

## Nigerian Undergraduates' Awareness of Metadiscourse and its Relationship with their Persuasive Writing Quality

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### ABSTRACT

Persuasive writing in second (L2) or Foreign Language (FL) is found to be a very challenging task for many undergraduates. Metadiscourse are devices used to help writers to make a connection with the audience and express ideas clearly. However, many Nigerian undergraduates are not fully aware of or do not appropriately utilise these devices in their writing. Also, little attention has been paid to the devices by researchers in the Nigerian context. Therefore, this study investigates undergraduates' awareness of metadiscourse and its relationship with their persuasive writing performance using a correlational research design. An intact class of 56 third-year undergraduates in a local university in Nigeria was selected for the study. Data for the study were collected through a writing task in English, and a questionnaire. The essays were graded using a validated scale. The questionnaire was analysed using SPSS software. Findings of the study show that the participants have a low awareness of metadiscourse. The findings also reveal that there is a positive relationship between the participants' awareness of metadiscourse and their persuasive writing quality. The study gives insight to researchers and lecturers, not only in the language field but in other areas, on how to improve the students' awareness and use of metadiscourse which would eventually develop writing performance. Finally, the study makes some recommendations for further studies.

**Key words:** Awareness, ESL Writing, Metadiscourse, Nigeria, Persuasive Essay

### INTRODUCTION

In academic institutions, developing a good command of students' written English is one of the desires of teachers and lecturers most especially in countries where English is adopted as a second (ESL) or foreign language (EFL). In higher institutions, writing is largely used as a tool to measure students' performance and thinking (Gillett et al., 2009; Murray & Hughes, 2008) through writing assignments, tests, reports, term papers, examinations and projects. Writing, according to social constructivist theory is a social activity (Vygotsky, 1978) which both the writer and the reader are actively involved in making meaning of the text (Spivey, 1995). This shows the need for a writer to be aware of and consider his/her audience in the writing process.

Academic writing generally is described as a persuasive one because writers are expected to present and explain their ideas to convince the readers. Regardless of the genre, academic writing aims to sway the reader's opinion to agree with that of the text/writer (Silver, 2003). Thus, Academic writing process involves critical thinking and persuasive skills which are also essential for students in meeting the challenges of the current world (Tan, 2003). In academic writing, writers are required to critically think of ideas and logically present the

ideas to persuade their readers. They should also sequence their thoughts so that they are well received by their readers (Jones, 2011; Hyland, 2005). They also have to present their propositions using logical reasoning and linguistic devices to build a relationship with their readers. These linguistic devices are known as metadiscourse.

According to Hyland (2005), metadiscourse is a 'set of features which together help explain the working of interactions between text producers and their texts and between text producers and users.' Metadiscourse offers various strategies for the writers to shape their texts and involve the readers along with revealing their attitude to a material as well as addressees. Beauvais (1989) defines metadiscourse as the overt markers which help the listeners to identify how the arguments of a speaker are to be understood. Many scholars have stressed the importance of metadiscourse in academic writing. However, many ESL undergraduates and even young researchers in the ESL context face challenges with the use of metadiscourse in their academic writing (Bogdanović & Mirović, 2018), Nigerian undergraduates included.

In Nigeria which is also an ESL context, numerous researchers have shown that many undergraduates cannot produce good writing in English (Ngadda & Nwoke, 2014) and they are not exposed to metadiscourse (Haruna, Ibrahim,

Haruna, Ibrahim & Yunus, 2018). From the researchers' experiences of evaluating the undergraduates' writing, absence or wrong usage of metadiscourse devices have been observed in the students' writing. In an attempt to ensure good writing skills among the students, most researchers and L2 teachers emphasize on identifying problems in areas like grammar, punctuations, spelling and tense in the students' writing in English (Bodunde & Sotiloye, 2013; Theodore, 2013). The area of metadiscourse is neglected by many researchers and language instructors in Nigeria. In the real sense, good writing is beyond grammar and punctuation or tense but the number of ideas and how the ideas are presented to convince the readers. Hence, there is a need to investigate the use of metadiscourse in the students' writing. Therefore, this study aims at investigating the students' awareness of metadiscourse and its relationship with their persuasive writing performance. This is because they can only utilize the devices when they are aware of them.

