

Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers in Persuasive Local Newspaper Articles: A Cross-Cultural Study

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Abstract

Across local Egyptian and British newspapers, the researcher intends to investigate the function of interpersonal metadiscourse markers in building and achieving persuasion. A corpus of 120 persuasive opinion pieces published in two local Egyptian newspapers and two local British newspapers, from July 2015 to June 2016, are randomly selected and examined using Dafouz-(2008) Milne's taxonomy of interpersonal metadiscourse markers. Overall, the results show that interpersonal metadiscourse is present in both corpora; however, the distribution and frequency of interpersonal indicators differ.

Keywords

Interpersonal metadiscourse markers, cross-cultural study, local newspaper, persuasion

1. Introduction

Newspapers and their audiences play a vital role in public media as the most popular written discourse. Despite the move from print to digital, newspapers continue to attract readers. To captivate the attention of a large, diverse, and anonymous readership, highly talented and capable authors are required. As a result, journalists need not only have extensive knowledge of the subject, but also be able to develop a positive relationship with their audience through textual communication. Newspaper discourse and opinion columns, according to Connor (1996: 144), are "some of the greatest examples of persuasive writing in all countries; they set standards for written persuasion."

To attract readers, a columnist or opinion piece writer must construct materials in such a way that they persuade the audience. The goal of opinion pieces is to persuade readers of the importance and significance of an issue and to persuade them to accept the authors' viewpoints (Fu & Hyland 2014). In editorials, opinion pieces "tend to express institutional opinions," whereas journalistic commentary seek to "encode the views of a single individual" (Wang 2008, as quoted in Fu &

Hyland 2014: 124). "Opinion pieces take a more personal interactional position, adopting a clear perspective toward both their topics and their readers by establishing a stance early in the piece and supporting this with a range of warrants for their opinions," Fu and Hyland (2014: 124), "opinion pieces take a more personal interactional position, adopting a clear perspective toward both their topics and their readers by establishing a stance early in the piece and supporting this with a range of warrants for their opinions." Writers use interpersonal metadiscourse markers, a quality associated with persuasive writing, to establish a good connection with the audience. As a result, the purpose of this study is to investigate this nuanced and sophisticated discourse in local.

2. Theoretical Review

Metadiscourse markers are techniques that construct texts in such a way that readers are involved in the writers' attitudes (Hyland & Tse 2004). Hyland (2005) describes metadiscourse as a cover phrase for self-reflectiveness and assisting readers or speakers in expressing their objectives in his book. As a result, utilizing metadiscourse markers allows writers to indicate their attitude toward the contents or the reader in their works (Hyland 2000). Furthermore, metadiscourse resources are the ties between text and disciplinary culture that allow the audience to comprehend the rhetorical environment in which the text is created (Hyland 2004a).

A variety of taxonomies have been constructed to examine metadiscourse markers throughout the last two decades (e.g. Crismore 1984, Dafouz-Milne 2003, 2008, Hyland 2005, Vande Kopple 1985). The majority of systems categorize metadiscourse indicators as textual or interpersonal. "Organize the discourse by pointing out subject transitions, signaling sequences, cross-referencing, linking concepts, previewing information, and so on," according to textual metadiscourse markers (Hyland 2004a, Hyland & Tse 2004: 158). Logic markers (additives, adversatives, consecutives, conclusives), sequencers, reminders, topicalizers, code glosses (parenthesis, punctuation devices, reformulators, exemplifiers), illocutionary markers, and announcements are all explored in the texts (Dafouz-Milne 2008).

Interpersonal metadiscourse markers, on the other hand, "alert readers to the Interpersonal metadiscourse indicators, on the other hand, "alert readers to the author's stance on both propositional information and the readers themselves, thus contributing to a writer-reader interaction and predicting the subjective negatability of claims" (Hyland 1998: 443). "Essentially an evaluative kind of discourse, interpersonal metadiscourse expresses the writer's uniquely defined, yet disciplinary restricted, persona" (Hyland 1999: 8). It's worth noting that,

because writers' attitudes are communicated through the use of interpersonal markers, the current study focused solely on this type of metadiscourse in local newspaper opinion pieces. The amount of hedges (i.e. epistemic verbs and expressions and probability adverbs), certainty markers, attributors, and attitude markers (i.e. deontic and cognitive verbs and attitudinal adverbs and adjectives) and commentaries (i.e. direct address to reader, inclusive expressions, personalization, rhetorical questions, and asides).

