

Metadiscourse Features in English News Writing among English Native and Iranian Writers: A Comparative Corpus-based Inquiry

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Abstract—The aim of this study was to compare and contrast the distribution and application of metadiscourse features in news writings between English native writers and Iranian non-native writers. To this end, a comparable corpus of English news written by English native authors and Iranian authors were selected randomly. For the theoretical framework, Hyland's model (2005) was exploited. As the data represent, the English authors were more relied than the Persian ones on metadiscourse features. Also, the data revealed that in both corpora, the interactional metadiscourse features were preponderant as compared to the interactive metadiscourse features. In addition, in the interactional corpus, hedges were the most frequent as compared to transitions which were the most frequent type of metadiscourse in interactive category.

Index Terms—metadiscourse features, interactive, interactional, corpora, news writing, native writers vs. nonnative writers

I. INTRODUCTION

Written language (writing) plays a crucially important and significant role in different aspects of our lives including academic, social and professional (Salar & Ghonsooly, 2015). It is important due to the fact that writing is one of the four main skills of language learning (Salem, 2013) and can help the acquisition of complex grammatical structures and new vocabularies (Al-Saleem, 2008). As a matter of fact, the objective and the receiver(s) of the written message are the factors that have impacts on the writing production (Tadayyon & Vasheghani Farahani, 2017). By applying specific devices in writing, authors show their personality, subject matter, credibility and needs of the readers (Crismore, Markkanen & Steffenson, 1993).

Written language as “a major productive language skill that learners need to master” (Al samadan & Ibnian, 2015 p.227) is composed of various genres and rhetoric. Indeed, “different genres are best conceived as actualization of language choices to delineate particular purposes, assumptions about the audience and interpersonal relations with the reader, and thus, different genres approaches persuasion differently” (Khajavy & Asadpour, 2012, p.148).

From among the various genres, one very interesting and controversial is news genre. As “journalism is becoming increasingly important for the news industry” (Steensen, 2011, p.49), news writing genre has attained too much attention. Indeed, every day, a plethora number of news bulletins is being written about daily events; as a result, knowing how to shape the event within the boundaries of language can be a very key principle. News writing is important in that the writer puts forward a proposition and it must be shaped in such a way that it can persuade the readership of the message.

II. METADISOURSE

Coined at first by Zelling Harris in 1950s, metadiscourse is used as a tool way by which we can comprehend the language in real use. As a matter of fact, metadiscourse refers to the fact that communication is a phenomenon which is more than the information exchange and includes such other features as personalities and attitudes (Hyland, 2005). Based on this definition, “Metadiscourse is a new and interesting field of inquiry which is believed to play a vital role in organizing and producing persuasive writing, based on the norms and expectations of people involved” (Amiryousefi & Eslami Rasekh, 2010, p.159). Williams (1981, p. 212) defines metadiscourse simply as “writing about writing, whatever does not refer to the subject matter being addressed”. In another definition, Vande Kopple (1985) defines metadiscourse as text connectives by which “we can help readers recognize how our texts are organized and see exactly how different parts of them are connected to each other” (p, 83).

Metadiscourse is a term used in applied Linguistics in spoken and written modes; serving as the textual and interpersonal functions of language and can help the receivers of the message to not only organize and interpret; but

also to assess the content of the text. (Blagojevic, 2004; Kim & Limi, 2013). As the metadiscourse has an interactional role between the reader and writer, Hyland & Tse (2004) specifies three main principles of metadiscourse as:

- "Metadiscourse is distinct from propositional aspects of discourse.
- Metadiscourse refers to aspects of the text that embody writer reader interactions.
- Metadiscourse refers to relations only that are internal to the discourse" (p.159).

Accordingly, metadiscourse is a very significant phenomenon which has to be studied. Indeed, "the significance of Metadiscourse lies in its role in explicating a context for interpretation and indicating one way which acts of communication define and maintain social groups" (p.16). Vande Kopple (2012) also specifies the importance of studying metadiscourse features for three main reasons. One reason is that metadiscourse features can show how a complex structure is a language that we use and how critical one has to be in order to study this structure. A second reason is that some metadiscourse features may play more than one rhetorical and functional role in languages. The last reason for the important study of metadiscourse features is that while some linguistic forms have the function of metadiscourse features in one language, in other texts they have the function of conveying the ideational information.

