Early-Career Researchers' Perceptions of Constructing an Authorial Identity via Self-Mention and Code-Meshing

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The present study aims to explore the insights of Turkish early-career researchers into the use of self-mention and code-meshing strategies to construct an authorial identity. The data were obtained from six early-career researchers in the field of social sciences who have publication experience in both Turkish and English, and collected through a demographic information questionnaire and in-depth individual and group interviews. The qualitative analysis of the data revealed that Turkish early-career researchers tend to have a distant approach toward highlighting their authorial identity in academic texts, bringing forward the issues of academic culture, intelligibility and power dynamics, although some milder views are present suggesting that such practices help establishing a strong existence in academia. Some suggestions are made for creating a more inclusive and flexible writing education that fosters voice development of writers.

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Introduction

Identity is an area of research that has been widely investigated in the field of language education. So far, many researchers have explored the identity construction of second language teachers and learners, especially in the context of English as an additional language. To be more specific, there have been numerous studies looking into the language learning histories of English language learners, and the identity construction of non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) who are teaching English as a second language in different contexts. Recently, many studies on identity issues have been conducted adopting narrative inquiry as a research method, as "narrative studies lead us to look at issues in different ways or open up new avenues of inquiry" (Benson, 2014, p.164).

Despite a great number of studies on identity issues conducted with second language teachers and learners using narrative inquiry as a research method, there seems to be a gap in literature when it comes to the writer identity construction of academics. As Ivanič (1998) puts it, "writing is a particularly salient form of social action for the negotiation of identities, because written text is deliberate, potentially permanent and used as evidence for many social purposes (such as judging academic achievement)" (p. 32). Writer's identity plays such a significant role in social circles; however, "whereas there has been much research on language and identity with respect to learners, teachers, and teacher educators, there has been little focus on the identity of the researcher, an important stakeholder in language education" (Norton & Early, 2011, p. 415). Writers in academia usually produce a written text to reach a wider audience to get recognition or acknowledgment by publishing their work in high-quality journals, and while doing so, they must consider that "textual production is at the core of negotiating the interactive relationships among the members of academic communities and claiming and constructing academic identities" (Flowerdew & Wang, 2015, p.82); therefore, establishing and sustaining an authorial identity is of utmost importance for researchers.

Writers can make various linguistic choices to express their stance and get their voices heard in academic texts, such as using 'them' as a gender-free singular object form, using the spelling '-ize' rather than '-ise' for suffixes, or not using Latin expressions like 'ibid', replacing them with their English equivalents (Ivanič, 1998). Another way to raise the writer's voice in academic writing would be the use of an interactional metadiscourse marker, *self-mention*, which helps to demonstrate the writer's stance "as an attitudinal dimension that includes features which refer to the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgments, opinions, and commitments" (Hyland, 2005, p. 176). According to Hyland (2005), whether or not a writer explicitly refers to themselves in the text is usually "a conscious choice" and very much related to their stance as a writer and authorial identity in their discipline.

Another element that can be used by writers to emphasize their authorial identity is the use of *code-meshing* in their academic texts. Code-meshing, 'a strategy for merging local varieties with Standard Written English' (Canagarajah, 2006), seems to be an under-

researched topic (Canagarajah, 2011), leaving a gap in the literature for non-native English speakers use in academic writing, especially in EFL contexts. Although the concept has been introduced to celebrate "language difference and hybridity" (Gevers, 2018), implementing code-meshing in academic writing has been regarded as challenging, either because the concept has not yet been theoretically settled (Matsuda, 2014), or it may hinder a desirable language development (Atkinson & Tardy, 2018). Another reason why code-meshing is not encouraged among educators and students is related to the academic standards set on our minds that are hard to change, as "depending on our age and our histories, our imaginations may be shaped by decades' old 'data points' of academic rejection" (Ogunniyi & O'Neil, 2022, p. 344). Regardless of the prejudices against the use of such translingual practices, the goal remains to "help students build (meta) linguistic awareness and work toward social justice" (Schreiber & Watson, 2018, p. 95).

In language and identity literature, there seem to be few studies investigating the early-career researchers' perceptions as to constructing an authorial identity, adopting a qualitative approach to uncover these perceptions, focusing on how academics perceive the use of self-mention and code-meshing practices to construct writer identity. As Curry & Lillis (2019, p. 5) suggest, "more research is needed on how scholars use multiple languages in academic communications and the effects of these practices and choices on their work lives and on global knowledge production". Therefore, this study aims to fill a gap in language and identity literature by exploring researchers' attitudes toward personalizing academic writing and unfolding the factors that affect their preferences.

