

Interpersonal Metadiscourse in Newspaper Editorials

Farzad Salahshoor¹
Zahra Najjary Asl²
Marzieh Tofigh³

Abstract

The power of media lies in its persuasive function, which gives media a potential to maneuver on the mind of audience (van Dijk, 1996). This potential is realized via different linguistic resources, one important group of which is metadiscoursal resources. The major aim of this study was to explore how and in what distribution these resources are employed by writers with different cultural backgrounds to fulfill persuasive objectives in the genre of newspaper editorials. Based on Hyland's (2005) interpersonal taxonomy, a total of eighty newspaper editorials from four elite newspapers (two Iranian and two American) were analyzed and compared. The results revealed some differences between the two groups of editors (Iranian group and American group) in terms of the number of metadiscoursal elements used in their editorials. For instance, the native speaker group proved to be more confident in using interactional and interpersonal metadiscourse markers more frequently than the non-native group, which can be attributed to genre and language ownership on the part of the native speaker group. It can also be related to the contrast often made between writer-responsibility vs. reader-responsibility cultures (Hinds, 1987). On the whole, cultural upbringing, genre and language ownership, as well as different rhetorical considerations may play key roles in the type and frequency of metadiscoursal elements used in public domain discourses.

Keywords: Metadiscourse, Newspaper Editorial Genre, Stance, Engagement

¹Assist. Prof, English Department, Azarbaijan Shahid Madani University, Tabriz, Iran. Email: Farzad.salahshoor@gmail.com

²M.A. in TEFL, English Department, Islamic Azad University, Maragheh Branch, Maragheh, Iran. Email: znajjariasl@yahoo.com

³M.A. in TEFL, English Department, Islamic Azad University, Maragheh Branch, Maragheh, Iran. Email: m_tofigh82@yahoo.com

INTRODUCTION

Media as an inevitable part of modern life and as presenters of culture, politics, and social life shape and reflect our thoughts and views (Bell, 1991). This ‘machinery of representation’ (Curran & Seaton, 1997, p.9) does not act in vacuum with neutral stance towards what is presented. Rather, what is presented and the way it is presented go through various socio-cognitive, pragma-lingual and socio-cultural filtering. This process is not random by any means since differences in linguistic representation of ‘reality’ have ideological bearings (Timucin, 2010). Newspapers, as a crucial example of modern media, are not simply presenters of objective and neutral information but are sites whereby ideological biases and positioning are negotiated by means of various functional strategies such as persuasion and various pragma-lingual devices such as metadiscoursal recourses. This is particularly evident in the genre of Editorial, which has a very powerful role in persuading its audience what issue or issues should be seen as important or controversial and from what perspective they should be interpreted. As such, editorials carry much more weight than other genres within the medium of newspaper since they act as the ‘mouthpiece’ of editorial board and all other powerful invisibles behind the newspaper in adopting positions and expressing opinions on current affairs.

Thus, newspaper editorials present interesting opportunities to study how language is used for persuasion and argumentation, to establish relationship with their audience, and eventually to shape and form their outlooks on any given issue they raise. In this way, metadiscourse becomes the focal point of such studies, as means in the hands of writers to organize discourse and engage the audience for the purpose of pursuing their rhetorical goals. Hyland (2005a) defines metadiscourse as: “Metadiscourse is the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meaning in a text, assisting the writer (or the speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community”(p.37).

Thus, the study of metadiscourse as an effective tool in the hands of expert writers in both informing and manipulating discourse is of paramount importance when we consider communication as a way of social engagement. Metadiscoursal elements have been examined, both in terms of their occurrence and functions, in a number of different social and academic genres. However, it appears that only little work has focused on the use of metadiscourse in journalistic texts and in particular

in newspaper editorials. Dafouz's (2003) contrastive study on the use of metadiscourse in the opinion columns of one Spanish (EL Pais) and one British (The Times) newspaper is worth mentioning here. Le's (2004) study of metadiscourse use in the French Le Monde is another case of this type. In Iran, one can mention two major studies of such nature: First, Abdollahzadeh's (2007) cross-linguistic study of metadiscourse use in Persian and English newspaper editorials, and second Noorian and Biria's (2010) contrastive study of interpersonal metadiscourse markers in Iranian newspapers' opinion columns. To add to this slim literature, the current study aimed at exploring the preferences of Anglo-American (native speakers of English) and Iranian (non-native speakers of English) writers in terms of the use of interactional metadiscourse resources in the genre of newspaper editorials. Our main question to address was whether there are any differences in the use of such interactional metadiscourse elements as *hedges*, *boosters*, *self-mention*, *attitude*, and *engagement* markers between the two cultural groups of writers.