Macro Category	Sub Category	Examples
1. Hedges	Epistemic verbs	may/might/it <u>must be</u> two o'clock
	Epistemic expressions	It is likely, They are likely
	Probability adverbs	maybe, probably, perhaps
2. Certainty markers		undoubtedly, clearly, certainly
3. Attributor		'x' claims that.../As the Prime Minister
4. Attitude markers	Deontic verbs	have to, must, need to
	Cognitive verbs	I feel, I believe, I think
	Attitudinal adverbs	unfortunately, remarkably, pathetically
	Attitudinal adjectives	It is absurd, It is surprising
5. Commentaries	Direct address to the reader	<u>You must understand dear reader.</u>
	Inclusive expression	<u>We all believe, Let us summarize</u>
	Personalization	What the polls are telling me? I do not want
	Asides	Diana (<u>ironically for a Spenser</u>) was not of <u>the Establishment</u>
	Rhetorical questions	What is the future of Europe, integration or disintegration?

Dafouz-Milne (2008) Table 1: Interpersonal metadiscourse categories

Metadiscourse indicators are used differently depending on culture, community, and genre (Hyland 2005). As a result, studying a variety of texts from various fields authored for a variety of audiences and objectives should help us better understand how writers use metadiscourse sources to connect with their

readers. Metadiscourse markers have been studied in a variety of genres, including research articles (e.g. Abdi 2009, 2011, Afros & Schryer 2009, Dahl 2004, Gillaerts & Van de Velde 2010, Gholami & Ilghami 2016, Mur-Dueñas 2011), students' writings (e.g. Cheng & Steffensen 1996, Crismore, Markkanen & Steffensen 1993, Hyland 2004a, Intaraprawat & Steffensen 1995), textbooks (e.g. Hyland 1999), and newspaper editorials (e.g. Belmonte 2007, Boshraadi et al. 2014, Dafouz-Milne 2003, 2008, Kuhl & Mojood 2014, Le 2004, Maddalena & Belmonte 2011, Mu 2010, Noorian & Biria 2010, Tavanpour et al. 2016). Despite this, there are few research on the use of metadiscourse markers in local newspaper stories. The majority of metadiscourse literature focuses on business genres (e.g. Carrió-Pastor & Calderón 2015, Hyland 1998, Ulvskov Jrgensen 2015) and academic genres (e.g. Estaji & Vafaeimehr 2015). Other genres, according to Ho (2016), have garnered less attention from the study community.

To the best of the authors' knowledge, the use of interpersonal metadiscourse in realizing means of persuasion in local media has not been investigated. Writing is always engaged to reflect the interest, viewpoints, perspectives, and beliefs of individuals who perform them, according to Hyland (2005). Furthermore, as Kuhl and Mojood (2014) point out, while creating meaning, an author must consider not only its societal impact but also its impact on the readership, who interpret the meaning and, at the same time, form the audience for the act of communication. As a result, it is considered that authors of national or local newspapers analyze the immediate context's readership and use "persuasive, public, and likely both local cultures and ideological tendencies" (Kuhl & Mojood 2014: 1047).

3. Metadiscourse markers in newspaper editorials

There are several research on metadiscourse in newspapers. Dafouz-Milne (2008) looked at metadiscourse indicators in 40 British and Spanish newspaper editorials in a cross-cultural, cross-linguistic research. The type and distribution of interpersonal and textual metadiscourse indicators in the corpus varied, according to her results. The employment of textual metadiscourse indicators in English and Spanish opinion pieces, however, does not differ significantly according to statistical studies.

