



Cultural Impact on Interactive Metadiscourse in Legal Hybrid Disciplines: A Comparative Genre Study

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Abstract

Cultural background can impact writers' writing styles in academic contexts. The present study aimed to investigate this impact on research article (RA) abstracts in two legal hybrid disciplines (medical law and IT law) when used by native and non-native writers of English. By adopting corpus-based genre analysis, the present study explored the use of interactive metadiscourse markers (MMs) in 40 RA abstracts. The corpora were randomly chosen from two high-impact factor journals: "Health and Justice" (medical law) and "International Journal of Cyber Criminology" (IT law). For the analysis, corpus-based genre analysis was employed and Hyland's (2005) interpersonal model of metadiscourse was the framework for the present study. Other tools were also used: AntConc 2019 software, SPSS Version 27, and frequencies per 1000 words. The results revealed that there was a stronger presence of code glosses in the abstracts written by native writers compared to non-native writers. However, the differences between the native and non-native writers across the two disciplines were minimal and non-significant. This study suggests that both co-authorship with native writers and writing experience can reduce the influence of cultural background on non-native writers' academic writing style.

1. INTRODUCTION

Learners often face many difficulties when acquiring a specific skill. However, the more challenges they encounter, the more they learn. Academic writing is one of those challenges that are not easy to overcome. It is a skill that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learners and authors are in grave need of. Even though it seems complicated, academic writing can be a gateway for ESP learners to join the academic community.

In ESP, genre analysis has played an important role in facilitating the process of learning academic writing. Drawing on the term 'genre,' Biel (2018) indicates that its meaning has changed over time due to the underpinning theoretical framework. First, Swales (1990) demonstrates that a genre is "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes that are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community." (p.58) Then, Fairclough (2003) states that 'genre' is a medium through which those involved can communicate linguistically. Later on, 'genre' has been used to refer

to a group of texts having similar features, styles, and content. In view of this perspective, Hyland (2006) defines a genre as a term for grouping texts together. Giving credence to the fact that communication is not merely an exchange of information, Hyland (2005) explains the dynamic view of language as metadiscourse. He indicates that when communicating, people also show their true selves and express their perspectives. According to Hyland (2005), the interactive MMs serve to organise the text's content; they imply that a writer is aware of the existence of readers. They help readers understand the writer's intention more easily. As for abstracts, they assist readers to gather broad details about the study topic. Readers can then choose whether to read the entire paper to satisfy their curiosity or just the information they need.

Recently, there has been a tendency for the hybridity of disciplines. Hybrid disciplines usually involve the blending of multiple areas, which have emerged as a response to the need for more than one discipline to solve some issues. In fact, all credits go to hybridity, which has helped to describe the difficulties of daily life in different fields (Freedman & Lemay-Hebert, 2017). Law has been one of those disciplines that specialists in many other disciplines particularly medical law and IT law resort to in order to solve these issues. Writing in these hybrid disciplines requires special academic writing skills as the target readers belong to different discourse communities. This can be challenging especially for non-native writers, whose cultural backgrounds may influence their writing styles namely their use of interactive MMs. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no studies have examined the cultural impact on the interactive MMs in legal hybrid RA abstracts. Consequently, the present study is a comparative genre analysis which aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the frequencies of interactive metadiscourse markers used in legal RA abstracts by native and non-native writers in medical law and IT law?
2. What are the similarities and differences between legal RA abstracts in medical law and IT law in terms of interactive metadiscourse markers when used by native and non-native writers?
3. Do medical law and IT law RA abstracts show statistically significant differences with reference to interactive metadiscourse markers used by native and non-native writers?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Background

In his book *Disciplinary Identities: Individuality and Community in academic discourse*, Hyland (2012) indicates that the exploration of language would enable writers to create identity across disciplines and in academic contexts. That is why he advocates applying corpus analysis to explicate how the use of MMs can reflect not only the writer's individual identity but also their disciplinary identity. The more novice writers are engaged in the activities of their disciplinary discourse community, namely writing and sharing the findings of their research, the stronger their disciplinary identity is. Consequently, there has been a new trend in teaching and learning academic writing. Lave and Wenger (1991) indicate that the fundamental principle of writing pedagogy has become more concerned with writing as a social action: it can be improved by being engaged in the discourse community's activities. Genre-based writing teaching seems to be the most appropriate method to assist novice writers in establishing their disciplinary identity when they produce their academic research.