### Purpose of the Study

The study aims to investigate the Nigerian undergraduates' awareness of metadiscourse. It also aims to examine the relationship between the undergraduates' metadiscourse awareness and their persuasive writing quality.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What is the Nigerian undergraduates' awareness of metadiscourse?
2. What is the relationship between the undergraduates' awareness of metadiscourse and persuasive writing quality?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Definition of Metadiscourse

Metadiscourse refers to linguistic devices which writers use to help readers decode the message, share their views and reflect particular conventions that are followed in a given culture. It is defined by Hyland (2000) "as the interpersonal resources used to organise a discourse or the writer's stance towards either its content or the reader" (p.109). Although the term is defined by various scholars in different ways, it is seen as an umbrella term including an array of features that help relate a text to its context by assisting readers to connect, organise, and interpret material in a way preferred by the writer concerning the understandings and values of a particular discourse community (Halliday, 1998). Hyland (2005, p.37), defines metadiscourse as "the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assist the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community." On the one hand, it helps the writer to organise the content of the text, on the other hand, it assists the reader to understand and interpret the text. During the

reading, the reader, by making use of these metadiscourse features, decodes, reconstructs and interprets the text. In short, by providing context it facilitates communication, supports the writer's position and builds the writer-reader relation.

### Model of Metadiscourse

Some early studies of metadiscourse, as well as some of the recent analyses, identified two levels to metadiscourse based on the Hallidayan distinction between textual and interpersonal macro-functions of language (Halliday 1973). The first level, called 'textual metadiscourse', contributes to the deployment of rhetorical strategies used to express a theory of experience coherently. It provides a framework which clarifies the schematic structure of the text. The second level, labelled 'interpersonal metadiscourse', concerns the interactional and evaluative aspects of the author's presence in his/her discourse. It expresses the writer's persona. This type of metadiscourse is used to convey attitudes to propositional material and to involve the writer in more intimacy and dialogue with the reader. Interpersonal metadiscourse indicates the writers' assessment of information and their conviction in its reliability or truth, thereby projecting a strong, authoritative and credible authorial presence in the text.

Hyland (2005) divides metadiscourse into two broad categories, namely Interactive and Interactional.

1. Interactive — features used to organize propositional information in ways that the target reader should find coherent and convincing.
2. Interactional — features that draw the reader into the discourse and allow them to contribute to it and respond to it by alerting them to the writer's perspective on propositional information and orientation and intention concerning the reader.

The Table 1 below presents the details of the classification which will be adopted in this study.

### Previous Studies on Metadiscourse

Many studies were carried out in different parts of the world to investigate the use of metadiscourse in the undergraduates' academic writing. For instance, Tan and Eng (2014) investigated the use of metadiscourse among Malaysian undergraduates. The results indicated that between the two main domains of metadiscourse, both groups of writers exhibited a greater preference for the use of interactional metadiscourse than the interactive. Between the two groups of writers, it was the HEP writers who exhibited a higher frequency of use for both the interactive and interactional metadiscourse. In terms of the forms used, the HEP writers also used a greater variety of metadiscourse forms when compared to the LEP writers.

Anwardeen, Luyee, Gabriel & Kalajahi, (2013) examined the usage of metadiscourse in argumentative writing of Malaysian college students. They observed that Malaysian college students are more inclined to using textual metadiscourse instead of interpersonal metadiscourse. Besides, the selected students are using fewer code glosses and stance

**Table 1.** Hyland's model of metadiscourse

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive	Help to guide the reader through the text	
Transitions	Express relations between main clauses	in addition; but; thus; and
Frame markers	Refer to discourse acts. Sequences, or stages	finally; to conclude; my purpose is
Endophoric markers	Refer to the information in other parts of the text	noted above; see Fig; in section2
Evidentials	Refer to information from other texts	according to X; Z states
Code glosses	Elaborate propositional meanings	namely; e.g.; such as; in other words
Interactional	Involve the reader in the text	
Hedges	Withhold commitment and open dialogue	might; perhaps; possible; about
Boosters	Emphasize certainty or close dialogue	in fact; definitely; it is clear that
Attitude markers	Express writer's attitude to proposition	unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly
Self-mentions	Explicit reference to author (s)	I; we; my; me; our
Engagement markers	Explicitly build relationship with reader	consider; note; you can see that

(Adopted from Hyland, 2008)

indicator in their argumentative writing. The students committed quite several errors in using metadiscourse and practices are needed to train them in using metadiscourse correctly.