Literature Review

The use of self-mention in academic writing

The use of first-person pronoun in academic writing is regarded as a way to display author's identity and authority in the text and has been widely investigated in different genres, from student essays to article journals, in various scientific disciplines. In one of the earlier studies, Hyland (2001) focused on the use of self-citation and first-person pronouns in 240 research articles in eight disciplines, and he found that the pronouns "I", "my" and "me" were rarely used in the articles in hard sciences, whereas they occurred frequently in humanities and social sciences with a proportion of 3/4. In another study, Hyland and Jiang (2017) compared the use of first-person pronouns in academic writing across time, examining a corpus of research articles in four disciplines in five top journals in 1965, 1985 and 2015, in order to explore a possible trend toward informalizing academic writing. Their examination revealed that, over the fifty years, there seemed to be a small increase in the use of first-person pronouns in the field of hard sciences and a reduction in social sciences, which the authors related to the changing rhetorical practices.

Some scholars compared the use of first-person pronouns in the academic articles of NES (native English-speaking) and NNES (non-native English speaking) writers, revealing certain stylistic differences. In one study, Hyland (2002) examined the use of personal pronouns in 64 undergraduate theses in the Hong Kong context, and he emphasized the underuse of personal pronouns when compared with the corpus of research articles, referring to the fact that there may be various social and psychological factors

behind the writers' stylistic choices. In another study, Martinez (2005) compared the use of first-person pronouns in biology articles written by NES writers with those manuscripts produced by NNES writers, and she found the instances of underuse and overuse in the NNES corpus, stressing out the need to increase NNES writers' awareness regarding the issues of authorial presence and authority. In a similar study, Lores-Sanz (2011) examined the differences between the academic articles written by Spanish scholars and NES writers concerning the use of first-person pronouns as an indicator of author visibility. Her results revealed a much more frequent use of exclusive pronouns by NES writers compared to Spanish writers, and she attributes this finding to conventional or stylistic reasons.

Regarding the Turkish context, there have been numerous research studies focusing on the use of self-mention in academic writing, visibly revealing that Turkish writers tend to avoid using the "I" language in academic writing (Akbas & Hardman in Hatipoglu et al., 2017; Karahan, 2013; Deveci, 2020). One of those studies compared the use of self-mention markers in doctoral dissertations of literary studies written in Turkey and the UK and found significant differences between the two academic cultures concerning authorial voice (Can & Cangır, 2019). The results of the corpus-based analysis revealed that unlike their counterparts at British universities, Turkish doctoral students state their opinions in a more indirect style, "which renders the authorial voice and stance markers in their dissertations far less prominent" (p.10).

In another corpus-based study exploring the authorial presence markers in the argumentative essays of Turkish and American students, Çandarlı et al. (2015) found that Turkish students use first-person singular pronouns in their English essays much less frequently than their American counterparts. When asked about the possible reasons for this during the additional stimulated recall interviews, the participants explained that they were taught not to use "I" in academic writing while receiving L2 writing instruction at high school, which signifies the role of instruction in adopting such elements into writing.

Another study by Işık-Taş (2018) that explored how the use of first-person pronouns reflects authorial identity through the examination of 130 Sociology research articles published locally and internationally obtained similar findings. The analysis of corpus-based and interview-based analyses revealed that Turkish writers publishing in Turkish national journals preferred to refrain from using first-person pronouns and showing an explicit authorial presence in their articles, unlike their peers publishing in international journals, which implies that publication context plays an important role in the academics' linguistic and discoursal choices.

Code-meshing in academic writing

When an African-American scholar Young (2004) coined the term 'code-meshing', he explained it as a way to "blend dialects, international languages, local idioms, chat-room lingo, and the rhetorical styles of various ethnic and cultural groups in both formal and informal speech acts" (p. 114). The term was later proposed by Canagarajah (2006) as well, who emphasized the need for "multidialectalism" rather than "monodialectalism", further commenting that minority students not only need to know the varieties that exist in the English language, but also the ways to bring it into their writing (p.598). Since the coinage of the term, some scholars have focused on its merits in terms of challenging the

existing power relations (Canagarajah, 2011; Siegel, 2020), while others have touched upon its inadequacy in combatting the inequalities in global academia (Matsuda, 2014; Hultgren & Molinari, 2022; Kuteeva, 2022).

The implication of code-meshing still has not found a prevalent place in the Turkish context despite the calls for integrating it in writing classes to promote respect for plurilingualism (Young, 2010; Canagarajah, 2011). There seem to be a limited number of studies investigating the translingual writing practices of Turkish writers (referred to as translanguaging, translingualism or code-meshing in different studies), but most of them fail to provide naturally-occurring data, suggesting that more research is needed to find out how inclined Turkish writers feel toward employing such strategies in academic writing.

One of the studies with a focus on translingual writing in a multilingual classroom was carried out to investigate how and why plurilingual students make use of translingual elements in their writing and whether it has an impact on their writing performance (Altın, 2023). The analysis of students' texts and interview data revealed that plurilingual students can bring their linguistic repertoire into their writing when allowed, and using translanguaging in their writing enables students to enhance their writing performance and express their views more effectively. However, it should be noted that these students were purposefully asked and encouraged to use translingual elements in writing, and as suggested by the researcher, the study aims to "encourage educators to embrace a pedagogy that values and leverages students' diverse linguistic backgrounds" (p.136).

