



Role of Meta-discourse Markers in Academic Writings of Pakistani Scholars: An Interdisciplinary Comparative Content Analysis

Muhammad Imran Shah^{*1}; Ata ul Ghafar¹; Asifa Iqbal¹

¹M.Phil scholar (Applied Linguistics) Government College University faisalabad, pakistan

ABSTRACT

Meta-discourse markers (MMs) are lexical tools that scholars use to coordinate their talk and express their position about the content or the pursuer. In Pakistani academic writing, inappropriate use of Meta-discourse markers which makes writing vague or uncertain, has been observed. The purpose of this study is to compare Meta-discourse markers between articles of journalism and economics composed by Pakistani scholars. An adhoc corpora comprises of 40 articles selected from Google search engine 20 from Journalism and 20 from Economics discipline, published in well recognized Journals randomly selected from 2012 to 2020. The frequency of meta-discourse markers based on Ken Hyland model 2005 was extracted while using corpus tools famous software Ant Conc3.5.8. As obtained results showed, the frequency of interactional markers is more in journalism rather than economics. One of the main marker of interactional markers that is Self-mentions have been also more frequently used which shows inappropriateness on part of scholars. On the other hand, interactive markers are more frequently used in economics rather than journalism. Similarly one of the interactive marker that is hedges have been also more frequently used which shows inappropriateness on part of scholars. The study highlights the importance of meta-discourse markers in academic writing and opens new horizon for academicians and researchers that they may focus on the importance of meta-discourse markers because they play a vital role in developing discourse produced by writers in any piece of literature.

Keywords: *Corpus, Academic writing, Discourse, Meta-discourse, Interactive markers, Interactional markers, Hedges.*

Citation: Shah, M. I., Ghafar, A. u., & Iqbal, A. (2021). Role of Meta-discourse Markers in Academic Writings of Pakistani Scholars: An Interdisciplinary Comparative Content Analysis. *International Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Studies*, 3(6), 210-216.

INTRODUCTION

Meta-discourse is "talk about talk" [1] Markers of Meta-discourse are used as great devices that build writers writings extra profitable in the setting of social and are viewed such as quite possibly the main attributes of correspondence between people to convey information in a sound and levelheaded manner through various semantic expressions. In order to build and develop powerful composition as well as significant composition, the linguistic term Meta-discourse plays a crucial role. The investigation of meta-discourse is vital in the learning of English composition.

In earlier times, the writing was very much subjective the authors wrote and reader would understandable as much as possible by their own abilities. There is no writer's concern that reader can understand their writing or not. By the passage of time this phenomenon has changed, writers make their writings more understandable for readers. Hyland's [2] developed a model of meta-discourse markers he gave a complete framework how writers can make their writings more interactive and interactional. As we observed our academic functional or business English there is no proper use of meta-discourse markers but in reality meta-discourse markers play a vital role in developing discourse of the content. While reading various academic material produced by learned people investigated that our syllabus designers and curriculum developers ignored these markers. Siddique [3]. Wei, et al.[4], Mina & Biria[5] worked on exploring interactive and interactional meta-discourse markers and its use in academic writing but in Pakistan very few researchers interested in this field no one compared meta-discourse markers in economics and journalism so this study fills the gap of meta-discourse use in academic writings and identify the inappropriate use of these markers in Pakistani academic writings.

The current study explores the frequencies of meta-discourse markers based on Hyland's model 2005 among research papers of Pakistani writers in the field of economics and journalism. The frequency would be extracted famous tool Ant Conc 3.5 8 than it compares the various categories of discourse markers defined by Hyland's. In order to highlight the appropriate use of these important markers in academic writing, it is very valuable and useful for follower researchers. The purpose of this corpus based research is to make the writers the worth of meta-discourse markers. The researcher has selected 40 research papers (20 journalism 20 economics) by HEC recognized journals from 2012 to 2020. In order to make a comparison between the writings of journalism and economics.

There is a problem with the Pakistani academic writers particularly the scholars they do not consider the worth of meta-discourse markers while composing their articles. This research study has tried to redress this problem in the academic writing of Pakistani scholars. Following objectives has been formed to investigate in this study.