METHOD

Corpus

A total of 80 newspaper editorials were randomly sampled from four international newspapers, 40 from New York Times and Washington Post, and 40 from Kayhan International and Iran News (20 editorials per each newspaper). To reduce the effect of time on genre dynamism, all the sampled texts were selected from the issues published between 2010 and 2012. Also to keep the topic factor (Hyland, 1999; Dafouz, 2003; and Thompson, 2010) under the control, the editorials were sampled from an initial larger corpus compiled on the political topics concerning the Middle East. The sampled texts were then scanned and converted into MS Word format to facilitate accurate word counts.

Procedure

Hyland's (2005a) interpersonal model of metadiscourse was used for the analysis. Acknowledging several metadiscourse schemes (Vande Kopple, 1985; Crismore, 1993; and Adel, 2006), Hyland's model offers a robust theoretical underpinning and practical advantages (Kuhi & Behnam, 2011) originally proposed for the analysis of metadiscourse in academic genres. However, we think that the model can be applied to the genre of newspaper editorial due to the prevalence of persuasive and argumentative patterns in newspaper

editorials wherein metadiscourse markers play a crucial role (Le, 2004). Also the fact that Hyland's (2005a) metadiscourse model has evolved for academic contexts does not suggest its inappropriateness for other discourses such as newspaper editorials.

Hyland's (2005a) model encompasses two categories for metadiscourse, "interactive" and "interactional". The former concerns with ways of organizing discourse to fit into the reader's background knowledge and reflect the writer's assessment of what needs to be made explicit to constrain and guide what can be recovered from the text; the latter deals with the writer's efforts to control the level of dialogic relationship to establish an appropriate relationship to his/her propositions, arguments, and audience (reader and listener), marking an appropriate degree of intimacy, the expression of attitude, the communication of commitment, and the reader involvement. Hyland (2005b) later added two more categories, namely *stance* and *engagement*. Stance is the textual voice recognized by the discourse community which refers to the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgments, opinions, and commitments. It is a means in the hands of the writer to intrude and stamp their personal authority onto their arguments or step back and disguise their involvement. Whereas stance is a writer oriented category, engagement is more reader (listener) oriented and refers to the writers' awareness of their readers' presence.

In the analysis of our data, our point of departure was to see what type of stance and engagement markers have been employed in newspapers editorials. To this end, first these markers were identified and categorized on the basis of Hyland's (2005b) model above and then their frequencies of occurrences were calculated per 1000 words. To achieve a higher inter-rater reliability, the analysis was carried out simultaneously by all the researchers and the findings were double-checked in several meetings to achieve final consensus.

RESULTS

On the whole, the total frequency of interactional metadiscourse resources (IMRs) was 103.9 items per 1000 words, out of which 95.4 (per 1000 words) belonged to stance and 8.45 items belonged to engagement. Comparing the distribution of IMRs in the texts of the two cultural groups, native (N) versus non-native (Nn), revealed another outstanding variation. Editorials written by native speakers utilized both stance and engagement metadiscourse markers (much

more frequently (61.35 against 42.55 per 1000 words) than non-native writers (see Table 1).

Table 1.
Comparison of Stance and Engagement in Newspaper Editorials

Category	F per 1000 words			%	
	N	Nn	Total	N	Nn
Stance					
Hedges (H)	19.95	13.79	33.74	32.52	32.41
Boosters (B)	11.62	10.27	21.89	18.95	24.14
Attitude markers (AM)	22.97	15.63	38.6	37.44	36.74
Self-mention (SM)	1.14	0	1.14	1.87	0
Total	55.70	39.70	95.4	90.79	93.30
Engagement					
Reader pronouns (RP)	0.28	0.44	0.72	0.46	1.04
Directive (Dir)	1.24	0.16	1.4	2.02	0.39
Personal asides (PA)	3.06	1.78	4.84	4.99	4.19
Appeal to Shared Knowledge (ASK)	0	0	0	0	0
Questions (QS)	1.05	0.44	1.49	1.71	1.04
Total	5.64	2.84	8.48	9.20	6.69
Totals	61.35	42.55	103.9	100	100

