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Interactive metadiscourse in L1 and L2 English: Evidence from editorials

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Abstract

This study investigates the use of interactive metadiscourse markers in first language (L1) and second language (L2) English editorials. It also identifies how L1 and L2 editorials differ in the use of these markers. To this end, the study utilizes Hyland's (2019) model of interactive metadiscourse to analyse – based on a descriptive approach – 80 editorials collected from two highly reputed newspapers: *The Guardian* and *The Jordan Times*, distributed evenly. The data were analysed both quantitatively, using SPSS tests to identify significant differences (if any) between the two sets of editorials, and qualitatively to enrich our understanding of the functions of interactive metadiscourse markers in editorials. The analysis revealed that there is no significant difference in the use of interactive metadiscourse markers between the two corpora. However, there is a slight variation in the use of individual interactive markers such as frame markers and evidentials. The findings are discussed in the light of theories of metadiscourse and previous literature. The study provides implications for L2 learning and teaching in terms of how interaction in written discourse is achieved in the L2.

Key words

Interactive metadiscourse; newspaper editorials; L1 English; L2 English

1. Introduction

In discourse analysis, researchers opt to discover the interconnections between language and context. Paltridge (2012, p. 1) argues that discourse analysis "looks at patterns of language across texts as well as the social and cultural contexts in which the texts occur." In particular, discourse analysis focuses on 'patterns' of language use across genres. Research in the field of discourse analysis has extensively explored pattens of language use in a vast number of genres. However, media discourse remains an area where more investigations of language use are called for and deeper insights into cross-linguistic and interlanguage variations are needed. Within media discourse, a newspaper editorial – the genre being examined in this study – is a text which represents the voice of the newspaper vis-à-vis an issue or an event.

Metadiscourse is an important area in discourse analysis and is defined as a number of resources used by language users to organize their discourse and establish a tie with the text and the audience (Hyland, 2015). As a matter of fact, these linguistic resources are used in both spoken (Zhang, et al., 2017) and written discourse (e.g. Alghazo, et al. 2021; Alghazo, Al Salem & Alrashdan, 2021). Hyland (2017, p. 16) argues that metadiscourse is "the commentary on a text made by its producer in the course of

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speaking or *writing*" (italics added). Although the study of metadiscourse has covered both spoken and written forms, most research dealt with written texts. The process of writing includes an interaction between two parties (the writer and the reader) and this interaction is regularly led by the writer of a text by means of metadiscourse resources. In the light of the definitions presented above, it is argued that metadiscourse functions in both spoken and written discourse to organize the text in a way that leads the reader smoothly through the text and express the speaker's/writer's stance towards the text. This study is concerned with the first function of metadiscourse in L1 English and L2 English newspaper editorials, i.e. the organization of the text. It specifically answers the following questions:

1. How are the interactive metadiscourse resources used in L1 English and L2 English newspaper editorials?
2. What are the similarities and/or differences in the use of interactive metadiscourse in the two sets of editorials?

2. Literature review

This section reviews the related literature on interactive metadiscourse in media texts, focusing on newspaper editorials. Crismore (1983, p. 1) defined metadiscourse as "the author's discoursing about discourse, [and] is classified into two types, informational and attitudinal". Building on Crismore's notion of metadiscourse, Hyland (1998) devised a framework which sets linguistic resources that function as 'informational' and 'attitudinal', to use Crismore's words. As noted above, this study explores how metadiscourse is used to organize texts and lead the reader through them. That is, how interactive resources function in newspaper editorials in L1 and L2 English. Since the inception of Hyland's model, a great number of studies were conducted to investigate how these devices are used by writers to achieve the two functions. However, very few were conducted to show how interactive metadiscourse is used by L1 and L2 English editorialists.

Researchers have sought to analyse the use of metadiscourse in different parts of newspapers such as opinion articles or economic sections of the newspaper. A notable study is that of Boshrabadi et al. (2014) which investigated the use of metadiscourse in the economic section of newspapers. This study attempted to analyse the interpersonal and textual metadiscourse markers across different cultures. Boshrabadi et al. (2014) compared the use of metadiscourse markers in English and Persian newspapers' economic section and reported the use of more interpersonal metadiscourse markers by American writers than by Persian writers. In particular, the results showed that Persian writers used more textual markers and less interpersonal markers than did the American writers. Boshrabadi et al. (2014) argued that "culture-specific norms" might be the reason behind the differences between authors from different countries in the organization and representation of discourse. Boshrabadi et al. (2014, p. 65) indicated that "American authors are so concerned about the reader-writer interaction that they prefer to use more interpersonal markers in their texts in order to establish a strong solidarity with their target audience".