In the English as a foreign language context (EFL), Gholami, Nejad, and Pour, (2014) conducted a study to investigate the use of metadiscourse devices in the argumentative essays of EFL undergraduates. They discovered the students commits various errors in their usage, among an overuse of metadiscourse devices was found to be the major one.

In a recent study, Shafique, Shahbaz, and Hafeez, (2019) examined the use of metadiscourse by comparing research articles written by native English and Pakistani. Their findings reveal that Pakistani research writers use more interactive markers whereas the interactional markers are found frequent in native English academic writers. The findings generally reveal that the research articles of the Native English are more persuasive and readers are involved and guided through the text by using different markers effectively.

However, in the Nigerian context, few studies are conducted to examine the use of metadiscourse among undergraduates. Haruna, Ibrahim, Haruna, Ibrahim and Yunus (2018) examined the metadiscoursal choice and its influence on the success of final year undergraduates' academic

writing. The findings showed that many of the students did not use or wrongly used the devices. This suggests that they were not exposed to these elements, thus, they write an academic essay the way they speak.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

A correlational research design is adopted for the study. This research design allows the researcher to investigate the relationship between the participants' awareness of metadiscourse and their persuasive writing quality.

### The Setting of the Study

The site of this study is a local university in the North-eastern part of Nigeria. Specifically, students from the Departments of English and Literary Studies were considered for the study.

### Participants of the Study

The participants of this study are 56 third-year undergraduates of English and literary studies. The participants are purposefully selected because it assumed that they have attained a certain level of proficiency in writing in English in their first and second years of the University. Also, they have acquired a certain level of proficiency in the English language based on the minimum entry requirement for admission into the University.

### Instruments

Two instruments, writing task and a questionnaire, were employed for the data collection of the study. The writing task was given to the participants to ascertain their writing quality. They were given a writing prompt to write an essay for about 500-750 words (see Appendix A for the writing prompt). The questionnaire was used to collect data regarding the participants' knowledge of metadiscourse. The questionnaire is divided into four sections. The first section elicits the participants' background information which includes their L1, knowledge of metadiscourse and academic writing. The second section gathers participants' experiences writing in English. The third section elicits participants' knowledge of metadiscourse and the last section gathers information on the participants' use of metadiscourse devices in their writing. Sections A, C and D are adapted from Bogdanović and Mirović, (2018). The modifications are made to suit the current study as their study is on young researchers.

### Data Collection Procedure

Having obtained permission from the Department, the consent of the participants was sorted for. They were asked to fill in an informed consent form. The data were collected in two stages. In the first stage, the participants were given a topic to individually write an essay of about 500-750 words. In the second stage, the questionnaire was administered to the participants to fill out and submit to the researchers.

### Data Analysis

As mention previously, two sets of data were collected and the data were analysed using different methods of data analysis. To achieve the first objective of the study on the Nigerian undergraduates' awareness of metadiscourse, the data collected from the questionnaires were analysed descriptively using SPSS. The participants were then grouped based on their level of metadiscourse awareness.

Finally, to achieve the second objective of the study which is to examine the relationship between the undergraduates' awareness of metadiscourse and writing performance, the essays written by the participants were graded by two trained raters using Analytical Scale of Argumentative Writing (ASAW) developed by Nimehchisalem (2010). It is a heuristic scale with five components with a total score of 100: 1, content 20, organization 20, vocabulary 20, language convention 20 and overall effectiveness 20. Each of the components has the following five categories: excellent, competent, modest, Basic and Very Limited (see Appendix B for the complete description of the components). The participants' writing scores were compared with that of metadiscourse awareness.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data collected for the study were analysed and the findings are presented to answer the research questions of the study.

### Undergraduates' Awareness of Metadiscourse

To achieve the first research objective of the study, (to examine the Nigerian undergraduates' awareness of metadiscourse), the data obtained using the questionnaire were analysed. From the responses of the questionnaire, it is discovered that all the participants have more than ten years' experience of learning English, right from their primary, secondary schools to the tertiary institution. However, none of the participants ever attended a course specifically for academic writing in English. The other findings are presented in the following subsections which include their writing experiences that are considered difficult by many of the participants; information related to Metadiscourse where the majority of the participants are not much aware of the term let alone utilise it in their writing.