Wang and Zhang (2016) studied 10 English stories about North Korea's nuclear test in 2016 using Hyland's metadiscourse categorization technique. Interactional metadiscourse, which comprises transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code glosses (Hyland 2005), is found to be utilized more frequently than interactive metadiscourse, which included hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions, and engagement markers. Furthermore,

the widespread usage of attitude indicators and boosters suggest that countries are strongly opposed to the conduct. To account for these findings, the researcher claims that knowledge on metadiscourse may allow readers to understand the news stories about this occurrence. Metadiscourse, in other words, "reveals the manner in which authors project themselves into their discourse to convey their views and commitments to their readers" (Hyland 2004b: 133).

Noorian and Biria (2010) investigated interpersonal metadiscourse indicators in 12 opinion pieces published in English in the United States and Egypt, respectively, by two elite newspapers. There are substantial disparities in the usage of interpersonal metadiscourse indicators. "Culture-driven preferences, genre-driven norms, and Egyptian EFL writers' level of foreign language exposure," according to Noorian and Biria (2010), resulting in considerable differences in the two corpora.

To explore the interactive and interactional markers in the two datasets, the data are analyzed using Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse. The researcher discovers that the distribution of interactive and interactional markers varies. Discrepancies in the two corpora are due to the writers' cultural/linguistic backgrounds, and that the texts are genre-driven. In other words, the text is created following the precise patterns controlling writings targeting a given language/culture/discipline. Their findings highlight the importance of the idea of metadiscourse as a crucial component in expressing oneself in the process of persuasion across newspaper editorials.

The current research investigates metadiscourse markers in 10 English and Egyptian Economic newspaper articles in another cross-cultural metadiscourse research. The study states that the tokens of interpersonal metadiscourse markers are relatively high in American newspapers compared to Egyptian ones, whereas the incidence of textual markers is greater in the Egyptian corpus, using Kopple's (1985) framework to code the data. The study suggests that the discrepancies in the corpora may be due to the cultural backgrounds of the newspaper article writers.

4. The Aim of the Study

The majority of studies focus on opinion articles in national (e.g. Sukma & Sujatna 2014, Hashemi & Golparvar 2012, Mashhady, Fatollahi & Shahraki 2015, Yazdani & Salehi 2017) or international (e.g. Dafouz-Milne 2008, Maddalena & Belmonte 2011, Noorian & Biria 2010) newspapers, so research on local newspapers is Because practically all studies have looked at opinion pieces in international and national newspapers, and no one has looked at local/regional media, the current research was created with the following goals:

- (1) to look at the interpersonal metadiscourse markers used in local British and Egyptian persuasive newspaper stories, and
- (2) to see whether there are any variations in the usage of interpersonal metadiscourse markers between local British and Egyptian persuasive newspaper articles.

5. The Method of the Study

5.1 Selected Corpus

The corpus comprises of opinion pieces chosen at random from two Egyptian local newspapers and two British local newspapers. Opinion pieces cover "topics of exceptional societal relevance at the time of publishing" (Le 2004: 688) and do not reflect the official viewpoints of publications. Opinion columns, according to Connor (1996, as referenced in Noorian & Biria 2010), are a good example of persuasive writings in a country. In other words, the goal is to compare the differences in speech markers between the two cultures in opinion pieces published in English.

These newspapers are published in both print and online in Egypt, but the English edition is only available online. The online English version created by Egyptian non-native English speakers was analyzed for the purposes of this study. It goes without saying that English is regarded as a foreign language in Egypt and is learned through official training. Egypt's national and official language is Arabic (Egyptian), which has electronic versions accessible. A total of 120 articles (60 in each corpus) were chosen at random based on the topic's closeness to political concerns. Each corpus had around 30,000 words.

5.2 Data analysis

Dafouz-(2008) Milne's taxonomy of interpersonal metadiscourse indicators is used to examine the data. Every sentence in each corpus is examined to see which markers are utilized. The analyses are done by hand, and the markers are coded. The meaning of the marker in the phrase is taken into account when using markers that may serve several functions. Two raters verify the coded data to confirm its trustworthiness, resulting in an interrater reliability value of 0.9. The information is then loaded into SPSS version 22 for additional descriptive (frequency) and statistical (chi square) analysis.

