

## **Engagement Features in Russian & English: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Academic Written Discourse**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines discursive features of engagement (Hyland, 2009) demonstrated by native English- and Russian-speaking academics in their research articles. Pronoun choice, formation of directives, references to shared information, and use of rhetorical questions are identified in written academic discourse and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. This research connects the use of interactional features in research-based writing and the communicative practices of the authors. It is argued that academic discursive traditions are molded by the sociocultural environment, which either encourages or discourages a writer to engage in dialogue with the reader.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Professional discourses represent not just enumeration of data or information transfer, but also a constant process of interaction and negotiation of meaning among the members of a particular community. It could be argued that the main function of academic discourse – “the ways of thinking and using language which exist in the academy” (Hyland, 2009, p. 1) – is to reflect on social roles and relationships involved in knowledge construction and its transfer within a social context. Like any other kind of discourse, academic discourse takes into consideration the target audience. This makes it inherently dialogic; academic scholars are interacting with their colleagues, or an even wider circle of readers. An academic researcher’s two-pronged goal of expressing his or her perspective in a disciplinary field, while at the same time seeking acceptance from the academic community, creates “a dialogic perspective on academic communication as a dynamic network of interpersonal relations between the producer of a text on the one hand and its readership – other researchers working on similar problems and the whole academic discourse community on the other.” (Warchał, 2010, p. 140-141).

The dialogic perspective is applied by many researchers studying academic discourse. Hyland (2001a), in discussing the ways in which the reader is addressed in academic articles, refers to Bakhtin’s (1986) idea of *dialogicity*, which asserts that “presenting and supporting a position always assumes a dialogue. Any text anticipates a reader’s response and itself responds to a larger discourse already in progress, so argument incorporates the active role of

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an addressee and is understood against a background of other opinions and viewpoints on the same theme in prior texts” (Hyland, 2001a, p. 551). Hyland (2001a) presumes that the exchange between individuals is established when authors treat their readers as “real players in the discourse rather than merely as implied observers of the discussion” (p. 552) through various discursive devices such as reader inclusive pronouns. These tools, termed *interactional features*, allow authors to engage their audience in dialogue.

Interactional features help authors build solidarity with their audience, closing the space between themselves and their readers (Hyland, 2001a). Such features include using reader pronouns, directives, personal aides, appeals to shared knowledge, and questions (Hyland, 2009). Moreover, as Warchał (2010) points out, individuals can express (dis)agreement as well as negotiate meanings and standpoints. Analyzing academic discourse, then, can demonstrate the way people in a community, apart from expressing their empirical or philosophical arguments, communicate collegiality.

Since the construction of academic discourse follows certain accepted norms and traditions of the community in which the discourse is embedded, we can surmise that academic discourse will demonstrate culturally specific interactional features. Indeed, it has been discovered that scholars writing in English (see Hyland, 2001a), Italian (Gotti, 2010), and Spanish (Lafuente-Millán, Mur-Dueñas, Lorés-Sanz, & Vázquez-Orta, 2010) express their ideas and establish a relationship with their readers differently. For instance, scholarly texts in English may address or acknowledge the target audience more directly than articles written in other languages. Although there is some evidence that the expression of academic identities is “more strongly tied to the discipline than to the language of the author” (Fløttum, Torodd, Dahl, 2006, p. 203), in order to be acknowledged and appreciated by their colleagues within their cultural communities, academics have to adjust their writing styles “to meet their peers’ beliefs, values and expectations” (Lafuente-Millán et al., 2010, p. 18).

This paper will look into whether and how engagement features used by Russian social scientists differ from those used by their English-speaking counterparts. However, before we analyze examples from Russian and English research articles (RAs), we must understand the main approaches to the study of academic discourse.

## **ACADEMIC DISCOURSE IN CROSS-CULTURAL CONTEXTS**

The study of written academic discourse attracts researchers from various cultural backgrounds. In Europe, for instance, there are three centers in Italy, Norway, and Spain that study how academics construct their scholarly identities through written language. In addition, these organizations examine the ways in which writers engage readers in the subject matter.

The Interpersonality in Written Academic Discourse (InterLAE), based at the Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain, emphasizes “the growing awareness of the critical importance of interpersonal aspects in academic communication” (Lorés-Sanz, Mur-Dueñas, Lafuente-Millán, 2010, p. 2). Lorés-Sanz et al. note that “[I]n line with growing awareness of the critical importance of interpersonal aspects in academic communication, over the last few years the InterLAE group at the Universidad de Zaragoza has explored the way interpersonal rhetorical features are used in research articles and abstracts from different fields of knowledge and has adopted different contrastive perspectives of analysis: interdisciplinary, intercultural and intergeneric” (p. 2). Interpersonality, which highlights the establishment of a relationship between people, can be investigated using a variety of perspectives and approaches. The InterLAE team focuses its attention on the Spanish English Research Article Corpus and analyzes the differences in the use of interpersonal devices, and hence the

specifics of writer-reader relationship in articles from different academic fields. The texts they examine are either written in English by scholars working in Anglophone institutions and Spanish institutions, or in Spanish by Spanish scholars.

The results obtained by the InterLAE group describe the culturally distinctive features of RAs written by Spanish authors in Spanish. The team compared metadiscursive features (for a more detailed discussion of interactive sub-categories of meta-discourse, see Hyland, 2005) used by Spanish authors with those used by their English-speaking peers. They found that Spanish scholars are usually less interactive with their readers and do not make explicit connections between various parts of their research through the inclusion of an extensive review of the pertinent, previous literature, nor do they cross-reference their material. As Lafuente-Millán et al. (2010) state, “What is more, they do not tend to emphasize to the same extent as their international peers their role as authors, their stance and the critical role of readers in the acceptance or rejection of the new knowledge being communicated” (p. 27).

