



Dialogism in Research Article Introductions Written by Iranian Non-Native and English Native Speaking Writers

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Abstract

Despite a growing interest in the study of the introduction sections of research articles, there have been few studies to investigate how academic writers engage with other voices and alternative positions in this academic genre. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to show how native-speaking (NS) and nonnative-speaking (NNS) writers take position and stance in research article introductions. For this purpose, engagement resources based on the appraisal framework were investigated in 60 articles written by English NS and Iranian NNS writers published in journals of applied linguistics. It was found out that the mean occurrences of heteroglossic items in both corpora was larger than those of monoglossic items but comparing the means of monoglossic engagements between the two corpora, it was revealed that NS writers' corpus had larger mean occurrences of monoglossic engagements than NNS writers' corpus implying the natives' stronger authorial stance in the texts. The results also revealed that there was no significant difference in the use of contractive and expansive engagements by NS writers ($t = -0.995$, $p > 0.05$), indicating a balanced use between the two options. However, the higher mean occurrences of expansive options compared with contractive options in the NNS corpus may suggest that NS writers open up more dialogic room for alternatives positions in the introductions. The findings of this study may help writers to better perceive the creation of a strong authorial position using appropriate engagement resources in research article introductions.

Keywords: Engagement; Heteroglossic; Introduction; Monoglossic

INTRODUCTION

Introduction section is one of the most important parts of Research Articles (henceforth RA) due to the fact that it is the first section which readers read after the abstract. If readers fail to

be impressed in reading this part of the article, they will not probably continue reading the whole article (Swales & Najjar, 1987). Swales and Feak (1994) mention that the main purpose of Introduction section of a RA are two folds: giving a logical reason for the article and

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provoking readers to read it.

Being persuasive in nature, RA Introductions are not merely a collection of facts, experts' opinions or quotations from other scholars but they also reflect a clear presence and identity of the writers (Hyland, 2002b). Thus, creating appropriate interpersonal relationship with the reader, and as a result, establishing disciplinary affiliation in academic discourse is crucial for RA writers. Because of this important role of interpersonal communication with the reader, evaluation which is related to the interpersonal aspect of language, has been the focus of many studies under different labels such as *modality* (M. A. K. Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), *hedging* (Hyland, 1996), and *Attribution* (Thomas & Hawes, 1994) and *Appraisal* (Martin & White, 2005). Among these approaches, Appraisal, originated from Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) theory, is a comprehensive, thorough, and systematic framework for investigating evaluative language, and as Hyland (2005) states, it is "the most systematic analyzing tool that offers a typology of evaluative resources available in English." (p. 174). This system explains how language is used for evaluating attitude, creating authorial identity, taking stances, and constructing interpersonal relationship (Hood, 2010; Martin & White, 2005)

There are three main subcategories in Appraisal: Engagement, Attitude, and Graduation, and the effective and successful authorial positioning is established by co-articulation of these three subcategories. However, the effective use of what Hood (2004, p. 24) names "evaluative stance", defined as "the ways writers position their own research in relation to other knowledge and other knowers," might be a big problem to non-native speakers. That is, most of the problematic errors made by non-native speaking (NNS) writers are not surface syntactic and grammatical errors, but rather establishing a successful authorial position in their texts. Furthermore, scholars (Feak & Swales, 2009) have repeatedly voiced

in the literature the inability of non-native and novice writers in the use of evaluative language and critical stance in scientific writing. In fact, Flowerdew and Peacock (2001) in interviews with 11 editors of International journals in the field of English language teaching concluded that the most problematic issues for NNS were not surface grammatical errors such as subject-verb agreements or article use but rather the lack of authorial voice in their articles. Therefore, although Iranian academic writers are proficient in general English skills, this proficiency does not lead automatically to proficiency in pragmatic competence. In other words, Iranian NNS writers may focus on lexica-grammatical features of their writing, but communicative features perhaps have not been grabbed much attention. Thus, this ignorance of interpersonal aspects of academic discourse may result in writing RA which are not as interactive as RA written by English NS.

In spite of the fact that there has been flourishing interest in using Appraisal System to explore evaluative language in RA (Ansarin & Tarlani-Aliabdi, 2011; Babaii, Atai, & Saidi, 2017; Jalilifar & Moazzen, 2014) there have been few studies to investigate how Engagement resources as a subcategory of Appraisal are used by English NS and Iranian NNS writers to open space and room for or constrain alternative viewpoints and voices in the Introduction section of RAs. In this study, we set out to explore this issue using Martin and White's (2005) Engagement subcategory of Appraisal framework. Engagement organizes together all locutions which presents the means for authorial stance to situate itself with respect to, and thus to 'engage' with the other voices, stances and alternative positions.

A comparative study of RA Introduction written by English NS and Iranian NNS writers within the same scientific area can help delineate the actual diversities and similarities among them. These probable similarities and differences in Engagement use may have numerous significances. They may help RA

writers to pay attention to the authorial stance through monoglossic and heteroglossic resources in their RA Introductions. More specifically, we aim to answer the following research questions:

- 1-Is there a statistically significant preference among Engagement categories and sub-categories in RA Introductions written by English NS writers?
- 2-Is there a statistically significant preference among Engagement categories and sub-categories in RA Introductions written by Iranian NNS?
- 3- Are there any similarities and differences between the Introduction section of RA written by English NS and Iranian NNS in the use of Engagement categories and sub-categories?

In Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory of Halliday (1994), three levels of

meaning are distinguished which simultaneously operate in all texts and speech. They include the textual, the ideational and the interpersonal meaning. The interpersonal meaning considers managing social relations, that is, how people interact with each other as a systematic tool for exploring interpersonal meaning in text and speech. It distinguishes three fundamental subcategories: Attitude (which is concerned with our feelings and emotional reactions, as well as our judgment of behavior and evaluation of things), Engagement (deals with play of voice and position in discourse), and Graduation (attends to grading phenomena) (Martin & White, 2005)

It is the Engagement subcategory (Figure 1), which was employed for analyzing RA Introductions in the current study, since it is particularly relevant for probing how RA Introduction writers position themselves and attribute dialogism in scientific discourse.

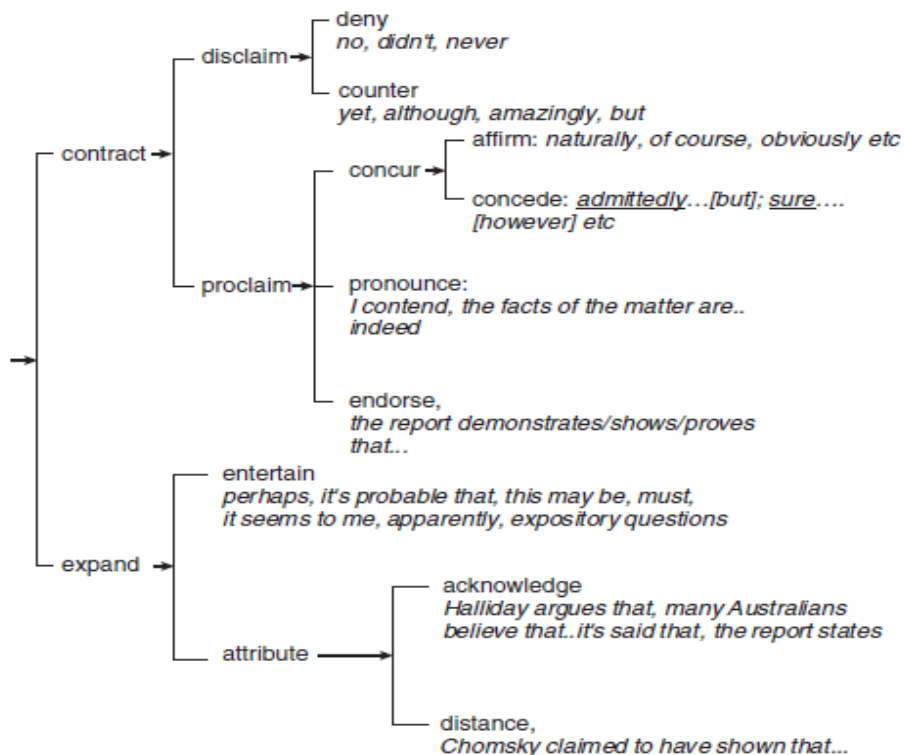


Figure 1. The Engagement framework adopted from Martin and White (2005, p. 134)

The Engagement system can be either monoglossic or heteroglossic. Monoglossia refers to undialogized bare assertions in which there are

not any other realizations of alternative voices in text. Heteroglossia refers to statements in which other voices or stances are recognized (Martin &

Rose, 2007). Utterances employing Engagement options recognize the dialogic nature of the statements, but utterances not doing so renounce or deny the dialogic potentials of the utterance. Therefore, through the Engagement options the academic writers can show their interests to admit the negotiability of the proposition in text. Heteroglossic Engagements consist of two sub-categories: Contract and Expand. Resources Contracting dialogic space are Disclaim which in turn, consists of Deny and Counter, and Proclaim consists of Concur, Pronounce and Endorse.

The heteroglossic options which are dialogically Expansive are resources that provide great dialogical space for other voices and positions. It is done by presenting modal verbs and rhetorical questions in Entertain or by Attribution that admits alternative positions via explicitly referencing external sources. They are traditionally labeled as 'direct' and 'indirect speech'. Attribution consists of two subsystems including Acknowledge and Distance.

Engagement options have been the focus of many research studies. Babaii et al. (2017) examined English science articles using Engagement within Appraisal system. They demonstrated that heteroglossic Engagements were preferred over monoglossic Engagements in English popular science articles. Brooke (2014) also analyzed high-rated and low-rated essays written by ESL students in South-East Asian universities. He concluded that high rated papers employed higher frequency of Attribution and Endorsement, but low-rated papers employed higher frequency of monoglossic Engagements. In addition, Ansarin and Tarlani-Aliabdi (2011) found significant differences in native Persian and English writers' engaging of the readers. Furthermore, they found significant differences in categorical distribution of reader engagement markers. In another study, Mei (2007) has examined 27 high-rated and low-rated essays written by undergraduate NNS of English. She found out some differences in the frequency of bare assertion in the high-rated and low-rated essays.