F= frequency, N= Native, Nn= Non-native

Further examining the distribution of “stance” and “engagement” features shows that there were different preferences for managing writer-reader interaction in Anglo-American and Iranian editorials. Regarding stance, editorials written by Anglo-American writers favored *attitude markers* (37.44%) followed by *hedges* (32.52%) as most and *self-mentions* (1.87%) as the least metadiscourse elements. In Iranian editorials, too, *attitude markers* (36.74%) followed by *hedges* (32.41%) were the most frequent type of stance markers whereas *self-mention* (no occurrence) was the least occurred. The following examples are culled from our corpora:

Hedges

- (1) Women in Saudi Arabia *probably* won't be able to declare their candidacies unless they obtain permission from a male guardian. (N1)
- (2) Polls *may* show that voters care overwhelmingly about jobs and that there is no political benefit to talking about war. (N8)

Boosters

(3) But **we are sure** there can be no solution without strong American leadership. (N 21)

(4) It is so **obvious** today that the United States is morally bankrupt and spiritually broken. (NN29)

Attitude markers

(5) The European Union and a few other countries **-notably** Turkey- has stepped up. But the response of much of the world- especially the African states- has had been **shameful**. (N3)

(6) The fate of east Jerusalem is **the most explosive** issue in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (NN 11)

Self mention

(7) At this point, **we** are skeptical that the administration has a comprehensive strategy to help build up a government that Afghans would be willing to fight for. (N 23)

(8) **We** are sure that less pressure will guarantee that Iran will keep pushing its nuclear program ahead. (N 35)

Coming to *engagement* markers, the analysis showed that *personal asides* (4.99%) was the leading category followed by *directives* (2.02%), *questions* (1.71%) and *reader pronouns* (0.46%) in the texts of native writers. This statistics for Iranian texts were *personal asides* (4.19%), *reader pronouns* (1.04%), *questions* (1.04%) and *directives* (0.39%). Take, for instance, the following excerpts:

Reader pronouns

(9) Then **we have** the U.S. unemployment rate. In November, it was just below nine percent. But according to most experts, the actual rate is much higher. (N37)

Directive

(10) Tribes, factions representing different regions and rival rebel leaders **must be reconciled** and represented in the transitional government. (N 24)

(11) Just as importantly and under the UN mandate, the US-led NATO forces **must immediately withdraw** from Libya and allow the Libyan people to determine their own destiny in an atmosphere free from any foreign intervention. (NN 31)

Personal asides

(12) Mr. Assad knows that if he allows Syrians free choice — **or even if he stops assaulting them** — he and his regime will not survive. (N7)

(13) But President Obama has said repeatedly that Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon is unacceptable — **and the IAEA report makes clear the danger is growing, not diminishing.** (N19)

Rhetorical questions

(14) What exactly are Palestinians supposed to gain by waiting for statehood? Some future promise of possible talks? (N27)

(15) The question now is if the U.S. is to continue this downward trend in 2012, then how much time does their empire have before collapsing? (NN37)

The analysis also suggested a tendency both in Iranian and American editorials towards using more stance than engagement devices (see Table 1). A further finding was that attitude markers were the first and utmost rhetorical option for both groups: 22.97 and 15.63 per 1000 words in native and non-native group, respectively.

Among other noted similarities was that hedges were the second most frequent interactional metadiscourse feature in both corpora and that *boosters* were exploited markedly in editorials of both groups showing a very similar (11.62 vs. 10.27) frequency. However, the sharpest inconsistency was that whereas native speaker editors opted for a limited use of *self-mentions*, the Iranian editorials were totally void of this feature.

As for *engagement markers*, the data depicted that both sets of editorials favored the frequent use of *personal asides* (3.06 and 1.78 in native and non-native editorials respectively). As for the rest of interpersonal markers, it was found that while the native speaker group made use of questions slightly more (1.05 vs. 0.44) than their Iranian counterparts, the Iranian editorials exploited slightly more *reader pronouns* (0.28 vs. 0.44) than their native speaker peers.

