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WHO AM "I" IN ACADEMIC WRITING?: THE STUDY OF AUTHORIAL IDENTITY

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Abstract
In this paper, we attempt to examine the identity of researchers in writing their research articles (RAs) by exploring the linguistic forms indicating the identity of the authors in English RAs, determining the functions these forms serve in the discourse, and revealing the socio-cultural aspects implied from the use of the authorial identity. We will identify the English first-person pronouns used by native and non-native authors in Scopus-indexed linguistics and education academic journal articles. This study applied the corpus linguistic method to collect the data and to draw conclusions about the authorial identity presented in the articles. Hopefully, this paper will help to not only comprehend the role and the importance of the authorial presence but also encourage researchers to represent their identity in their own RAs.

Keywords: academic writing, authorial identity, discourse functions, first person pronouns.

Introduction
Impersonality in academic writing has encouraged academic authors in reporting their research in the form of research articles. Not only is it suggested by writing guidance books, but some researchers also agree that impersonality in academic writing can show objectivity and open-mindedness (Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984; Lachowicz, 1981 in Hyland, 2001). Hyland's study (2002) in Hongkong showed that students used impersonality in their essays because first-person pronouns had a strong indication of self-representation in writing. Thus, they felt uncomfortable to use the first-person pronouns in their research essays. As regards the need of the authors as part of an academic community, they need to stay "hidden" as a sign of respect for the academic community and focus more on their investigation rather than emerging their existence in their writing (Karahan, 2013; Molino, 2010).

However, Hyland (2001) states that authors cannot avoid projecting themselves in their writing. Therefore, academic writing, such as research articles, should allow the authors to express their existence. This act of showing the authors' existence should not be judged as a discouragement for the objectivity of their research. Instead, authorial presence in their research articles can be

considered a way of telling their identity. Research has shown that authorial presence in RAs can give several advantages, such as promoting authors' credibility from the research as it is used for claiming knowledge and opinion (Harwood, 2005a, 2005b; Hyland, 2001) and helping authors to engage with the readers and community (Hyland, 2002; Kuo, 1998). Moreover, present-day academic writing tends to encourage authors to market or promote themselves as the scientific community provides them a "competition arena" of scientific contribution (Harwood, 2005a) so that the authorial presence is considered necessary to show the authors "self" in the RA.

Many studies investigating the authors "self" in the RAs have been conducted (e.g. Çandarli, Bayyurt, & Marti, 2015; Carciu, 2009; Gu, 2010; Işık-Taş, 2018; Karahan, 2013; Li & Deng, 2019; Vassileva, 1998; Susanti, Kurnia, & Suharsono, 2018). Those studies were conducted in countries where English is not the native language for the community there. The reason for investigating the authorial presence in cross-cultural, native-nonnative English research articles is that each academic community has cultures that can be compared. The contrastive studies of the authorial presence can help to understand the factors underlying the writing and papers, which affect the authors around the world in showing themselves in their RAs.

In this study, we aim to find out the authorial identity of English Native and Non-native authors that are reflected in the use of personal pronouns and references in English language education RAs and to explore the discourse functions that construct the authorial identity in the RAs.

Authorial Identity in Research Articles

Ivanič (1998) states that "writing is an act of identity in which people align themselves with socio-culturally shaped possibilities for self-hood, playing their part in reproducing or challenging dominant practices and discourses, and the values, beliefs, and interests which they embody." In other words, writing itself is the representation of its author regardless of whether the authors are truly present in their writing or not. Identity in academic writing can be traced back when Cherry (1988) introduced two kinds of identity offered by the authors when they are writing, namely *ethos* and *persona*. *Ethos* refers to the personal characteristics and *persona* to the roles that authors employ in composing their articles (Tang & John, 1999). Ivanič (1998) brought this concept of identity into her ways of interpreting the identity of a person in the act of writing, in which she called them "the selves", namely (1) autobiographical self, which refers to the identity that brought by the authors into their writing such as their origin or their gender, (2) discoursal self, i.e. the identity constructed through the discourse characteristics of a text, which is related to values, beliefs and power relations in the social context in which they were written, and (3) self as author, which expresses the voice of the writer, in the sense of the writer's position, opinions and beliefs. This study will focus on discoursal self since we deal with how the authors represent themselves in a RA discourse and how the RA discourse constructs the identity of the authors themselves.