Firstly, the current article aims to investigate the frequencies of interactive and interactional meta-discourse markers in academics English between the fields of economics and journalism written by Pakistani writers. Secondly, exploring inappropriateness contrasts based on the check list of the taxonomy of meta-discourse markers propounded by Hyland's in the utilization of interactive and interactional meta-discourse markers in the academic writing. The results of two interdisciplinary fields (Journalism and Economics) will help academicians, writers and also English language instructors to comprehend the qualities and shortcomings of EFL students, and help them mastering the writing skills.

Literature review

The theory of meta-discourse markers propounded by Hyland [6] has helped to conceptualize the hypothesis of the study. According to Holmes and Hyland[6], Hedges indicates that the writer is circumspect to functionally represent the suggestive knowledge, to allow the authors to add chivalrous, prospect and Uncertainty as a mean to follow audience by her/his text of their principles and generator of new information. As lexical grammatical categories such as lexical verb (for example, make, cover, express, emphasize, etc), Epistemic Modal verb like write, wrote, written, etc), Adjective (cheerful, charming, perfect), Adverbs (completely, quietly, etc), Noun as a prospect, risk, alternative, etc) and another linguistically different exploration. For qualifications marking (comparatively, basically mostly etc).

In comparison to hedges, Extension validity, decision indication and affirmed the power of project by Boosters. "To allow the authors closed down substitutes, to escape from clashing opinions and to show their assurance for what they are saying?"[2], Lexical verb (As express, describe, substantiate, etc.) adverb/adjectives (for example disputed, doubtedly), Epistemological Modal verb (such as may, might), Noun like truth, uncertainty), or another emphatically different features, for instance doubtless) may be conceived the written discourse's boosters. In academic writing utilized the boosters appropriately may not be only emphasized the Epistemological perspective of the authors, however develop agreement with audience as well [6]. Attitude markers describe the writer's appraisal of the proposed data, which conveys surprise commitment, understanding, significance, etc. [7]. Attitude markers can assist writers with persuading readers by foregrounding shared perspectives and qualities [8] and can be accomplished through lexico-syntactic assets, including deontic modals (for example need to, ought to), attitudinal adjectives(for case attractive, unfortunate), affective intensifiers (e.g., strangely, shockingly), and different articulations passing on position or assessment (for example., what is significant, it is important).

Code glosses is a basic category of interactive meta-discourse that is considered with interpretation of the writer's presenting purpose [9]. Prepositional meanings are elaborated, explained, and modified with the use of code glosses. Code glosses' two sub forms renowned by function: to formulate Again and exemplifies [9]. The first subcategory is a justification of discourse while the other function is a modifier for identification and interpretation [10,9]. Exemplifies, for instance, identifies or assists the second unit's meaning by samples. Code glosses can be a good source and may become helpful for listeners and readers to understand the meaning and proposed information. Self-mentions show the degree to which the writer is available as far as first-person pronouns and possessives, addressing the choice of the writer to remain behind the statements or to keep away from such responsibilities [7]. Utilize the main first-person pronoun (e.g., we, I), possessive determiners (e.g., our, my), and third-person nominal expressions (e.g., the current writer), Writers can perform diverse relational capacities in their composition, from the association of discourse to the part of the writer in research, to the arrangement of information claims [11].

Table 1: Hyland's Model of meta-discourse markers

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive	Help to guide the reader through the text	Resources
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 information in other parts of the text	noted above; see Fig; in section 2
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	Resources
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

The methodology of the research investigation is very much influenced by bench mark study based on Hyland's model of meta-discourse markers in academic writings.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher has followed post positivist school of thought because the research investigation is based on a particular theory propounded by Hyland on meta-discourse markers in 2005. The two corpora has been compiled on the basis of a general selection of 40 research articles written by Pakistani writers from 2012 to 2020 of social sciences (economics and journalism journals), and 20 papers from each discipline. The sub categories of meta-discourse markers including interactive and interactional meta-discourse markers have been investigated, based on Hyland's model [2] from these sets of corpora. This research has followed quantitative approach. All corpora a recompiled to identify the meta-discourse (MM). First of all, we find out the relevant research articles selected from Google search engine 20 from Journalism and 20 from economics well recognized Journals randomly selected from 2012 to 2020 the second decade of twenty first century. In the second step, we built two sets of corpora each corpus contains on 20 articles of economics and 20 journalism. In the third step, these corpora has been uploaded on famous software AntConc3.5 8and investigated through search box based on the check list of the taxonomy of meta-discourse markers propounded by Hyland's N-Grams frequencies of meta-discourse features. In the fourth step, concordance has been observed and the appropriate use of meta-discourse features identified through scanning based on Hyland's model meta-discourse markers 2005 check list. In the fifth step, meta-discourse markers classified into interactional and interactive meta-discourse markers based on Hyland's model 2005. At the end the frequencies of meta-discourse markers have been found separately forms both corpora.