DISCUSSION

The results of the current study provide interesting insights into the nature of interaction between writers and readers in Anglo-American and Iranian newspaper editorial genres. As the use and proportion of interpersonal metadiscourse deployed in both sets of data are concerned, the findings indicated that native editorial writers markedly made higher use of interactional metadiscourse resources compared to their non-native peers, thus supporting the findings of previous reports (Noorian & Biria, 2010; Adel, 2006; Abdollahzadeh,

2007) that native speakers are more confident in using metadiscoursal elements than non-native speakers.

One explanation that can be put forward for this tendency is in terms of a comparison often made between *writer responsibility* and *reader responsibility* cultures (Hinds, 1987). That is, it seems there is a co-relational dependency between writers in writer-responsible cultures and use of metadiscourse elements in that use of metadiscourse elements best serve into the obligation felt by these writers to establish dialogic relationship with his/her readers. To say it differently, it seems that there is a greater rhetorical and affective awareness of audience and purpose (Abdollahzadeh, 2011), most probably due to genre and language ownership, among native English authors than non-native groups, which allows more convenient and effective way of using metadiscoursal elements. A third explanation comes from a fact pointed out by Van Dijk (1996), who argues that the rhetorical patterns of one's native culture is more likely to be pronounced in newspaper editorials whereby the main objective is forming public opinion by persuasion.

In the case of interpersonal metadiscourse, hedges stood out as leading category with higher rate of distribution in both groups in the current study, thus in total agreement with the results of previous studies (Hyland, 1999; Abdi, 2002; Dafouz, 2003 & 2008; Noorian & Biria, 2010).

The importance of hedges lies in several key rhetorical functions they fulfill in discourse in general: first, hedging is an indicator of writers' degree of tentativeness and caution in claim-making thereby showing deference to other voices and opening room for more interpretation (Hyland, 1998). Second, hedging can be employed by an effective writer to soften the force of his propositions in his/her discourse (Holmes, 1990, p.185), thus alleviating the writer's authorial position. Third, hedges are devices used to avoid or minimize impositions on the reader by mitigating face threatening acts (Holmes, 1982, 1984, Myers, 1989). Now, since newspaper editorials are more concerned with not looking too authoritative then they can be expected to employ abundant use of various hedging strategies.

Coming back to findings of this report, it is worth noting that the use of hedges in English editorials exceeded those in Iranian editorials. This can be attributed, as Abdollahzade (2007) has, to the cultural background and orientation of these writers. In other words,

western cultures in general and Anglo-Saxon one in particular seem to be treating critical and controversial issues with a pinch of salt, to be on the safe side, while Iranian editors seem to be under no such obligation. Unlike mitigating role of hedges, boosters are used to accentuate the writer's position. This acts as a signal to the reader as to which side the writer's argument is swaying to. Secondly, boosters restrict the dialogic space available to the reader and allow the writer to enact his/her authority (Hyland, 1998, 2005a & 2005b). Boosters have several functions: firstly, they ratify the writer's position so that the reader is aware which side the argument is taking and, secondly, they restrict the dialogic space available to the reader and allow the writer to enact interpersonal solidarity and idea of group membership (Hyland, 1998, 2005a & 2005b). Finally, boosters develop "a sense of solidarity with the reader and appeal to her/him as an intelligent co-player through the text" (Hyland, 1998a, p.368).

Returning to the findings of this work, our analysis showed that editorials written by native speakers made use of booster more confidently than those written by Iranians. Given the view that hedges and boosters are two central characteristics of persuasive discourse (Hyland & Tse, 2004; Hyland, 2005b) in that they provide opportunity for the writers to persuade his readers by weakening one argument (using hedges) and strengthen another (using boosters), it is no surprise to notice that native-speakers use these two metadiscoursal elements more effectively. This confidence may be due to several reasons, the most important of which is genre ownership. That is, a culture in which a genre is born will obviously be at ease with the use of genre than a culture that has adopted the same genre from a different discourse community.

Another group of metadiscoursal elements, namely attitude markers, are the focus of this section of discussion. Editorials, in its broadest sense, are characterized to some extent as a subjective discourse, whereby columnists comment on current political or ethical issues of general interest and importance in critical, involved, and persuasive language. It is realizing this fact about editorials that genres of this type are suitable context for evaluation of writer attitudes.