In another study conducted by Akkuş & Ataş (2023), students in an English-oriented content course were allowed to translanguage during their exams to explore the impact on this practice on students' writing skills in expressing themselves and constructing knowledge. The analysis of exam papers suggested that translanguaging allowed students to express themselves better and utilize their linguistic repertoire to fill lexical gaps that occurred during the exam.

The role of translanguaging pedagogy in writing classes was explored in another study, in which the students' perceptions concerning such practices in an EFL class were investigated (Karabulut & Kesli Dollar, 2022). Having experimental and focus groups to compare the effects of translingual practices, the researchers found that translingual practices enabled the students instructed with this pedagogy to perform better at tasks, use more varied and accurate vocabulary and grammar, as well as present cohesion and coherence.

Although all of these studies suggest that using translingual elements in writing helps students improve their writing skills and provides them with diversity and richness in their language production, it should be noted that such practices do not appear in texts randomly and instinctively, but are encouraged, even instructed, by the teachers to be implemented in writing. Therefore, the question of whether the L2 learners of English would still use translingual practices in their writing without being asked to do so remains to be answered.

Research Aim and Research Questions

The current study aims to investigate the perceptions of Turkish early-career researchers as to constructing an authorial identity through the use of self-mention and code-meshing in academic writing. By gathering their opinions related to the inclusion of these concepts into their manuscripts, the researchers hope to find out where the Turkish scholars stand in terms of personalizing their writing in academia, whether they feel motivated or restricted to embed their identity in their writing, and what motivates them to do so. Therefore, this research aims to find the answers to the following two questions:

1) How do early-career researchers perceive the use of self-mention and code-meshing to construct an authorial identity in their writing?

2) What factors play a role in their decision to (not) use self-mention and code-meshing in their academic writing?

Methodology

Research Design

Being a part of a larger scale research study investigating the authorial identity construction of Turkish early-career researchers in social sciences, the current study employs a qualitative research design, adopting narrative inquiry as the methodological framework. As a method, narrative inquiry "begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.110); therefore, in this study, the researchers focus on the lived experiences and relevant viewpoints developed in time regarding personalizing academic writing. According to Barkhuizen (2022), topics in narrative inquiry could be related to teachers' and learners' personal experiences concerning subjects about teaching and learning, as well as "their changing identities as they go about their work" (p.8). In the current study, by conducting in-depth interviews with the participants, the researcher aims to unfold the lived experiences and related perceptions of Turkish academics that play a role in the construction of an authorial identity while producing English manuscripts written with the primary purpose of publication.

Publication Ethics

As for ethical considerations, the official permission to conduct this study was obtained from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board at Hacettepe University on 18.01.2021 and was assigned the number E-35853172-300-00001403401. Participation in this study was completely voluntary, and participants' consent was obtained via the consent form.

Participants

For the current study, 6 participants were selected through the purposive sampling method. The criteria for the participants determined by the researcher were as follows: The participants should be currently working in a field of social sciences and be affiliated with

a Turkish state university, should have completed their doctoral education in the past five years, and should have published at least one article in both languages (English and Turkish) either in local or international journals. The academics that met these predetermined criteria and agreed to participate in the study were selected among those who were enrolled in an Academic Writing Course, in which one of the researchers was working as an instructor at the time of the data collection. The course had been running for about six weeks when the data were collected. The researchers reached out to a group of 15 academics who were enrolled in the course through e-mail, and after explaining the scope and the purpose of the study, they asked whether they would be interested in joining as participants. Six academics responded positively to the invitation, all of whom were employed in the current study.

At the time of the data collection, all of the participants were employed at a state university in Türkiye and working in the field of Social Sciences, though in different programs. They were each located in a different geographical location of the country (namely, Marmara, Black Sea, Aegean, East Anatolia, Southeast Anatolia and Central Anatolia), which is deemed important to help gather opinions from various local contexts. The participants' ages ranged between 31 and 43. Out of 6 participants, 4 were females and 2 were males. All of the participants had to take a foreign language (English) proficiency exam, prepared and conducted by the Measuring, Selection and Placement Center in Türkiye (ÖSYM), as a prerequisite for an academic position at the university. Therefore, their English proficiency levels were determined through these exam results and range from B1 to C1 based on the CEFR (The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). To protect the anonymity of the participants, their names have been replaced with pseudonyms and their affiliations are not given in the study. The demographic information of the participants can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Participants' Demographic Information

Name (pseudonym)	Academic title	Age	Gender	Affiliated department	English prof. level
Selim	Assoc. Prof.	31	Male	Labor Economics and Industrial Relations	B1
Ceren	Assist. Prof.	36	Female	English Language Teaching	C1
Banu	Assoc. Prof.	37	Female	Recreation Management	B2
Ece	Assist. Prof.	34	Female	Political Science and Public Administration	B2
Ahmet	Assist. Prof.	35	Male	Psychology	B2
Mine	Assist. Prof.	43	Female	Business Administration	C1

Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection Tools

To explore the use of self-mention and code-meshing as contributing elements to constructing an authorial identity, the researchers adopted a qualitative study design and

accordingly utilized two data collection tools: a demographic information questionnaire and in-depth individual and group interviews.