Another study on metadiscourse in newspapers is Sukma's and Sujatna's (2014) which analysed metadiscourse markers in opinion articles. The study found that attitude markers were the most frequent category from the metadiscoursal resources because of the texts' persuasive nature. Another line of thought on the idea of utilizing interpersonal metadiscourse in the persuasion of the newspaper standpoint comes from Noorian's and Biria's (2017) study which addressed this issue by analysing 12 opinion articles from the *New York Times* and *Tehran Times* newspapers. The findings of this study revealed that the use of interpersonal metadiscourse markers was found in both corpora, but more frequently used by the American writers than by the Iranian ones. The findings also showed that while hedges were the most frequent in the Iranian set of data, commentaries were the most frequent in the American one.

The editorial section of the newspaper presents the viewpoint of the newspaper on a public event or issue. For example, Shokouhi et al. (2015) analysed evidential markers' usage in 267 samples from Persian editorials of two different newspapers. The researchers reported the frequent use of the imperfective (progressive) evidential marker in Persian editorials. Shokouhi et al. (2015, p. 450) used the evidential elements as: "the indication of the evidence for a given statement". This study covered the metadiscoursal category of evidentials and how this category can be linked to different genres and text types.

Scholars attempted to examine the impact of culture on the use of metadiscoursal resources and to conduct contrastive studies between different languages. An example of this is the study carried out by Kuhi and Mojood (2014) that compared the use of metadiscoursal elements by English and Persian editorialists within the editorial section. The findings revealed that the interactional markers were more frequent in the two sets than the interactive ones, and that attitude markers were the most frequent interactional marker, while transitions were the most frequent interactive marker in both sets of data. The researchers concluded that genre conventions have an essential role in the usage of metadiscoursal markers by different groups of writers.

In reviewing the literature on metadiscourse and metadiscoursal analysis, we notice that most contrastive studies have focused on comparing the use of metadiscourse in two different languages. One can also easily notice that there is an increasing interest in contrasting the use of metadiscourse within the journalistic genres (e.g. Noorian and Biria, 2010; Kuhi and Mojood 2014; and Siddique et al., 2018). However, very few studies have compared the use of metadiscourse in editorials written by writers from two different first-language backgrounds. This study considers the influence of the writer's first language on the use of interpersonal metadiscourse markers in editorials written in English. Currently, there is a need to understand the use of metadiscourse in English as L1 and L2 within written argumentation (e.g. editorials, op-eds and features). Using a variety of metadiscourse taxonomies, some researchers adopted Hyland's (2005) taxonomy to explore argumentation in print media (e.g. Ahmed and Masroor, 2018). On the other hand, other researchers relied on Dafouz-Milne's (2008) taxonomy to examine the use of metadiscourse markers in similar persuasive newspaper articles (e.g. Farnia and Mohammadi, 2018). As a general observation, the presence of the various taxonomies of metadiscourse regardless of nomenclature are important because the diversity broadens the scope of investigation and allows researchers to examine metadiscourse from different perspectives.

3. Methodology

3.1 Corpus of the study

Eighty newspaper editorials were randomly collected from two widely read newspapers: *The Guardian* and *The Jordan Times* (40 editorials from each newspaper) between 2020-2021. The topic of the editorial was not a variable to consider; therefore, the selected editorials covered a number of topics related to the most recent events at the time of data of collection. It was of course difficult, if not impossible, to collect editorials of the same length, but we chose editorials with similar number of words (SPSS tests[1] dealt with the varying number of words in each corpus). After collecting the editorials, we converted the texts into Microsoft Word, with each collection put in a separate file to begin the analysis. The total number of words in the two corpora was 42,029 words (24,661 words in the Guardian corpus and 17,368 words in the Jordan Times).