2.2. Previous Studies

The impact of culture on the utilisation of MMs has been investigated in a number of recent studies (Kirisci & Duruk, 2022; Mazidah, 2019; Shafique et al., 2019). According to Kirisci and Duruk (2022) and Shafique et al. (2019), non-native speakers of English preferred interactive MMs to interactional MMs to organise their abstracts rather than to interact with their readers. In addition, Mazidah (2019) drew attention to the variations in the interactive MMs caused by culture.

Shafique et al. (2019) selected 100 RA abstracts from five soft disciplines: linguistics, literature, sociology, psychology, and management. Hyland and Tse's (2004) model of metadiscourse was employed to analyse the corpora that were written by native English speakers and Pakistani writers. The results indicated that Pakistani writers used more interactive MMs than English native speakers. This would demonstrate that Pakistani writers wrote clearly to facilitate reading their abstracts for readers. On the other hand, native English speakers were more persuasive than their Pakistani counterparts, which can be attributed to the high frequency of interactional MM occurrences in their abstracts.

The results of Kirisci and Duruk's (2022) comparative study supported those of Shafique et al.'s (2019) study regarding the influential role played by culture in using MMs. Like Shafique et al. (2019), Kirisci and Duruk (2022) investigated the interactive and interactional MMs. The corpora, which consisted of 300 RA abstracts, were written by native English speakers and Turkish speakers in special education and preschool education. 200 RA abstracts were written in English: 100 abstracts were written by native English speakers and 100 abstracts were written by Turkish speakers. The other 100 abstracts were written in Turkish by Turkish writers. It is noteworthy that the analysis was also applied using Hyland and Tse's (2004) metadiscourse taxonomy. The findings revealed that code glosses and hedges were the most frequently appearing MMs in English native speakers' abstracts, whereas Turkish speakers preferred frame markers and boosters more. A chi-square test indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the three corpora in terms of the use of code glosses, hedges, boosters, and self-mentions.

In addition, the objective of Mazidah's (2019) study was to shed light on whether native English speakers and Indonesian scholars' use of interactive MMs in RA abstracts was different. For this purpose, 100 RA abstracts in applied linguistics were analysed. The application of Hyland's (2005) MM classification illustrated that the native speakers of English showed more interest in interactive MMs, namely code glosses and transition markers, whereas Indonesian scholars utilised endographic markers, evidentials, and frame markers more. It is pertinent to note that the versatility of Indonesian scholars' use of interactive MMs exceeded that of the native speakers of English. According to Mazidah (2019), these differences could result from some cultural differences. Surprisingly, based on the T. test, these differences were not statistically significant. Their study highlighted a research gap in understanding how cultural background would affect the use of interactive MMs.

3. METHOD

This section aims to provide full insights into the present study's research design and criteria for selecting the corpora. In addition, it presents a detailed description of all the tools used to analyse the collected data.

3.1. Data Collection

A question might arise about the difference between research design and research method. In spite of the differences, they are strongly related. While choosing a research design is the most important part of the research process (Rezigalla, 2020), as it is the framework that will be used to address the research inquiry, a research method is the technique utilised to operate this framework. Thus, well-designed research ensures that the obtained data will assist in responding to the research queries more effectively. The present study is descriptive in nature and applied corpus-based genre analysis

Corpus-based genre analysis is considered a data collection method rather than an instrument. In order to measure frequencies and find similarities and differences in a text,

corpus-based genre analysis requires meticulous inspection and analysis employing various instruments (qualitative and quantitative).