The purpose of using the first data collection tool, the questionnaire, was twofold: To double check whether all the participants who agreed to participate in the study met the required criteria, and to obtain more details about their personal and educational backgrounds. The researchers had reached out to these academics through their personal and academic websites, making sure they could all be considered early-career researchers having published both in Turkish and English; however, they wanted to make sure no information was missing by asking these questions in the questionnaire as well. In the questionnaire, they asked the participants about their work experience, educational background (where and when they graduated and which programs), their current academic title and when they received it, their age, gender and English proficiency level (which English exam they have taken and their score). The questionnaire was sent through e-mail and was expected to be received back in a week.

The second data collection tool was the in-depth interviews that were conducted in two stages: individual interviews and a focus group interview. The semi-structured individual interviews included questions regarding the participants' academic and professional background, with a focus on their experiences in English language learning and academic writing. During the individual interviews, the participants' experiences and views were gathered regarding their language learning history and how it has affected their development of an authorial identity while writing their theses and articles throughout their careers. During the focus group interview, on the other hand, there was more emphasis on their current writer identity and the factors that play a role in it. In this part, the participants were given a short lecture about the concepts of self-mention and code-meshing, which they had already been presented in detail during the Academic Writing course they were taking. Upon the researchers' reintroducing these two elements in academic writing, the participants were invited to discuss what their perceptions were about these concepts, whether or not they preferred to use them in their writing, and what factors contributed to their preferences.

Before the interviews were conducted with the participants, the questions were discussed with a senior scholar with a PhD who has experience in academic writing, and a pilot interview was carried out with an academic with similar qualifications to those in the actual study. Upon the feedback received from both parties, two questions were revised as they were thought to be ambiguous and needed clarification. After these revisions, the final set of the interview questions was shared with two other colleagues with a PhD in ELT and expertise in academic writing, and the questions were finalized upon their feedback.

Data Collection Procedure

In order to investigate how the Turkish early-career researchers perceive the role of self-mention and code-meshing in academic writing in constructing a writer identity, the researchers utilized two main data collection tools: A demographic information

questionnaire and interviews (one round of in-depth individual interviews and one focus group interview). Once the participants responded positively to the invitation e-mail, they were sent an online demographic information questionnaire, in which they were asked questions regarding their educational background, age, gender, academic title and English proficiency level. At this stage, they were also provided with the ethical committee approval report and were asked to fill in a consent form to participate in the study.

After the questionnaire and the consent forms were received, the researchers arranged an interview schedule with each participant. The individual interviews were conducted online through the Zoom videoconferencing platform as the participants were residing in different locations across the country. Each interview lasted between 48 and 78 minutes, and the total number of hours spent on these interviews was 5 hours and 43 minutes. During these semi-structured interviews, the participants' utterances were not interrupted; however, they were asked to elaborate on certain points when the researchers felt the need to delve deeper into the subject.

Once the individual interviews were completed, the researchers set out to arrange a time for the group interview, and Doodle platform was used to determine the best time that would fit everyone's schedule. All 6 participants joined the online group meeting, which was again conducted via Zoom platform. The interview lasted for 1 hour and 47 minutes, and the researchers tried to make sure each participant had a chance to share their opinions on a given question. There were overlaps and interruptions during the interview as a natural part of a group discussion, but this did not yield in any loss of data. During the group interview, the participants were reminded of the concepts of self-mention and code-meshing with a short explanation and exemplification, as they had already been introduced to these two concepts before in their Academic Writing classes. After the reminder, they were asked about their opinions and impressions, as well as their experiences regarding their priorities and preferences.
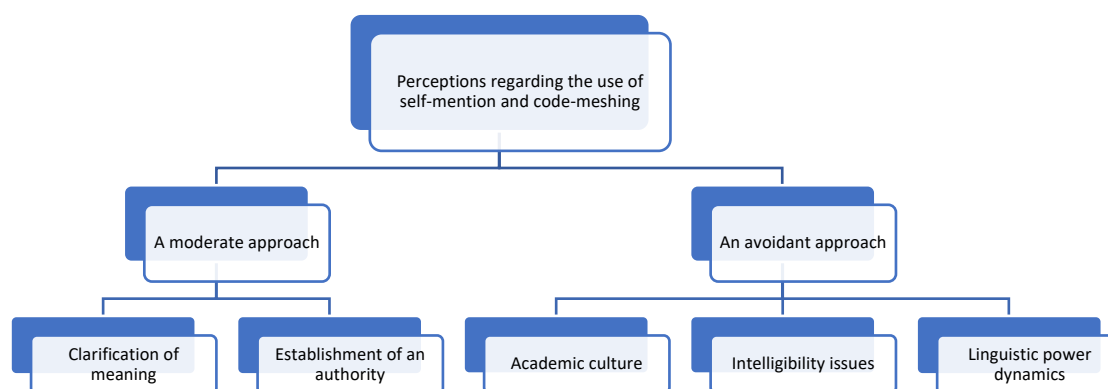
Data Analysis

After the completion of data collection, there were two sets of data at hand: The first set of data that came from the questionnaire, and the second from the interviews. The responses in the questionnaires were used to triangulate the data obtained from departmental web pages and provided in the interviews. The second pile of data, however, required more detailed analysis. First, the interviews were transcribed verbatim. Then, the transcriptions were coded using Saldaña's coding manual (2013), and the data were analyzed using thematic analysis method using MAXQDA 2022 software program.

