15% of the data. That percentage is the highest one among other stances' percentages. Although Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers used hedges mostly in their academic writing, there are some differences regarding the article sections in which they wrote the hedges. Indonesian writers used hedges mostly in findings and discussion; meanwhile, non-Indonesian writers used hedges mostly in their introduction. From this part, it is crystal clear that Indonesian writers avoided overgeneralization, acknowledged alternative views, and respected the readers' opinions after they got the data and analyzed it. However, non-Indonesian writers did them at the beginning of their academic writing.

The prevalent use of hedges by both Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers is not merely a stylistic choice but a strategic maneuver to navigate the complex landscape of academic discourse. While Indonesian writers predominantly employ hedges in the findings and discussion sections, reflecting a post-analysis caution, non-Indonesian writers preemptively hedge in the introduction, indicating a preemptive defense against potential criticism. This distinction is not trivial; it underscores a fundamental difference in the approach to scholarly communication that warrants further investigation. The implications of these practices extend beyond individual articles, suggesting a cultural dimension to academic writing that challenges the universality of Western academic norms.

Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers used attitude makers to convey the topic's evaluation, appreciation, or criticism and engage the readers' interest in second place after the hedges. Indonesian writers used attitude makers mostly in findings and discussion, like when they used the hedges; meanwhile, non-

Indonesian writers used it mainly in the conclusion section. In the third place, Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers used self-mentions in their academic writing. Both used self-mentions mostly when they wrote the method. They used self-mentions in this part because they needed to explain how they had conducted their research so that they intended to express personal involvement, responsibility, or ownership of the research in this part. This result is in congruence with the theory from Qi & Zhao (2023) which reveals that scholars are more likely to develop a larger repertoire of linguistic resources to construct their intended discursual scholarly identity. Moreover, it is also in line with the result from Januarto and Hardjanto (2020) which proved that native and non-native English scholars mostly used authorial identity to recount and structure their research articles. In addition, Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers rarely used boosters in their academic writing. It can be concluded that they hardly persuade the readers in their articles since their aims are mainly to give information about their research.

### **Conclusions**

Some facts about academic writing written by Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers are found in this research. In using Hyland's stances, Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers have quite the same tendency to use some categories in Hyland's stances to show both authorial identity and authority through their academic writing. Even though they have similarities in the frequency of using Hyland's stances, the article sections in which they wrote the stances differ. Indonesian writers tend to use hedges in findings and discussion, while non-Indonesian writers do in the introduction. Besides, Indonesian writers mostly use attitude makers in findings and discussion, but non-Indonesian writers use it mostly in conclusions. For the self-mentions, both use it frequently in their methodology. Finally, Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers rarely use boosters in their academic writing.

This research only focuses on analyzing the articles taken from the TEFLIN Journal in a particular volume and issue number. There are still many volumes and issue numbers from this journal that have not been analyzed yet. Therefore, it would be better for the future researchers who are willing to conduct the same topic to broaden the data collection so that the results will be more valid in searching for the differences between Indonesian and non-Indonesian writers establishing their identity in academic writing. Besides, future researchers can also use other international journals as resources for their data collection as long as the journal writers are Indonesians and people from countries other than Indonesia.

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