A corpus is a vast collection of authentic text (Stefanowitsch, 2020) but not a roughly collection of text (Biber et al., 1998; De Monnik, 2016). Rather, it aims at reflecting a language or part of a language (Biber et al., 1998). Following Nwogu's (1997) three criteria: representativeness, reputation, and accessibility, the corpora in the present study were collected. Two journals met the aforementioned standards of selecting a journal: "*Health and Justice*" for medical law and "*International Journal of Cyber Criminology*" for IT law. The corpora were selected randomly with 20 RA abstracts per journal (10 written by native writers and 10 by non-native writers). To limit the data set, the RAs were selected from 2017 to 2023 publication dates. To identify whether the writer was native or non-native, the first writer listed in each abstract was considered, as the majority of the corpora were coauthored. To identify the cultural background of each name, a website called *Namsor* was used. *Namsor* is a website that provides a name analysis tool designed to determine the ethnicity and cultural origin of a person's name.

3.2. Data Analysis

Hyland's (2005) model of interpersonal metadiscourse markers was the framework for the present study. According to Jomaa (2020), "Hyland is considered the most prominent author in the field of disciplinary academic writing in general and metadiscourse in particular"(p. 189). See Table 1.

Table 1: Hyland's (2005) interpersonal model of metadiscourse

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive	Help to guide reader through the text	Resources
Transitions	Express relations between main clauses	and, but, in addition, however, thus
Frame markers	Refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages	My purpose is ..., first, second, the findings are ..., In conclusion
Endophoric markers	Refer to the information in other parts of the text	mentioned above, as follows
Evidentials	Refer to information from other texts	according to ..., X states that ...
Code glosses	Elaborate propositional meanings	In other words, it means that ..., such as ..., e.g., for example

Source: Hyland (2005, p.49)

A researcher can identify interactive MMs in corpora using a variety of tools, but before choosing the right one, a researcher must be aware of the characteristics or features they would like to investigate. The current study used AntConc 2019 software. Posavec (2020) has stated that AntConc is a program that provides fundamental corpus tools, which include concordance, collocations, and keywords, among other basic functions that allow a corpus to be searched. After AntConc was employed, the corpora were manually analysed to provide pragmatic or semantic information as the program would yield a result regardless of a word's illocutionary meaning.

To measure the similarities and differences between medical law RA abstracts and IT law RA abstracts in terms of interactive MMs, the researchers considered both the number of metadiscourse per 1,000 words and Z-score values. Then an investigation into whether there were statistically significant differences between medical law RA abstracts and IT law RA

abstracts written by native and non-native writers was conducted. For this purpose, the Chi-square test in SPSS Version 27 was applied.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explore the application of interactive MMs in RA abstracts in medical law and IT law when used by native and non-native writers. Metadiscourse analysis helped answer the study's three questions.

To answer the first question that states, "What are the frequencies of interactive MMs used in legal RA abstracts by native and non-native writers in medical law and IT law?" the frequencies of the five categories of interactive MMs were determined using basic mathematical operations in order to provide a clearer exploration of the data. The distribution of these markers throughout the corpora was displayed in tables. Then, a discussion of these results was provided with excerpts from the corpora. The interactive MMs were investigated first in the medical law corpus (see Table 2) and then in the IT law corpus (see Table 3).