3.2 Data analysis

In order to properly analyse the data, we adopted a descriptive approach. This approach was best suited because the reliance of a single method alone leaves the analysis partial and thus leads to unreliable results. For example, relying on quantitative measures alone will lead to a partial picture of the contextual dimension of the use of interactive metadiscourse resources. We conducted a manual analysis of the tokens to account for the functions of interactive metadiscourse markers and for the context where the marker appears. For reliability purposes, a jury of three linguists reviewed the analysis and provided suggestions. We incorporated their suggestions as requested. A coding system, which is based on highlighting colours, was used to identify the interactive resources in each editorial. Frequencies and percentages of the metadiscoursal markers were calculated manually and analysed statistically using SPSS to find any significant differences between the two sets of data. Qualitatively, we extracted examples from the corpora, interpreted them thoroughly, and presented them to show their functions. By so doing, we embraced Hyland's (2019, p. 28) view that "the emphasis … [should be] on meanings in context, how language is used, not what a dictionary says about it." Statistically, a table of

[1] The data were analysed using paired samples t-test and independent t-test as appropriate. A paired samples t-test was chosen because it calculates the differences between the values of the two sets of editorials for each type of metadiscourse resources. On the other hand, an independent t-test was selected because it is particularly useful to test the statistical differences between the means of any two groups.

triggers (words) was created from existing literature on each interactive marker. After that, we identified the interactive metadiscourse resources in each editorial using the colour-based coding system. We run tests using SPSS. In particular, we run a Chi-square test, a paired samples t-test and an independent t-test where appropriate. The first was used to test differences between the values of the use of markers in each corpus, and the other two tests were used to test the significance in differences between the two sets.

This study adopts Hyland's (2019) framework of interactive metadiscourse (see Table 1 below) in order to answer the above-mentioned questions. The interactive metadiscourse markers are assigned the function of structuring and organizing the text for the reader. According to Hyland (2019), the interactive functions of metadiscourse markers have five categories. Firstly, transitions have the interactive function of organizing the discourse and relating pieces of the text together. Secondly, frame markers perform the function of creating a sequence within the text. Thirdly, endophoric markers are used to refer to the different parts mentioned in the text. Fourthly, evidentials refer to external resources outside the text. Finally, code glosses are used to convey a propositional meaning or content.

Table 1. Hyland's (2019, p. 58) interactive framework of metadiscourse

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

This study adopts Hyland's (2019) framework of interactive metadiscourse resources. The framework was chosen because, as Hyland (2019, p. 57) argues, "it builds on earlier models of metadiscourse" to take a more comprehensive look at the texts. Hyland's (2019) framework of interactive metadiscourse is focused on "leading and directing" the readers through the text. As indicated earlier, this study is primarily based upon the interpersonal model of metadiscourse proposed by Hyland in 2005 and modified in 2019. Although this model serves as a vehicle for implementing the metadiscoursal analysis, the identification of metadiscoursal markers to be included under the umbrella of this model remains "fuzzy" and "confusing" for researchers and discourse analysts. For this reason, an attempt to collect the metadiscoursal markers listed by previous studies and analyses has been made. A table was created to collect interactive metadiscourse resources and categorize them as they were classified in previous studies.

4. Findings

This section presents the results of analyses conducted to answer the research questions. It shows the frequencies and percentages of interactive metadiscourse resources in each set of editorials *separately.* As mentioned above, a total of 42,029 words were analysed adopting Hyland's (2019) model of metadiscourse. The interactive dimension of metadiscourse is of five sub-categories: (1) transitions; (2) frame markers; (3) endophoric markers; (4) evidentials; and (5) code glosses. Hyland (2019, p. 57) mentioned that the interactive dimension of the interpersonal model deals with the ways of "organizing discourse structure" and "the extent to which the text is constructed with readers in mind". The analysis of the interactive dimension of metadiscourse showed that the total number of frequencies of the five sub-categories in the entire corpus was 3,639 times. Table 2 illustrates total frequencies, percentages, and frequencies per 1,000 words in each set of editorials.