Another prominent academic group, the Research Centre on Languages for Specific Purposes (CERLIS), at the University of Bergamo, Italy, focuses on how the process of globalization and the use of English as a lingua franca affect written and oral academic communication worldwide. This project examines the ways in which numerous social factors (e.g. professional, ideological, or ethno-geographic) are reflected through various “socioculturally-oriented identity constructing factors and textual variation in academic discourse, focusing in particular on the identification of identity traits typical of different branches of English academic discourse” (Gotti, 2010, p. 43). The researchers are interested in discursive variety, which, despite a set of norms and conventions used for communication, exists even within the same university building (Swales, 1998). Their project analyzed identity markers found in the linguistic corpus of academic texts in English and Italian. The resulting data show that “academic discourse is not at all uniform but varies according to different factors, such as language competence, professional expertise, gender and generic conventions” (Gotti, 2010, p. 55). Indeed, the findings indicate that such factors as age, experience, and academic standing are perhaps more important in establishing an author as a respected scientist than gender (D’Angelo, 2010) or native language and culture (Gotti, 2010).

The work of the Cultural Identity in Academic Prose (KIAP) research group is especially relevant to this paper, as this organization investigates the discursive construction of identities cross-culturally. Researchers based at the Universitet i Bergen, Norway, are interested in the ways in which cultural identities are revealed in professional discourses, and which factors affect the indexing of these cultural identities. This research relies on various approaches, one of which is the study of interpersonal features of discourse construction in RAs. The interaction between the author and the audience is realized through academic voices. As Fløttum, Dahl, Kinn, Gjesdal, and Vold (2008) state: “The main focus will be on person presence as realized through different *academic voices*, representing what we call the *self*- and the *other*- dimensions. By the *self* we refer to the author and by *other* to the reader and other persons related in one way or another to the community in question.... Our aim is to show that in order to determine the complex constellations of academic discourse present ‘behind’ obvious person manifestations, it is necessary to take into account both linguistic context and extralinguistic context” (p. 14, emphasis in original). According to the findings presented by this group, cultural background seems to be of great importance for representing the author’s research and voice in the RA. For example, the group found that English-speaking cultures, described as low-context, tend to lay out arguments explicitly instead of relying on implied information, which is commonplace in high-context, French-speaking cultures; they also argued that authors of individualistic cultures use more first-person singular pronouns, as compared to the authors of collectivist cultures in which plural *we* is more common, even in single-authored articles. However, the research of the KIAP project

shows that “the discipline is more important than language in the identification of cultural identities” (Fløttum et al., 2008, p. 15). Through both quantitative and qualitative methods, Fløttum et al. also confirm that linguists express their individuality in RAs more overtly than economists or medical researchers.

Studies devoted to the analysis of academic discourse are not limited to those conducted by the above-mentioned research groups. Investigations into how knowledge transfer is organized have also been conducted by Finnish (Mauranen, 1993) and French (Grossman & Wirth, 2008; Tutin, 2010) researchers. Mauranen writes about the cooperativeness of the academic discourse of non-native English speakers, which is achieved through rephrasing, or “manipulating the way in which the meaning is interpreted” (p. 257). By raising the level of explicitness in the discourse, the interlocutors are trying to overcome the difficulties which may arise among those with a non-native command of the English language. At the same time, she concludes that English is expected to accept new usages “along with new user groups” (p. 258) as more speakers of English as a foreign language (users) appear throughout the world. The French researchers discovered lexical and adverbial markers specific to academic discourse. These markers are used differently in various scientific fields. They also discovered that English tends to use a higher number of more specific, lexical markers and French a higher number of adverbials (Grossman & Wirth, 2008), which signifies different culturally related approaches to construction of academic discourse.

Ukrainian researchers conducted a study of the features of the conference handout genre, pointing out that although wide-spread in the western Anglophone environment, handouts are still quite rare in Russia and Ukraine. Due to the dearth of materials in Russian or Ukrainian, the study relied on handouts written in English by both native and non-native speakers. They identified the main types of handouts (informative, indicative, and illustrative), without stipulating any cross-cultural specifics (Yakhontova & Markelova, 2010). It was concluded that the choice of the handout type depended on the context, which influenced lexical choice and linguistic structure. For instance, indicative handouts serve to illuminate the main ideas of the presentation rather than fully cover it, unlike more informative handouts. As a result, “indicative handouts avoid personal pronouns, but use hedging devices, pandering to the reader’s interest and self-citation” (p. 353). Interestingly, the authors thought that although currently the handout is an academic genre with “its own place and tasks” (p. 354), it is likely to be replaced by new technologies in the future.

Having examined publications on academic discourse and its connection with cultural context, I noted that little research has been conducted on the culturally-specific properties of Russian academic written discourse. Indeed, only a few publications are devoted to this kind of study. Melnikova’s dissertation (2007) analyzes the role of metaphor in pedagogical discourse, while Lipaev’s (2004) dissertation is a case study of the role of pedagogical discourse in a rural school. In addition, I found a few RAs about academic discourse at the university level (Maksimov, Najdon, & Serebrennekova, 2010; Zubkova, 2009). Thus, there is a dearth of current research studying the dialogic qualities of academic discourse within Russia, and there is virtually no research concerning the culturally specific features of Russian academic discourse and how these might differ from the characteristics of English academic written discourse. Clearly, there is a lack of both theoretical and applied research in this vein. This may be explained by the fact that Russian academics are less active internationally than their overseas colleagues (see Section 4 for more information); however, the younger generation of professionals is showing more interest in engaging with the global academic community. I am presenting this research with the hope that in the near future, Russian-speaking academics will become interested in participating in academic dialogues internationally and in sharing ideas with their international colleagues.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper attempts to analyze and compare features of engagement within Russian and English written academic discourse. This contrastive analysis approach usually brings two languages in focus and allows the researcher to ascertain differences between them (e.g., Silva & Matsuda, 2002). Contrastive analysis is further achieved through a careful description of the parallel structures in both languages, comparing them for the purpose of establishing differences. In this particular study, I establish the frequency of engagement feature use and the role of engagement features in the discourse of the RA. In addition, I posit possible reasons behind these differences. For an objective study, it is important that engagement features are examined in context in both languages, followed by a results comparison (Hyland 2010). By adopting such an approach, we can ensure that engagement features selected from the Russian RAs correspond in their discursive role to engagement features found in the English RAs. Therefore, just as in Hyland's research, the study employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches, comprising frequency counts and text analysis of a corpus of published articles (Hyland 2001b).