Tang and John (1999) proposed a framework based on first-person pronouns usage in RAs, namely (1) "I" as the representative, (2) "I" as the guide through an essay, (3) "I" as the architect of the essay, (4) "I" as the recounter of the research process, (5) "I" as the opinion holder, and (6) "I" as the originator. This is based on what Ivanic (1998) has mentioned about the continuum from not using "I" to use "I" in academic writing. Since Ivanic did not develop the criteria of those continua, Tang and John (1999) then introduced the six classifications that consecutively categorize the roles taken by the authors in the RA from the least powerful to most powerful identity.

Following Tang and John's framework, Harwood (2005b) also mentioned his interest in authorial presence by focusing on the inclusivity and exclusivity of personal pronouns in RAs. Inclusive pronouns allow readers to be involved in the authors' point of view. Through inclusive pronouns, the authors build the bridge to their readers to gain the same assumption towards the authors' knowledge. While exclusive pronouns tend to specify those who involved in the authors' research. Mainly, exclusive pronouns only take the authors and their research team to be included in the authors' research.

We will take the Tang and John's framework to classify the discourse function that was served by the linguistic forms we examined. We will also identify the personal pronouns through how the authors refer to their role as the writers and engage the readers in *inclusive* pronouns and how the authors suggest their role as the writers and other people associated with the writers in *exclusive* pronouns.

Personal Pronouns as Authorial References in Research Articles.

Personal pronouns refer to which the grammatical distinction of person applies (Huddleston & Pullum, 2007). Most researchers studying authorial presence in RAs focused on how the first-person pronouns in English revealed the way the authors showed themselves in RAs (e.g., Can & Cangır, 2019; Carciu, 2009; Chavez Munoz, 2013; Dontcheva-Navrátilová, 2013; Mur Dueñas, 2007). The first-person pronouns indicated the references to the speakers or in this case the authors. The English first-person pronouns examined in this study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. English First Person Pronouns (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002).

	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Reflexive
Singular	I	Me	My, Mine	Myself
Plural	We	Us	Our, Ours	Ourselves

However, in most cases, the authors of RAs have also expressed themselves in a form other than first-person pronouns. In addition to the first-person pronouns, the references were the nouns that described the role of the authors, namely *the researcher*, *the writer*, and *the author*. Thus, in this study, we will also see how those references are used to convey the identity of the authors in RAs.

The use of first-person pronouns in research articles was common in the past but it changed gradually as the academic cultures developed (Kuo, 1998). In the past, scientific articles were mostly written in the form of letters. Most of the scientist at that time believed that human played the most important role in the scientific investigation. Thus, using the first-person pronouns in research articles was considered as personal honesty and modesty. As the interest of research was changed from experimental report to investigation, the focus was also shifted from the scientist into the investigation itself. Impersonality in writing scientific articles was distinguished as the characteristic of scientific reporting. Nowadays, the researchers are demanded not only to report their results of the investigation but also to claim and to be significant in their research so that they can be considered contributive to their academic community.

Methodology

In this corpus research, we took the data from four English language Scopus-indexed journals, namely Journal of English for Academic Purposes, Journal of Second Language Writing, Linguistics, and Education from Science Direct and Language and Education from Taylor & Francis. Those journals focus on empirical studies of English language education. Each article consisted of Abstract, Introduction, Method, Result, and Discussion (AIMRD). The total articles used for the data were 36 articles, which were divided into two categories, namely native author (18 articles) and non-native author (18 articles). The total lengths of words of the journal articles we examined are explained in Table 1 as follows:

Table 2. Total words from the data source.