### Writing Experiences

The participants were also asked to rate their experiences and perceptions of writing in English by indicating the extent to which they agree with each statement in the following Table 2 using 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree. From their responses, it is revealed that the majority (about 75%) of the participants agree that they like writing in English. However, items 2 shows that Writing in English is a very difficult task for many of the participants. Especially in choosing appropriate word/phrase, developing ideas and using correct grammar as indicated by items 4, 7 and 5 respectively.

### Information related to Metadiscourse

As for the awareness of metadiscourse, the participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they are aware of metadiscourse with 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree. The findings show that the majority of the participants are not much aware of the term as indicated by the items of the questionnaire. It is further shown that most of the participants neither premeditate the use of metadiscourse while writing in English nor do they pay much attention to metadiscourse when writing English in Table 3.

### Use of Metadiscourse

As for the use of the metadiscourse device, the participants were asked to choose numbers 1-5 to indicate how often you use the following expressions when writing English: 1=I don't use them at all, 2=I rarely use them, 3=I occasionally use them, 4=I use them quite often, 5=I always use them. The results of the questionnaire show that the expressions that refer to the source of information from other texts/papers/books (according to X, Z 1990, Y states, as shown in [1]) have the highest mean scores of (M 3.0). Followed by expressions that withhold your full commitment to the information (e.g might, perhaps, possibly, about, approximately, to some extent) have the second-highest mean scores of (M 2.7). While the Expressions that explicitly refer to you as the author (I, we, my, our) recorded the lowest mean scores (M 1.7) in Table 4.

To enable the researchers to ascertain the participants' awareness of metadiscourse, the results of the participants'

**Table 2.** Summary of the participants writing experiences

S/N	Item	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	M	SD
1	I like writing in English.	5.4	5.4	10.7	33.9	44.6	4.07	1.126
2	Writing in English is a very difficult task.	7.1		5.4	50	37.5	4.11	1.039
3	To succeed in my university studies, I must write well in English.	5.4	7.1	17.9	37.5	32.1	3.84	1.125
4	I have difficulty choosing an appropriate word/phrase in my writing.		39.3	23.2	37.5		4.14	.773
5	I tend to use wrong grammar in my writing	7.1	12.5	44.6	35.7		4.09	.879
6	I have problems organizing my ideas in a logical sequence		14.3	14.3	33.9	37.5	3.95	1.051
7	I have difficulties developing ideas for my writing.			12.5	42.9	44.6	4.32	.690
8	I have difficulty using the appropriate style of writing	7.1	7.1	12.5	42.9		3.82	1.161
9	I think about readers when I am writing	26.8	26.8	21.4	19.6	5.4	2.50	1.236



**Table 3.** Summary of the participants' information on metadiscourse

S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
1	I know what metadiscourse is.	50%	33.9	10.7%	5.4%		1.714	.868
2	I premeditate the use of metadiscourse while writing in English.	44.6%	44.6%	5.4%	5.4%		1.714	.803
3	I pay much attention to metadiscourse when writing English.	41.1%	44.6%	14.3%			1.732	.700
4	I have a set of metadiscourse that i regularly use while writing in English.	32.1%	39.3	19.3%	8.9%		2.054	.942

**Table 4.** Summary of the participants' use of metadiscourse in academic writing

S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
1	Expressions to indicate semantic relation between main clauses and main sections in your writing, (but, thus, in addition, consequently etc).	14.3	28.6	42.9	14.3		2.57	.912
2	Expressions that refer to writing organization, express sequence, label text stages, announce discourse goals, or indicate topic shift (finally, to conclude, the purpose is, first, next)	14.3	28.6	28.6	28.6		2.71	1.04
3	Expressions that refer to information in other parts of your writing (noted above, see Fig., in section 2)	28.6	42.9	28.6			2.00	.763
4	Expressions that refer to the source of information from other texts/papers/books (according to X, Z 1990, Y states, as shown in [1])		28.6	42.9	28.6		3.00	.763
5	Expressions that restate and explain information for better understanding (namely, e.g., such as, in other words)	14.3	42.9	28.6	14.3		2.43	.915
6	Expressions that withhold your full commitment to the information (might, perhaps, possibly, about, approximately, to some extent)		42.9	42.9	14.3		2.72	.707
7	Expressions that emphasize your certainty in the information stated (in fact, definitely, it is clear that)	14.3	42.9	28.6	14.3		2.43	.912
8	Expressions that explicitly express your attitude towards information in your writing (unfortunately, I agree, surprisingly, promising idea, important contribution)	14.3	28.6	42.9	14.3		2.58	.912
9	Expressions that build relationship with the reader (consider, note that, you can see that)	42.9	28.6	14.3	14.3		2.00	1.079
10	Expressions that explicitly refer to you as the author (I, we, my, our)	42.9	42.9	14.3			1.71	.706