6. Results

The employment of interpersonal metadiscourse markers in the two corpora is seen in Table 2. As demonstrated in the table, British local newspapers utilize 2,317 metadiscourse markers out of a total of 3,837 markers, compared to 1,520 markers in the Egyptian corpus. When compared to other categories, commentary

are the most common in the two corpora (41.2 percent and 31.1 percent in local British and Egyptian media, respectively). The second and third most commonly used categories in each corpus are attitude markers and hedges, with no variation between the two corpora. Furthermore, in local British and Egyptian media, attributors and certainty markers are the least often utilized techniques.

Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers		Local Newspaper				χ^2	df	P-value
		British		Egyptian				
		F	P	F	P			
1. Hedges	Epistemic verbs	490	21.1	383	25.2	8.563	1	0.003
	Probability adverbs	58	2.5	42	2.8	0.244	1	0.621
	Epistemic expressions	33	1.4	25	1.6	0.300	1	0.584
	Total number	581	25.1	450	29.6	9.584	1	0.002
2. Certainty Markers		110	4.7	46	3.0	6.972	1	0.008
3. Attributors		62	2.7	102	6.7	36.518	1	> 0.001
4. Attitude Markers	Denotic Verbs	167	7.2	126	8.3	1.523	1	0.217
	Attitudinal Adverbs	50	2.2	37	2.4	0.316	1	0.574
	Attitudinal Adjectives	102	4.4	87	5.7	3.422	1	0.064
	Cognitive Verbs	290	12.5	199	13.1	0.274	1	0.601
	Total number	609	26.3	449	29.5	4.871	1	0.027
5. Commentaries	Rhetorical Questions	85	3.7	38	2.5	4.039	1	0.044
	Reader Direct Address	6	0.3	0	0.0	-----	--	0.087
	Inclusive Expression	69	3.0	14	0.9	18.350	1	> 0.001
	Personalization	748	32.3	359	23.6	33.571	1	> 0.001
	Asides	47	2.0	62	4.1	13.982	1	> 0.001
	Total number	955	41.2	473	31.1	40.051	1	> 0.001
Total number of Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers		2317	100.0	1520	100.0			

F: Frequency; P: Percentage Table 2: The use of Interpersonal metadiscourse markers in selected corpora

Both local British and Egyptian corpora reveal that epistemic verbs are the most common subclass of hedges. Furthermore, in the corpora, cognitive verbs are the most common subgroup of attitude indicators. Personalization has the maximum number of instances in both the local British and local Egyptian corpora in the area of commentary.

Moreover, the distribution and types of interpersonal metadiscourse signals in the two corpora are shown in table 3. In both local British and local Egyptian corpora, the modal verbs can and will are employed most frequently (n = 102 and 131, 17.5 percent and 22.5 percent, respectively). Furthermore, the probability

adverbs maybe, possibly, and probably are the most frequently used adverbs in the British corpus (n = 13, 12, 11), whereas probably and almost are the most frequently used adverbs in the Egyptian corpus (n = 7 for both adverbs).

Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers		Types	Local British Newspaper		Local Egyptian Newspaper	
			F	P	F	P
Hedges	1. Epistemic Verbs	May	36	6.19	22	4.88
		Can	102	17.55	89	19.77
		Could	55	9.46	33	7.33
		Will	131	22.54	117	26
		Would	43	7.40	31	6.88
		Won't	2	0.34	2	0.44
		Shall	3	0.51	1	0.22
		Should	54	9.29	45	10
		Need	20	3.44	17	3.77
		Might	19	3.27	8	1.77
	Must	26	4.47	18	4	
	2. Epistemic Expressions		33	5.67	25	5.55
	3. Probability Adverbs	Maybe	13	2.23	5	1.11
		Probably	12	2.06	7	1.55
		Perhaps	11	1.89	5	1.11
		Possibly	3	0.51	3	0.66
		Almost	5	0.86	7	1.55
		Apparently	3	0.51	4	0.88
		Presumably	3	0.51	2	0.44
		Seemingly	4	0.68	6	1.33
Relatively	4	0.68	3	0.66		
Total number			581	100	450	100