Table 2. Total of Interactive Resources' Frequencies and Percentages

Interactive Metadiscourse Markers	The Guardian Editorials			The Jordan Times Editorials			Interactive Markers in the two Corpora
	Total of Freq.'s	%	Freq.'s Per 1,000 words	Total of Freq.'s	%	Freq.'s Per 1,000 words	
	1893	7.7%	77	1746	10.1%	101	3,639
Transitions	1168	4.7%	47	1019	5.9	59	
Frame markers	59	0.2%	2	17	0.1%	1	
Endophoric markers	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Evidentials	183	07%	7	112	06%	6	
Code glosses	483	2%	20	589	3.4%	34	
Total Number of Words in Each Corpus	24,661			17,368			Total of the Two Corpora 42,029

Table 2 demonstrates that the interactive metadiscourse resources in the Guardian corpus were 1,893. This figure was higher than the frequencies in the Jordan Times corpus which accounted for 1,746. In addition, the percentage of interactive metadiscourse markers compared to the total number of words in each set of editorials was different. It can be noticed that the interactive resources' percentage in the Guardian was 7.7%, while it was 10.1% in the Jordan Times. Thus, it can be inferred that interactive metadiscourse markers were more frequent per 1,000 words in the Guardian editorials than in the Jordan Times editorials. As for the comparisons related to individual resources, we notice the following:

Transitions

Transitions can be broadly defined as the linguistic items used to connect different parts of the text. In this regard, Hyland (2019, p. 204) emphasized "the discourse-organizing role" of transitions in "connecting arguments" by functioning as addition, comparison and consequence. The frequency of transition markers in the two sets of editorials totalled 2,187 times as the most frequent sub-category within the interactive resources of metadiscourse. An important result is that transition markers were the most recurrent type of metadiscourse from the four sub-categories of the interactive metadiscourse in the two corpora combined. As shown in Table 2 above, transition markers occurred 1,168 times in the Guardian newspaper editorials with a percentage of 4.7% of the total number of words in the Guardian corpus. It should be pointed out that the percentages were calculated in relation to the word count of the two corpora *separately*. The frequency of occurrence per 1,000 words in the Guardian corpus was 47 times. By contrast, transition markers were found 1,019 times in the Jordan Times newspaper editorials with a percentage of 5.9% of the total number of words in the Jordan Times corpus. The frequency of occurrence per 1,000 words in the Jordan Times was 59 times and is higher than that of the Guardian editorials. Overall, transition markers were used more frequently by the Guardian editorialists than the Jordan Times editorialists. The following are examples of transition markers functioning as metadiscourse in the two sets of editorials:

(1) By huddling closer together, elected representatives appear to have encouraged the political instability they wanted to avoid. **However**, the country is not bereft of wily politicians. ("The Guardian view on Tunisia's coup", The Guardian, 2021).

(2) Touching on regional developments, the King underlined the need to support Iraq's efforts in bolstering its security **and** stability, **whereas** the US president commended the Kingdom's peace overtures in the region. ("Enduring and strategic partnership", The Jordan Times, 2021).

In (1), the transition marker *however* was used in a sentence-initial position to connect two sentences and show a contrastive relationship between them. Hyland and Jiang (2017) stated that the use of *however*, which is considered to be an 'initial conjunction', or 'conjunctive adverb' reflects the rhetorical awareness and the stylistic choices of an author. The example (2) included two instances of transition markers, one of which was used for 'addition' and the other was used for 'contrast'. The transition marker *and* in (2) is an additive conjunction used to connect words of the same part of speech (security and stability), while *whereas* serves as a contrast conjunction juxtaposing two propositions.

Frame Markers

Frame markers can be understood expansively, as any linguistic device which is used to *signpost* the various stages of the text. Hyland (2019, p. 59) assigned frame markers a function and stated that "frame markers signal text boundaries or elements of the schematic text structure". Examples of frame markers include words such as: *finally*, *to conclude* and *the aim is*. The analysis of metadiscoursal features mentioned earlier showed that frame markers occurred 76 times in the two corpora together. This number implied that frame markers were the second least used feature from the interactive dimension of metadiscourse. Table 2 shows that frame markers were used by L1 English writers 59 times which represents a percentage of 0.2% of the corpus word count. The occurrences per 1,000 words were 2 times in the L1 English writer's corpus which appears to be relatively minimal. Comparatively, Table 2 reveals that in the Jordan Times corpus, frame markers were mentioned 17 times, which account for 0.1 percent of the total number of words in the corpus. The frequency of occurrence per 1,000 words was only 1 time, which represents a relatively small proportion of the texts. Here are two examples of frame markers from the Guardian and the Jordan Times editorials:

(3) **Eventually**, Zuma was ousted Ramaphasa took over. ("The Observer view on South Africa's problems", The Guardian, 2021).
(4) **Now**, Jordanians are coming to terms with the new reality of life under virtual lockdown, with remote work and empty streets. ("Time to count on civic responsibility", The Jordan Times, 2020).