She concluded that high-rated essay writers employ a set of Engagement resources that build up a contrastive position in a strategic way to make possible contradictories in introducing ideas.

METHODS

Materials

The method which was adopted is that of a discourse analysis. The data were collected in the form of sentence, phrases, clauses, words, and classified into the categories of monoglossic or heteroglossic and its subcategories. It was also a descriptive study in that it tried to describe the Introduction sections of RAs written by English NS and Iranian NNS writers based on the Engagement sub-category of Appraisal system offered by (Martin & White, 2005).

Thirty articles written by English NS and thirty articles written by Iranian NNS published within a 10-year range from 2007 to 2017 in accredited Applied linguistics journals, namely *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *Language Learning Journal* and *System* were selected as the corpus of this study. The reasons for choosing these journals are that, firstly, the selected articles from these journals all have an independent Introduction section. Secondly, in other highly ranked ISI journals, it was not possible to find equal number of articles from both English NS and Iranian NNS academic writers. Therefore, to have the representative sample for analysis, we had to select RA from the above-mentioned journals. Each of these journals shared an equal number of articles for both native and NNS writers (10 articles from each journal for English NS writers and 10 articles for Iranian NNS writers). This section of the articles varied in length from approximately 212 to 920 words.

The selected articles were checked in terms of the nationality of their authors. The information considering the RA writers' nationalities was obtained from the experts in the field, information presented at the end of the article, affiliations and search through Internet. We considered someone as NS for whom English was

first language. That is, s/he acquired English in early childhood and s/he speaks it in the family and/ or work. To check this, an email was sent to them to ask about their first language. Regarding articles with more than one author, we made sure that all the authors were NS. RA writers were considered as NNS for whom English was taught as subject in schools and it was not a medium of communication at home or work. Regarding multiple authored articles, only articles written by up to three authors were selected. The NS corpus consisted of 15029 words and 511 sentences while the NNS corpus consisted of 15501 words and 569 sentences

Procedure

We manually annotated each corpus for monoglossic and heteroglossic features based on the Engagement subcategory included in the Martine and White's (2005) Appraisal system (Figure.1). As a bottom-up approach, the units of analysis for monoglossic statements were sentences and clauses while for heteroglossic Engagements lexical and grammatical expressions were considered. Since the annotation was performed manually, the coding conventions employed were underlining the whole sentence or clause as monoglossic Engagement while for heteroglossic Engagement, we labeled heteroglossic options by underlining the Engaging words or phrases. To check reliability, inter-rater reliability was computed by comparing 30 percent of analyzed corpora by two other raters who were specialists in discourse analysis and were familiar with the Appraisal system. Each specialist independently analyzed the texts for the Engagement expressions, and their results were

compared with those of us using Cronbach's alpha (0.751 & 0.843). A series of paired samples t-test for comparing the mean occurrences of paired variables (monoglossic vs heteroglossic, Contract vs Expand, Disclaim vs Proclaim, Entertain vs Attribute, Deny vs Counter, and Acknowledge vs Distance) in both corpora was performed. Since there are three subcategories in Proclaim subcategory (Concur, Pronounce and Endorse), the repeated measure ANOVA test was applied to compare the mean differences among these three subcategories in both English NS and NNS writers' corpora.

RESULTS

In this section, first taking a within group perspective, the results of Engagement resources deployed by the NS and NNS writers will be presented in each corpus; then taking a between groups perspective, we will compare the results from each corpus to find any probable differences and similarities between NS and NNS writers' use of Engagement categories and subcategories in their RA Introductions. Due to the fact that Affirm and Concede options as subcategories of Concur were few, only results of the distribution patterns from Concur subcategories were reported and analyzed here.

The Results of Engagement Resources in NS Writers' RA Introductions

To answer the first research question of the study, this section provides the results of Engagement categories and sub-categories employed by NS writers' in their RA Introductions. Tables 1 and 2 show the mean occurrences of Engagement options in per 1000 words in Introduction sections of RAs written by NS writers.

Table 1.**The Results of Paired Samples t-test for Comparison of Paired Variables in NS Corpus**

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	p-value
Pair 1	Monoglossic	30	.4713	.29986	-7.082	29	.000
	Heteroglossic	30	1.2723	.66829			
Pair 2	Contract	30	.6283	1.05801	-.995	29	.328
	Expand	30	.8440	.40794			
Pair 3	Disclaim	30	.3313	.24372	5.545	29	.000
	Proclaim	30	.0893	.11045			
Pair 4	Deny	30	.0963	.10956	-4.215	29	.000
	Counter	30	.2400	.16543			
Pair 5	Entertain	30	.3357	.22089	-1.796	29	.083
	Attribute	30	.4857	.37831			
Pair 6	Acknowledge	30	.4883	.38508	6.983	29	.000
	Distance	30	.0020	.01095			

As the Table 1 depicts, NS writers employed more heteroglossic Engagement (M=1.2723, SD=0.66829) than monoglossic statements (M=.4713, SD=0.29986). The results of t-test statistic showed that there was a significant difference in the use of monoglossic and heteroglossic Engagements by NS writers ($t(29) = -7.082, p=0.001$).