Findings

The current study aims to explore what early-career Turkish researchers think about using self-mention and code-meshing in academic writing in terms of constructing an authorial identity and what triggers them to think so; therefore, the findings will be presented here in two main categories: Perceptions regarding the use of self-mention and

code-meshing in writer identity construction (with the sub-themes of *a moderate approach* and *an avoidant approach*), and the factors that play a role in these perceptions (with the sub-themes of *academic culture*, *intelligibility issues*, and *linguistic power dynamics*).

Figure 1. Summary of Findings

Perceptions regarding the use of self-mention and code-meshing

The analysis of the data revealed that Turkish early-career researchers tend to perceive the use of self-mention and code-meshing differently in that they either regard it as a writing behavior that can be tried and tested to see whether it gets recognized by others, or as something to be avoided having no place in academic writing. These different approaches will be presented here under two main themes, *a moderate approach* and *an avoidant approach*, and the factors that determine these perceptions will be listed and supported with quotations from the participants.

A moderate approach

As for the use of self-mention and code-meshing in academic writing, two participants sound more moderate, stating that they might consider using them in certain situations. For instance, Mine says "I can prefer code-meshing if it's just right on the nail, or if I feel I can't give the exact meaning in English. Then, it would make sense" (GI). She states that emphasizing one's identity through such elements in writing would make them feel "more competent and accomplished", since "having an authorial identity has a lot to do with experience and familiarity" (GI).

Another reason for using such practices in academic writing seems to be related to establishing a personal authority. One of the participants states that he is willing to try out such practices as he thinks it gives the writers more freedom and helps them construct an authorial identity. While talking about certain academic conventions such as CARS model (Swales, 1990), Selim says, "When it comes to writing, I feel worried about being overly robotized to be honest" (II). He also adds:

Dictating that one shouldn't get out of a certain writing model is, I believe, the biggest betrayal that can be done to an academic. Okay, there are some common points that academic writing must embody, but a one-size-fits-all approach is a betrayal to writing itself (II).

While sharing his opinions about the use of self-mention in his articles, Selim puts forward the idea that "Turkish academics usually refrain from using 'I' language", and he attributes this tendency to "the characteristic of modesty" (II). Criticizing the idea that a researcher must have an extraordinary finding to share if they want to use the "I" language, he says:

The important thing is not to have found something extraordinary, but to stress out that I'll be opening up a discussion about whether or not I found something ground-breaking, and I should emphasize I am the subject of this action. If the research topic is not novel enough, the reviewers will tell for sure, but what matters is to be able to say "I" made it (GI).

An avoidant approach

The academics who tend to avoid using self-mention and code-meshing in academic texts have various explanations for doing so. One of the participants, Ceren, thinks that using code-meshing in academic writing could lead to confusion in both local and international readers and adds:

If we got into this (code-meshing) with the purpose of imposing our language on others in mind, we would even create a variety in our own language, because a word that we use here (in this part of the country) may mean something different in another. And I think this would lead to nothing but confusion by readers abroad (GI).

Another participant, Banu, says: "I feel like we are making it harder for non-native readers only to make another non-native writer feel better" (II). She believes that "keeping the standards is more advantageous both for the reader and the writer" as the main purpose of academic writing is to be "readable and easily understandable" (II). Banu brings forward a different point in not using such practices in academic writing: "When we use pronouns like 'we' or 'our', it feels like we are sharing the guilt. The use of 'I' or 'my', however, doesn't have much place in our literature, so why should I bother using it?" (GI). What she means by "sharing the guilt" is not only related to the content of the research conducted but also the language used while writing up that research; therefore, she takes on a collaborative approach to producing academic work and avoids taking on the whole responsibility. Similarly, Ceren says: "Passive voice is one of my favorites in grammar – It feels like if there's a mistake, let's not take it on but put the blame on someone else" (GI). By refraining from using the "I" language, she feels she sounds more modest, and believes "imperfections can be better tolerated if you don't boast about your role in the research" (GI).

Suggesting that the use of self-mention is more meaningful when one comes up with an innovative idea, Ece says: "If I found something *totally* new in literature, yes, I would probably love to show that it's *me* who found it. But I'm not sure if I can make such

a creative and ground-breaking discovery" (GI). On a similar ground, approaching the use of "I" language with caution, Banu makes the following comment:

> I've never used the first-person singular in my Turkish publications, and I don't think I ever will because it doesn't sound nice and it gives the impression of arrogance. In fact, we use it not to boast about ourselves but to show that it was *me* who did the research, but it just doesn't feel right (GI).