In the previous examples, frame markers are used to signal and organize the various stages of the discussion in the editorial section. Hyland (2019) pointed out that frame markers are used to plan the schematic structure of the argument and the text. The adverb *eventually* in (3) signalled the end of a discussion about a certain topic in the editorial. *Eventually* in this context was employed to mark the end of the argument and was used to mean "in the end" or "finally". By contrast, *now* in (4) is an adverb of time used to frame what Hyland (2019) called "the boundaries of the text".

Endophoric Markers

Endophoric markers deal with the organization of the whole text. In Hyland (2019) defines endophoric markers as "expressions which refer to other parts of the text" (p. 60). The results show that endophoric markers were absent from the two corpora. Endophoric markers occurred zero times in the entire corpus. The absence of endophoric markers in the corpora might be construed as a recognition of the variation between different genres in the use of metadiscourse markers. In this regard, Le (2004) discussed the difference between the academic writing genre and the editorial genre. Le (2004, p.690) pointed out that "[E]ditorials differ from academic texts by: being much shorter in length (and thus they do not need to contain as many endophoric markers or frame markers), having a content that can be exposed with less complexity (making code glosses much less relevant), and benefiting from a much larger and less specialized audience". Le's (2004) interpretation about the short length of editorials is a plausible scenario for the lack of endophoric makers in the tested editorials.

Evidentials

In a broad sense, evidentials are the linguistic devices used to indicate referencing to sources from outside the text. Hyland (2019, p. 58) stated that "evidentials refer to information from other texts". Another explanation of the term was provided by Shokouhi et al. (2015, p. 450) that "[E]videntials are, broadly speaking, the indication of the evidence for a given statement, regardless of the type of evidence". The analysis revealed that evidentials were used 295 times in the two corpora together. It can be seen from the data in Table 2 that the Guardian editorials contained more evidentials than the Jordan Times editorials. L1 English editorialists used a greater number of evidential markers –183 times amounting to 0.7 percent of the total number of words – than did the L2 English editorialists in the Jordan Times editorials which included 112 evidential markers representing 0.6% of the total number of words in the corpus. The rate of occurrences of evidentials per 1,000 words was 7 times in the Guardian, and 6 times in the Jordan Times. Here are some instances of evidentials from the two sets of editorials:

(5) The UN's Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia this week **pointed out that** poverty now affects 88% of the population in Syria and 83% in Yemen. ("The Guardian view on Arab democracies", The Guardian, 2021).
(6) Opening its doors to waves of refugees, Jordan today remains the second largest refugee host per capita worldwide with more than 754,000 registered refugees, **according to** UNHCR statistics. ("Jordan at 100", The Jordan Times, 2021).

The above-mentioned examples demonstrate the citation practices of editorialists from the Guardian and the Jordan Times using evidential markers. As can be seen from (5), the phrasal verb *pointed out* was utilized to "refer to the source of textual material" (Hyland, 1999, p. 7). The example (6) involved the use of the preposition *according to* as an evidential marker to credit the quoted information. It is shown from the use of evidential markers in the previous examples that these markers are critical to increase the authenticity and credibility of the editorial section. Gonzalez et al. (2014, p. 2) asserted that "we make use of evidential and epistemic forms to assess the validity of our assertions and opinions, providing our words with reliability and thus a certain degree of authority".

Code glosses

Code glosses are generally concerned with providing the reader with more detailed information about every concept and idea mentioned within the text. Kopple (1985, p. 84) stated that the basic function of code glosses is to "help readers grasp the appropriate meanings of elements in texts". Table 2 provides an overview of the comparative results in the two sets of editorials. From the table above, it can be seen that code glosses were the second most frequent sub-category from the interactive resources of metadiscourse. The results show that code glosses were found 483 times in the Guardian editorials amounting to 2% of the total word count of the Guardian corpus. This indicates that the frequency of code glosses per 1,000 in the Guardian editorials was 20 times. On the other hand, code glosses were used more frequently in the Jordan Times than in the Guardian. In the Jordan Times, codes glosses occurred 598 times representing 3.4% of the total number of words. As for the percentage per 1000 words, code glosses were mentioned 34 times in the Jordan Times corpus. British editorialists, on the other hand, used fewer code glosses with the percentages of 2% and 3.4% respectively. Below are some illustrative examples of code glosses from the two corpora:

(7) **In other words**, we are going to experience increasingly severe, devastating weather events for a further 30 years. ("The Observer view on the urgency of tackling climate change", The Guardian, 2021).
(8) On March 31, 2013, His Majesty King Abdullah and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas signed a historical agreement in Amman reaffirming the King's Custodianship over holy sites in Jerusalem, which includes His Majesty's right to exert all legal efforts to safeguard them, especially Al Aqsa Mosque, **which is defined as** "the Entirety of Al Haram Al Sharif. ("A noteworthy recognition of a noble mission", The Jordan Times, 2020).