Monoglossic Engagements which make no reference to other voices and viewpoints are called “bare assertions” in Martine and White’s terms (2005, p. 99), as manifested below:

- 1 (NS): “*Every word is a union of features that define it in a unique way*”. (Monoglossic)
- 2 (NS): “*there are still (Heteroglossic) aspects of the L2 associative connections that have not (Heteroglossic) been explored sufficiently well*”.

Considering Contractive and Expansive options as subcategories of heteroglossic Engagements, Table 1 displays the mean occurrences of Expansive options (M= 0.8440, SD=.40794), and those of Contractive ones (M=0.6283, SD= 1.05801) in the Introduction sections of RAs written by NS writers. The results of t-test statistic also revealed that there was not a significant difference in the use of Contractive and Expansive Engagements by these writers

($t(29) = -0.995, p>0.05$), indicating a balanced use between the two options.

Table 1, further, shows that, within Contractive Engagements, there was a significant preference for Disclaim (M= 0.3560, SD=0.31236) over Proclaim (M=0.1633, SD= 0.12850), ($t(29) = 3.962, p=0.001$) by NS writers.

Regarding the subcategory of Disclaim options in NS writers’ corpus, the mean occurrences of Counter (M=0.2400, SD=0.16543) were greater than those of Deny (M=0.0963, SD= 0.10956). The results also suggested a significant difference between these two options, ($t(29) = -4.215, p=0.001$). Note the examples of Counter and Deny identified in ENS writers’ corpus:

- 3 (NS): “*Although (Disclaim: Counter) accent may not hinder comprehensibility,*”.
- 4 (NS): “*Previous research studies ... did not (Disclaim: Deny) explore the relationship between*”.

Based on Table 1, within the subcategory of Expansive options, there appeared to be a nearly balanced use between Attribute (M=0.4857, SD= 0.37831) and Entertain (M= 0.3357, SD= 0.22089) in NS writers’ corpus since there was not a significant difference in the use of these options ($t(29) = -1.796, p>0.05$). Examples of Entertain in NS corpus are manifested below:

5 (NS): “*linguistic and non-linguistic factors that are likely to (Expansion; Entertain) influence L2 learners’*”.

6 (NS): “*It seems that (Expansion; Entertain) ambiguity tolerance in EFL learning classes is ignored.....*”

Acknowledge option occupying the largest proportion in the whole heteroglossic Engagements with the mean occurrences of (M=0.4883, SD=0.38508) was preferred over the Distance with the mean occurrences of (M= 0.0020, SD= 0.01095). Distance was the least frequently used option in NS writers’ corpus. A t-test statistic further marked a significant difference between the Acknowledge and Distance ($t(29) = 6.983$,

$p=0.001$). Here are examples for Acknowledge and Distance as subcategories of Entertain from the corpus.

7 (NS): “*For most learners, as Hacker (2008) notes (Expansion: Acknowledge), language exposure is ...*”

8 (NS): “*Krashen (1984) claimed (Expansion: Distance) that immersion may be*”

Since there are three subcategories in Proclaim options (Concur, Pronounce and Endorse), the repeated measure ANOVA test was applied to compare the mean differences among these three subcategories in NS writers’ corpus.

Table 2.

The Result of Repeated Measure ANOVA for Comparison of Concur, Pronounce and Endorse in NS Corpus

Source	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pillai's Trace	F	p-value
Concur	0.02	0.03	.107	1.673	.206
Pronounce	0.04	0.07			
Endorse	0.03	0.05			

Table 2 reveals that there was not a significant difference in the use of the Concur (M=0.02, SD=0.03), Pronounce (M=0.04, SD=0.07) and Endorse ((M=0.03, SD=0.05), $p>0.05$) by NS writers. An example is given for the subcategories of Proclaim from NS corpus below.

9 (NS): “*In other words, (Proclaim: Pronounce), the act of noticing variances ...*”.

10 (NS): “*Research has shown (Proclaim: Endorse) that students who are in standards-based ...*”.

11 (NS): “*After all, (Proclaim: Concur), one person’s ‘natural’ conversation may be...*”.

The Results of Engagement Resources in Iranian NNS Writers’ RA Introductions

To answer the second research question of the study, the results from the analysis of Engagement resources in NNS writers’ RA Introductions are provided here. Table 3 and Table 4 display the mean occurrences in per 1000 words of Engagement categories and sub-categories found in Introduction sections of RAs written by Iranian NNS writers.

Table 3.