III. CONTRASTIVE RHETORIC

Language as a means of communication in society, from one hand, and a source of power for human being, from the other hand, is regarded as a manifestation of culture and distinctiveness of its users (Vasheghani Farahani & Mokhtari, 2016). The notion of contrastive rhetoric (CR) began in 1966 in a paper written by Kaplan on the cultural thought patterns in intercultural education which he came to the conclusion that the writing style of American native speakers was different from that of the non-native speakers of English (Vaez Dalili & Vahid Dastjerdi, 2013). By definition, contrastive rhetoric is "the study of how rhetorical expectations and conventions differ among cultures" (Liebman, 1988, p.6).

As Kaplan, 1996, (as cited in Xing; Wang & Spencer, 2008) believes, in contrastive rhetoric every written language enjoys some specific means of organizational modes and native languages of any language are familiar with them; though there are some similarities in rhetorical modes of all the languages. In this sense, the contrastive rhetoric of one specific genre in different languages or within one language, but different writers can be a very interesting area of inquiry which needs more investigations.

IV. CORPUS-BASED STUDIES

By the advances in computer science and due to the increasing globalization, the corpus-based studies have become a major trend in language studies (Guo-rong, 2010). Since the 1960s, when the first corpus was created at Brown University, this area of research is going from strength to strength (Zanettin, 2005). By definition, corpus is stemmed from the Latin language which means literary body (Baker, Hardie and McEnery, 2006). Scientifically, corpus refers to a large collection of texts that are stored electronically and can be analyzed by software (Munday, 2012). Corpus Linguistics as the scientific field of inquiry is defined by Granger (2002) as "a methodology which is founded on the use of electronic collections of naturally occurring texts, vis. Corpora (p.4)".

Corpora have various implications and applications in language studies. Indeed, "corpus-based study methods have proven established in linguistic research and have expanded most of its methods and language analysis techniques to other disciplines such as lexicology, terminology, language teaching and translation" (Candel-Mora & Vargas-Sierra, 2013, p.318). based on the research objectives, various kinds of corpora are exploited such as parallel, specialized, learner, bidirectional and comparable corpora. The last one, comparable corpora, are one the most valuable tools for studying the differences between the two or more languages. Indeed, it is a corpus "contains texts in two or more languages, which have been gathered according to the same genre, field and sampling period criteria" (Delpech, 2014p.7).

V. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

As a matter of fact, metadiscourse features have been studied by different scholars in various genres. For this purpose, for gaining a clear account of the topic of the study and in order to be able to analyze the related works, it is plausible to have a review literature.

As far as the metadiscourse features in news writing are concerned, Deliery Moghadam (2017) did a research on the way native speakers of English and Iranian non-native speakers of English put the propositions by using metadiscourse features in news articles. Applying Hyland's model of metadiscourse features, he selected 60 newspapers from American and Iranian newspapers (30 from each language). By quantitative analysis of the corpora, she came to this conclusion that the American writers used more metadiscourse features (both interactive and interactional) in their writings.

Kuhia & Mojood (2014) conducted a research on the distribution of metadiscourse features in English and Persian editorials. For this purpose, they relied on Hyland's model of metadiscourse features and selected 60 news editorials (30 in each language) via internet. The results of the study showed that in both corpora the interactional metadiscourse

features were used more frequently as compared to interactive ones. Also, in interactive dimension, the transition markers were the most frequent one as compared to attitude markers in interactional one.

Yazdani, Sharifi, and Elyassi (2014) investigated metadiscourse features in news written about 9/11 accident in U.S.A. For this aim, they used Hyland's model of metadiscourse features and compiled a corpus of 60 news articles (30 for each language) written on this event. Being limited to only interactional metadiscourse features, the results of their research revealed that the American writers employed more interactional metadiscourse features than the Iranian ones and that the Iranian writers had less inclination to use self-mentions and engagement markers as compared to the American writers.

Sukma & Sari Sujatna (2014) embarked on a study on the interpersonal metadiscourse on opinion articles. For this study, they selected 11 articles written in Indonesian magazines on legal and political issues. For the metadiscourse classification, they employed Dafouz's (2008) classification. The findings could show that from among the attitude markers and commentaries were the most applicable metadiscourse features used in news writings.

In the same line, Tarrayo (2014) did a comparative research on the distribution of metadiscourse features on Philippian Journalism blogs. Relying on the Hyland's model of metadiscourse as the theoretical framework, he investigated 20 journalism blogs in Philippine as the corpus of the study. The findings of his research could show that the interactive metadiscourse features were the main metadiscourse features used by the bloggers. Also, from among the interactive metadiscourse features, the evidentials were the main one enjoyed by the bloggers.

Fu and Hyland (2014) did a research on the distribution of metadiscourse features in two journalistic genres. Being limited to interactional category of Hyland's metadiscourse features, they compiled a corpus of 200 popular science and 200 opinion texts for the objective of the study. The results revealed that opinion texts used more metadiscourse as compared to the science corpora.