In the examples above, code glosses were used to provide a clarification of a proposition or a definition to a term. Code glosses are essential for building a relationship with the reader because they

are dependent on the expectations that the writer has about the reader's knowledge and background (Supasiraprapa and Costa, 2017). Hyland and Jiang (2018, p. 24) pointed out that "writers have to make assumptions about their readers informed by an understanding of both discipline and genre and both change over time". The use of *in other words* in (7) as a code gloss is a 'reformulation' or restatement of the previous sentence or idea according to Hyland's (2007) classification of code glosses' discourse functions. The example (8) illustrates how code glosses can be used to provide a definition of a term using a linguistic expression such as, the expression mentioned above in (8) *which is defined as*. Dehghan and Chalak (2016, p. 24) described the function of code glosses as metadiscourse, mentioning that "they pinpoint where readers require guidance in interpreting points, where more elaboration or specificity is essential".

In a nutshell, the analysis of the two sets of editorials revealed that the frequency of occurrence varied among the five sub-categories of interactive metadiscourse resources. The five sub-categories of the interactive metadiscourse were present in the Guardian and the Jordan Times editorials, except for endophoric markers which were absent from both corpora.

The second question in this study sought to determine the significant differences in the use of interactive metadiscourse markers in the two sets of editorials. To answer this research question, we conducted a statistical analysis which showed the means and standard deviations of frequencies in order to compare the use of interactive metadiscourse in the two sets of editorials. In addition, we run a Chi-square analysis to examine the significant differences between the two sets of data in terms of their use of interactive metadiscourse resources. Table 3 below illustrates the means, standard deviations, and statistically significant differences between the two corpora.

Table 3. The means, standard deviations, and statistically significant differences between the two sets of editorials

Categories	Corpus	Mean	Standard Deviation	T- Value	Degree of Freedom	Statistical Significance
Transitions	The Guardian	29.20	9.32	1.938	78	0.056
	The Jordan Times	25.48	7.81			
Frame Markers	The Guardian	1.48	2.04	2.905	78	0.005*
	The Jordan Times	0.43	1.04			
Evidentials	The Guardian	4.58	4.41	2.237	78	0.028*
	The Jordan Times	2.80	2.40			
Code glosses	The Guardian	12.08	10.22	-0.939	78	0.351
	The Jordan Times	14.95	16.46			
	The Jordan Times	14.50	16.71			
Total of Interactive Metadiscourse Markers	The Guardian	47.33	13.82	0.984	78	0.328
	The Jordan Times	43.65	19.16			
	The Jordan Times	91.23	35.97			

(*) The star refers to a statistically significant difference between the two sets; the difference is significant at the level (0.05), ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Table 3 shows that the use of the five sub-categories by L1 English editorialists are quite similar to their use by L2 English editorialists. In essence, there is no significant difference regarding the performance of L1 and L2-native English editorialists when it comes to using interactive resources. The average of interactive metadiscourse usage in the Guardian was 47.33, which is very close to that of the Jordan Times editorials with an average of 43.65. The t-value at the level (0.000) was 0.984 and this t-value does not represent a statistically significant difference between the two sets of editorials in their use of interactive resources. As mentioned earlier, a comparison of statistical averages was employed to determine the significant differences between the two corpora. As a result, transition markers appeared to be the most frequent sub-category of interactive resources in the two corpora sets