No	Data Source	Article Lengths Native (words)	Article Lengths Non-Native (words)
1.	Journal of English for Academic Purposes	33.446	40.357
2.	Journal of Second Language Writing	41.261	43.280
3.	Linguistics and Education	35.074	35.908
4.	Language and Education	23.628	27.085
	Total	133.409	146.630

As the articles were in PDF, we changed their format into *txt* to insert them into our corpus tool, i.e. WordSmith (Scott, 2008). The *txt* version of each article section was filtered using the WordSmith feature called concordance. In the txt format of article sections, the concordance selected the linguistics form of authorial identity, namely the first-person pronouns and other common authorial references (the author/s, the researcher/s, and the writer/s).

For the quantitative analysis, given the fact that each RA was different in word length, we applied a normalization per 100.000 words to make a fair

comparison between the frequencies of each authorial reference. We also applied a chi-square test using SPSS 23 to test the probability of the authorial references' occurrence in native and non-native RAs. We did a qualitative analysis using Tang & John's (1999) framework to categorize the authorial references used by the authors. This categorization will show the discourse functions existed in authorial references found in the RAs, revealing which identity being carried by the authorial references. The analysis also determined the inclusive and exclusive functions of the authorial references. In the end, we also interpreted the identities revealed from the authorial references used in the RAs.

Findings and Discussion

Frequencies of Authorial References

Table 3. Frequencies of First Person Pronouns used in Native RA.

First-Person Pronouns in Native RA	Raw	Normal
We	349,00	261,60
Our	218,00	163,41
I	86,00	64,46

Table 4. Frequencies of First Person Pronouns used in Non-native RA.

First-Person Pronouns in Non-Native RA	Raw	Normal
We	242,00	165,04
Our	125,00	85,25
I	48,00	32,74

From this study, we found that "We" is the most commonly used first-person pronouns as the authorial references in both native and non-native RAs. The pronouns "We" were mostly found in native RAs, although "We" were also the most commonly used first-person pronouns in non-native RAs. Other first-person pronouns frequencies that were also more likely to be used in both RAs were surprisingly the same, namely "Our" and "I" respectively. We believe that since most of the RAs were written by many authors or by a research team, they tended to use "We" as often as "Our" to refer to the authors. Since the studies are about elaborating ideas, we assume that pronoun "We" are needed the most because it shows the researchers as the subject of the study. After all, syntactically, "We" belongs to the subject of a clause/sentence. In English, personal subject pronouns are significantly used to determine the agent of a process (Molino, 2010). The pronoun "Our" expresses the claim towards the ideas which belong to the researchers since it belongs to the possessive pronouns category. It aligns with Hyland's (2001) statement that possessive forms are applied in order "to promote the writer's contribution by associating them closely with their work". The same case happened in the use of pronouns "I" when the RA was written by a single author.

Table 5. Frequencies of Authorial References used in Native RA.

Authorial References in Native RA	Raw	Normal
Researcher*	17,00	12,74
Author*	8,00	6,00
Writer*	0,00	0,00

Table 6. Frequencies of Authorial References used in Non-Native RA.

Authorial References in Non-Native RA	Raw	Normal
Researcher*	23,00	15,69
Author*	1,00	0,68
Writer*	0,00	0,00

*****Researcher, Writer, and Author references include the singular and plural reference

For the other references, both native and non-native authors used "researcher" in the first place. While "author" and "writer" were less commonly found in the native and non-native RAs. We assume that the terms "author" and "writer" contain other specific references, i.e. "those who write or produce a writing" while by using "researcher", the authors can infer their readers that they are the one who "do the research and study on the subject" in the RAs. Moreover, we also found that the authors use "author" and "writer" to refer to their object of study, such as when they examine someone's writing, they will refer to someone as "the author" or "the writer". Thus, by using the term "researcher", the authors agree with the idea as the one who is responsible for their research in the RAs. Likewise, the decision of taking "researcher" as the authorial reference in both RA was caused by the design of the RA itself. Since we focus only on empirical studies research, the term "researcher" expresses the feeling of being involved in a study. Even though "researcher" was used less in non-native RAs, it still described the necessity of those authors being existed in their research.