Based on the above-mentioned issues and due to the fact that analyzing metadiscourse features in news writing by exploiting corpus software is a neglected area of inquiry which deserves more investigation, the following research questions were addressed in this study.

Q.1 What is the mode of the interactive metadiscourse features distribution in English native author news writing?

Q.2 What is the mode of the interactional metadiscourse features distribution in English native author news writing?

Q.3 What is the mode of the interactive metadiscourse features distribution in Iranian author news writing?

Q.4 What is the mode of the interactional metadiscourse features distribution in Iranian author news writing?

Q.5 Are there statistically significant difference between the mode of interactional metadiscourse features distribution in English native author and Iranian authors corpora?

Q.6 Are there statistically significant difference between the mode of interactive metadiscourse interactive metadiscourse features distribution in English native author and Iranian authors corpus?

VI. METHOD, DESIGN, AND INSTRUMENTATION

As far as the design of the study was concerned, the design of the study in hand was descriptive, quantitative, non-experimental and corpus-based study in nature to analyze metadiscourse features. As far as the metadiscourse discourse classification was concerned, it is worth noting that since its advent, there has been proposed several models of metadiscourse classifications (see for example Crismore, 1989; Vande Kopple, 1985, 2002; Hyland, 2005; Adel, 2006). However, for the purpose of the current study, the classification proposed by Hyland (2005) was exploited; due to the fact that it is not only the most up to date model, but also, the most well-defined, established and comprehensive model (Ghadyani & Tahririan, 2015). In his model, metadiscourse features are basically divided into main categories as interactive and interactional. As far as the interactional metadiscourse features are concerned, they are concerned "the way writers conduct interaction by intruding and commenting on their message. The writer's goal here is to make his or her views explicit and to involve readers by allowing them to respond to the unfolding message" (Hyland, 2005, p. 49). On the other hand, the interactive dimension concerns "the writer's awareness of participating audience and the ways he or she seeks to accommodate its probable knowledge, interests, rhetorical expectations and processing abilities" (Ibid.).

TABLE 1
AN INTERPERSONAL MODEL OF METADISOURSE FEATURE (HYLLAND, 2005).

Category	Function	Example
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, sequence or stages	finally, to conclude, my purpose
Endophoric markers	refer to information in other parts of the text	Noted above; see fig
Evidentials	refer to information from other texts	According to X; Z states
Code glasses	elaborate propositional meanings	Namely; e.g.; such as; in other words,
Category	Function	Example
Interactional	Involve the reader in the text	Resources
Hedges	withhold commitments and open dialogue	might; perhaps; possible; about
Boosters	Emphasis 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

For the corpus of the study, it is worth noting that since the current research was a corpus-based inquiry, two DO IT Yourself (DIY) corpora, also known as closed corpora, were compiled. As its name implies, DIY corpus, is a corpus which is compiled by the author for research purposes and usually, it is discarded once the research has been finished and does not expand in terms of quantity (Mahadi, Vaezian & Akbari, 2010).

For the purpose of the study, two corpora of news texts were selected. The total number of each corpus was ten thousand words; making together a corpus of twenty thousand words. The texts which were written by the native authors, were selected from journals, gazette and news editorials in U.S.A and U.K. As a result, both American and British English were selected. Also, by selecting the news from various sources, the idiosyncrasies of the writers were avoided. It is worth noting that only news is written in the current year (2017) were selected due to the fact that the old news was difficult in accessibility. For the Iranian non-native writers, news was selected from editorials, news agencies, and online news sources. Since they were selected from Iranian sources, the idiosyncrasies of the writers were not taken into consideration. The table below shows the sources from which English and Persian texts were extracted.

TABLE 2
THE SOURCES FROM WHICH NEWS WAS EXTRACTED

Foreign Sources	Iranian Sources
Antiwar	ISNA
BBC	ILNA
Euronews	IRNA
Daily Mail	FARS
Sunday Times	MEHR
Financial Times	Iran Daily News

TABLE 3
BASIC INFORMATION OF THE TEXT WRITTEN BY ENGLISH NATIVE AUTHORS

Number of Words	Number of Sentences	Number of Tokens
9883	388	11245

TABLE 4
BASIC INFORMATION OF THE TEXT WRITTEN BY IRANIAN NON-NATIVE AUTHORS

Number of Words	Number of Sentences	Number of Tokens
10091	415	11,701

Since the current research was a corpus-based inquiry it was quite necessary to make a use of corpus software for gleaning better and more tangible results. From among various software, the one which was used in this study was Sketch Engine software. Sketch Engine is a windows oriented and supported corpus software which is used in various activities including dictionary compiling, translation, phraseology, collocation studies, language teaching and learning and text analysis. This program was designed by Lexical Computing Ltd. (<https://www.sketchengine.co.uk/>). Being user-friendly, Sketch Engine gives the researchers the opportunity to have full access to a wide range of raw data from various corpora and languages like National British Corpus, Early English Books Online, English Web 2013 and ... It also gives the researchers the opportunity to compile DIY parallel and comparable corpora (McGillivray & Kilgarrif, 2013).