Last but not least, Ahmet considers using first-person singular pronouns "a bit odd" and adds: "When I think about the articles I have published, umm yes, we have used 'we' while writing a paper with my colleagues, but using 'I' sounds weird. Part of my mind grows uneasy when I even think about it" (GI).

Factors that play a role in these perceptions

The data in this study revealed that the main factors behind the decisions of early-career researchers to (not) use self-mention and code-meshing practices are academic culture, intelligibility issues, and linguistic power dynamics.

Academic culture

One of the most important factors that play a role in early-career researchers' decision (not) to use self-mention and code-meshing in academic writing seems to be related to the academic culture they feel they belong to. All the participants state that personalization does not have a place in the Turkish academic literature, and this common perception makes them approach this subject with caution. Even the ones who have a more moderate approach express their concerns for not being acknowledged in the academia if they adopt the "I" language. Selim says: "As you know, we do our best to sound passive in Turkish publications, which is what we are expected to. Using the first-person singular is considered too daring" (II). However, he keeps up his optimism and moderate approach and adds: "From what I observe, I feel we should bring this to our agenda in English publications. If we can keep the balance (between active and passive voice), it may sound reasonable, and even cool" (II).

Claiming that Turkish academic culture has "well-defined boundaries", Ece says: "I feel that we use passive voice in writing because we are passive in academia in many aspects" (II). Similarly, Selim mentions the boundaries that tend to limit the writers:

> I think the reason behind our hesitation (to use active voice) is that we have been repressed in the Turkish academic literature, and we are allowed to wander around only in a very limited area. For instance, even when you are writing your Master's or PhD thesis, your advisor tends to have an attitude like "you should know your place" (II).

Another participant, Ahmet, also openly states that he would never use self-mention in his texts. He further explains his concerns by saying "Actually, I don't think we will ever be allowed to use it in Turkish academia. They would immediately return the

paper and ask for a correction" (II). Selim feels that the academic culture he belongs to is not open to using such a personal tone, but he says he can try it in international journals, which, he thinks, have a more "sensitive" attitude toward identity issues:

> "If I want to publish in a local journal in English and use self-mention or code-meshing, it might still stick out like a sore thumb, because those journals have insurmountable boundaries. But I can try it in an article for an international journal, as I would lose nothing" (II).

Another point to consider is that there seems to be a tendency toward believing that the use of self-mention is related to the academic title of the writer, as "experience brings along freedom of speech" (Ece, II). In alignment with this thought, Ceren also states: "I can only start using self-mention after getting a higher position in academia, but now I'm in the early stages and I prefer to stay on the safe side" (GI). Similar to what Ceren feels, Ece also mentions that "it is not common in Turkish articles" and adds: "After it's become more common and everybody starts to use them and you get to read more and more of them, you'll start using that too. It's when it stops being risky" (GI). On a similar note, Banu believes she will be more courageous in the upcoming years:

> In this stage, it feels too daring to use them (self-mention and code-meshing). My professors, for instance, sit down and write a paper in an hour. They don't even need to check the literature because they've created some of it. When I reach that level, I guess I'll have no hesitation to sound more daring (II).

While referring back to the process of writing his dissertation, Ahmet emphasizes his fear of "standing out" and mentions how hard he tried to follow the standards:

> While writing the English summary of my doctoral dissertation, I used "I" as the subject because Grammarly always corrected me on this. Then, I thought to myself "OK, I'll use active voice and use 'I'". When I read it once again, I got worried thinking they (the readers) might call me a snob, but I still submitted it like that (II).

Mentioning that the academics' not using self-mention in their texts might be related to "a lack of self-confidence due to language incompetence", Banu puts forward another possible reason and says: "Maybe, we don't want to stand out in academia by sounding too confident" (II), which is in line with what other participants have stated. Regarding code-meshing practices as challenging in Turkish academia, Ece makes a final remark by suggesting the following:

> If we really want to make the Turkish language heard, then we should do this: Let's uplift the Turkish academic journals to international standards and let them (international readers) follow the Turkish literature (…) If we really bother to draw the attention of international writers and readers, I believe we should raise the standards of Turkish manuscripts first (GI).

Intelligibility issues

When the participants were asked about their perceptions of academic writing, they all emphasized one single purpose of producing an academic manuscript, that is conveying opinions to an academic community. Unfolding the meaning of identity in academic writing, Selim says:

> If you ask me what I understand from authorial identity (…) For me, maybe it is not something lofty, but it means to exist in academia, not only in Türkiye but also abroad. Maybe that's the biggest motivation for me – to communicate your work to a wider audience as much as possible (II).