The decision to examine engagement features of RAs from a cross-cultural perspective comes primarily from my personal experience of extensively revising research findings written originally in Russian in preparation for publication in English. Major changes include linguistic, structural, and pragmatic transformations. Even more important than those changes, however, is the fact that, in comparison to the approach adopted in the Russian academic environment, a more interactive manner of writing is used when presenting research in English. Writing for the English-speaking audience, I must express my identity more vividly (e.g., through the use of active voice constructions and first-person pronouns) and engage readers in the discussion by asking questions, directing them to previous research, and contrasting it with current information.

The methodology of this research relies heavily on methods applied by Hyland in his extensive study of engagement features in academic discourse (for instance, see methods described in: Hyland 2001a; 2001b; 2010). I first compiled the text corpus of RAs. I next selected interactive features in Russian and English RAs, respectively. I then analyzed and compared the findings. When examining the RAs in Russian, I manually selected all the engagement features and classified them according to their type. Interested in conducting a comparative investigation, I then obtained findings for the RAs written by English-speaking scholars. Finally, I conducted a comparative analysis of engagement markers used in RAs by Russian and English-speaking authors. The results for each engagement feature are presented in the next section. The tables illustrate the number of engagement features used per page in RAs by both Russian and English authors. When discussing rather noticeable differences in the use of directives, I also present the percentage of types of directives calculated from the total number of directives found in the RAs in Russian and then in English.

For the analysis, I selected 40 pages of RAs in Russian (excluding references) published by Russian-speaking linguists in the intercultural communication section of a well-regarded, peer-reviewed journal (*Вестник Ленинградского государственного университета имени А.С. Пушкина*), published by Leningrad State University in St. Petersburg (Russia) in 2012.<sup>2</sup> I chose to analyze the RAs from this section because I presumed

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<sup>2</sup> The journal is entitled "Vestnik Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta imeni A.S. Pushkina. # 1, tom 1 'Filologia'. St. Petersburg, 2012. +268 p." (The Leningrad Pushkin state university bulletin. # 1, volume 1. 'Philology Series'). The journal features seven sections: the study of literature and folklore; linguistics; the study of discourse and linguistic styles; cognitive aspects of linguistic categorization; linguistic culture studies and intercultural communication; theory and methodology of teaching languages; and information and surveys.

it would be easier to find thematically corresponding RAs in English in a journal of a similar status (in addition, the area of research interests me). It should be stressed that this Russian journal features RAs by linguists from various parts of Russia. This means that in the analyzed RAs, we can observe engagement techniques particular to the whole country, not a specific region. All the authors happen to be female, as the majority of Russian academics engaged in studying linguistics, literature, or foreign languages are women.

I faced a few difficulties when trying to find equivalent material for research in English. Many authors who write within the field of linguistics or intercultural communication are non-native speakers of English, and many RAs have two or more authors. Therefore, my initial hope to find the necessary amount of pages from the same journal turned out to be untenable. As a result, I selected English-language RAs from a variety of sources: the 2011 issues of the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* and the *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, as well as two edited books, *Media and Communication Studies: Interventions and Intersections* (Carpentier, Tomanić Trivundža, Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, Sundin, Olsson, Kilborn, Nieminen, & Cammaerts, 2010), and *Identities in Transition* (Tsolidis, 2012). The English-language RAs I selected were similar to the Russian-language RAs in terms of: 1) the number of pages; 2) the area of research, and 3) the time period of publication. The English-speaking authors happened to be both men and women. I also welcomed an opportunity to have ‘various kinds’ of English-speakers. The RAs were written by two British scholars, one Australian scholar, and one American scholar. Altogether, the analyzed RAs comprised 40 pages, excluding references.

In the next section, I analyze engagement features in Russian and English academic discourse found in the RAs in linguistics and communication studies. Using a mixed methods approach, I compare the results of this analysis of engagement features in Russian and English RAs and try to explain the differences through the cultural communicative characteristics of the authors. I also offer a qualitative analysis of written examples containing engagement features. The examples from the RAs in Russian are provided with a translated gloss underneath.

## ANALYSIS

This section will examine quantitatively and qualitatively five types of engagement features in English and Russian RAs: reader pronouns, directives, personal aides, appeals to shared knowledge, and questions. The results of the frequency analyses for each feature are presented. Possible explanations for the differences in the use of engagement features are provided. Examples from both Russian and English RAs are used to illustrate the functions of engagement features.

### Reader Pronouns

Writers bring the readers into their research through direct address, which can be achieved by means of the inclusive (*we*) or the second-person pronoun (*you*). According to Hyland (2001a), that is why they can be termed ‘reader pronouns.’ Second-person pronouns are not often used in RAs in Russian. In English RAs the pronoun *you* is also rare, purportedly because it implies a separation between participants, rather than a connection (Hyland 2009). Therefore, only first-person pronouns are examined in this research. First-person reader pronouns involve the addressee in the discussion of ideas or beliefs expressed in a RA. Because academic writing “is not the uniformly faceless prose it is often thought to be,

but displays considerable differences between disciplines” (Hyland, 2002b, p. 352), academics use personal references to express their point of view and engage the reader.