Table 2: Interactive MMs in medical law RA abstracts

Interactive Metadiscourse Markers	Native Writers		Non-native Writers	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Code glosses	60	81%	35	73%
Endophoric markers	0	0%	0	0%
Evidentials	0	0%	0	0%
Frame markers	4	5%	2	4%
Transitions	10	14%	11	23%
Total	74	100%	48	100%

As Table 2 illustrates, native writers used the categories of interactive MMs differently. For them, code glosses were the most commonly used, accounting for 81% with 60 occurrences. They were followed by transitions, which appeared 10 times with 14% of the total interactive MMs. Native writers placed less emphasis on frame markers being employed 4 times (5%). Interestingly, endophoric markers and evidentials were absent. When it comes to the non-native writers, code glosses dominated with 73% (35 occurrences). Transitions came second, accounting for 23% (11 occurrences). These writers minimally used frame markers, appearing in 4% (2 occurrences) of the total interactive MMs. Moreover, it seems that non-native writers did not prioritise the use of both evidentials and frame markers as they were not employed in any abstract.

The predominance of code glosses can indicate the great concern of native writers in medical law to these markers. The native writers used these interactive MMs to offer precise explanations to clarify any ambiguous terms for their readers, some of whom might be unfamiliar with terminologies of medical law. Native writers also used code glosses to provide clarification. See Excerpt 1.

Excerpt 1

The objective of this study is to compare the prevalence of serious or moderate mental illness (SMMI), and the proportion of those with SMMI who receive mental health treatment, among community-dwelling older adults on correctional supervision (**parole or probation**) vs. not on correctional supervision. (ML8)

Another communicative function of code glosses that is providing examples also appeared in some of the abstracts written by native writers. Excerpt 2 illustrates this function.

Excerpt 2

Criminal justice measures included contacts with the criminal justice system (e.g., arrests) and criminal offenses. (ML5)

Similarly, parentheses functioned as a tool for presenting abbreviations and the statistical values of the results of non-native writers' empirical studies. See Excerpt 3.

Excerpt 3

We rely on data from the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI) evaluation and employ cross-lagged panel models to examine short-term changes in substance use and crime over time among a large sample of high-risk, former prisoners (N=1697). (ML2)

Excerpt 4 shows how non-native writers ensured the explanation of what can be unclear for their readers.

Excerpt 4

In this exploratory study, health care system distrust was evaluated among 200 people who were incarcerated using the Revised Health Care System Distrust scale, a community-validated, 9-item measure comprised of 2 subscales (values and competence distrust). (ML14)

Excerpts 1, 2, 3, and 4 are good examples of how native and non-native writers paid great attention to ensuring clarity in their abstracts. Considering that some readers might not be specialists in medical law, these writers expanded on the abbreviation after its introduction (Excerpts 1 and 3). Excerpt 2 and 4 also demonstrate that native and non-native writers attempted to enhance readers' comprehension, as native writers in Excerpt 3 used "e.g." to provide examples without disrupting the flow of the abstract. By doing so, they made it easier for readers to follow the argument. Notably, Excerpt 4 demonstrated how non-native writers elaborated on the scale used, making the measurement tool more transparent to readers. This elaboration may appear slightly more verbose compared to how native writers succinctly reference the scale.

The abundance of code glosses in the medical law corpus suggests that both native and non-native writers tried to simplify the complex features of the hybrid discipline (medical law). It seems that they attempted to engage their readers who can have different disciplinary backgrounds or can be non-specialist readers. This draws attention to the importance of writing well-organised and coherent abstracts in academic writing.

Regarding transitions, they were used moderately, enabling native writers (Excerpt 5) and non-native writers (Excerpt 6) to guide the logical flow between ideas.

Excerpt 5

This study is the first to evaluate a stigma intervention designed for the criminal legal setting and results will be used to inform a larger, randomized controlled trial. (ML19).

In Excerpt 5, native writers used the transition "and" in an effective and straightforward manner to link two significant points in an attempt to maintain the natural progression of ideas. This keeps the abstract clear and easy to follow.

Excerpt 6

Much work has investigated the association between substance use, crime, and recidivism, yet little scholarship has examined these associations longitudinally among samples of recently released prisoners. (ML2)

Non-native writers, on the other hand, used "yet" in Excerpt 6 to introduce a shift in their argument. They highlighted the novelty of their study, comparing existing work with their research. This emphasised a gap in the literature review.