Focusing on the findings in the data, it was observed that Iranian editorials have employed comparatively limited number of this rhetorical resource, which again can be attributed to cultural difference, lower degree of genre awareness, and also language issues.

Also noteworthy in newspaper editorials was the use of metadiscourse from the viewpoint of writer's identity manifested overtly in the form of *self-mentions*. It is generally believed that the strategic use of *self-mentions* is the reflection of writers' conscious projection into text and promoting authorial *self* more explicitly through first person pronoun (Ivanic, 1998; Hyland, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, & 2005a). It is also widely acknowledged that writers' rhetorical decisions regarding the choice between an impersonal or subjective style have prominent impact on how the message should be taken by the reader (Hyland, 2001 & 2002a).

Despite observing strong flavor for passive voices in the current study, limited use of self-mention by non-native group was reported. The preference for passive voices could be traced in a philosophical movement deeply rooted in theoretical underpinning of the positivist assumption that perceives academic discourse as impersonal and objective (Hyland, 2001, 2002a, & 2002b). Looking from this perspective, it can be said that editorial writers can either opt for *self-mentions* in order to project their own identity, personal standing, and authority, or go for passive voices to disguise their projection into texts. The current study showed a strong tendency for being objective (use of passive voice) than being represented (use of self-mention) among Iranian editorials writers. This was in contrast to the editorials written in Anglo-American newspapers where self-mentions were widely used.

Regarding *Engagement* markers (EMs), Anglo-American editorial writers made use of EMs more than their Iranian counterparts. It might be possible to argue that English writers are more interested in engaging a dialogic relation with the readers in discourse and creating solidarity with them, thereby including them as discourse participants. According to Hyland (2005b), there are two main purposes to writers' uses of these features: first, acknowledgement of the need to adequately meet readers' expectations of inclusion and disciplinary solidarity. Here, we find readers addressed as participants in an argument with reader pronouns. Second, to rhetorically position the audience, here the writer pulls readers into the discourse at critical points, predicting possible objections and guiding them to particular interpretations with questions, directives and references to shared knowledge.

Among *engagement* markers, surprisingly, reader pronouns (you, your, inclusive we) were the least used categories in both sets of groups. Indeed, there was an immense emphasis on binding writer and reader together through *inclusive we*, which is usually the most frequent

engagement device in persuasive writing. Its function is virtually outstanding in the sense that it sends a clear signal of membership by textually constructing both the writer and reader as shared participants with similar understanding and goals (Hyland, 2005b). The reasons for underestimating such devices on the part of editors in newspaper editorials of both cultural groups may be rooted in their reluctance for: a) claiming solidarity with potential audience, b) voicing and anticipating readers' concern and views, and c) downplaying the readers' positioning (Hyland, 2005b).

As for directives, they are interpersonal features that contribute to the dialogic dimension of academic genres (Hyland, 2002a). The corpus in the current study revealed more frequent use of directives in the native group editorials, with the purpose of instructing readers to perform actions or see things in a way determined by writers themselves. One probable explanation can be awareness of Anglo-American writers of the socio-political power of the press in the western societies in contrast to the weak position of their counterparts as a political force in Iranian context.

To continue with another metadiscoursal element, *personal aides*, the analysis of the data proved it to be very popular with both groups of editorial writers. This particular device provides an opportunity for writers to address readers; sometimes just in passing, by interruption of the argument to offer a comment on what has been said. By and large, this reader-oriented strategy is a response and acknowledgement by the writers to the reader presence and the necessity initiate a dialogic and interpersonal relationship with the reader (Hyland, 2005b).

Finally, *rhetorical questions*, as a fruitful strategy, draw the readers' attention to participate actively in the process of an argument. The data in our study suggests that Iranian writers exploited rhetorical questions less than their counterparts in Western media. One possible explanation is the cultural fact that Iranians seem to be more assertive in criticism than western cultures (Bonyadi, 2010). To put in Hyland's (2005b) words, "questions are the strategy of dialogic involvement par excellence, inviting engagement and bringing the interlocutor into an arena where they can be led to the writer's viewpoint" (p.185). In fact, they serve to arouse interest in the readers and encourage them to explore an unresolved issue with the writer as an equal interactional partner.