The analysis shows that English-speaking scholars, more so than their Russian-speaking counterparts, emphasize what they personally have discovered within their respective research area. With the help of the pronoun ‘we,’ readers are often guided closely through the theories underpinning the research or the findings narrated in the text, as demonstrated in the following example. The example below illustrates how the author brings the reader into the discussion of intercultural differences by using ‘we’:

Beliefs influence how *we* perceive and categorise using labels. (Crumpton, 2012, p. 31, my emphasis)

Table 1 illustrates the results of the total use of first-person plural pronouns per page in the corpus:

*Table 1: Comparison of first person plural reader pronouns*

	Author’s last name	Total # of pages in the RA	# of reader pronouns in the RA	# of reader pronouns per page	Overall average (per page)
English (total of 57 uses)	Crossman	9	1	0.1	1.4
	Crumpton	7	33	4.7	
	Smith	15	13	0.9	
	McQuail	9	10	1.1	
Russian (total of 11 uses)	Shabunina	8	4	0.5	0.3
	Malisheva	6.5	0	0	
	Volkova	8.5	0	0	
	Golimbov	8.5	5	0.6	
	Karimova	8.5	2	0.2	

The English-speaking scholars express more openly “their impression of themselves and how they stand in relation to their arguments, their discipline, and their readers, and this can have an important impact on the outcome of their discursual purposes” (Hyland 2002b, p. 210). The example below illustrates the use of ‘we’ in a section of the RA explaining the interconnection between communication and culture:

If in-group harmony is a major value of members of collectivist cultures, *we* may expect them to favor more indirect modes of communication, at least within their in-groups. (Smith, 2011, p. 218, my emphasis)

In the English RAs all 57 cases of the first-person plural pronouns, when analyzed in the discourse, were determined to be reader inclusive (100%). In the Russian RAs, 35 instances of first-person plural pronouns were noted. However, when analyzed in context, only 11 pronouns actually included the reader (31%); the rest of the cases were used to refer to the author of the RA and were often substituted for the pronoun ‘I’ (see the example from Shabunina’s paper below). This may be explained by the total absence of the first-person singular pronoun (*я*) in the RAs in Russian. The first-person plural pronoun is used in both cases to refer to the author of a RA and to include the reader. Consequently, in the Russian

RAs, there was no distinction between the use of ‘I’ and the use of ‘we,’ as self-reference cases were represented by first-person plural pronouns, which were used in the single-authored RAs. A similar observation was made by the InterLAE group of academics, who discovered that Spanish scholars used the inclusive *we* even in single-authored texts, which allowed them “to claim authority and respect as scholars but without risking too much, as the use of *we* has the effect of ‘diluting’ the authorship in a plural responsibility” (Lafuente-Millán et al., 2010, p. 28).

What are the reasons behind Russian linguists choosing the pronoun ‘we’ as the form of self-reference? Are they trying to engage the readers in their research? The majority of the cases (69%) of the first-person plural pronoun were used to represent the author and express the collective result in publishing this article:

Важным для *нашего* исследования представляется столкновение чрезвычайно формальной манеры речи камердинера Дживса и неформальной манеры его хозяина Вустера. (Shabunina, 2012, p. 199, my emphasis)

(It seems that for *our* research the clash between Jeeves’s extremely formal manner of speech and the informal manner of his master Wooster is very important.)

Hyland identifies a few main reasons for the use of *we* in single-authored RAs; it expresses humility, modesty, and distance, and reminds the reader of the “collaborative nature of the research activity” (Hyland, 2001b, p. 218). The expression of the collaborative nature of the research is more typical of collectivist cultures in which “the ‘we’ group (or in-group) is the major source of one’s identity, of which there are many” (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 75). The cultural tradition of professional communication in Russia is still under the influence of the Soviet era (see Groznaya’s [2009] report on the influence of the Soviet times on the current business culture in Russia), when the Soviet government deprived Russian-speaking academics of any incentive to express individuality and personal involvement. These appear to be good explanations as to why Russian linguists use either plural first-person pronouns or no pronouns at all (passive voice or impersonal expressions are used instead). Two of the analyzed RAs did not feature a single case of ‘we’ (or any other form of self-reference). In fact, all the grammar constructions in these two RAs in Russian are passive; the authors use impersonal sentences as well. As a result, there are no cases of self-reference (see several examples from one of these RAs below):

Выделяются следующие участники (компоненты) процесса перевода... (Volkova, 2012, pp. 214-215, my emphasis)

(The following participants (components) of the process of translation *are singled out*...)

Представляется возможным разработать теоретико-методологические основы интегрального подхода к моделированию процесса перевода... (Volkova, 2012, p. 217, my emphasis)

(*It seems possible* to develop theoretically methodological grounds of an integral approach to the translation process...)

As we can see from the examples above, the author evades the conclusions made in the RAs by using the so-called “Official Voice” (Lanham, 2006). As a result, the RA is less clear in stating who does what, which affects the extent to which the readers are engaged in the scientific discussion: “Active verbs push hard; passive verbs tug fitfully. Active verbs also



enable us to visualize the activity because they require a pronoun... , or a noun... , or a person... to put them in motion” (Zinsser, 2001, p. 69). As there is no established norm for expressing writer presence in Russian research reports, self-referential pronoun use in RAs varies widely. In some cases, a RA might include several instances of reader pronoun use (the maximum amount of pronouns including the reader (*мы*) was four; see Golimbiovskaya, 2012), while other RAs feature no such pronouns at all (e.g., Volkova, 2012).

### Directives

In exploring the definition of ‘directive,’ Hyland (2002a) explains that he borrowed the term from the literature on speech acts (Searle, 1969), and he sees it as an utterance usually expressed “by the presence of an imperative, ...by a modal of obligation addressed to the reader, ...or by a predicative adjective expressing the writer’s judgment of necessity/importance” (Hyland, 2002a, p. 216). Directives are applied to convey a whole range of meanings, which must be determined within the context of use. They can be classified as textual, physical, and cognitive. This classification is based on the function of directives in a RA. Textual directives guide readers to “some textual act, referring them to another part of the text or to another text” (Hyland, 2002a, p. 217). The statistics that Hyland (2002a) presents show that textual directives are most frequent in sociology, applied linguistics, and biology.