For knowing how the software functions and in order to decipher the content analysis, some example extracted from the corpora are presented. The examples were extracted from both the native and non-native texts.

Examples of Interactive Classification

individuals responsible will be held accountable."	However	' he said to date neither KPMG's review
That's another potentially big problem,	however	, as many recent US "show of force" actions
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-40704184	However	, at other times Mr. Maduro returned to more
to rewrite the constitution. His critics,	however	, see it as a way for the president to expand
slightly declined" over the past 10 years.	However	, scientists working in the field said the
U.S.S. Gerald R. Ford. Since World War II,	however	, neither preventing nor winning wars have

Figure 1. Examples of Interactive Classifications

have been made and painful lessons learnt.	We	commit to take every action necessary to
apply these learnings to strengthen the way	we	work' and help restore the public trust
work' and help restore the public trust	we	have earned over more than a century of
exchange would have disastrous consequences. As	we	look at the possible consequences, former
themselves into compliance, though naturally	we	have no idea what that action would be,
aimed at Boris Johnson: "Let's be honest, if	we	had an effective electoral law leading
imperialists" of plotting against his government. "	We	will never cede to foreign powers," he

Figure 2. Examples of Interactional Classification

Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Search engines	like	Google are blocked, and access to many
despite a number of adverse external factors	like	increasingly congested airspace, particularly
checked was checking the tickets by hand.	Like	in so many others places, the visits of
metres takes just few seconds but you feel	like	being in a movie as the revolutionary music
future of U.S.-North Korean relations look	like	? To answer that question, consider the
South Korea and Japan become nuclear powers	like	Britain and France. Given the rising risk
today. It's a study of what "success" looks	like	when you fund the U.S. military fulsomely

Figure 3. Examples of Interactional Classifications

Interactive Metadiscourse Features Transitions

narrowly defeated vote of no confidence **but** his hell ride is far from over

Frame markers

advantage preserves maximum freedom of action...**Finally**, it allows U.S. decision-makers the opportunity

Endophoric Markers

And heavily congested airspace above parts of Europe and London

Evidentials

Accordingly, the review team is now being led by

Code Glosses

change caused by the burning of fossil fuels **such** as coal and oil. On the programme

Interactional Metadiscourse Features

Hedges

In Switzerland, whose spy agency warned about the threat in May

Boosters

Delays of over three hours this year. In fact, despite a number of adverse external factors

Attitude Markers

the future couldn't be more perilous. **Unfortunately**, to grasp their assessment of the global

Self-mentions

Whatsoever by an Azerbaijani composer before I start working with Femusa and it's been

Engagement Markers

worked out for them. Or you might want to **consider** the findings of another study altogether

VII. DATA ANALYSIS

In order to be able to answer the research questions and for gaining a better understanding of the research findings, it was necessary to run some statistical analysis by SPSS software. In this regard, first the frequency of each metadiscourse features (interactive and interactional) were calculated separately in both corpora. Then they were tabulated by bar charts and graphs. In addition, for calculating the significant differences on the distribution of metadiscourse features, a chi-square test was conducted.

TABLE 5
INTERACTIVE TEXT CROSS TABULATION RESULTS

		Text		Total
		Persian	Foreign	
Transitions	Count	456	374	830
	% within text	71.8%	60.5%	66.2%
Frame markers	Count	98	139	237
	% within text	15.4%	22.5%	18.9%
Endophoric Markers	Count	11	6	17
	% within text	1.7%	1.0%	1.4%
Evidentials	Count	15	24	39
	% within text	2.4%	3.9%	3.1%
Code Glosses	Count	55	75	130
	% within text	8.7%	12.1%	10.4%
Total	Count	635	618	1253
	% within text	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 5 demonstrates the way metadiscourse features were distributed and used in texts written by English native writers and Iranian writers. As can be seen, as far as the Persian texts were concerned, transitions with 456 counts (71%) were the most frequent type of interactive metadiscourse features in corpus, followed by frame markers and code glosses as the second and third most enjoyed interactive metadiscourse features with 98 counts (15%) and 55 counts (8.7%), respectively. In the fourth rank came evidentials with only 15 counts (2.4%) which followed by endophoric markers as the least applicable metadiscourse features with 11 counts only (1.7%).