The Result of Paired Samples t-test for Comparison of Paired Variables in NNS Corpus

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	p-value
Pair 1	Monoglossic	30	.3130	.28123	-7.953	29	.000
	Heteroglossic	30	1.4193	.86031			
Pair 2	Contract	30	.5240	.39646	-5.859	29	.000
	Expand	30	.8967	.52774			
Pair 3	Disclaim	30	.3560	.31236	3.962	29	.000
	Proclaim	30	.1633	.12850			
Pair 4	Deny	30	.1347	.13109	-2.978	29	.006

	Counter	30	.2260	.21489			
Pair 5	Entertain	30	.2880	.21597	-1.694	29	.101
	Attribute	30	1.0273	2.39097			
Pair 6	Acknowledge	30	.5917	.39295	8.189	29	.000
	Distance	30	.0040	.01522			

Table 3 shows that the mean occurrences of heteroglossic Engagement (M=1.4193, SD=0.86031) were greater than those of monoglossic Engagement (M=0.3130, SD=0.28123). The paired samples t-test indicated that there was a marked significant difference between monoglossic and heteroglossic Engagements in NNS writers' RA Introductions ($t(29) = -7.953$, $p=0.001$). Therefore, NNS writers, similar to NS writers, preferred heteroglossic to monoglossic Engagement resources in RA Introductions. Here are examples of monoglossic and heteroglossic Engagements identified in NNS writers' corpus:

12 (NNS): "For learners, failure in conversation is equal to failure in developing their conversational ability (Monoglossic)".

13 (NNS): "It goes without saying (Heteroglossic) that".

Regarding Contractive and Expansive options of heteroglossic Engagements, based on the Table 3, NNS writers, contrary to NS writers who deployed a balanced use between Contractive and Expansive Engagements, employed more Expansive resources (M=1.0377, SD=0.48759) than Contractive ones (M=0.5240, SD=0.39646). The result of paired samples t-test showed that the difference between the two means was statistically significant ($t(29) = -7.172$, $p=0.001$).

With respect to Contractive subcategories, Table 3 reveals that Disclaim with the mean occurrences of (M=0.3560, SD=0.31236) was preferred to Proclaim with the mean occurrences of (M=0.1633, SD=0.12850). The result of paired samples t-test did show a significant difference in the use of Proclaim and Disclaim Engagements by NNS writers ($t(29) = 3.962$, $p=0.001$).

Regarding the subcategory of Disclaim re-

sources in NNS writers' corpus, the mean occurrences of Counter (M=0.2260, SD=0.21489) were larger than those of Deny (M=0.1347, SD=0.13109), indicating a significant difference between Counter and Deny, ($t(29) = -2.978$, $p=0.006$). Examples of Counter and Deny in NNS corpus are manifested below:

14 (NNS): "There is not a consensus among researchers; however, (Disclaim: Counter) Faerch and Kasper's definition seems to be widely accepted".

15 (NNS): "previous studies on multimedia annotations have not (Disclaim: Deny) sufficiently investigated ...".

Regarding the Expansive subcategories (Entertain and Attribute), as can be seen in Table 3, the results of paired t-test also demonstrated that there was no significant difference between Entertain (M=0.2880, SD=0.21597) and Attribute (M=1.0273, SD=2.39097), ($t(29) = -1.694$, $p>0.05$) in Iranian NNS writers' corpus. An example for Entertain in NNS corpus is given below:

16 (NNS): "the NNS may (Expansion; Entertain) presumably benefit".

In addition, a conspicuous difference was found between the mean occurrences of Attribute subcategories (Acknowledge and Distance). As the Table 3 demonstrates, there was a statistically significant difference between Acknowledge (M=0.5917, SD=0.39295) and Distance (M=0.0040, SD=0.01522), ($t(29) = 8.189$, $p=0.001$). Here is an example for Distance and Acknowledge from non-native corpus.

17 (NNS): "As Hatch (1978) once wrote (Expansion: Acknowledge),

18(NNS): “Bernhardt (2003) claims (Expansion: Distance) that the variance in second language”.

As with NS writers’ corpus, the repeated measure ANOVA test was performed to compare the mean differences of Proclaim

subcategories in NNS writers’ corpus. Table 4 depicts that there was a significant difference in the deployment of the Concur (M=0.06, SD=0.15), Pronounce (M=0.09, SD=0.09) and Endorse ((M=0.03, SD=0.04), p=0.01) by Iranian NNS writers.

Table 4.

The Result of Repeated Measure ANOVA for Comparison of Concur, Pronounce and Endorse in NNS Corpus

Source	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pillai's Trace	F	p-value
Concur	0.06	0.15	.282	5.499	.010
Pronounce	0.09	0.09			
Endorse	0.03	0.04			

Furthermore, in order to find where among these three subcategories the differences exist, the comparisons between the means of pairs of

Concur and Pronounce, Concur and Endorse, and Endorse and Pronounce were performed based on post hoc LSD tests as depicted in Table 5.

Table 5.

The Result of LSD Post-hoc Test for Pairwise Comparisons

(I) factor1	(J) factor1	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	p-value
Concur	Pronounce	-.035	.027	.211
	Endorse	.030	.025	.233
Pronounce	Endorse	.065	.019	.002

As can be seen in Post hoc tests, there was a statistically significant difference between Pronounce and Endorse in NNS writers’ corpus. However, there were not any significant differences between Pronounce and Concur, and Endorse and Concur (p>0.05). Examples of Proclaim subcategories from NNS corpus are manifested below:

19 (NNS): “Key to this discussion (Proclaim: Pronounce) is that”.