The interaction in the IT law RA abstracts between both native and non-native writers and their audience was also clarified through examining how these writers used the interactive MMs. Table 3 shows the frequencies and percentages of all interactive MMs in the IT law corpus.

Table 3: Interactive MMs in IT law RA abstracts

Interactive Markers	Native Writers		Non-native Writers	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Code glosses	17	71%	10	37%
Endophoric markers	0	0%	0	0%
Evidentials	1	4%	0	0%
Frame markers	1	4%	2	7%
Transitions	5	21%	15	56%
Total	24	100%	27	100%

As Table 3 shows, the most predominant markers in the IT law abstracts written by native writers were code glosses. They emerged in 71% of the total markers (17 occurrences). The use of transitions ranked second with 5 appearances (21%), maintaining a balance between explanation and logical flow of ideas. As for both evidentials and frame markers, native writers minimally used them, appearing once (4%) each. There was an absence of endophoric markers in IT law abstracts written by native writers. Regarding the non-native writers, they hinged more on transitions, accounting for 56% of the total markers (15 occurrences). Regarding code glosses, they accounted for 37% (10 occurrences). Frame markers received less attention with 2 occurrences (7%), and endophoric markers and evidentials were not employed by non-native writers of IT RA abstracts.

By using many code glosses, native writers might attempt to ensure the elaboration of the technical terms (Excerpt 7) and concepts (Excerpt 8) of IT law for their readers.

Excerpt 7

This study collects Twister data to analyse the geospatial distribution of gang member connections using an exponential random graph model (**ERGM**) of location homophily. (**ITL12**)

Like their native counterparts in medical law, native writers in IT law ensured that their abstracts were accessible to a broader audience. In Excerpt (7), they provided the necessary background for readers who were unfamiliar with the term "ERGM." Moreover, these writers in Excerpt 8 made the technical concept "electronic resources" more relatable by improving the clarity of their arguments.

Excerpt 8

This framework suggests that electronic resources (**e.g. social media; message boards; digital texts; etc.**) may act as proxy for conventional social interaction in learning deviant ideologies and developing neutralizing strategies. (**ITL7**)

Similarly, by using code glosses, the non-native writers of IT law RA abstracts tried to familiarise their readers with some terms (Excerpt 9) and elaborate on unclear points (Excerpt 10).

Excerpt 9

The study revealed that electronic transactions are already defined under various laws of Indonesia namely Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions (**ITE Law**) which regulated all kinds of acts using computers, computer networks, and / or other electronic media. (**ITL17**)

In Excerpt 9, non-native writers briefly but clearly used the abbreviation "ITE Law." They are fully aware that the explanation of the term itself can be more formal and possibly redundant, and this would impact the conciseness of the abstracts. However, the tendency of non-native writers to provide more explanation than necessary appeared in Excerpt 10. The elaborate code glosses, such as (EU, USA) can distract readers from the main argument.

Excerpt 10

The targeting of these comments is very similar in both countries and we are able to classify immigrants and refugees, Muslims in general, governments in both countries, political elites (**EU, USA**), and people who are in favour of immigrants or refugees (most often from NGOs) as individual targets. (**ITL3**)

When it comes to the transitions, they served different functions, helping produce a structured approach to abstracts. Excerpt 11 indicates how native writers used "although" to highlight the study's advantages.

Excerpt 11

Although this perspective remains consistent with the proximity principle that the smaller the geographic space, the greater the likelihood of observing connections between individuals, location-based studies limit our understanding of gang member connections to narrowly defined geographic spaces at specific points in time. (**ITL12**)

Likewise, the use of non-native writers of transitions in IT law RA abstracts can demonstrate how much they care for guiding their readers through their arguments. Excerpt 12 illustrates this.