Regarding the foreign texts, as the data show, transitions with 374 counts (60%) were the most applicable interactive metadiscourse features. After transitions, frame markers with 139 counts (22.5%) were the second most used interactive metadiscourse features in foreign texts followed by code glosses as the third interactive metadiscourse features used by foreign writers (75 counts). In the fourth rank, stood evidentials with 24 counts (3.9%) as the most used interactive metadiscourse features. The least used interactive metadiscourse feature by native writers was endophoric markers with only 6 counts (1%).

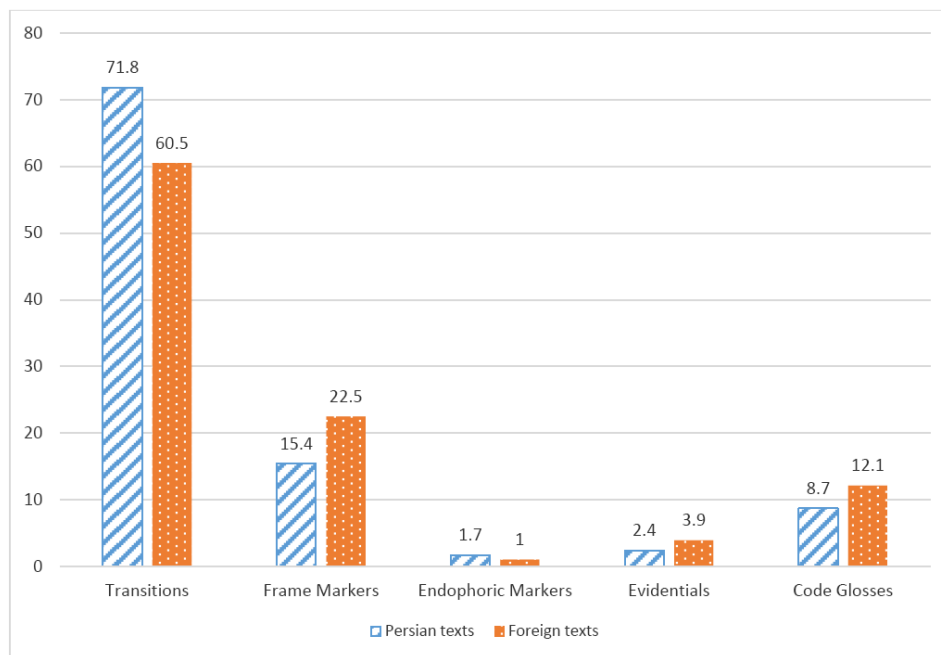


Figure 6. Bar Chart of Interactive Metadiscourse Features in Both Corpora

Figure 6 represents the way interactive metadiscourse features were distributed in both corpora by English native and Iranian writers. As can be seen, in both corpora, transitions were the most applicable interactive metadiscourse features used by English and Iranian writers. However, Persian writers used more transitions than the foreign ones. In addition, in frame markers foreign writers relied more on these metadiscourse features as compared to Iranian writers. As far as the code glosses are concerned, again foreign writers out used the Iranian authors. However, in terms of evidentials, too, the foreign writers used more than the Iranian ones. The last one, that is to say, endophoric markers, it is understood that the Iranian writers used more than the foreign ones.

TABLE 6
INTERACTIONAL CROSS TABULATION RESULTS

		Text		Total
		Persian	Foreign	
Hedges	Count	172	172	344
	% within text	43.9%	36.5%	39.9%
Boosters	Count	36	40	76
	% within text	9.2%	8.5%	8.8%
Attitude Markers	Count	12	6	18
	% within text	3.1%	1.3%	2.1%
Self-mentions	Count	112	165	277
	% within text	28.6%	35.0%	32.1%
Engagement Markers	Count	60	88	148
	% within text	15.3%	18.7%	17.1%
Total	Count	392	471	863
	% within text	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 6 demonstrates the normative behavior of the interactional metadiscourse features distribution in both corpora. As far as the Persian corpus was concerned, hedges with 172 counts (43%) of the total occurrences was the most applicable interactional metadiscourse features followed by self-mentions with 112 counts (28%). It is conspicuous from the data that the third and fourth most applicable metadiscourse features were engagement markers and boosters with 60 and 36 items; respectively. The least used metadiscourse feature in the category of interactional was attitude markers with 12 items only (3.1%).