Based on the frequencies of all authorial references found in this study, the chi-square test shows that the probability of the first-person pronouns and other references used in RA were insignificant ($p < 0.05$).

Table 7. Chi-Square Test.

Test Statistics		
	Native	Non-Native
Chi-Square	3.077[a]	3.077[a]
df	10	10
Asymp. Sig.	.980	.980

($p < 0.05$)

This means that there are no relations between authorial references and their occurrences in English Education Language Journals, both written native and non-native authors. Since most of the RAs examined in this study were issued from 2017 to 2019, we assume this indicates the changes of the authors' perspective toward their existences in their RAs if we relate it with Kuo's (1998) statement. We expect that most of the authors in English Education Language Journals examined in this study are aware of their roles in their research. Thus, they found that using authorial references to show their existence in their study are not considered as disruption to their objectivity in research.

The results are surprising because we expect that the non-native authors will feel the greater pressure and responsibility in mentioning themselves in their arguments as also found in Hyland's (2002) study of his students in Hong Kong. We expect that the non-native RAs will contain much less authorial references than the native RAs. The results of our study echo with the results of Walková's (2019) study, which revealed that the authors of L1 Slovak and L2 English used more self-mentions in their writing. Walková assumes that L1 Slovak and L2 English authors feel "safer" in mentioning themselves in smaller academic communities (Walková, 2019). However, we doubt whether the RAs we examined in this study are considered as small academic communities. The pronouns as the authorial markers in the RAs were important because they enhanced the researchers' roles as the authors of RAs (Rezvani, 2013). They reflected the efforts of enhancing the authors' role in RAs because all of the RAs we examined in this study employed the empirical method in their research. We believe that by enhancing the authors' roles in the RA using authorial references, the readers can be ensured about the contribution made by the authors in their RAs.

Interpretations of Authorial References

The authorial references in RA can also be interpreted to find out the identity carried by the authors. In this study, we try to apply the comprehension of authorial identity brought by Tang and John (1999) from their study of classroom essays. By interpreting the discourse functions of authorial references, we will show that the identity of authors exists, which can be seen from how the authors use the authorial references. We provide examples of how we can interpret the identity and try to explore the roles of the authors in the RAs.

"I" as the Representative

The "I" as the representative means that the authors identify themselves to be the representative of the statement in the RAs. The authors give a general understanding of what they have mentioned in their RAs. As Tang and John describe, the authors "signal ownership of some universal or common property. "

> **Sample 1**. File Name: Native RA, LNE_N02I
> *To inform my analysis of how individual beliefs about language derive from and ultimately develop apart from socially shared beliefs about language, I drew upon Bakhtin's (1981) notion of voice. Bakhtin explained that our language is never solely ours; instead,* ***we*** *voice the*

*ideas and thoughts of others as **we** move through individual consciousness.*

In **Sample 1**, there are two pronouns "we" in one sentence. The sentence mentions a theory in 1981 by Bakhtin. In this sentence, the authors try to explain what Bakhtin mentioned in his theory. Given the context from the previous sentence in the sample, we assume that the authors try to apply Bakhtin's theory not only in the authors' RAs but also in building a bridge to the readers' world by making it relatable to the readers' world. In other words, the authors wanted the readers to also feel about how Bakhtin's theory impacted their world the same way the authors felt about the theory impacted their study in their RAs. In this regard, the authors are representing what Bakhtin's theory is by making the theory sounds comprehensive to the readers. The authors' identity as the representative is the least powerful in Tang and John's discourse functions since the authors show the effort of "not overpowering the field" by taking the readers into the same world as the authors. We can address this identity as an inclusive "We".