writing experiences, information on metadiscourse and the use of metadiscourse were categorised into three levels (high, moderate and low). The participants' writing experiences as presented in Table 1, shows that the majority of them have a positive attitude and experiences of writing in English as shown in Table 5 and Figure 1.

The participants' awareness of information on metadiscourse which is presented in Table 2 is also categorised into three. The result shows that a larger percentage of the participants (60.7%) have low information on metadiscourse as shown in Table 6 and Figure 2.

Finally, the results of the analysis of the participants' use of metadiscourse in academic writing as presented in Table 7 and Figure 3 show moderate use of metadiscourse by the participants.

## Discussion

Therefore, to answer the first research question of the study, it could be seen that despite the positive attitude and experiences of writing in English, the majority of the participants have low awareness of metadiscourse devices but moderate use of the devices in their academic writing. These findings may seem surprising that the participants have very high positive experiences of writing in English

**Table 5.** Levels of the participants writing experiences

Level	Frequency	Percentage
High	52	92.9
Moderate	4	7.1
Low	0	0
Total	56	100

**Table 6.** Levels of the participants' information on metadiscourse

Category	Frequency	Percentage
High	0	0
Moderate	22	39.3
Low	34	60.7
Total	56	100

but low information on metadiscourse. It is not surprising because while filling out the questionnaires, the participants informed the researchers that they are not aware of the term metadiscourse. Majority of the participants revealed that they have heard of the term for the very first time. Also, they confessed that none of them ever attended a course specifically for academic writing in English. Thus, the participants

want to improve their writing in English, however, they are not allowed to acquire some essential skills in doing so. Furthermore, the results may appear contradictory that the participants have low information on metadiscourse but moderate use of metadiscourse devices in their academic. They may use the devices subconsciously.

The findings have proved the study conducted by Haruna, Ibrahim, Haruna, Ibrahim and Yunus (2018) which suggested that many of the undergraduates were not exposed to metadiscourse because they write academic essays in the same manner they speak.

The findings further agree with the findings of Anwardeen, Luyee, Gabriel, and Kalajahi (2013) which observed that students are more inclined to a certain type of

metadiscourse while ignoring or using less of other types in their argumentative writing. This suggests the students' lack of metadiscourse awareness. This because over usage or under usage of metadiscourse could both affect writing quality negatively. Similarly, the study of Gholami, Nejad, and Pour, (2014) discovered that EFL undergraduates over-use of metadiscourse devices among other errors in their argumentative essay.

**Relationship between Metadiscourse Awareness and Persuasive Writing Quality**

To achieve the second objective of the study, which is to examine the relationship between the undergraduates' awareness of metadiscourse and persuasive writing quality, the participants' essays were graded and the scores were compared to the results of their metadiscourse awareness obtained from the questionnaire. The average scores of the participants' essays are Content 13; Organization 10; Vocabulary 11.5; Language Conventions 11; Overall Effectiveness 10 as shown in Table 8. Based on Nimehchisalem's scale (2010), the result implies that the content of the participants' essays are reasonably mature and extensive accounts of relevant claims and data, but at times lacks adequate backing. As for the organization, their introduction/conclusion: brief/lacking; despite certain redundant ideas, easy to follow writer's line of thought and purpose; sentences linked well but cases of wrong connection evident. There are occasional incorrect word forms, phrases, or collocations; mostly using simple words; use of synonyms/antonyms to avoid repetition but still a few repeated words. Also, there is almost one error every other sentence; form blurring meaning sometimes, some spelling, capitalization, or punctuation problems blurring meaning, spelling, capitalization or punctuation problems in almost all sentences blurring meaning. Overall, the participants' essays display a reasonable ability in presenting arguments but through a simple, fairly correct, clear and appropriate style; task still fulfilled reasonably well; written over/to the word limit.