Table 3: The use of hedges in the selected corpora

The distribution and kinds of certainty markers in the two corpora are shown in Table 4. As indicated in Table 4, the British corpus employs certainty markers more frequently than the Egyptian corpus (n = 110 and 46 in British and Egyptian local newspapers, respectively).

Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers	Types	Local British Newspaper		Local Egyptian Newspaper	
		F	P	F	P
Certainty Markers	Undoubtedly	2	1.81	0	0
	Clear	5	4.54	0	0
	Certainly	8	7.27	3	6.52
	Truly	1	0.90	0	0
	No/Without	1	0.90	2	4.34
	Doubt				
	Evidently	4	3.63	3	6.52
	Really	14	12.72	8	17.39
	Surely	24	21.81	9	19.56
	In fact	10	9.09	4	8.69
	Indeed	8	7.27	4	8.69
	Obviously	8	7.27	5	10.86
Actually	22	20	8	17.39	
Total number		110	100	46	100

Table 4: The use of certainty markers in the selected corpora

The distribution of attributors in the two corpora is seen in Table 5, with attributors being employed more frequently in the local Egyptian corpus (n = 102) than the local British corpus (n = 92), but the difference was minor.

Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers	Types	Local British Newspaper		Local Egyptian Newspaper	
		F	P	F	P
Attributors		92	100	102	100

Table 5: The use of attributors in the selected corpora

The distribution and types of attitude indicators in the two corpora are shown in Table 6. Local British writers (n = 609) utilized attitude markers more frequently than local Egyptian writers (n = 449), as seen in the table.

Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers	Types	Local British Newspaper		Local Egyptian Newspaper	
		F	P	F	P
1. Denotic Verbs	Have to	16	2.62	9	2.00
	Must	28	4.59	18	4.00
	Need to	25	4.10	14	3.11
	Has to	3	0.49	5	1.11
	Be able to	24	3.94	11	2.44

	Is to	14	2.29	17	3.78
	Was to	3	0.49	2	0.44
	Were to	1	0.16	0	0
	Are to	6	0.98	2	0.44
	Got to	1	0.16	0	0
	Be going to	10	1.64	9	2.00
	Let's	18	2.95	7	1.55
	I wish	2	0.32	9	2.00
	I hope/It is	8	1.31	18	4.00
	Hoped that				
	Be bound to	2	0.32	0	0
	Used to	4	0.65	4	0.89
	If I were	2	0.32	1	0.22
	Unfortunately	9	1.47	6	1.33
	Remarkably	8	1.31	4	0.89
2. Cognitive Verbs	Feel/Felt	27	4.43	4	0.89
	Believe/Believed	22	3.61	21	4.67
	Think/Thought	46	7.53	29	6.45
	Assume	7	1.14	3	0.66
	Guess	7	1.14	4	0.89
	Presume	9	1.47	5	1.11
	Expect	10	1.64	19	4.23
	Imagine	14	2.29	5	1.11
	Consider	27	4.43	17	3.78
Pretend	8	1.31	6	1.33	
	Appear	21	3.44	16	3.56
	Sound	12	1.97	7	1.55
	Be aware of	5	0.82	2	0.44
	Notice	7	1.14	5	1.11
	Sense	2	0.32	6	1.33
	Deem	1	0.16	4	0.89
	Judge	5	0.82	3	0.66
	Wonder	14	2.29	9	2.00
	Suppose	11	1.80	6	1.33
	Predict	15	2.46	9	2.00
	Estimate	4	0.65	5	1.11
Tend	5	0.82	0	0	