Directives that invite readers to perform a physical act are described as physical directives. This act can be performed within the article (research focus) (‘to summarize,’ ‘to re-orient,’ ‘to look at’) or directed towards real world action (‘to check,’ ‘to hold,’ ‘to respect,’ ‘to fill,’ ‘to set’). According to Hyland (2002a, p. 231), this type of directive is more typical of hard sciences such as electronic engineering, mechanical engineering and physics, because the research is more experiment oriented. Directives can also engage readers in cognitive acts, “where readers are invited into a new domain of argument, led through a line of reasoning, or directed to understand a point in a certain way” (p. 217), for example, ‘to note,’ ‘to clarify,’ ‘to take into account,’ and ‘to determine.’ Hence, he divides such cognitive-oriented directives into those with rhetorical purpose, elaborative purpose, or emphatic purpose. In academic discourse, Hyland concludes: “despite their supposed bald-on-record quality then, directives are better seen as complex rhetorical strategies writers can use to manipulate a relationship with readers and indicate the ways they intended to follow the text” (p. 218). Based on quantitative analysis, Hyland discovered that this type of directive is most frequent in philosophy, mechanical engineering, and electronic engineering (p. 231).

The comparative use of directives per page in the analyzed RAs in both English and Russian is illustrated in Table 2.

*Table 2: Comparison of directives used per page*

	Author’s last name	Total # of pages in the RA	# of directives in the RA	# of directives per page	Overall average (per page)
English	Crossman	9	5	0.5	0.9
	Crumpton	7	11	1.6	
	Smith	15	15	1	
	McQuail	9	5	0.5	
Russian	Shabunina	8	4	0.5	1
	Malisheva	6.5	11	1.7	
	Volkova	8.5	12	1.4	

	Golimbov	8.5	8	0.9	
	Karimova	8.5	5	0.6	

Although there is not much difference in the overall number of directives used per page, the qualitative analysis reveals that there are a few noticeable differences in the types of directives used by the Russian and English authors of the analyzed RAs.

In the RAs written in Russian, textual directives are mostly internal, referring the reader to the internal parts of the RA rather than to external resources. These constitute 7.5% of the total cases of directive use. The following example taken from an RA in Russian features an internal directive which asks the reader to compare a sentence in English with the Russian translation: *Ср. в рус.*, meaning, “See the Russian translation” (Malisheva, 2012, p. 204). Thus, the authors of the RAs in Russian, typically, wish to refer the reader to specific parts of the RA, rather than to the external sources cited by the author (see another example of the external directive below):

Главной же отличительной чертой ключевого слова принято считать семантико-стилистическую многослойность [см.: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7].  
 (Golimbovskaya, 2012, p. 221, my emphasis)  
 (Multiple layers of semantic features of a key word are considered to be its distinctive characteristic [see: the referenced sources are enumerated]).

The analysis shows that Russian RAs do not focus on guiding their readers by contextualizing and justifying their research in relation to previous work (Lafuente-Millán et al., 2010); conversely, in RAs published in English, the external textual directives may actually exceed the internal ones (Hyland, 2002a).

There are several explanations for the lack of external directives in RAs by Russian linguists. First, the RAs are much shorter, usually about half the length, than the RAs published in English. The RAs are not necessarily based on empirical data and instead might summarize (or even paraphrase) theoretical observations made by the authors. Perhaps more importantly, the RAs by Russian linguists are exclusively intended for the Russian academic environment, in which the conversation about plagiarism only began relatively recently. Also, authors have historically tried to cite their academic advisors and those who are going to be on their dissertation committee. Russian linguists’ references to English-language academic articles are sparse and are usually outdated; one of the RAs cited Hall’s 1966 publication within a total of 19 citations (see Karimova, 2012). Russian linguists mostly emphasize certain points within their RAs, rather than refer readers to other research in a particular area.

Physical directives compose 35% of the referential writing, with most of them (25%) used in the same RA (see Volkova, 2012). These are exclusive research directives, in which the author describes the future direction of the research. These include intentions to study and systematize the main principles, to single out the key elements, to conduct a detailed analysis, to lay out the specifics of the created model, to expand the application area, to conduct a comparative analysis, and to systematize the interdisciplinary approaches. For example, one author writes:

Теперь необходимо *проверить* текстовую частотность наиболее информативных звуков. (Golimbovskaya, 2012, p. 225, my emphasis)  
 (Now it is necessary to *check* the frequency of the most meaningful sounds.)

The Russian RAs mainly feature the use of directives expressing cognitive acts (57.5%). These are often represented by directives of emphasis (35%), or by rhetorical

directives (20%). This is similar, according to Hyland (2002a), to the frequent use of cognitive directives in RAs published in English. The Russian authors primarily used the cognitive directives in their RAs to emphasize the most important points in narration from their perspective:

*Необходимо отметить*, что в языке Вудхауза мы можем найти огромное количество эпитетов. (Shabunina, 2012, p. 200, my emphasis)  
 (It is *necessary to note* that in Wodehouse’s discourse we can find a great amount of epithets.)  
*Любопытно отметить*, что тип отношений... задан в таких комплексных коммуникативных актах... (Malisheva, 2012, p. 206, my emphasis)  
 (It is *curious to observe* that the type of relationship ... is specified in such complex communicative acts.)

Most of the directives used in the Russian RAs are impersonal, meaning that they do not overtly state who is directed to act. Still, 35% of the directives are collective (the equivalent of the English phrases ‘let us’ or ‘we will’). Their use makes the directives more carefully hedged and invites – rather than orders – readers to participate in the discussion (Hyland, 2002a, p. 227). An example from Malisheva (2012) illustrates this:

*Рассмотрим* еще несколько примеров данного речевого акта... (p. 205, my emphasis)  
 (Let’s *analyze* a few more examples of this speech act...)