Regarding the foreign texts, it is seen that in line with the Persian corpus, hedges with 172 counts (36.5) were the most applicable interactional metadiscourse features. After that, self-mentions with 165 items (35%) were the second most applicable interactional metadiscourse features. However, in the third stage, stood, engagement markers with 88 items (18.7%) of the total occurrences. As can be seen, the fourth most applicable interactional metadiscourse feature were boosters with 40 items (8.5%). However, the least used interactional metadiscourse features used by foreign writers were attitude markers with only 6 items (1.3%).



Figure 7. Bar chart of Interactional Metadiscourse Feature in Both Corpora

Figure 7 reveals the distributive behavior of the metadiscourse features in both corpora by English native and Iranian Writers. As can be seen, in terms of hedges, Iranian writers outperformed their native counterparts. However, for the self-mentions as the second most applicable interactional metadiscourse features, it is conspicuous that English (foreign) writers used more items as compared to the Iranian ones. In the third most applicable interactional metadiscourse features; that is to say, the engagement markers, the English writers, like self-mentions, used for items as opposed to the Iranian ones. However, when it comes to the boosters, it can be inferred from the data that the Iranian writers relied more than the English ones on the boosters. Also, Persian writers used more attitude markers in comparison with the English writers.

TABLE 7
COMPARISON DATA FOR INTERACTIVE METADISOURSE FEATURES BETWEEN PERSIAN AND FOREIGN WRITERS

	Persian texts N (%)	Foreign texts N (%)	P-value
Transitions	456 (71.8)	374 (60.5)	<0.001
Frame Markers	98 (15.4)	139 (22.5)	
Endophoric Markers	11 (1.7)	6 (1)	
Evidentials	15 (2.4)	24 (3.9)	
Code Glosses	55 (8.7)	75 (12.1)	
total	635 (100)	618 (100)	

Table 7 represents a set of comparative data on the distribution of interactive metadiscourse features within Persian and foreign corpora. Generally, it can be inferred from the data that the total number of interactive metadiscourse features used by the Iranian writers was 635 items; whereas the foreign writers used only 618 items. As far as the transitions are concerned, while Persian writers used 456 counts (71%), the English writers used only 374 counts which mean that the Iranian writers used more than the foreign ones. As far as the frame makers are concerned, however, it is seen that while the Iranian writers used 98 items their English counterparts applied 139 items. When it comes to endophoric markers, the Iranian writers used 1 items only and the English writers 6 times which are the least in both corpora. For the evidentials, the Iranian writers used 15 items; while the English writers applied 24 items. Like evidentials, English writers relied more on the code glosses (75 items) than the Iranian ones with only 55 items.

TABLE 8
RESULTS OF THE CHI-SQUARE TESTS OF THE INTERACTIVE METADISOURSE FEATURES

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.592 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	21.690	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.867	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	1253		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.38.

Table 8 demonstrates results yielded from chi-square tests of the distribution of interactive metadiscourse features in both corpora. As can be seen, the Pearson chi-square test is 21.592^a which is less than 5% and the P-value is <0.001; therefore, the interactive metadiscourse features were not normally distributed in both corpora.

TABLE 9
COMPARISON DATA FOR INTERACTIONAL METADISOURSE FEATURES BETWEEN PERSIAN AND FOREIGN WRITERS

	Persian texts N (%)	Foreign texts N (%)	P-value
Hedges	172 (43.9)	172 (36.5)	0.03
Boosters	36 (9.1)	40 (8.5)	
Attitude Markers	12 (3.1)	6 (1.3)	
Self-mentions	112 (28.6)	165 (35)	
Engagement Markers	60 (15.3)	88 (18.7)	
total	392 (100)	471 (100)	

Table 9 gives comparative information on the way interactional metadiscourse features were distributed and used in both corpora. On the whole, it can be understood from the data that writers of the foreign texts applied more interactional metadiscourse features (471) than the Iranian ones (392) items. For the hedges, the data show that both writers applied equal number which is 172 for both. In terms of boosters, however, foreign writers used more in comparison with the Iranian writers with 40 and 36 items; respectively. When it comes to the attitude markers, the data show that the Iranian writers used two times more than the foreign writers with 12 and 6 items; respectively. Self-mentions category shows that the foreign writers used more than the Iranian ones with 88 and 60 items. This trend can be seen in engagement markers as well. In other words, whereas the foreign writers applied 88 times engagement markers, the Iranian ones used only 60 times.

TABLE 10
RESULTS OF THE CHI-SQUARE TESTS OF THE INTERACTIONAL METADISOURSE FEATURES

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.505 ^a	4	.033
Likelihood Ratio	10.540	4	.032
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.632	1	.010
N of Valid Cases	863		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.18.