and were used similarly by L1 English editorialists and L2 English editorialists. No significant differences were found between the Guardian and the Jordan Times editorials in terms of writer's use of transition markers. The t-value was 1.938 at the level of 0.056 and this is no statistically significant difference in terms of transition markers' use. The second sub-category of interactive resources was frame markers, in which a significant difference was found between the two sets of editorials. Although the two sets of editorialists have made little use of frame markers, the average of frame markers' frequencies were different. The average of frame markers in the Guardian corpus was (1.48) which is higher than the average appearing from the Jordan Times corpus, 0.43 only. The third sub-category of interactive metadiscourse was endophoric markers, which was absent from the two corpora. The fourth sub-category of interactive metadiscourse was evidentials, in which we can see a significant difference between the two corpora. The t-value at the level 0.028 was 2.237 and this value indicates a significant difference between the two groups of editorialists in their use of evidentials. The mean of evidentials' frequency in the Guardian editorials also exceeded the mean of evidentials' frequency in the Jordan Times editorials. The fifth and last sub-category of interactive metadiscourse was code glosses, and no significant differences were existent. Code glosses were used at approximately the same rate with the average of 12.08 in the Guardian and the average of 14.95 in the Jordan Times. The t-value of code glosses amounts to -0.939 at the level of 0.351 which is a statistically insignificant value.

5. Discussion

The findings presented above show that there are some similarities and differences between the two corpora. The findings showed that no statistically significant differences were detected between the Guardian and the Jordan Times corpora in the use of interactive metadiscourse resources. In this sense, the lack of significant differences in the use of interactive resources might be explained by the fact that editorials of both corpora share a very similar average *length*. A similar finding was reported by Moghadam (2017) in his comparison of American and Iranian writers in their use of metadiscourse in opinion articles. Moghadam (2017, p. 488) stated in his discussion regarding the use of interactive resources of metadiscourse that "more similarities were noted than differences". Additionally, Zhao (2017) discussed the idea of "the native-speaker linguistic advantage" in relation to academic writing. In broad terms, the native-speaker linguistic advantage refers to the idea that native-speakers are "linguistically privileged" because they are using their mother tongue in speech and writing. *The native status of the author* could affect the use of metadiscourse features, in the sense that L2 writers might possibly face some challenges and difficulties in using certain metadiscoursal features. Even though the native-speaker status is a controversial reason, it might have an impact on the use of metadiscoursal features in editorials, and, thus, should not be overlooked as a potential aspect of the differences when comparing native and non-native writings.

As noted above, no statistically significant differences were found between the Guardian and the Jordan Times editorialists in their use of interactive metadiscourse resources. It was also mentioned earlier that endophoric markers were absent from both corpora. The lack of significant differences in the two sets of editorials when it comes to these categories could be interpreted as related to *the genre* in which these editorials exist. Rahman (2011, p. 1) generally described the notion of genre as "the abstract, goal-oriented, staged, and socially recognized ways of using language delimited by communicative purposes, performed social interactions within rhetorical contexts, and formal properties". Therefore, the genre to which a certain text belongs might affect the ways of using the language and might result in similar patterns of using certain linguistic devices including, for example, the use of metadiscoursal features.

Some possible explanations were offered by Hyland (2004) in his analysis of metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. Hyland compared MA and PhD students in their use of metadiscoursal items. He reported that doctoral students used more interactive features than their MA counterparts. One of Hyland's interpretations of this result was the need for more interactive resources to organize any lengthy work. Another interpretation was linked to the proficiency levels of different writers and how they wanted to represent their own language. Hyland (2004, p. 141) claimed that "the greater use of metadiscourse in PhDs can also be seen as representing a more sophisticated approach to language as these advanced students sought to craft more 'academic' reader-friendly prose and make more concerted attempts to engage with readers". Hyland's interpretations are deemed relevant and closely connected to the findings of this thesis about the editorial section of newspapers. In this sense, the British editorialists

at the Guardian newspaper might be using more interactive markers to organize their long editorials or to reflect their high proficiency levels as native speakers of the language. A proof of this interpretation from the findings of this study about editorials would be the fact that the number of words in the Guardian corpus (24,661 words) was higher than the number of words in the Jordan Times corpus (17,368 words). The average number of words in the Guardian editorials was higher which gives rise to the use of more interactive markers to organize discourse.