CONCLUSION

This paper was a contrastive study of two groups of newspaper editorials, one from Anglo-American and the other from Iranian writers, in terms of their use of metadiscourse elements. The aim was to check whether there were any possible differences in the use of metadiscourse markers in terms of type and frequency, and also to discuss the factors causing such differences.

The analysis of editorials revealed that there was almost similar pattern of distribution between native and non-native groups. However, statistically speaking, we found prominent discrepancies in terms of frequency of interactional features. It is possible to assume that the use of metadiscourse signals is dictated by genre conventions, cultural influences, and rhetorical preferences (Noorian & Biria, 2010). Overall, we may conclude that similarities between two groups outshine the differences.

Notably, one main thing that stands out clearly from the analysis of editorials in both groups is that metadiscourse features serve to provide an opportunity for persuasive writing, since metadiscourse features are manifestation of informational, rhetorical, and personal choices (Hyland, 1996). From a pedagogical standpoint, exploring metadiscourse in English newspaper editorials is really noteworthy. In fact, reading newspapers can help students to improve their English knowledge because the language of newspaper, according to Bhatia (1993), is fresh, topical, and current.

The findings also have implications for non-native editors who need to be aware of manipulating metadiscourse resources in the world that is bombarded with persuasive messages particularly in comparison with their native counterparts. Since the role of rhetorical functions and interpersonal strategies were bypassed in many places, it seems necessary for students to receive adequate instruction in using metadiscourse and expressing their stance in writings (Hyland, 2005a). Last of all, the findings of the current study should be viewed with caution and corroborated with large scale corpora due to small scale of data. We believe that a more comprehensive picture should definitely emerge in the light of further research into nature of persuasion in a vast range of genres, disciplines, and languages.

REFERENCES

- Abdollahzadeh, E. (2007). *Writers' presence in English and Persian newspaper editorials*. Paper presented at the 34th International Systemic Functional Grammar. Denmark.
- Abdollahzadeh, E. (2010). Poring over the finding: Interpersonal authorial engagement in applied linguistics papers. *Journal of Pragmatic*, 43(1), 288-297.
- Adel, A. (2006). *Metadiscourse in L1 and L2 English*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Ansary, H., & Babaii, E. (2009). A cross-cultural analysis of English newspaper editorials: A systemic-functional view of text for contrastive rhetoric research. *RELC Journal*, 40(2), 211-249.
- Bell, A. (1991). *The language of news media*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Berkenkotter, C. & Huckin, T. (1995). *Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Bhatia, V. K. (1993). *Analysing genre: Language use in professional settings*. London: Longman.
- Bhatia, V.K. (2004). *World of written discourse: A genre-based view*. London: Continuum.
- Bonyadi, A. (2010). The rhetorical properties of the schematic structures of newspaper editorials: A comparative study of English and Persian editorials. *Discourse & Communication*, 4(4), 323-342.
- Connor, U. (1996). *Contrastive rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspect of second-language writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crismore, A., Markkanen, R., & Steffensen, M. (1993). Metadiscourse in persuasive writing: A study of texts written by American and Finnish university students. *Written Communication*, 10(1), 39-71.
- Curran, J. & Seaton, J. (1997). *Power without responsibility: The press and broad casting in Britain*. Routledge.

- Dafouz, E. (2003). Metadiscourse revisited: A contrastive study of persuasive writing in professional discourse. *Estudios Ingleses de la Universidad Complutense*, 11, 29-52.
- Dafouz, E. (2008). The pragmatic role of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in the construction and attainment of persuasion: A cross-linguistic study of newspaper discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 40, 95-113.
- Deuze, M. (2012). *Media life*. Cambridge: UK polity press.
- Fowler, R. (1991). *Language in the news: Discourse and ideology in the press*. London: Routledge.
- Grabe, W. & Kaplan, R. B. (1996). *Theory and practice of writing*. Hillsdale, NJ: Longman.
- Guillem, S. M. (2009). Argumentation, metadiscourse, and social cognition: Organizing knowledge in political communication. *Discourse Society*, 20, 727-746.
- Hinds, J. (1987). Reader versus writer responsibility: A new typology, U. Conner, R. B. Kaplan (eds.), *Writing across languages: Analysis of L2 texts*, (Pp.141-152). Addison-Wesley.
- Holmes, J. (1984). Modifying illocutionary force. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 8, 345-365.
- Holmes, J. (1990). Hedges and boosters in women's and men's speech. *Language Communication*, 10 (3), 185- 205
- Hyland, K. (1996). Writing without convection? Hedging in scientific research articles. *Applied linguistics*, 17, 433-454.
- Hyland, K. (1998). Persuasion and context: The pragmatics of academic metadiscourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 30, 437-455.
- Hyland, K. (1999). Talking to students: Metadiscourse in introductory coursebooks. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18 (1), 3-26.
- Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Hyland, K. (2001). Humble servants of the discipline? Self-mention in research articles. *English for Specific Purpose*, 20, 207-226.