RESULTS

Interactive Meta-discourse markers shown in the Table.3 the number of marker (endophoric markers, code glosses, and transition marker) used by writers in both groups was significant. The writers of economics articles used them more frequently compared to the journalism writers. There was no critical difference between the use of endophoric markers and frame markers, in the two groups. The Interactional meta-discourse markers shown in Tables, the number of markers (hedges, booster self-mentions) utilized by writers in both groups was significant. The writers of journalism used

interactional features more frequently compared to economics. In that place was no criticizing distinction in applying attitude markers and Engagement mark

Table.3 Interactive Meta-discourse Markers

Interactive Meta-discourse Markers Categories	Category wise Frequency	
	Journalism	Economics
1. Transition Markers		
a)addition	2938	4713
b)comparison	453	651
c) consequence	242	303
2. Frame markers		
a) Sequencing	99	297
b) label stages	72	69
c) announce goals	92	18
d) shift topic	9	2
3. Endophoric markers	38	280
4. Evidentials	477	52
5. Code glosses	482	58
Total	4902	6443

Table 4. Interactional Meta-discourse Markers

Interactional Meta-discourse markers categories	Category wise Frequency	
	Journalism	Economics
1. Hedges		
a) Epistemic verbs	543	751
b) Probability adverbs	301	196
c) Epistemic Expression	117	124
2. Boosters		
a) intensifier adverbs	121	63
b) intensifier adjectives	53	31
c) intensifier verbs	125	265
3. Attitude markers		
a) attitude verbs	219	199
b) Attitudinal adverbs	55	45
c) Attitudinal adjectives	124	140
4. Self-mentions	3047	599
5. Engagement markers		
a) reader pronoun	208	9
b) interjection	0	0
c) directive imperatives	117	64
d) obligation modals	172	282
Total	5202	2384

DISCUSSION

The purpose of current research is to explore the difference between Journalism and economics research papers in the context of interactive and interactional meta-discourse markers usage based on Hyland's (2005) social categorization in the English written research papers by Pakistani scholars. The first research hypothesis was to identify the interactive markers in these academic writing. According to the research hypothesis the result has been found through Ant Conc and these are explained in the following paragraph according to the taxonomy propounded by Hyland in respect of interactive and interactional markers. In this research investigation it has been observed that Pakistani scholars of economics use more frequently interactive markers as compare to that of journalism. It has been found that the frequency of interactive markers like Transitions, frame markers, and evidential, in articles of economics is greater than that of journalism, but in this place was no expressive distinction in applying the endophoric markers but code glosses are most frequently used in journalism. As obtained results showed, that Pakistani scholars of journalism use more frequently interactional markers as compare to that of economics. But the economics research papers scholars used hedges, boosters, greater than that of journalism. The engagement markers, Self-mentions were used in journalism writing more frequently than the economics. There was no critical difference in attitude markers in these corpora. The final results show that economics scholars applied interactive meta-discourse markers more, but journalism writers used interactional meta-discourse markers more frequently in their writings.

Interactive meta-discourse markers like Transitions, frame markers, endophoric provides the interaction between various words and phrases of the text. Frame Markers refer to arrangement, writings stages, or talk acts, Transition markers are in the type of conjunctive and conjunctions that help the readers to look for sensible connections between propositions. The interactive and interactional markers act like adverb phrases and help readers in understanding pragmatic relations between arguments and events. Endophoric markers are the tools that refer to information which are described in the written work such as mentioned above, noted given below, etc. In the economics research articles it has

been observed that economics is a study of statistics in which writer's make the writing more interactive and make a relationship between the texts they used interactive features more frequently. As obtained results Interactional meta-discourse make a relationships between reader and writer so the frequent use of Self-mentions engagement markers of Interactional meta-discourse in journalism shows that journalism is a study of social engagement.