	Propose	4	0.65	5	1.11
	Suggest	7	1.1	9	2.00
3. Attitudinal Adverbs	Fortunately	12	1.97	9	2.00
	Usually	8	1.31	7	1.55
	Significantly	9	1.47	7	1.55
	Preferably	4	0.65	4	0.89
	It is surprising	5	0.82	4	0.89
	It is amazing	5	0.82	8	1.78
	It is odd	8	1.31	10	2.22
	It is unfortunate	4	0.65	5	1.11
	It is shocked	5	0.82	2	0.44
	It is essential	12	1.97	4	0.89
4. Attitudinal Adjectives	It is important	15	2.46	18	4.00
	It is interesting	10	1.64	13	2.89
	It is striking	3	0.49	0	0
	It is unusual	7	1.14	4	0.89
	It is bizarre	5	0.82	0	0
	It is usual	8	1.31	5	1.11
	It is wonderful	8	1.31	9	2.00
	It is curious	7	1.14	5	1.11
Total number		609	100	449	100

Table 6: The use of attitude markers in the selected corpora

The distribution and types of commentary in the two corpora are shown in Table 7. Local British writers (n = 955) utilize commentary more frequently than local Egyptian writers (n = 473), as indicated in Table 7.

Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers	Types	Local British Newspaper		Local Egyptian Newspaper	
		F	P	F	P
Commentaries	Direct Address to Readers	6	0.62	0	0
	Inclusive Expressions	69	7.22	14	2.95
	Asides	47	4.92	62	13.10
	Rhetorical Questions	85	8.90	38	8.03
	Personalization	748	78.32	359	75.89
Total number		955	100	473	100

Table 7: The use of commentaries in the selected corpora

7. Discussion

Hedges are often used in both local British and Egyptian publications, according to the research. This is consistent with the prior claim that utilizing hedges as mitigated viewpoints in newspaper discourse is critical for persuasion (Dafouz-Milne 2008). Local British publications employ epistemic verbs substantially more than local Egyptian media, according to the data. The frequent use of epistemic verbs in the two corpora is also consistent with other relevant studies (e.g., Dafouz-Milne 2008, Noorian & Biria 2010, Sukma & Sujatna 2014), implying that they, along with other types of hedges, are the main indicators of interpersonal metadiscourse in all previous metadiscourse research (Khabbazi-Oskouei 2013). The significant usage of epistemic verbs by local British authors may reflect their apprehension in expressing their thoughts. The usage of probability adverbs and epistemic expression is minimal in both corpora, similar to Dafouz-(2008) Milne's and Sukma and Sujatna's (2014) investigations.

When it comes to the employment of assurance markers (also known as emphatic markers or boosters), the study finds that local British authors utilized them substantially more than Egyptian writers. The terms *actually*, *undoubtedly*, and *really* are the most often used adverbs by both local British and Egyptian writers, taking linguistic preference into account. To persuade their readers, British authors prefer to communicate their viewpoints more explicitly than Egyptian writers, according to the findings. The employment of confidence markers, as Dafouz-Milne (2008: 108) puts it, "creates a sense of unity with readers while debating matters that are in reality controversial."

Local Egyptian writers employ attributions more frequently than their British counterparts, as "references to authorities that the writer exploited for their intellectual or persuasive force" (Crismore, Markkanen, & Steffensen 1993: 54). In other words, the data demonstrate that Egyptian writers are more likely than British writers to utilize "authoritative values with persuasive purposes" (Dafouz-Milne 2008: 99).

Attitude markers are persuasion tools that convey the writers' emotive values toward propositional information. They are used in text in a variety of ways, serving as "expressions of surprise, of believing something is noteworthy, or of concession, agreement, disagreement, and so on" (Crismore, Markkanen, & Steffensen 1993: 53). The research also finds that there are a lot of attitudinal indicators in both corpora, with cognitive verbs being the most common subtype in both. Local British newspaper writers utilize attitude indicators more than local Egyptian newspaper writers, according to the data. These differences have been shown to be statistically significant. Attitude markers assist authors in expressing

their personal sentiments in order to persuade the reader (Dafouz-Milne 2008). Linguistically, the use of cognition verbs like *feel*, *believe*, and *think* was rather common in local British media, a finding that mirrors Dafouz-(2008) Milne's English corpus. In all corpora, the most common deontic verbs are *must*, *need to*, *be able to*, and *be to*. Attitudinal adverbs, on the other hand, show no discernible difference.