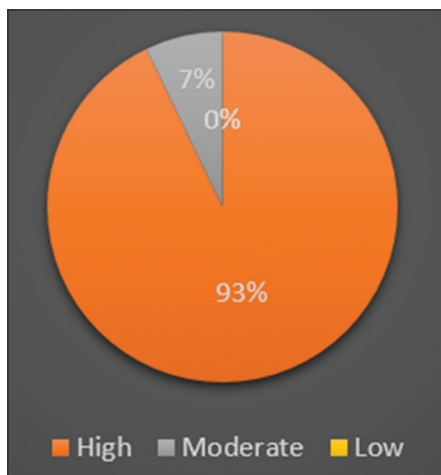


Figure 1. Levels of the participants writing experiences

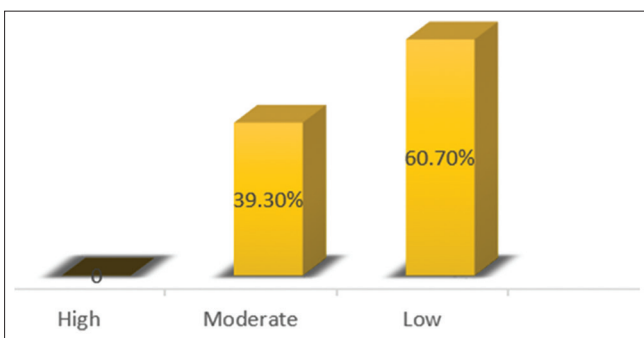


Figure 2. Levels of the participants' information on metadiscourse

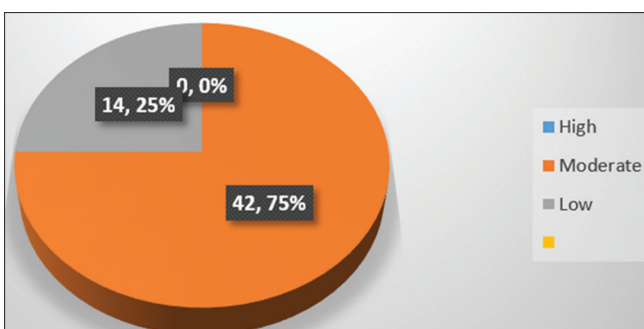


Figure 3. Levels of the participants' use of metadiscourse in academic writing

Table 7. Levels of the participants' use of metadiscourse in academic writing

Category	Frequency	Percentage
High	0	0
Moderate	42	75.0
Low	14	25.0
Total	56	100

Table 8. Summary of the participants' writing scores

S/N	Components	Scores
1	Content	13
2	Organization	10
3	Vocabulary	12
4	Language conventions	11
5	Overall effectiveness	10
6	Total	56

**Table 9.** Level of the participants writing quality

Category	Frequency	Percentage
High	1	1.79
Moderate	54	96.42
Low	1	1.79
Total	56	100

The results of the participants' essays were further categorised into three: high (from 100 to 70 marks), moderate (from 69 to 39 marks) and low (from 38 to 0 marks). It is shown that almost all the participants' writing quality (96.42%) is moderate as indicated in Table 9.

To answer the second research question of the study, it could be seen that writing quality of the majority of the participants is moderate, so also their awareness of the use of metadiscourse devices. Thus, it could be concluded that there is a positive relationship between the participants' awareness of metadiscourse devices and their writing quality. The finding is not surprising because many studies show that metadiscourse are essential devices that ensure effective academic writing. Thus, since most of the participants have low awareness of metadiscourse, their writing quality is presupposed to be low as well.