Excerpt 12

Therefore, the current study investigates the impact of cyber security, such as critical infrastructure security and cloud security, on the digital workplace in Saudi Arabian private sector organizations. (**ITL20**)

The use of transitions helps readers understand the writer's argument. In Excerpt 11, native writers showed a more sophisticated structure by employing the transition "although" to present contrasting ideas smoothly and logically. This made their argument more persuasive. In Excerpt 12, non-native writers in IT law guided their readers from general understanding to the focus of the study. The use of the transition "therefore" added reasoning to their abstracts.

It is worth mentioning that the reluctance of native and non-native writers to use endophoric markers in IT law suggests that these writers do not rely on referencing in their RA abstracts.

To answer the second question of the present study that states, "What are the similarities and differences between legal RA abstracts in medical law and IT law in terms of interactive MMs when used by native and non-native writers?" the results of the frequencies per 1000 words and Z-scores were provided for a more accurate comparison. See table 4.

Table 4: Similarities and differences between interactive MMs when used by native and non-native writers

Interactive metadiscourse markers	Medical law RA abstracts				IT law RA abstracts			
	Native writers		Non-native writers		Native writers		Non-native writers	
	F per 1000 words	Z-score	F per 1000 words	Z-score	F per 1000 words	Z-score	F per 1000 words	Z-score
Code glosses	22.37	1.14919	1.48	1.11380	10.25	1.45274	5.31	.15250
Endophoric markers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evidentials	0	0	0	0	0.60	-.66034	0	0
Frame markers	1.49	-.67217	0.84	-.82069	0.60	-.66034	1.06	-1.067
Transitions	3.72	-.47702	4.66	.29311	3.01	-.13207	7.97	.91499

As Table 4 illustrates, there were similarities and differences between native and non-native writers in terms of interactive markers. To start with the similarities, there was an absence of endophoric and evidential markers in both disciplines with a Z-score of 0 for endophoric markers and evidentials. When it comes to evidential markers, in medical law for both groups, they had 0 frequency per 1000 words, and non-native writers in IT law also had a frequency of 0. These results aligned with Messabha and Merrouche's (2020) results that revealed no difference between the native speakers of English and Algerian writers, as both of them rarely used endophoric markers and evidentials in their abstracts, attributing this to the nature of abstracts that require writing briefly.

Another similarity was the predominance of code glosses in both disciplines, which were used more by native writers than non-native writers, with higher frequencies per 1000 words and Z-scores. Native writers in medical law (22.37) significantly exceeded the non-native writers (1.48). In IT law, this gap narrowed (native: 10.25 vs. non-native: 5.31). In addition, great attention was paid to transitions in medical law and IT law, indicating a shared reliance on these markers for coherence. These results were consistent with Mazidah's (2019) results, which revealed that Native English speakers employed more code glosses than Indonesian scholars in their RA abstracts. They indicated that this could be the result of some cultural differences, yet the T. test revealed that this difference was not significant.

In contrast, there were differences between medical law and IT law in their use of frame markers. Native writers used more frame markers (1.49 frequency, Z-score -0.67217) than non-native writers (0.84) with a more negative Z-score (-0.82069). Conversely, non-native writers (1.06 frequency, Z-score -1.067) in IT law slightly outpaced the native writers (0.60 frequency, Z-score -0.66034), suggesting that non-native writers may rely more on frame markers in their abstracts. Another difference can be observed in transitions despite the aforementioned similarities. The performance of non-native writers in IT law in using transitions was likely better than that of their counterparts in medical law. The non-native writers in IT law (7.97 frequency, Z-score .91499) performed better with transitions than those in medical law (4.66 frequency, Z-score .29311).

It seems that the focus of writers varied. Writers in medical law emphasised clarity, employing more code glosses in an attempt to guide their readers through explicit explanations. IT law writers, namely non-native writers, prioritised cohesion by using more transitions than their native counterparts. That is to say, despite having less overall experience of non-native writers in IT law with code glosses, they used more transitions than the native writers, demonstrating a strategic approach to coherence. The varied use of interactive MMs between writers in medical law and IT law would imply the different expectations of the discourse communities of both disciplines regarding clarity and organisation.