Although interactive and Interactional meta-discourse features make a relationship between the texts and built a relationship between reader and writer, but in Pakistani academic writing, inappropriate use of Meta-discourse markers which makes writing vague or uncertain, has been observed, It has been found that the frequency of hedges in the economics greater than that of journalism which is totally unfair because economics is a study of statistics these markers make statements more polite and doubtful so this is why we can not get certain results in economics. Similarly Self-mentions markers also unnecessarily used journalism in one row occurs more than two or three times the unethical used of meta-discourse markers make academic writings erroneous as we looked in these research articles. This research demonstrates cultural and geographical categorization for meta-discourse makers Pakistani writers think different ways and make their writings. The non-native speakers, Pakistani scholars generally use meta-discourse markers in the context of their own culture or own region where as the native ones use the same markers according to the formula prescribed by Hyland's taxonomy. Therefore, the non-native writers maintain their foreignness in their academic writings that causes problems in the comprehension of their products at international forms. We find frequencies of meta-discourse markers based on Hyland's model 2005 in research papers of Pakistani writers in the field of economics and journalism, further researchers can use different software tools and select different linguistics units and chunks understanding of complexity of meta-discourse markers. In EFL and ESL circles writing skill play a crucial role. The mastery of students in writing of academy is not good and satisfactory, so they can write for their progress. They discuss their opinions to their audience or they can have problems generate comprehensible text. As mentioned in this section authors are not well known with the ideas of cohesion and they cannot be capable to generate a cohesion and coherent text. As stated by Hyland [6], meta-discourse markers may be used as the most influential rhetorical tools for generating texts and persuading authors. Experience with meta-discourse markers can mostly take care of this issue. Despite the fact that meta-discourse is progressively significant in writing and reading research works and also very much significant in listening and speaking.

CONCLUSION

Meta-discourse markers play a vital role in mature writing, particularly, the use of interactive and interactional markers. The current investigation were based on the meta-discourse markers taxonomy propounded by Hyland in respect of interactive and interactional markers. The study has proved that the scholars of social sciences have very little knowledge about meta-discourse markers as It was found that the frequency of hedges in the economics is greater than that of journalism which is totally unfair because economics is a study of statistics these markers make statements more polite and doubtful. Similarly Self-mentions markers also unnecessarily used in journalism. Pakistani academic writers particularly the scholars they do not consider the worth of meta-discourse markers while composing their articles. If Pakistani scholars realise the worth of meta-discourse markers their writings would be more comprehensible at an international level acceptance. Actually the scholars face much problem during the process of their research report in the highly level indexing international journals due to poorly comprehensible ideas composed and jotted down by them on paper. If they were well aware of the usage of these linguistic chunks they could have better opportunity to secure their niche in relevant research field. Hence, in grammatical course contents description of meta-discourse markers should be included as course content of English at university level. It will help the scholars upgrading their writing skill. There are certain limitations in this research study First of all the text compiled for this research investigation is not sufficient but the results can be generalized at the border level to enhance the academic writings of the scholars.

REFERENCES

1. Williams, J. (1981). *Style: Ten lessons in clarity and grace*. Boston: Scott Foresman.
2. Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. London: Continuum
3. Siddique, A. (2018). Metadiscourse Analysis of Pakistani English Newspaper Editorials: A Corpus-Based Study. *International Journal of English Linguistics*; (Vol. 8), 1923-8703.
4. Wei, J. Gong, Y. (2016). Studies on Metadiscourse since the 3rd Millennium *Journal of Education and Practice*. (Vol.7), www.iiste.org.
5. Mina, K. Biria ,R. (2017). Exploring Interactive and Interactional Metadiscourse Markers in Discussion Sections of Social and Medical Science Articles. *International Journal of Research in English Education*(Vol2), www.ijreeonline.com.
6. Hyland, K. (1998). Persuasion and context: The pragmatics of Academic Metadiscourse. *Journal of pragmatics*, 30(4), 437-455.
7. Hyland, K. (2004). Disciplinary interactions: Metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*. Vol. 13, 133-151.

8. Hewings, M. (2006). Introduction. In M. Hewings (Ed.). *Academic writing in context: Implications and applications* (pp. 79–92). London: Continuum.
9. Hyland, K. (2007). Applying a gloss: Exemplifying and reformulating in academic discourse. *Applied linguistics*, 28(2), 266-285.
10. Cuenca, M. J., & Bach, C. (2007). Contrasting the form and use of reformulation markers. *Discourse Studies*, 9(2), 149-175.
11. Schiffrin, D. (1980). Meta-talk: Organizational and evaluative brackets in discourse. *Sociological Inquiry*, 50(3-4), 199-236.