20 (NNS): “an emerging body of ... research now exists that demonstrates (Proclaim: Endorse) the association of CT skills with other constructs”.

21 (NNS): “It goes without saying that (proclaim: Concur) individual linguistic repertoire is not perfect”.

Comparison of English NS and Iranian NNS Writers’ Corpus

This section provides results from the comparison between the RA Introductions written by NS and NNS writers. To answer the third research question of the study, a between groups view has been taken. For this purpose, an independent t-test analysis was used to compare the mean occurrences of Engagement categories and subcategories written by the writers from each culture. The results of the independent t-test analyses for each Engagement categories and subcategory are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6**The Result of Independent t-test for Comparison of Engagements between NS and NNS Corpora**

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	p-value
Monoglossic	NS	30	0.47	0.30	2.110	58	0.039
	NNS	30	0.31	0.28			
Heteroglossic	NS	30	1.27	0.67	-.739	58	0.463
	NNS	30	1.42	0.86			
Contract	NS	30	0.71	0.29	2.075	58	0.042
	NNS	30	0.52	0.40			
Expand	NS	30	0.77	0.34	-2.487	58	0.016
	NNS	30	1.04	0.49			
Disclaim	NS	30	0.33	0.24	-.341	58	0.734
	NNS	30	0.36	0.31			
Proclaim	NS	30	0.09	0.11	-2.392	58	0.020
	NNS	30	0.16	0.13			
Deny	NS	30	0.10	0.11	-1.229	58	0.224
	NNS	30	0.13	0.13			
Counter	NS	30	0.24	0.17	.283	58	0.778
	NNS	30	0.23	0.21			
Entertain	NS	30	0.34	0.22	.845	58	0.402
	NNS	30	0.29	0.22			
Attribute	NS	30	0.49	0.38	-1.226	58	0.225
	NNS	30	1.03	2.39			
Acknowledge	NS	30	0.49	0.39	-1.029	58	0.308
	NNS	30	0.59	0.39			
Distance	NS	30	0.00	0.01	-.584	58	0.561
	NNS	30	0.00	0.02			
Concur	NS	30	0.02	0.03	-1.548	58	0.127
	NNS	30	0.06	0.15			
Pronounce	NS	30	0.04	0.07	-2.426	58	0.018
	NNS	30	0.09	0.09			
Endorse	NS	30	0.03	0.05	.250	58	0.804
	NNS	30	0.03	0.04			

As the Table 6 depicts, comparing the mean occurrences of heteroglossic Engagements in NS writer' corpus ($M= 1.27$, $SD= 0.67$) with those of NNS writers' corpus ($M= 1.42$, $SD= 0.86$), no statistically significant difference was found between them ($t(58) = -0.739$, $p>0.05$). However, NS writers outperformed their NNS writer counterparts in using monoglossic Engagements. To be in more details, the mean occurrences of monoglossic Engagements in NS corpus ($M= 0.47$, $SD= 0.30$) were larger than those of NNS writers' corpus ($M= 0.31$, $SD= 0.28$), indicating a statistically significant difference between two corpora, ($t(29) = 2.110$, $p=0.039$).

Comparing the mean occurrences of Expansive options between NS writers ($M=0.77$, $SD=0.34$) and NNS writers ($M=1.04$, $SD=0.49$), Table 6, further, reveals that NNS writers outperformed their native counterparts, suggesting a statistically significant difference between two corpora, ($t(58) = -2.487$, $p=0.016$).

Analysis of the corpora also indicated that NS writers tended to use more Contractive options with the mean occurrences of ($M=0.71$, $SD= 0.29$) than NNS writers ($M=0.52$, $SD= 0.40$), implying a marked significant difference between the corpora, ($t(58) = 2.075$, $p=0.042$).

Based on the results displayed in the Table 1

and Table 3, it was revealed that both English NS and Iranian NNS writers similarly preferred Disclaim over Proclaim within Contractive heteroglossic Engagements. Nevertheless, comparing the two writers' corpora from the Table 6, it was found out that NNS writers ($M=0.71$, $SD=0.29$) showed a tendency to use more Proclaim options than NS writers ($M=0.09$, $SD=0.11$). This tendency was realized to be statistically significant, ($t(58) = -0.341$, $p=0.734$).

Another similarity observed in the two corpora concerned with Disclaim options which were found to be ($M=0.33$, $SD=0.124$) and ($M=0.36$, $SD=0.31$) for NS and NNS writers, respectively. Based on the Table 6, the differences between the mean occurrences in both corpora were not statistically significant, ($t(58) = -0.341$, $p>0.05$).