- Hyland, K. (2002a). Authority and invisibility: Authorial identity in academic writing. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 34(8), 91-112.
- Hyland, K. (2002b). Options of identity in academic writing. *ELT Journal* 56, 351-358
- Hyland, K. (2004). Disciplinary interactions: Metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 13,133- 151.
- Hyland, K. & Tse, P. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic writing: A reappraisal. *Applied Linguistics*, 25,156-177.
- Hyland, K. (2005a). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. London: Continuum.
- Hyland, K. (2005b). Stance and engagement: A model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies*, 7, 173-192.
- Hyland, K. (2011). Academic discourse. In K. Hyland & B. Paltridge (Eds.), *Companion to discourse analysis*, (pp.171-184). London: Continuum Press.
- Hu, G., & Cao, F. (2011). Hedging and boosting in abstracts of applied linguistics articles: A comparative study of English – and Chinese- medium journals. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43, 2795-2809.
- Ivanic, R. (1998). *Writing and identity: The discursive construction of identity in academic writing*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Kuhi, D., & Behnam, B. (2011). Generic variations and metadiscourse use in the writing of applied linguists: A comparative study and preliminary framework. *Written Communication*, 28(1), 1-45.
- Le, E. (2002). International relations: Le Monde's editorials on Russia. *Discourse & Society*, 13(3), 373-408.
- Le, E. (2003). Information sources as a persuasive strategy in editorials: Le Monde and the New York Times. *Written Communication*, 20(4), 478-510.
- Le, E. (2004). Active participation within written argumentation: Metadiscourse and editorials authority. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 36(4), 687-714.

- Le, E. (2009). Editorials' genre and media roles: Le Monde's editorials from 1999 to 2001. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41, 1727-1748.
- Lee, L. F. & Lin, M. Y. (2006). Newspaper editorial discourse and the politics of self-censorship in Hong Kong. *Discourse and Society*, 17(3), 331-358.
- Lihua, L. (2010). *Interpersonal rhetoric in the editorials of China Daily: A generic perspective*. Switzerland: Peter Lang.
- Mauranen, A. (1993). Contrastive ESP rhetoric: Metatext in Finnish-English economics texts. *English for Specific Purposes*, 12, 3-22.
- Myers, G. (1989). The pragmatics of politeness in scientific articles. *Applied Linguistics*, 10, 1-35.
- Noorian, M., & Biria, R. (2010). Interpersonal metadiscourse in persuasive journalism: A study of texts by American and Iranian EFL columnists. *Journal of Modern Languages*, 20, 64-79.
- Reah, D. (1998). *The language of newspapers*. London: Routledge.
- Sinclair, J. (1995). *Collins co build English language dictionary*. London: Harper Collins.
- Shams, M. R. (2005). *Reading English newspapers*. Tehran: Rahyan.
- Shokuhi, H & Talati, A. (2009). Metadiscourse functions in English and Persian sociology articles: A study in contrastive rhetorics. *Poznan Studies in Contemporary Linguistics*, 45(4), 549-568.
- Timucin, M. (2010). Different language styles in newspapers: An investigative framework. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 6(2), 104-126.
- Valero Garces, C. (1996). Contrastive ESP rhetoric: Metatext in Spanish-English economics texts. *English for Specific Purposes*, 5, 279-294.
- Vande Kopple, W. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication*, 36, 82-93.