Overall data on the use of directives in Russian RAs written about linguistics are illustrated in Table 3:

*Table 3: The use of directives in RAs published in Russian (% is calculated from the total number of directives found in the RAs in Russian)*

Textual (7.5%)		Physical (35%)		Cognitive (57.5%)		
internal	external	research	real world	rhetorical	elaboration	emphasis
5	2.5	32.5	2.5	20	2.5	35

In the analyzed RAs published in English, the number of directives does not differ greatly from those used in the Russian RAs. However, all the examples of textual directives, are external, and in contrast to the use of textual directives by Russian researchers. This seems to be expected of those who publish in English, as it is important to place the research within a wide international context of the discipline (Lafuente-Millán et al., 2010) through a careful reference to previous research. In the example below, the author, in order for her readers to understand the discussed in the RA associations and other concepts, recommends the reader to consult a few external sources:

A number of sources have associated internationalisation with the developing notions surrounding global citizenship (*see Bourn, 2010: 21; Caruana, 2010: 30; Shiel, 2009*) though the concept of internationalisation, like global citizenship has not yet been clearly defined (*Bourn, 2010: 27; Caruana, 2010: 30*). (Crossman, 2011, my emphasis)

In addition, as was the case in one of the Russian RAs, 10 examples of physical directives in a single RA were found:

Leadership as usual may not be that helpful, instead, we need *to re-orient and re-envision* leadership towards the following five practices: *Commit* to reflection upon and increasing awareness of our own worldview. Mutually *acknowledge* and *respect* one another. *Seek* understanding rather than agreement focusing on striving to see the world through another’s eyes. *Hold* differing worldviews in truth, *respect* and equality. *Embrace* the necessity of relational dialogue. (Crumpton, 2012, p. 35, my emphasis)

In English, physical (30%) directives appear to present more lexical choices than in the Russian RAs. In these, physical directives feature such verbs as ‘to re-orient,’ ‘to re-envision,’ ‘to seek,’ ‘to respect,’ ‘to acknowledge,’ etc. and describe various kinds of actions. In the Russian RAs, a rather limited number of verbs are used: ‘to see’ and ‘to compare’ (which are often applied by the English authors as well). Cognitive directives are the most often used type in the both languages. However, the authors in the English RAs express cognitive activities using different verbs from those used by their Russian-speaking counterparts. In the English RAs, we come across the directives expressed with the help of the verbs “to know”, “to note”, “to contrast”, “to focus”, “to predict”, “to clarify”, etc. The Russian authors of the analyzed RAs use: ‘to note’ (отметить, заметить), ‘to examine’ (рассмотреть), ‘to follow’ (проследить), and ‘to clarify’ (уточнить). Still, the emphasis type of the cognitive directives is the most frequent in both English (46%) and Russian (35%). Below are the examples of emphasis directives borrowed from the English RAs:

In interpreting the results for citizen response styles, it is *important to bear* in mind that (as noted earlier) disagreement correlates significantly negatively with agreement but positively with extremity. (Smith, 2011, p. 224)  
 It is, however, *interesting to note* that that the ‘misunderstood’ email was attributed to cultural differences rather than say, some aspect of the learning context or confusion about how the tasks should be approached and by whom. (Crossman, 2011)

The quantitative analysis of overall directive use in the English data set is illustrated in Table 4:

*Table 4: The use of directives in the RAs published in English (% is calculated from the total number of directives found in the RAs in English)*

Textual (11%)		Physical (30%)		Cognitive (59%)		
Internal	external	research	real world	rhetorical	elaboration	emphasis
-	11	27	3	8	5	46

The results of the comparative analysis show that there is not much difference in the number of directives used by Russian- and English-speaking academics. The results seem consistent, at least ostensibly, with Hyland’s conclusion (Hyland, 2001b, p. 212) that considerable differences in the use of engagement markers are often influenced by disciplinary conventions. However, it is also possible to conclude that the differences in the

types of directives used in Russian and English RAs show differences in academic traditions and approaches to knowledge construction (for instance, it could be argued that Russian scholars prefer to use textual internal directives, whereas the English-speaking authors favor using textual external directives).

### Personal Aides

Personal aides “allow writers to address readers directly by briefly interrupting the argument to offer a comment on what has been said” (Hyland, 2009, p. 77). In the example below the author brackets a personal note, providing some extra information about the research:

Hillel Crandus, a teacher of eleventh-grade English, asked his class to write short papers (which Crandus shared with me) expressing how they felt about analysis.... (Graff, 2002, p. 28)

Such means of engagement serve to enhance the writer-reader relationship through providing more context. In this case, the author details his shared experience with a participant during the data collection process, which gives the reader more tools to understand the research, and thereby connect more strongly to it. Since the Russian RAs tend not to foster such a connection through this kind of contextualization, it is not surprising that only one example of a personal aide was discovered. In this example, the author explained her use of italics in her RA: [13, p.22. – Курсив здесь и далее мой. – Э.Ш. (In this and other cases the use of italics is mine. – E.Sh.)] (Shabunina, 2012, p. 200). Here, we can see the referenced source, the page, and the explanation of the use of italics personified through the use of the possessive pronoun *ты (мой)*, and the author’s initials. Other instances where aides were used (a total of 28 cases across 40 analyzed pages) represent additional remarks, which are supposed to help the reader understand the information in the RA:

...вмещает все свои эмоции – или их отсутствие – в один-единственный звук. (Shabunina, 2012, p. 197, my emphasis)  
(See translation: (he) ...contains all his emotions – or their absence – in just one sound...).

The use of personal aides by Russian linguists thus did not seem to briefly interrupt the argument “to offer a comment on what has been said” (Hyland, 2009, p. 77), as often occurs in English RAs. Instead, the function of personal aides in Russian RAs is to clarify and expand upon the information presented; they sound like friendly (yet formal) tips, offering help in case the reader is not familiar with the subject matter being discussed. Personal aides were also found in English, and often served to further explain a term or piece of information, as evidenced in this comment concerning participants in a research project:

A total of 27 students in Australia participated in the project, 11 of whom were international students (i.e., holding student visas in Australia) and came from countries such as Botswana, China, Korea, India, Malaysia and Singapore. (Crossman, 2011)

Once again, we see that the author brackets particular facts that would help the reader to understand the subject of the discussion. At the same time, the author engages the reader in

the scientific interaction by making an attempt to clarify the information. In this case, the personal aid in parentheses refines the definition of international student for the reader, assisting the reader in better understanding the participant cohort.