Finally, in terms of comments, the most obvious aspect is the use of personalizing in both corpora, despite the fact that British writers utilize commentary categories substantially more frequently than Egyptian writers statistically. Furthermore, the British corpus includes a high amount of rhetorical questions, implying that "the writer sets out the question that the cooperative reader expects to be answered, and this encourages the reader to accept the text's direction" (Thompson 2001: 61). The fact that comments appear more frequently in the corpus than other types of interpersonal metadiscourse markers reflects "the tendency of opinion columns to convey opinion in a far more personal fashion than editorials or scholarly works" (Dafouz-Milne 2008: 108). In the British corpus, however, there are few examples of direct reader address, and this category is missing in the Egyptian corpus, indicating that direct reader address "conflicted with the formality normally observed in journalistic discourse" in Egyptian culture (Noorian & Biria 2010: 71).

Argumentative writing can be improved by incorporating interpersonal metadiscourse markers, according to Williams (1989, as quoted in Crismore, Markkanen, and Steffensen 1993). Although incorporating more interpersonal markers may result in a more convincing text, the authors' decision to design the texts based on their broad audience and culture may explain the differences in use in the two corpora of this study. Local British newspaper writers utilize much more forms of interpersonal metadiscourse markers than local Egyptian newspaper writers, according to the findings. Various cross-cultural research comparing native and non-native writers' usage of interactive metadiscourse markers in English in other genres have shown similar results (e.g. Marandi 2003, Mirshamsi & Allami 2013, Tabrizi 2017). The employment of metadiscourse makers was found to be more common in English corpora than in non-native English corpora in these research. The frequent use of metadiscourse markers by native speakers, according to Mirshamsi and Allami (2013: 36), may be attributed to the fact that native speakers are "better familiar with the rules and conventions of their rhetorical framework." Furthermore, differences in metadiscourse marker use may indicate writers' different inclinations in producing or reporting information, depending on their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In other words, the cultural and linguistic background of writers has a significant impact

on the use of metadiscourse markers.

According to Hyland and Tse (2004: 175), “metadiscourse is thus an aspect of language which provides a link between texts and disciplinary culture, helping to define the rhetorical context by revealing some of the expectations and understanding of the audience for whom a text was written”.

As evidenced by studies of English native and non-native writers, local authors' linguistic background may be an important element leading to diversity in the usage of metadiscourse markers (e.g. Akbas 2012, Keshavarz & Kheirieh 2011, Marandi 2013, Mirshamsi & Allami 2012). In addition to the writers' linguistic backgrounds, persuasive article subjects may play an important influence in the use of metadiscourse markers to convince readers. To persuade readers, certain subjects require additional persuasive tactics (e.g. interactive metadiscourse markers).

8. Conclusion

In this study, interpersonal metadiscourse variables are examined in local British and Egyptian media opinion pieces. According to the findings, metadiscourse markers play an important role in establishing rapport between the addresser and the addressee, and their use in texts is highly dependent on the norms and expectations of the setting (Fuentes-Olivera, Velasco Sacristán, Arribas-Bao, & Samaniego-Fernández 2001). The current research is both theoretical and practical in nature. Theoretically, it has broadened the scope of metadiscourse analysis as an analytical framework by focusing on local newspapers rather than national or worldwide newspapers, as most earlier studies have done. In terms of application, the findings can help us better understand how local newspapers influence their readers. Despite its contribution to the advancement of theory and understanding of professional practice, the study can be refined and extended in several ways: first, other frameworks and taxonomies shall be used for further analysis; second, the use of metadiscourse markers can be investigated in other local newspaper articles to (dis)confirm whether these devices are used similarly or differently in other languages; third, comparative studies should be conducted.

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