The other similarity between the two corpora was that both NS writers and NNS writers employed nearly the same amount of Deny and Counter as the sub-categories of Disclaim. To be in more details, as can be seen from Table 6, the mean occurrences of Deny in NS writers' corpus was ($M=0.10$, $SD=0.11$), and in NNS writers' corpus, it was ($M=0.13$, $SD=0.13$), indicating no statistically significant difference between the two corpora, ($t(58) = -1.229$, $p>0.05$). The analyses of the texts further revealed that the NS and NNS writers, similarly, tended to deploy the same number of Counter in their RA Introductions. Specifically, based on the Table 6, the mean occurrences of Counter were ($M=0.24$, $SD=0.17$) and ($M=0.23$, $SD=0.21$) for NS and NNS writers, respectively, implying no significant difference between the two corpora, ($t(58) = 0.283$, $p>0.05$).

Comparing the Proclaim subcategories between the two corpora, as depicted in Table 6, NS and NNS writers' corpus contained similar amounts of Concur and Endorse options but different Pronounce options. Specifically, there were more Pronounce options in NNS ($M=0.09$, $SD=0.09$) corpus than in NS corpus ($M=0.04$, $SD=0.07$), implying a significant difference

between the two corpora, ($t(58) = -2.426$, $p=0.018$). Table 6 also shows that NS and NNS corpora were similar in the Concur and Endorse subcategories of Proclaim in terms of the distribution patterns. To be in more details, the mean occurrences of Concur were ($M=0.02$, $SD=0.03$) and ($M=0.06$, $SD=0.15$) for NS and NNS writers, respectively, suggesting no significant difference between the two corpora, ($t(58) = -1.548$, $p>0.05$). Likewise, Endorse mean occurrences were nearly the same in NS ($M=0.03$, $SD=0.05$) and NNS ($M=0.03$, $SD=0.04$) writers, with no significant differences between the two corpora, ($t(58) = 0.250$, $p>0.05$).

Table 6 shows that NS and NNS writers are alike in terms of Entertain and Attribute as the subcategories of Expansive options, and Acknowledge and Distance as the subcategories of and Attribute. Taken together, these four subcategories demonstrate another striking similarity between NS and NNS writers' corpora in terms of Entertain, Attribute, Acknowledge and Distance options. To be more specific, the mean occurrences of Entertain in NS and NNS writers' corpus were ($M=0.34$, $SD=0.22$) and ($M=0.29$, $SD=0.22$), respectively. The difference between the mean occurrences in both corpora was not statistically significant, ($t(58) = 0.845$, $p>0.05$). Furthermore, NS ($M=0.49$, $SD=0.38$) writers' corpus and NNS ($M=1.03$, $SD=2.39$) writers' corpus contained similar amount of Attribute options, with no statistically significant difference between them ($t(58) = -1.226$, $p>0.05$). Concerning the Acknowledge as one subcategory of Attribute in both corpora, it was revealed that although NNS writers ($M=0.59$, $SD=0.39$) outnumbered their NS ($M=0.49$, $SD=0.39$) counterparts, this difference was not statistically significant, ($t(58) = -1.029$, $p>0.05$). Regarding the other subcategory of Attribute, Distance was rarely found in both corpora, having the mean occurrences of ($M=0.0020$, $SD=0.01$) and ($M=0.0040$, $SD=0.02$), without any significant differences between the two corpora, ($t(58) = -0.584$, $p>0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The results of the study revealed significant differences and similarities among Engagement categories and sub-categories used in RA Introductions by NS and NNS writers. First and foremost, the heavier use of heteroglossic Engagements in both corpora may be interpreted as a more dialogic nature of Introduction section of RAs indicating both NS and NNS writers' awareness of the need to negotiate their proposition with prior utterances and with the imagined reader. This is in line with Fryer's (2013) study who pointed out that heteroglossic resources were found more in this section of RAs. In addition, this may be attributed to the nature of applied linguistics as a soft discipline, in which, according to Becher (1990, p. 335), knowledge is "qualitative and reiterative", so it is inclined to openly accept other researchers and scholars' points of view.

The analysis of the corpora manifested that NS writers outperformed their NNS writer counterparts in using monoglossic Engagements. The higher mean occurrences of monoglossic Engagements in NS writers' corpus compared with NNS writers' corpus could be interpreted as NS writers' rhetorical mechanism to display their confidence in the propositions to align the reader with the propositions. Since monoglossic options are important in creating a strong authorial stance in a text (Martin & White, 2005), which make a proposition "affirmative and authoritative" in Liu's terms (2013, p. 47), the NS writers were successful in conveying their authorial identity and projecting their presence into RA Introductions. Thus, the use of monoglossic Engagements in RA Introductions through which the author can take the responsibility for some utterance in texts may be a problem for Iranian NNS writers deserving attention from English for Academic users.

Within heteroglossic Engagements, it was mentioned that NS writers employed a balanced use of Contractive and Expansive heteroglossic Engagements while Iranian NNS writers preferred Expansive over Contractive Engagements.

In a similar vein, Swain (2007) analyzing English essays written by Italian EFL learners, demonstrated that successful learners were those who employed more of an equal deployment of Engagement options entertaining alternative views in companion with the contractive options.