In this study, the frequency of frame markers in the Guardian corpus outnumbered their frequency in the Jordan Times corpus. To put it differently, frame markers were used more frequently by British writers than by their Jordanian counterparts. This result is contrary to that of Memon et al. (2021) who found that British writers used fewer frame markers compared to Pakistani writers. This opposing result was reported in a study comparing metadiscourse markers in research articles written by Pakistani and British engineers. The difference in results can be attributed to a variety of reasons; one of which might be the variation in the use of metadiscourse across the different genres. Although the study of Memon et al. (2021) targeted a native group and an EFL group of writers, the texts' genre or type was different. The study of Memon et al. (2021) analysed the use of metadiscourse in engineering and technological research articles, while this research focuses on the editorial section of newspapers. Such an interpretation of the contradiction in results is supported by Bhatia's (2008) work about genre analysis and professional practice in which she claims that "it is important to note that different professional discourses have their own characteristics that constraint their use and interpretation" (Bhatia, 2008, p. 163).

The absence of endophoric markers in the corpora might be construed as a recognition of the variation between different genres in the use of metadiscourse markers. In this regard, Le (2004) discussed the difference between the academic writing genre and the editorial genre. Le (2004, p.690) pointed out that "[E]ditorials differ from academic texts by: being much shorter in length (and thus they do not need to contain as many endophoric markers or frame markers), having a content that can be exposed with less complexity (making code glosses much less relevant), and benefiting from a much longer and less specialized audience". In my own perspective, Le's (2004) interpretation about the short length of editorials is a plausible scenario for the lack of endophoric makers in the tested editorials.

Last but not least, the reasons behind the variation in the use of metadiscourse remain fuzzy and are not clear-cut which makes generalization more difficult. The diversity and variation in the use of metadiscourse are the result of the interplay of several factors. For instance, the cultural background and the native status of the writer can be partially responsible for the differences in the use of metadiscourse. The style of writing, which might differ from one editorialist to another, is another important factor in identifying the use of metadiscoursal items. In addition, variations in the distribution and frequency of metadiscourse markers might be affected by the degree of awareness that editorialists have of the register and the ways of building a relationship with the audience.

6. Conclusion

This study has explored the use of interactive metadiscourse resources in L1 and L2 English editorials. A functional and statistical analysis of interactive metadiscourse resources in 80 editorials (40 from the Guardian and 40 from the Jordan Times) was performed. The results of these analyses have shown that, taken together, there is no significant difference between the two corpora in the use of interactive metadiscourse resources. That is, the t-value does not represent a significant difference. The findings, however, suggest that some variation in the use of individual interactive metadiscourse resources between L1 and L2 English editorialists is caused by the interplay of several factors such as the nature of the genre and the status and identity of the writer. For example, the use of frame markers was significantly different in the two sets of editorials. Although there was little use of frame markers, the average of frame markers' frequencies was different. The average of frame markers in the Guardian corpus was (1.48) which is higher than the average appearing in the Jordan Times corpus, (0.43) only. The findings stress that interactive metadiscourse is a powerful tool that is used to organize texts in a way that leads the reader smoothly and achieves the purpose of writing. This is the case with respect to writing in media discourse where the ultimate objective is to persuade readers and attract their attention to the text. Although this study focuses on the editorial genre, the findings provide some implications for English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly courses in English for Media and English for Journalism. In its focus on the editorial section, the study has implications for ESP courses,

particularly English for media courses. Such courses should include texts written by both L1 and L2 English language writers in order to understand the similarities and differences and so we can appreciate the styles used by each type of writer.

There may be some possible limitations of this study. Due to time constraints, this study covers only the editorial section of the newspaper without comparing it to other sections in the newspaper. The second limitation is closely related to the first one which is the ability to compare metadiscourse in this journalistic genre with other types of genres such as the academic genre. Despite the interest in comparing metadiscourse in editorials of two languages (English and Arabic), it is a difficult task to find editorials written in Arabic by native speakers of English available at these newspapers' websites. These points might be taken into consideration as suggestions for future studies about metadiscourse.

Further research is required to fully understand the rhetorical choices that native and non-native writers make in their English editorials. Studying the cross-cultural variation of interpersonal metadiscourse in opinion pieces of newspapers other than editorials is one potential avenue. For instance, studying feature articles, Op-Eds, columns, letters to the editor and other types of opinion pieces would be a fruitful area for future research. A future study might examine the use of interpersonal metadiscourse by native and non-native speakers of English in print media (e.g. magazines) or broadcast media (e.g. TV or radio). Finally, further research could also be conducted to compare the use of interpersonal metadiscourse in Arabic and English editorials. Future research can also be conducted to investigate whether some social factors (age, gender, education, the writer's specialization and the newspaper's status) might affect the use of interpersonal metadiscourse.

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