Table 10 shows the results of the Chi-square tests on the distribution of the interactional metadiscourse features in both corpora. As can be seen, the frequency distribution of the interactive metadiscourse features is 10.505 and the P-value is 0.03, therefore the interactional metadiscourse features were not normally distributed within both corpora.

VIII. RESPONSE TO THE FIRST RESEARCH QUESTION

The first research question of this study was to detect the mode of interactive metadiscourse features distribution in English native authors news writing corpus. For this purpose, the frequency and normal distribution of the interactive metadiscourse features were calculated. As the data in table 7 show, from among the 5 items, transitions with 60% and frame markers with 22% were the most frequent types of interactive metadiscourse features. Also, the least frequent interactive metadiscourse feature features in foreign texts were evidential with 3.9% and endophoric markers with 1%; respectively.

IX. RESPONSE TO THE SECOND RESEARCH QUESTION

In line with the first research question, the second research question of this study dealt with the distribution of interactional metadiscourse features in English native authors news writing corpus. In this regard, the frequency of interactional metadiscourse features were calculated for each item separately. As the statistics in table 9 demonstrate, from among the 5 subcategories of interactional metadiscourse features, hedges and self-mentions with 172 and 165 items were the most frequent interactional metadiscourse features; respectively. However, with only 40 and 6 items, boosters and attitude markers were the least used interactional metadiscourse in the corpus; respectively.

X. RESPONSE TO THE THIRD RESEARCH QUESTION

The third research question of the study at hand was to analyses interactive metadiscourse features distribution in Iranian author news writing. Like the previous research questions, the frequency of each occurrence of interactive metadiscourse features were checked and analyzed in each subcategory separately. As the data in table 7 reveals, from among the interactive metadiscourse features, transitions with 456 items and frame markers with 98 items were the most applicable interactive metadiscourse features in Persian corpus; respectively. However, code glosses and endophoric markers were the least enjoyed interactive metadiscourse markers with 15 and 11 items; respectively.

XI. RESPONSE TO THE FOURTH RESEARCH QUESTION

Like the previous research questions, the fourth research question of this study was to analyze the mode of the interactional metadiscourse features distribution in Iranian author news writing. For this aim, the subcategories of interactional metadiscourse features were checked within the corpus separately. As the data in table 9 indicates, from among all the subcategories of interactional metadiscourse features, hedges and self-mentions were the most frequent types of 172 and 112 occurrences; respectively. Also, the least used and applicable interactional metadiscourse features in Persian corpus were boosters and attitude markers with 36 and 12 items; respectively.

XII. RESPONSE TO THE FIFTH RESEARCH QUESTION

The fifth research question of this research was to analyze the statistically significant difference between the mode of interactional metadiscourse features distribution in English native author and Iranian authors corpora. For this purpose, the P-Value and Chi-Square tests were analyzed. As the data in table 6 represents, the total number of interactional metadiscourse features used in Persian corpus was 392 items; whereas, in the English corpus, 471 items were detected. Also, as the results of the Chi-Square test in table 10 can show, the P-Value was 21.592; there for there was a significant difference between the way interactional metadiscourse features were distributed and used in English and Persian corpora.

XIII. RESPONSE TO THE FIFTH RESEARCH QUESTION

The last research question was to analyze statistically significant difference between the mode of interactive metadiscourse interactive metadiscourse features distribution in English native author and Iranian authors corpus. Like the previous research question, the P-Value and Chi-Square tests were analyzed. As the data can reveal in table 5 indicates, the total number of interactive metadiscourse features in the Persian corpus was 635 items as opposed to 618 ones in the English corpus. Also, the results of the Pearson Chi-square test and P-Value in table 10 can show, the P-Value was 10.505; therefor, the interactive metadiscourse features were significantly different within both corpora.

XIV. CONCLUDING MARKS

Metadiscourse features are open-ended category which has received too much attention of the academia within recent years and are the key features in text construction. Indeed, metadiscourse features are the tools for mediating the relationship between the writer' proposition and the discourse community (Faghih & Rahimpour, 2009). For this reason, this study aimed at analyzing the way metadiscourse features were distributed and used in two disposable corpora; that is to say, English native and Iranian writers. This study enjoyed Hyland's metadiscourse classification, which is divided into interactive and interactional and interactive sub-divisions. Interactive metadiscourse features are usually used to respond to the needs and expectations of the receiver of the message; whereas, the interactional metadiscourse features

are used to make the ideas and propositions of the author(s) more explicit and coherent. For the purpose of this research two disposable corpora were created from online media in Iran and the English speaking world.