The findings agree with the findings of previous studies on metadiscourse. For instance, Tan and Eng (2014) show that high English proficient Malaysian undergraduate writers use a higher frequency of metadiscourse devices in their writing than their low English proficiency counterparts. The high English proficiency level students also utilise a greater variety of metadiscourse forms as opposed to the low proficiency students. Based on the results, it could be concluded that the high the English proficiency of students, the greater their awareness of academic writing conventions and metadiscourse. On the other hand, the lower English proficiency of students, the lower their awareness of academic writing conventions and metadiscourse.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of the study is to examine the Nigerian undergraduates' awareness of metadiscourse and its relationship with their persuasive writing quality. Metadiscourse has been neglected by many researchers in investing the writing skills of Nigerian undergraduates. The findings show that the participants have low awareness of metadiscourse and there is a positive relationship between their awareness and their writing quality. The findings are important as they suggest that awareness and usage of metadiscourse can help to develop undergraduates academic writing which is mostly persuasive. The findings also reveal the need to teach undergraduates academic writing most especially the awareness of the audience and how to convince the audience in their writing, as it is shown that generally that explicit instruction of metadiscourse markers significantly improves EFL learners' writing ability (Dastjerdi, & Shirzad, 2010). The need is particularly important in the Nigerian context where the teaching of metadiscourse is neglected even among

language instructors. While assessing undergraduates' academic writings, lecturers, regardless of the field of study, should place much emphasis on how students convince their audience in their writing. The study is limited to only 56 participants which could limit the generalizability of the findings. Further studies can randomly select a larger number of participants. The study only describes the undergraduates' metadiscourse awareness levels and persuasive writing quality it does not give any treatment. Future studies could adopt an experimental research design to investigate how to increase the undergraduates' awareness and usage of metadiscourse in academic writing. To sum up, while metadiscourse awareness is important in improving undergraduates' academic writing, teachers, instructors and lecturers should help to create the students' awareness and ensure its usage in any academic writing.

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## APPENDIX A

### Questionnaire on Undergraduates' Awareness of Metadiscourse in Academic Writing

#### Section A .Personal Information

Kindly provide the following information. The information provided will kept highly confidential

- 
- 1 Level
  - 2 Course of Study
  - 3 Gender
  - 4 Age
  - 5 L1
  - 6 How long have you been studying English?
  - 7 Have you ever attended a course in Academic writing?
- 

#### Section B. Writing experiences

Please tick (√) to indicate the extent you agree with each statement in the following Table. 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree

S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1	I like writing in English.					
2	Writing in English is a very difficult task.					
3	To succeed in my university studies, I must write well in English.					
4	I have difficulty choosing appropriate word/phrase in my writing.					
5	I tend to use wrong grammar in my writing					
6	I have problems organizing my ideas in a logical sequence					
7	I have difficulties developing ideas for my writing.					
8	I have difficulty using the appropriate style of writing					
9	I think about readers when I am writing					

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#### Section C. Information related to metadiscourse

S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1	I know what metadiscourse are.					
2	I premeditate the use of metadiscourse while writing in English.					
3	I pay much attention to metadiscourse when writing English.					
4	I have a set of metadiscourse that I regularly use while writing in English. Eg...					

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#### Section D. Detailed Metadiscourse Analysis

Please choose numbers 1-5 to indicate how often you use the following expressions when writing English:

1 – I don't use them at all,

2 – I rarely use them,

3 – I occasionally use them, 4 – I use them quite often, 5 – I always use them

S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1	Expressions to indicate semantic relation between main clauses and main sections in your writing, (but, thus, in addition, consequently etc).					
2	Expressions that refer to writing organization, express sequence, label text stages, announce discourse goals, or indicate topic shift (finally, to conclude, the purpose is, first, next)					
3	Expressions that refer to information in other parts of your writing (noted above, see Fig., in section 2)					
4	Expressions that refer to the source of information from other texts/papers/books (according to X, Z 1990, Y states, as shown in [1])					
5	Expressions that restate and explain information for better understanding (namely, e.g., such as, in other words)					
6	Expressions that withhold your full commitment to the information (might, perhaps, possible, about, approximately, to some extent)					

- 7 Expressions that emphasize your certainty in the information stated (in fact, definitely, it is clear that)
- 8 a) Expressions that explicitly express your attitude towards an information in your writing (unfortunately, I agree, surprisingly, promising idea, important contribution)
- 9 Expressions that build relationship with the reader (consider, note that, you can see that)
- 10 Expressions that explicitly refer to you as the author (I, we, my, our)

APPENDIX B

Writing Task on Undergraduates' Use of Metadiscourse in Persuasive Writing

Writing Activity

In not less than five paragraphs (which include an introductory paragraph, developmental paragraphs and a concluding paragraph), write a persuasive essay on **why end-of-semester examinations should be banned in your university**. Provide at least three convincing reasons to explain your stand on the topic. To support your stand, you can quote relevant sources, use tables, statistics, and your life-experiences.