"I" as the Guide through the essay

The identity brought by this discourse function is like a "tour guide" based on Tang and John's interpretation. In this type of identity, we also specify that if there is the authors' role as the guide, there will be a "guideline" that functioned as the context of the "guide" or the authors.

Sample 2. File Name: Non-native, EAP_NN04R
*As indicated in Table 1 and the following extracts 5, 6 through 7, **we** see a predominant occurrence of expansive citation options in reporting the opposed knowledge claim.*

The pronoun "We" in **Sample 2** is specified as the guide identity. If we take a look at the context of the sentence, we will find out that this sentence tries to take the readers to take a look at the authors' research results mentioned in the table the authors had made. This effort of authors can be easily interpreted as the guide because the authors are trying to "guide" the readers towards the research results. We conclude that "Table 1" here becomes the "guidelines" that the authors refer to as they lead the readers' attention in the RA.

Sample 3. File Name: Native, LNE_N01R
*Yoojin (F:13), who had spent a year living in the U.S., found English as a way to subtly subvert politeness dynamics in adult deference. As she described, "I feel more freedom when I speak English because I can act less polite," referencing the honorifics embedded into the Korean language used when addressing elders. She accompanied this statement by saying this makes her "feel more American." Here **we** see Yoojin deriving a degree of pleasure, or freedom, from using English, likely for the way the language allows her to exercise less*

social deference, a linguistic performance she associates with feeling "American."

Similar to **Sample 2**, in **Sample 3** we can notice that the authors create a "guideline" which is the object of the study named "Yoojin". Inclusively, the authors take the readers to confirm the statement made by the authors. If we refer to the context before the underlined sentence, we will understand that the authors in this RA were trying to make the readers refer to "what kind of person Yoojin is". Simply, the sentences before the underlined sentence are the "guidelines" for the authors in guiding the readers. Since the authors are taking the readers together to take a look at a particular condition, we can conclude that the pronouns "We" in this identity are considered as inclusive.

"I" as the Architect of the essay

Although there might be several similarities between "architect" and "guide", we try to give clear boundaries between those identities. While the "guide" attempts to make the readers pay attention to the "guidelines" that often have existed in the RAs, the "architect" manages to deliver the main focus of the authors in the RAs. This is why the "architect" identity has more power than "guide" because of the authors as the "architect" role as the one who ensures the outline of the RA to the readers. **Sample 4** informs that the authors are outlining their study by mentioning the specific theory they adapted into their RA.

Sample 4. File Name: Native RA, SLW_N05I
*In this paper, **we** adopt Lu's (2010) definition of a complex nominal, based on Cooper (1976), which refers to a noun modified by an attributive adjective, possessive noun, post-preposition, relative clause, participle, or appositive; a noun clause; or gerund and infinitival subjects (see Lu, 2010, p. 483, for further explanation).*

Sample 5. File Name: Non-native, SLW_NN01I
***The researchers** wanted to see whether (1) modeling was more effective than self-practice, and (2) collaboration was more effective than working alone in enhancing students' detection, revision and commenting skills.*

In **Sample 5**, the authors' "architect" identity emerges on what we usually call the objective of the study. It makes sense for the authors to be the "architect" in this part of RA because the objective of the study should mention the purpose of the study, thus expressing identity as the one who outlining the study can be considered crucial for the authors in writing RA. In this kind of identity, we notice that "We" does not refer to the readers but only to the authors. Therefore, "We" in this identity can be considered as the exclusive pronoun.

"I" as the Recounter of the research process

The identity of the recounter of the research process can be found in the methodology section of the RAs. The recounter of the research process here means that the authors are identified as the ones who describe the step by step of how they conduct their research. This identity is the exclusive one since it represents the authors who recount their research process. The recounter can be easily noticed by referring to material process verbs (i.e. work, collect, interview, read, prepare) following the authorial references (Halliday, 1994 in Tang and John, 1999). The example of how the pronoun carried the recounter identity can be seen in **Sample 6**.