As the data show, the English corpus consisted of 1089 interactive and interactional metadiscourse features as opposed to 1027 interactive and interactional metadiscourse features in Persian corpus. This significantly different number of interactive and interactional metadiscourse features may indicate that the native authors were more aware of the usage of these features in guiding the readers, persuading them and making their texts more coherent and explicit as these are the functions of metadiscourse features. This can be due to the fact that since they are native speakers of English, their command of their mother tongue is better than the Iranian writers; causing the English speakers to have a better knowledge of the usage and exploitation of these features.

The results also showed that in both corpora (English and Persian) the interactive metadiscourse features were the pre-dominant features enjoyed by authors (618 and 635; respectively). This result can show that writers in both corpora were more concerned with the expectations and persuasion of the readers and also were aware of the ways and news writing methods to shape the interpretations of the receivers decipher of the message as these are met by interactive metadiscourse feature.

In addition, the results revealed that while in the Persian corpus consisted of 635 interactive metadiscourse features, the English corpus consisted of 618 ones; which is against the general trend of the results; (English corpus had more metadiscourse as opposed to the Persian one). This trend can support the idea that the Iranian authors were more concerned with the message receivers and their expectation as well as making more efforts to construct the message with the expectations of the readers in mind. However, for the interactional, the data could prove the fact that the English corpus contained more metadiscourse features (471) as compared to the Persian corpus (392) ones which can add support to the view that the English authors were more concerned with the ways to construct and make interaction with the readers as well as making their views more explicit in the eyes of the readers.

Furthermore, in the category of interactive metadiscourse features, although the English corpus contained more metadiscourse features, the Persian corpus contained more transition (456 vs. 374). This can show that the Persian authors were more occupied in making their texts more coherent so that the readers could follow the course of reading in a smoother way. The Persian authors also used more endophoric markers than the English ones which can show that they made more efforts to refer to information in other parts and sections of the text to remind the readers of the previously mentioned discourse. Nevertheless, the English corpus contained more frame markers which can show that the English writers were more aware of the fact that their texts need to be shaped in such a way that they would seem to follow sequential and discourse acts. The outperform of the English authors in exploiting evidentials can also reveal that their texts had relied more on the references and intertextualities than the Iranian authors. By using more code glosses, the English authors demonstrated that they were more interested in elaborating the propositional content than the Iranian Ones.

In the category of interactional metadiscourse features, although the English corpus contained more metadiscourse features than the Persian one (471 vs. 392), the Persian corpus contained more instances of hedges, boosters and attitude markers. That the Persian corpus contained more hedges than the English corpus may be due to the fact that the Persian writers were not confident and assured enough to open up new dialogues; withholding the commitment as this is the main function of the hedges. Boosters which were enjoyed more by the Persian authors showed the English authors had less certainty in their propositions as this is the main function of the boosters. Attitude markers were also enjoyed more by Persian writers which can add support to the idea that the Persian authors were more interested in expressing their ideas and attitudes and perspectives towards the propositions and the content. However, the extra usage of self-mentions in English corpus as compared to the Persian corpus (165 vs. 112) can be a sign that the English authors were more encouraged to use self- expressions and self-references in the texts which can be due to the fact that they were more interested in posting their own ideas within the propositional meaning. Engagement markers were also used by the English authors more frequently as when compared to the Iranian ones. This can reveal the fact that the English authors were more interested in making a logical relation with the reader and also establishing such relationship as this can be assured by the use of engagement markers.

XV. IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The results of this study can have some useful pedagogical implications. One implication is for students of English as a foreign language. They can understand how to use metadiscourse features in an effective way to improve their writing abilities. Also, the results are useful in a sense that the newly researchers can learn how to conduct comparative studies in this area of inquiry. The last; but not the least implication is that the results provide useful hints about doing corpus-based studies.

Like any other research, the current study had some limitations which could affect the results and findings. One limitation was that the authors had no access to the background of the writers. Their educational background and experiences were not clear to the authors. Another limitation of the study was that the corpus of this study was relatively small and the results cannot be overgeneralized. Also, since the corpus was very small in size, its representativeness was, to some extent, limited. Furthermore, since metadiscourse features are in nature an open-ended category, it is likely that some metadiscourse features were neglected in the analysis process.

This study can prepare the ground for doing further studies. One suggestion is that the same kind of study is conducted by applying other categories of metadiscourse features. Also, another study can be done by compiling larger corpora to detect the routine trend in news writing between English and Iranian authors. In addition, some experimental research can be done in this field of inquiry; meaning that the impacts of teaching metadiscourse features on English news writing can be investigated.

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