This perception is important in understanding the rationale behind the academics' preference for using or not using elements that could be associated with their writer identity. Academics conduct research and aim to publish its findings to be heard in local and international platforms, and while doing so, "they need to consider how to make it easier to understand by others" (Mine, II). In alignment with this concern, Ece (II) shares her opinions by saying: "My personal feeling is that... umm... yes, colorfulness (diversity) is nice, but if we branch out too much, for instance, how can I possibly read such a colorful (diverse) article?", emphasizing that intelligibility is paramount in academic writing.

In line with the common opinion, Mine focuses on functionality and says:

> I've come across such (code-meshing) practices in some articles. They write some words in Italian or French. I understand their meaning from the context, and we also have Google Translate if we are too curious about it. Well, yes, it sounds cool, but I'm not sure how well it really serves the purpose (GI).

Selim has a cautious attitude toward the use of code-meshing, and he believes one needs to be competent in both languages to take such a "risky" step and says:

> I may not be that competent in English, or maybe I don't know the English context right. Maybe what I adapted into Turkish is also not right. So, there's this possibility of confusing the reader while trying to bring some color from your own culture. I think it's really risky and should only be employed by those who are experienced in their field and competent in both languages; otherwise, it might lead to cultural chaos (GI).

Linguistic power dynamics

Another factor that seems to be playing a role in personalizing and giving a voice to academic texts is related to the linguistic power dynamics. Some languages, like English, tend to have more dominance compared to others, as it is considered to be the language of science globally. In the Turkish context, the English language has been continuously encouraged and even imposed on academics as the language of science and research publishing "as a means to integrate with Europe and the global scientific world" (Uysal, 2017, p.60). Therefore, the decision to (not) use translingual practices in writing seems to be affected by which language is being brought forward and in which context. Regarding the concept of constructing authorial identity through the use of code-meshing, Ceren raises the issue of native-speakerism and says:

> I think we call ourselves "multilingual" because we don't want to be referred as "non-native speakers of English". However, when we add a Turkish word or a symbol into an article, we are manifesting ourselves as non-native speakers and revealing our identity. While code-meshing, are we trying to brag about knowing many languages, or are we actually saying "hey, I am a non-native speaker of English, so read this article with this in mind"? I think this is a bit thought-provoking (GI).

Similarly, Banu believes that the adoption of code-meshing practices depends largely on which language is being used as an alternative to the main language of the text:

> I think it also depends on the language being used. The language that we are going to embed in the text should be recognized and respected as much as the main language of the article. I don't think a Spanish word and a Turkish word added to the text would leave the same impression on the reader (GI).

Holding the belief that the fundamental purpose of writing and publishing an academic text is "to reach a wider audience", Ceren raises her concern of not getting accepted in international academia if she uses any Turkish words in her writing:

> Many writers in academia, including me and my professors as well, have one basic purpose of writing in English or another foreign language – that is, how can I reach a wider audience? The purpose of belonging to that international academic community. For this reason, if we consult to translingual practices and occasionally use Turkish words in the texts, I feel it would wipe us out of that community we struggle to get in (GI).

Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

The current research study aimed to explore the perceptions of early-career Turkish researchers into the use of self-mention and code-meshing practices as strategies to construct authorial identity in academic texts, and the factors that affect their choices. By employing in-depth individual and group interviews as part of a larger study adopting a narrative inquiry approach, the researchers hoped to find out the attitudes of Turkish scholars toward personalizing their manuscripts and the reasons behind their current positioning as academic writers.

The analysis of the interview data revealed that Turkish early-career scholars tend to avoid using "I" language in their academic texts but prefer to use passive voice instead, as previously supported by many Turkish scholars in the literature (Can & Cangır, 2019; Işık-Taş, 2018; Kafes, 2017). When asked why they refrain from such practices, they gave various reasons for hiding their voice behind their texts, which seems to be related to the academic culture they are employed in as well as their concerns regarding acceptability. Although first-person singular pronouns are more commonly used in articles published in international journals both by Turkish and non-Turkish scholars, they are hard to find in articles written by Turkish scholars to be published in local journals (Işık-Taş, 2018), which shows the importance of publication context in making linguistic and discoursal choices. Therefore, we claim that the first step toward using more self-mention in academic articles written by Turkish scholars would be to familiarize the Turkish academia with such practices and increase its visibility and acceptability in articles published in local journals. Considering the promotion criteria of Turkish scholars, which require them to publish extensively locally and internationally, we should first provide them with a flexible and tolerant environment where they can present their authorial voice without the fear of getting rejected or stigmatized.

When it comes to using code-meshing strategies in their academic writing, Turkish scholars seem to be more conservative and hesitant, as they have concerns regarding whether their text would be understood by the readers, their scripts would be recognized in international platforms, or the academic culture they are employed in would be welcoming

such practices. In literature, some scholars consider translingual practices, including code-meshing, as "ill-equipped to overturn the wealth, might and power of the current global academic publishing regime" (Hultgren & Molinari, 2022) or liken such practices to "linguistic tourism" as "differences fascinate people" (Matsuda, 2014). The results of this study are in line with such claims in that Turkish scholars seem to be willing to stay in their comfort zone while engaging in academic writing, as they do not believe that localizing their work would serve their purpose or change the global linguistic power dynamics. This may also be attributed to the long-standing academic culture they have been educated and employed in, which does not readily adapt or change.