> **Sample 6**. File Name: Native, EAP_N01M
> *The reason that the interviews with the students were conducted in a small group was to reduce potential anxiety and logistical reasons.* ***The researcher*** *prepared a set of questions for the respondents and asked follow-up questions.*

"I" as the Opinion-holder

This identity is called opinion-holder since it considers the authors like the ones who share their ideas, view, and arguments in their RAs. We assume that identity as the opinion-holder is critical and exclusive because it shows how the authors are credible in giving their arguments in RAs. Verbs that indicate the authors' assumption are the most common signs of opinion-holder identity. **Sample 7** and **Sample 8** can give a vision of how the opinion-holder is carried by the pronouns "We" and "I".

> **Sample 7**. File Name: Non-native, EAP_NN02M
> ***We*** *assume that the ending move should be equally important because it is the move that gives a sense of conclusion to the personal statement. Therefore, the ways in which Rosy opened and ended her personal statements were particularly examined to demonstrate her rhetorical choices.*

> **Sample 8**. File Name: Native, LNE_N02M
> *Furthermore,* ***I*** *wondered if and how her stances might have evolved given her experience in the professional development group.*

"I" as the Originator

The last identity is considered as the most powerful identity in RAs because it exclusively aims to show the authors as the inventor or the owner of knowledge.

> **Sample 9**. File Name: Non-native, LAE_NN03I
> *Significantly,* ***we*** *argue that disrupting language and register boundaries through processes of disinvention and reconstitution not only enabled the students to take up confident positions as 'knowers' but also enabled the students' current understanding of concepts and*

registers to surface giving a fine-grained view of mis-understandings that required further pedagogical explanation.

This kind of identity takes the authors from delivering their arguments into claiming their arguments based on what they have found in their study. The pronoun "We" in **Sample 9** is the originator identity because it is followed by the verbs "argue". The authors in this significant RA express their opposite view toward other perspectives and give their version of the new knowledge-based on what they have studied in their RA. If the authors want to be the opinion-holder, they will simply write an argument to share their views. But, if they want to be seen as the originator, they have to show the capability of not only sharing their ideas but also claiming something new from the study they conducted. This is why originator is the most powerful identity because it will no doubt indicate the authors' credibility in conducting the research.

Conclusion

In this study, we found that both native and non-native RA authors were using first-person pronouns and authorial references in their RA with slight differences in numbers. The most commonly used first-person pronouns found in this study were "We". Since the RAs were written in English, the use of "We" makes us aware that it becomes the indicator of the subject of a certain process. Thus, we implied the use of "We" expresses the authors' openness as the readers will suggest that the authors disguised in pronouns "We" are responsible and credible to the findings in RAs. The most used authorial references, "the researcher", are considered reasonable because it is related to the title of the authors themselves. This indicates that they mostly wanted to be positioned as the people who did the empirical studies directly, not just writing the results on the papers.

Since the number of authorial references between native and non-native was not significantly different, we conclude that the authors mostly understand their existence in their RAs. Thus, it makes them aware that using authorial references will enhance their roles and expose their contribution to the RAs. The authors' selection of authorial references indeed can be the reflection of the authors in their RAs. Thus, every RA contains the authors' identities and their expectations of how they want to be seen by their readers and their community. In this sense, stating that authorial references can cause subjectivity in RAs becomes a rigid statement since the objectivity can be committed as the identities from authorial references are impacted by the use of other linguistic devices (verb, adjective). In the end, the question of "what is being investigated in the RAs?" can also be juxtaposed with the question of "who are the authors in the RAs and how do they want to be interpreted in their RAs?" The authors must be confident about their existence since it can be beneficial not only for the authors but also for the readers and the academic communities.

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