Summary: This article analyzes the degree of grammaticalization and fixation of 19 metadiscourse markers that establish endophoric relations in nine academic essays written by university students. These markers contribute to the organization of the discourse as they refer to information given in other parts of the text and guide the reader to the desired interpretation. A morphological approach of the study shows some compositional variation of the elements integrated in these markers, whereas a syntactic approach reveals more fixation of these parenthetical segments that act peripherally and present mobility in the statement. From the pragmatic point of view, these markers develop a principal function as referential markers, but they have also secondary functions like conclusive and continuative. This formal and functional variation leads us to yet consider them at the first stages of grammaticalization.

Keywords: Endophoric markers, discourse markers, metadiscourse, grammaticalization, pragmatic functions, academic writings