Altogether, there were 41 examples of these kinds of aides used in the English corpus, which exceeded the amount used in the Russian RAs. The quantitative difference suggests that the English-speaking linguists are more concerned than their Russian-speaking counterparts about clarifying facts or ideas for the reading audience. Of course, such an argument warrants further consideration through expanding the corpora and conducting more contrastive analyses in this vein.

### Appeals to Shared Knowledge

Expression of engagement is most commonly represented by explicit signals “asking reader[s] to recognize something as familiar or accepted... to identify with particular views” (Hyland, 2009, p. 77). Hyland (2001a) describes this strategy of appealing to shared knowledge as a less imposing involvement strategy designed “to position readers within the apparently naturalized and unproblematic boundaries of disciplinary understandings” (p. 566). However, as he remarks, it is indeed hard to define what constitutes “shared knowledge,” though it may include “the use of jargon, acronyms, preferred metaphors, familiar argument structures, citation practices, and so forth,” all of which “foreground a common frame for seeing the world, identifying problems, and resolving issues” (p. 566). Thus, the appeal to shared knowledge can include the use of commonly known and accepted terms, references, examples, and abbreviations, which help to create a sense of solidarity between the author and the reader.

The analysis revealed 8 instances of appeals to shared knowledge in the analyzed Russian RAs and 12 instances in the English RAs. In the Russian examples, the appeals were used in three out of five RAs. Most commonly used were expressions such as *разумеется* (‘of course,’ ‘it goes without saying’), *конечно* (‘of course’), *очевидно* (‘obviously’), *традиционно* (‘traditionally’):

*Очевидно, что проксематический фактор речеповеденческого кода позволяет говорить о пространственных стереотипах...* (Karimova, 2012, p. 236, my emphasis)

(The proxemics factor in the speech behaviour, *obviously*, allows to talk about spatial stereotypes...).

The use of appeals to shared knowledge in the English texts seems unevenly spread (with 0-6 signals used per RA); moreover, as is the case with other features of engagement, their use varies widely by author. These shared knowledge signals include the use of ‘of course,’ references to the shared pools of information derived from the specific RA, as well as from external sources, as can be seen in the following examples:

There are, *of course*, limitations and failures. (McQuail, 2010, p. 34, my emphasis)

*As we have seen*, a key item used by Minkov (2007) to define monumentalism is strong pride in one’s nation. (Smith, 2011, p. 230, my emphasis)

*It is widely accepted* that the basis for the contrast between nations that are more collectivist and those that are more individualist lies in the strength and nature of the bonds between individuals and groups. (Smith, 2011, p. 230, my emphasis)

As Hyland (2001a) notes, the frequently used adverbial phrase *of course* expresses “explicit appeals to shared understandings. Although generally seen as a marker of epistemic stance, indicating the writer’s certainty of a proposition... , *of course* actually moves the focus of the discourse away from the writer to shape the role of the reader” (Hyland, 2001a, p. 567). By using the expressions ‘of course,’ ‘as we have seen,’ and ‘it is widely accepted,’ the authors ask their readers to identify with their beliefs. At the same time, a reference to a common knowledge pool is expressed, which invites the readers to consider themselves as an important part of the professional whole.

It is, in my mind, also essential to emphasize the cross-cultural differences of ‘shared knowledge’ with regards to how written research should be presented. The differences between the accepted norms when making appeals to shared knowledge are felt especially by those presenting their research in both languages. For instance, unlike in English RAs, Russian texts do not often include a methodology section. Instead, it is assumed that the methods used by the author and the stages of the research are clear from how the examples are presented and analyzed in the paper; it is also assumed, that the reader will understand the methodology of the research based on the conclusion (which is usually not a separate section). Thus, it is helpful when analyzing cross-cultural differences in RAs to expand ‘shared knowledge’ beyond the sentence-level, encompassing the structure of a RA itself. This includes shared beliefs concerning the rules of citations and references listings, as well as the structure of the paper.

### Questions

Posing questions to the author’s audience is a – “strategy of dialogic involvement par excellence, often functioning to express an imbalance of knowledge between participants, but also working to create rapport and intimacy” (Hyland, 2002c, p. 531), and it is “one way that writers explicitly bring readers into their texts” (p. 532), mainly in spoken discourse. However, as Hyland (2002c) observes, questions are more often encountered in academic prose than in other written texts and can perform numerous functions: arousing interest, framing purposes, establishing a research niche, organizing the discourse, expressing an attitude or evaluation, conveying a claim, and suggesting further research. Questions are frequent in social science disciplines, “where acceptance of claims depends more on the construction of an elaborate discursive framework,” as well as in texts, “where writers are able to confidently assume a stance of undisguised authority in relation to their readers” (p. 553). At the same time, posing questions can be used as a strategy to establish an interpersonal relationship (Hyland, 2001a, p. 570).

The difference in the use of questions by the Russian and English scholars is quite noticeable in the quantitative sense: one question is posed in the Russian RAs versus 7 questions in the English RAs. If we consider the question in terms of the larger context, we will see that the one and only question in the Russian RA tries to arouse readers’ interest and draw attention to the discussed point:

Возникает вопрос: каким образом соотносится разграничение трёх вышеперечисленных видов анафонических структур с разграничением тематических, опорных и ключевых слов? (Golimbiovskaya, 2012, p. 221)  
(The question arises: how does the distinction among the three above mentioned types of anaphoric structures correlate with thematic and reference differences of the key words?)

This question piques readers' interest by bringing into focus the main points of the scientific discussion (three types of anaphoric structures and thematic and reference differences of the key words). We can also see that through utilizing the words 'correlate' and 'distinction,' the author brings to the forefront a discussion of these points and expresses her approach to studying them.