Iranian NNS writers' higher use of Expansive Engagement open up additional dialogic space for new arguments, viewpoints and voices which implies that NNS writers position themselves with respect to other voices cautiously by welcoming rather than constraining the probability of alternative positions. There may be some underlying reasons for NNS writers' higher use of dialogic Expansive Engagements. First, education is probably a crucial factor. Even though some changes for creative and learner-centered teaching have recently been made in Iran, the educational system is still widely considered as the unquestionable authority (Yousefi, 2014). Furthermore, Hashemi (2011, p. 64) states that "the Iranian education emphasizes on just transmitting information and limiting the learning to memorizing the materials" rather than focusing on "producing thoughtful people" and critical thinkers. Therefore, the Iranian academic writers are 'socialized', taught and accustomed not to critically make judgements about the published 'authoritative' materials.

Both NS and NNS writers preferred Disclaim over Proclaim, as the subcategory of Contractive options. This result is in line with Lancaster's (2014) finding that Disclaim rather than Proclaim is employed more frequently as a Contractive option in argumentative discourse. Additionally, this preference of Disclaim over Proclaim items by both groups of writers may indicate that these writers are more inclined to directly repudiate alternative positions rather than merely try to restrict the breadth of such alternative positions in the on-going discourse.

Analyses of the corpora also manifested that both English NS and Iranian NNS writers, similarly, tended to deploy more Counter than Deny. The similar predominance of Counter over Deny

in RA Introductions by both NS and NNS writers is found in Lancaster's (2014) study. He analyzed undergraduate papers in terms of Engagement resources, and differentiating between high and low-scored essays, he found out that high scored essays employed greater amount of Countering Engagement. This result is more or less anticipated because via counter academic authors invoke a contrary position to the ones introduced in the text by replacing or substituting alternative positions rather than directly denying them.

Considering Proclaim options, while English NS writers did not prefer one subcategory of Proclaim over the other, and invoke sense of uncertainty and tentativeness through an equal deployment of Pronounce, Concur and Endorse, Iranian NNS writers preferred Pronounce over Endorse probably to create authorial positioning which was not established through the use of monoglossic Engagements.

Within Expansive subcategories, a balanced use of Attribute and Entertain was realized in both NS and NNS writers' corpora. In addition, the relatively higher number of Attribute in both corpora may imply that both NS and NNS writers preferred using realizations of Attribute when they intended to open up dialogic space for other possible alternative views. This great number of Attribute option also suggests these academic writers' awareness of alternative views and the imagined reader who holds such views. In fact, Attribute has the highest mean occurrences within Expansive options in NNS writers' corpus whereas it ranked second in terms of mean occurrences in NS corpus. This is in line with Fryer's (2013) study that Attribute is the most frequently used Engagements in RAs. Swain (2010) also recognized Attribute as the most widely occurred choice in discussion essays of undergraduate students. All these findings could imply that Attribute is commonplace in academic discourse no matter whether written by NS or NNS writers. Finally, Table 1 and Table 3 show that Acknowledge option occupies the largest proportion in within Attribute subcat-

egory. In fact, relatively larger mean occurrences of Acknowledge in both NS and NNS corpus is not surprising, because as Hyland (1999, p. 342) states "citation is central to the social context of persuasion", and it is regarded a common device to engage with external voices in scientific discourse (Hyland, 2004). Distance as another subcategory of Attribute has the lowest mean occurrences in both NS and NNS writers' corpora. Distance was identified as being the lowest in the order of preference in Swain's (2010) corpus. This option was also rare in Coffin's (2009) data of the Introduction and one analysis chapter of a doctoral thesis from Film Studies and even not found in Fryer's (2013) corpus. In contrast with Acknowledge in which there is no specification of aligning or disaligning with respect to the proposition being developed, through Distance both NS and NNS writers show their detachment from liabilities of what is being cited (Martin & White, 2005).

CONCLUSION

The resources by which academic writers use to open up or restrict dialogic space while simultaneously trying to occupy space for their own research are effective means for construction of academic argument. Thus, in this study we were interested in whether Iranian NNS writers comparing with English NS writers introduce themselves as standing with, as standing against or as neutral with respect to other writers and their viewpoints and stances, and whether these value positions are introduced as taken for granted (monoglossic options) or, novel, problematic, contentious, questioned, resisted or rejected (heteroglossic) in Introduction section of RAs. This study has confirmed the findings of previous studies (e.g., Liu, 2013) that texts with a strong authorial voice are not those that use exclusively heteroglossic Engagement options, but rather those that show an interplay between the two patterns of monoglossic and heteroglossic Engagements, and Contractive and Expansive Engagements. Through analysis of the data, we showed how English NS writers consistently

employ Expansive Engagements in a harmonious collaboration with Contractive Engagements to construct a successful authorial voice while Iranian NNS writers suffered from lacking appropriate evaluative stance and authorial voice towards propositions being cited.

In short, the findings, generally, imply that English NS writers compared with Iranian NNS writers do better at the production of Engagement expressions in RA Introductions, and are, therefore, better at establishing an interpersonal positioning with readers as well.

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