APPENDIX C

Analytical Scale of Argumentative Writing

Score	1. Content	Grade (level)
15-20	Effectively introduces the claim(s), manurely provides an in-depth or extensive account of relevant data in support of the claim(s), backs the warrants, accounts for rebuttals and may employ qualifiers	A (Excellent)
12-14	Presents a reasonably mature and extensive account of relevant claims and data, but at times lacks adequate backing	B (Competent)
10-11	Presents relevant claims and data, but the data sound immature and are not well-elaborated	C (Modest)
8-9	Presents claims, data, warrants and backings, some of which may be irrelevant	D (Basic)
0-7	No response Or only makes a number of claims, some of which may be irrelevant	F (Very limited)
Score	2. Organization	Grade (level)
15-20	Well-organized introduction/narration/division, body and conclusion; sentences skillfully linked; an internal logic clearly showing writer's purpose and flow of ideas	A (Excellent)
12-14	Reasonably well-arranged introduction, confirmation and conclusion; sentences connected reasonably well; sometimes hard to follow the line of thought because of the gaps between a few ideas	B (Competent)
10-11	Introduction/conclusion: brief/lacking; despite certain redundant ideas, easy to follow writer's line of thought and purpose; sentences linked well but cases of wrong connections evident	C (Modest)
8-9	No introduction/conclusion; evidence of some basic form of cohesion but in case of complicated ideas, lack of cohesion; despite a few incoherent sentences, a simple pattern of thought evident	D (Basic)
0-7	Lacking an introduction/conclusion; no/vain attempts to create cohesion; OR no response	F (Very limited)
Score	3. Vocabulary	Grade (level)
15-20	Appropriate use of simple-complex/technical words, phrases, collocations, idioms, or figures of speech; few incorrect forms; skilful use of synonyms/antonyms to avoid repetition	A (Excellent)
12-14	Occasional incorrect word forms, phrases, or collocations; mostly using simple words; use of synonyms/antonyms to avoid repetition but still a few repeated words	B (Competent)
10-11	Incorrect word forms, phrases, or collocations in almost every other sentence; sometimes even lacking simple words to communicate; OR repeating the same words all over the essay	C (Modest)
8-9	Incorrect word forms, phrases, or collocations in almost all sentences	D (Basic)
0-7	No response or a collection of irrelevant words	F (Very limited)
Score	4. Language conventions	Grade (level)
15-20	Few negligible slips; variety of simple-complex structures; form getting meaning across very skillfully, very skilful control over spelling, capitalization and punctuation	A (Excellent)
12-14	Occasional errors; mostly simple structures; form still getting meaning across, occasional spelling, capitalization or punctuation problems not blurring meaning	B (Competent)
10-11	Almost one error every other sentence; form blurring meaning sometimes, some spelling, capitalization, or punctuation problems blurring meaning, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation problems in almost all sentences blurring meaning	C (Modest)
8-9	A collection of garbled sentences and fragments, confusing rather than communicating	D (Basic)
0-7	No response/fragments; spelling, capitalization/punctuation problems in almost all the essay	F (Very limited)
Score	5. Overall effectiveness	Grade (level)
15-20	Very skilful and effective presentation and justification of arguments through a highly engaging, correct, clear, appropriate and/or ornate style; task requirements skillfully fulfilled; written well over the word limit	A (Excellent)
12-14	Effectively presenting and justifying arguments through an reasonably engaging, correct, clear and appropriate style; task still fulfilled reasonably well; written over to the word limit	B (Competent)
10-11	A reasonable ability in presenting arguments but through a simple, fairly correct, clear and appropriate style, task requirements almost fulfilled; written around the word limit	C (Modest)
8-9	Lacking a reasonable ability in presenting arguments through a monotonous, usually incorrect, unclear and inappropriate style; task partially fulfilled; written below the word limit	D (Basic)
0-7	No ability to present arguments; incorrect, unclear and inappropriate style; task not fulfilled; written far below the word limit	F (Very limited)