Van Dijk, T. A. (1996). *Opinions and ideologies in editorials*. Paper for the 4th International Symposium of Critical Discourse Analysis, Language, Social Life and Critical Thought, Athens, 14-16 December, 1995. Retrieved from <http://www.discourse.org/unpublished>

APPENDIX. List of Native and Non-native Newspaper Editorials
Western Newspaper Editorials:

Washington Post

1. Women's right to vote in Saudi Arabia
2. Mr. Ahmadinejad deserves no credit for release of U.S. hikers
3. Somalia needs much more aid than it's getting
4. Planning for a follow-on force in Iraq
5. Hikers' sentence in Iran a miscarriage of 'justice'
6. The undimmed danger of Iran's nuclear program
7. Stopping Syria's slaughter starts with president Obama
8. The GOP field goes AWOL from Afghanistan
9. The wrong signals to Iran
10. Report on Bahrain's abuses suggests a tipping Point for U.S
11. Washing Post. Will Egypt's generals respect the power of the vote?
12. Israel's effort to muffle speech
13. As Egyptians protest anew, the Obama administration again enables the generals
14. More half-measures from Obama administration on Iran
15. Commotion in Kuwait
16. A U.S-Afghan Partnership serves both nations' interests
17. Will a Hezbollah operative escape justice?
18. U.S. foreign policy turns toward Asia
19. Running out of time to stop Iran's nuclear program
20. Arms sales to repressive Bahrain misplaced

New York Times

21. The Palestinians' Bid
22. The Latest Ugly Truth About Pakistan
23. The Clock Is Ticking
24. A New Start for Libya
25. Saudi Arabia and Its Women
26. Congress's Choice on Libya
27. Palestinian Statehood

28. The Long Pursuit of Justice in Lebanon
29. Bahrain' Latest Promises
30. A Pakistani Journalist's Murder
31. Pakistan After Bin Laden
32. Drawdown in Iraq
33. President Obama and the Arab Spring
34. The Way Out?
35. Tehran's Ambitions
36. Egypt's Elections
37. Egypt's Failing Army
38. End Date for Iraq
39. Justice in Pakistan
40. Syria and the Arab League

Iranian newspaper editorials:

Iran News

1. Turkey's Bold Move. September 4 2011
2. Gadhafi Zeroed on, September 28, 2011
3. Any Peace in View? September 25, 2011
4. Rabbani New Victim of Terrorism. September 22, 2011
5. Palestinian Statehood. September 20, 2011
6. Gadhafi, the Delusional Colonel. September 3, 2011
7. Blow to Al-Qaeda and Gadhafi. August 29, 2011
8. Zionists unhappy. September 5, 2011
9. Yemen Leader Quitting? October 10, 2011
10. Power Vacuum. October 9, 2011
11. Blow to U.S. Over Syria. October 6, 2011
12. Serious Blow to al-Qaeda. October 2, 2011
13. Israel Hampers Peace Efforts. September 29, 2011
14. NATO Libyan Mission Ends. November 1, 2011
15. Irannews.Afghn Support of Taliban on the Decline. November 17, 2011
16. Who's Next in Line? October 23, 2011
17. End of Time for King of Kings. October 22, 2011
18. Remarkable Exchange Rate. October 19, 2011
19. Crucial Vote. October 31, 2011
20. Islamists to Rule Tunisia. October 26, 2011

Kayhan International

21. No Rift Between Government & Parliament. June 20, 2011

22. Supreme Leader: Palestine Belongs to Palestinians
23. An Absolute Defeat for US. October 27, 2011
24. Press Freedom in Iran. August 6, 2011
25. Iran All Set for Gasoline Exports! August 2, 2011
26. Then Iraq, Now Libya. July 30, 2011
27. What a Shame! Europe Also Under Israeli Siege
28. The Battle for Gaza. July 2, 2011
29. Ten Years of American Terror. September 11, 2011
30. Int'l Confab on Counter-Terrorism in Tehran
31. The New Libya. October 22, 2011
32. Infrastructure for Imperial Wars. November 19, 2011
33. Leader: Islamist Awakening Irreversible
34. Int'l Quds Day. August 25, 2011
35. Yes we Camp! November 20, 2011
36. Rising Up Against Injustice & Exploration. August 14, 2011
37. 2011: A Year of U.S. Failures. December 20, 2011
38. 2012: an exciting year for the EU. January 9, 2012
39. The age of Eurozone Downgrades. January 19, 2012
40. Human rights defender Canada cooks up reasons to torture.
February 9, 2012