Despite this avoidant approach, there is an increasing number of studies appearing in journals that bring forward the optimistically inclusive and pedagogically pragmatic nature of translingual writing practices (Canagarajah, 2011; Smith et al., 2017; Brinkschulte et al., 2018); however, we cannot overlook the fact that the participants in these studies are purposefully asked to employ these elements in their writing, unlike the use of self-mention, leaving us with the question of whether the writers would still use them if not specifically asked to do so. Therefore, we need to reconsider the findings of such studies from a more critical perspective and extend the research into finding out how we can get these writers to voice themselves more strongly in their writing, allowing for more personalization and localization of academic texts.

Although self-mention and code-meshing could be regarded as two different concepts that comprise distinctive features and need to be handled separately, in this research, we, as the researchers, prefer to approach them as two sub-categories of writing elements used to enhance writer's position and identity in academic manuscripts. The interview data suggest that early-career Turkish writers tend to approach both elements with hesitation, which, on the one hand, they relate to the academic culture they are familiar with, and intelligibility issues and power relations on the other. Despite the relatively mild approach toward such practices embraced by some academics employed in this study, it should be noted that they state they do not use these strategies in their writing at the moment, but they *may* consider using them if such uses become more prevalent and acceptable in the Turkish academia.

Standing on a more cautious side suggests that Turkish academics do not feel powerful and confident enough to produce written texts that would allow them to highlight their authorial identity, as they are worried that they would be repressed in their academic surrounding, either by getting subject to mobbing by their seniors or rejected by the journals they submit their articles to. Although Canagarajah (2004, p. 286) suggests that "critical modes of negotiating discourses don't have to be taught" as "writers may develop these discourse strategies if they come to the communicative context with the frank and bold attitude of engaging with their conflicting discourse backgrounds to find a niche favorable to their purposes", we believe that, in most cases, writers first need to be introduced to various publication contexts and encouraged to delve deeper into articles with different voices to be able to gain their own over time.

Presenting an authorial voice is also very much related to the educational context one is brought up in; writers who have only been educated in a context where critical

thinking is not practiced as a vital component of the education system should not be expected to raise their voices when it comes to writing for an audience. Therefore, we suggest that writing skills (both in the local and target language) should be taught more critically and inclusively from the early ages, which would make the writers gain confidence and independence as they move along their academic journeys. Moreover, there needs to be more focus on pragmatic uses in language education, so that learners can get more familiar with the language structures appropriate for various contexts. As Uysal (2012) puts it, "any ESL/EFL academic writing instruction should include explicit teaching of the effective pragmatic argument features to help students establish a balance between hedging and toning down the claims and being clear and assertive" (p. 150).

Despite its valuable and thought-provoking findings, the current study has also some limitations. First of all, the findings are interpreted in the light of the data obtained from in-depth interviews with the participants, which combine their self-reported experiences and viewpoints. Examining the researchers' papers to find examples of self-mention and code-meshing practices might have strengthened the implications given here. Moreover, because of the small number of participants, the findings cannot be generalized; still, it should be remembered that in qualitative research "a preoccupation with method, validation, reliability, … and generalizability must be set aside in favor of a concern for meaning and interpretation" (Denzin, 1989). Researchers interested in authorial identity and academics' tendencies and perceptions regarding the use of personalizing elements could add a quantitative perspective to the study and reach a greater number of opinions on the topic, which could bring about more generalizable outcomes.

The findings of this research imply that Turkish academics approach the idea of bringing their voices into academic writing with suspicion, fearing that it may lead to confusion or rejection in academia. This concern might be considered to have valid grounds, as code-meshing the text or using first-person pronouns are not the only ways to challenge inequalities in global academic publishing. Therefore, it is important to bring the issues of authorial voice to the fore and introduce different ways of implementing it to newly-emerging writers to enable them gain confidence. This study reveals that Turkish early-career researchers are not well-informed enough about how to voice themselves in academic texts. We believe such studies help increase awareness, so that writers can decide for themselves how they want to sound in their manuscripts and tune up their work.

The results suggest that Turkish scholars seem to refrain from presenting a strong authorial identity in their texts, but it would be misleading to hold the current academic environment responsible for such passivity. Considering the limited L2 writing instruction in traditional Turkish classrooms, where there is a tendency toward strictly following the standard rules not leaving much space for deviations, we should remember the important role the educators play to encourage and support their learners. Most L2 users prefer to stick to the standard rules during language production, as they do not feel confident enough to challenge the status quo; therefore, we believe they need more encouragement to be able to sound stronger and bring forward their linguistic, sociocultural and authorial identities. Obviously, in this context, this does not mean that each writer should come up with their own language systems and reject international conventions; on the contrary, this

means that personalizing writing may empower academics from different circles and enable the writers to take responsibility of their work in a more subtle way.

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