Questions are very effective in establishing an interpersonal writer-reader relationship, because they mark a clear pause in the narration of facts or theories to start a dialogue and create an obvious rapport. This technique might seem informal and consequently inappropriate for Russian scholars, who are accustomed to writing in a formal, detached style. Also, along with intimacy, questions tend to convey authority (Hyland, 2002c). For instance, in the following example, the author uses a question to state a problem, to express the idea that the previous research on how to bridge cultural differences when speaking about leadership is incomplete, and to invite the reader to consider this issue:

In thinking about culture relative to leadership, are we going deep enough to bridge cultural differences? (Crumpton, 2012, p. 35)

Questions turn readers into learners. This is confirmed by Hyland's (2002c) findings, which state that questions are most commonly used in textbooks, followed by RAs, and student reports. Statistical data (Hyland, 2002c) show that questions are "a common strategy in expert-novice interaction" (p. 535). Hyland writes: "while questions seek to involve readers in both the argument and the ethos of a text, they may also construct unequal social relationships. Questions convey authority along with intimacy, carrying the implication that the writer is in full control of both his or her material and, often, of his or her audience as well" (p. 535). Most Russian scholars who publish in peer-reviewed journals are working on their dissertations, trying to publish the requisite number of RAs. Therefore, most of them would find such overt expressions of authority to be inappropriate. In this study, all the analyzed RAs were written by linguists who had not yet earned their doctorate. In addition, we should remember that the act of asking questions (just like giving advice, praising and giving compliments, etc) has strong cultural characteristics and, thus, might have different sociocultural value. In some cultures, asking questions might seem an impolite and face-threatening behavior (see, for instance, Cain, 2012; Gibson, 2008; Mariani, 2007).

## DISCUSSION

The results of the comparative analysis show that English-speaking academics apply engagement features in their RAs more actively than their Russian-speaking counterparts. The greatest disparities are observed in the use of those features which emphasize the expression of personal standing (reader pronouns), those which try to establish a sense of personal involvement with the reader (questions), and those that attempt to construct a sense of solidarity (for example, through personal aides and appeals to shared knowledge) (see Table 5).

*Table 5: Overall use of engagement features*

	Reader Pronouns	Directives	Personal Aides	Shared Knowledge	Questions
Russian	11	37	28	8	1
English	57	40	41	12	7



There are numerous explanations for the presence of fewer engagement signals in Russian RAs. First, it should be mentioned that the academic environment in modern Russia has a very weak peer-review culture (see Anderson, 2012; Yudkevich, 2012). Although doctoral students are required to publish 12 RAs in high-profile journals, such publishing is usually determined by timely payment of an official ‘publishing fee’ and an easily obtained positive reference from an academic working in the same field (Yudkevich, 2012). As publishing in such journals can get quite expensive, academics are often not interested in featuring their research in these journals after defending their dissertations. Russian students are mostly concerned about publishing the required amount of articles, which often rephrase the same theoretical information under different titles, than about contributing to a professional discussion.

The isolation of the Russian academics from international academia is, I believe, the primary reason for these scholars not following international standards of conducting research or engaging in the discussion and further presentation of their work. All of these are achieved through the use of English, the current lingua franca, which is for modern professionals “an instrument, not an object of study” (Mauranen, 2008, p. 243). The fact that Russian universities have not offered incentives for scholars to publish in internationally acclaimed, peer-reviewed journals perhaps contributes to the disparity between international research standards and those observed in Russian universities. According to Barabanov (2012), English-language publications are not required in order for a faculty member at a Russian university to apply for the professorship contests which are mandatory, nor are they needed to defend doctoral or post-doctoral theses. In most cases, the quantity and quality of publications have no bearing on salaries. Furthermore, as Barabanov notes, Russian professors are often unable to participate in the life of the international academic community, because they do not speak English and lack the Academic English skills necessary to present research at international conferences. Indeed, English is an important tool of academic mobility, allowing exchange of ideas and collaboration between professionals with various cultural backgrounds. The fact that Russian academics are reluctant to include engagement features in their research and are not eager to publish their findings can also be explained by the historic past of the country, when the Soviet collectivist system was not conducive to professionals expressing their individual, creative arguments. Although the choice of engagement features is affected by the author’s sociocultural background, I assert that Russian scholars should engage more deeply with their reading audience. Although the main purpose of this paper is to compare two different ways of using engagement features in RAs, I am writing with the hope that young, active, globally-oriented researchers (I know of a few individuals who fit these criteria) will benefit from my research.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis of RAs written in English and in Russian suggests that the use of engagement features is culturally conditioned, and, to some extent, can also be explained by communication specifics typical among a disciplinary community. For instance, the use of physical act directives, inviting the reader to participate in a number of physical actions, is usually more typical in ‘hard’ fields like physics. In addition, the sociocultural tradition of discourse construction in academia, as well as in any other area of society, plays a key role in the use of engagement features. In Russian RAs, engagement signals are used less often because of the lack of incentives to involve the reader in the discussion. This can be explained by the modern academic environment in Russia, as well as events of the past.

Above all, Russian linguists do not seem to express their personal standing in the research (by using reader pronouns), and establish neither rapport (by using questions) nor solidarity (by using appeals to shared knowledge) with their readers. The scholars might also have avoided the use of questions because they have not yet established their academic careers, and thus feel that it is improper to express their opinion openly and convey authority. Finally, I must emphasize that in order to draw more accurate conclusions about Russian academics' use of engagement features, the database of analyzed RAs both in English and Russian should be expanded. Nevertheless, the tendencies of engagement features can be observed even at this early stage of research.

Joining the international scientific community is an important step for the implementation of the Russian government's Russia 2020 strategy, which focuses on the modernization of science and education in Russia. The very existence of the Russian 2020 strategy implies that Russian academics should take part in an active dialogue with their colleagues in an open, international environment. To achieve this, it seems that Russian academics must learn how to invite the reader to become interested in their research with greater use of engagement features. Successful academic dialog will also require the introduction of academic writing courses in English within contemporary university programs in Russia.

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