In general, there was a stronger presence of interactive MMs in the abstracts written by native writers compared to non-native writers. This was evidenced by the higher frequencies per 1000 words and Z-scores they had for most markers. Significant issues can be raised regarding native and non-native writers' impact on using interactive MMs in both disciplines. It all related to writing confidence and writer experience. The remarkable tendency of native writers across both disciplines to use more interactive markers can indicate their confidence and familiarity with conventions of academic writing that they might have gained from experience. For non-native writers, especially in IT law, it was likely difficult to achieve the same level of writing confidence that native writers had. Consequently, non-native writers showed varying strengths and weaknesses in their use of interactive MMs.

To answer the third question of the present study that states, "Do medical law and IT law RA abstracts show statistically significant differences with reference to interactive MMs used by native and non-native writers?" Chi-square values were presented. See Table 5.

Table 5: Chi-square test results of interactive MMs in respect to native and non-native writers' impact within disciplines

Metadiscourse markers	Medical law			IT law		
	Native and non-native writers Chi-square value	df	P. Value	Native and non-native writers Chi-square value	df	P. Value
Interactive	0.76	4	P > 0.05	3.99	4	P > 0.05

The absence of significant differences between the native and non-native writers within each discipline was present. This was evidenced by Chi-square values and P-values. The interactive MMs had a Chi-square of 0.76 in medical law and 3.99 in IT law with a P-value greater than 0.05.

These results of the Chi-square test can suggest that native and non-native writers within each discipline adopted similar strategies in constructing their abstracts. This consistency of using MMs may reflect a common academic standard or conventions within each discipline. In other words, the non-native writers in medical law and IT law were effectively adapting to the expectations of the genre that could overcome linguistic background, perhaps due to established norms in academic writing or influences from co-authorship. Moreover, the lack of significant differences between native and non-native writers in composing abstracts in the two disciplines can demonstrate that non-native writers, like native writers, wrote in adherence to the disciplinary norms of these two legal hybrid disciplines. As a result, there was a reduction of potential distinctions in writing quality between native and non-native writers within both disciplines.

5. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to investigate the influence of cultural background on the use of interactive MMs in RA abstracts in two legal hybrid disciplines. The results have revealed that native writers in both disciplines used more code glosses than non-native writers. And unlike non-native writers in medical law, non-native writers in IT law used more transitions than native writers. The results also have indicated that the native and non-native writers' impact in both disciplines appeared minimal. According to the Chi-square test, the differences between native and non-native writers were not statistically significant. This was in line with Kirisci and Duruk's (2022) findings, which have demonstrated that code glosses were the most frequently appearing interactive MMs in native English speakers' abstracts. However, the results of the present study were not consistent with those of Wei and Duan's (2019) study, which indicated that Chinese scholars applied significantly more code glosses and transitions than English scholars in the three hard disciplines they investigated: biology, chemistry, and physics.

It is worth mentioning that the results of the present study suggest that two factors can minimise the impact of cultural background on writing styles in academic contexts. First, co-authorship in which native and non-native researchers cooperate to produce well-written and well-structured RA abstracts in hybrid disciplines. Second, cultural backgrounds do not have any impact on well-experienced academic writers' writing styles.

5.1. Recommendations

The crucial role played by confidence in writing in hybrid disciplines is a point that this study enhances. Non-native writers in hybrid disciplines are recommended to 1) familiarise themselves more with academic writing conventions in hybrid disciplines by following the steps of their native counterparts, who may have a higher level of writing confidence and 2) boost their confidence by collaborating with native writers in hybrid disciplines to help them not worry about significant variations in writing styles and enhance the quality of writing in legal hybrid fields, especially when integrating diverse perspectives.

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