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**METADISOURSE MARKERS IN OPINION ARTICLES.
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

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INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, the language itself becomes less of an interest for the linguists to investigate. Nowadays, the preponderance of the research in language draws on a variety of disciplines ranging from humanities and social sciences to neurosciences and computer sciences. The study of metadiscourse is concerned primarily with the language itself and the philosophy of language. Metadiscourse is a language that comment on the language used in the text.

The investigation into metadiscourse stems from Halliday's classification of three metafunctions of the language. Based on this the further work was done by Vandekoppe, Crismore, Mauranen, Ädel, Hyland and others [68; 1; 39].

Methodologically, there are two main approaches to study metadiscourse – the narrow approach that was presented by Mauranen and then developed by Ädel. This strand of research is highly influential in the Nordic countries. The broad approach was popularized by Hyland and due to its convenience, it is a common research methodology among the researchers all over the world.

Studies of metadiscourse have been conducted in various fields. Schiffrin [56] studies metadiscourse in casual conversation Crismore [21] and Crismore and Farnsworth [22] look into its uses in school textbooks and popular science texts, while Hyland and Fu [35] conduct a comparative analysis of popular science texts and opinion pieces.

Very popular strand in the metadiscourse research is study of the academic texts. The investigations have been conducted on the use of metadiscourse markers in undergraduate textbooks by Hyland [39] in postgraduate dissertations by Bunton [14] and Swales [61]. Another strand in metadiscourse research that is quite common is investigation into the differences of metadiscourse use among different cultural groups. Such studies have been done by Mauranen [49], Valero-Garces [67] and Trine [66], who explored the use of metadiscourse in the writing in English, French and Norwegian and whether such used are influenced by academic convention or national culture.

There are also studies in diachronic linguistics that explore the use of metadiscourse. Such studies have been conducted by Taavitsainen [62] and Atkinson [7].

In Ukraine, the only study that is somewhat similar to the study of metadiscourse and its cultural significance was conducted by Yakhontova where she explores the differences in academic writing in Ukrainian and English research articles. She explores whether such differences could be influenced by culture [73].

The topicality of the research is due to the lack of metadiscourse investigation among the Ukrainian researchers. This strand of enquiry is fairly common abroad however it is still at its initial stages of investigation in Ukraine.

The novelty of the research lies in the fact that to date there has been no comprehensive investigation of metadiscourse use by proficient non-native speakers of English in comparison to the native speakers of English. Also, the research looks into the functions performed by metadiscourse markers. Even though, some studies have been done in investigating reader engagement in opinion articles, none of them have taken into account the features of news discourse and the peculiarities of metadiscourse use in this context.

The aim of the research is to investigate the use of metadiscourse markers across three varieties.

Research objectives:

- Consider the differences in approaches in metadiscourse investigation;
- Explore the peculiarities of the news discourse and specific features of opinion articles;
- Identify the types and frequency of metadiscourse markers used across three different varieties of English;
- Explain the discrepancies and patterns in metadiscourse use;
- Identify the main discursive functions performed by metadiscourse markers;
- Analyze how the discursive functions of metadiscourse are realized in opinion articles;

- Measure whether the use of metadiscourse markers has any influence on the reader engagement and persuasiveness of the article.

The object of the research: British, American and Ukrainian opinion articles taken from the most popular publications in each country.

The subject of the research: Metadiscourse markers as defined by Hyland, i.e. interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers and the way they function in opinion articles.

The corpus consists of 75 thousand words with each regional subcorpus – British, American and Ukrainian having 25 thousand words. Each subcorpus is balanced in terms of the wordcount and the topics covered. For each subcorpus I have chosen articles from the three popular online newspapers of each country. Therefore, the data in British subcorpus consists from the articles of *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian* and *The Independent*; the data for the American subcorpus was taken from the articles from *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and *USA Today*; the Ukrainian subcorpus consists of the articles from *Unian*, *Business Ukraine* and *KyivPost*.

The research methods were chosen according to the aim and the objectives of the research. The bibliographical research method was utilized to study the appropriate scientific sources relevant to our research, the method of analysis of vocabulary definitions was used to clarify the linguistic terms and concepts outlined by the subject of the study; the corpus methodology was used to compile and search for the defined list of metadiscourse markers in the corpus; qualitative analysis was performed to identify whether the retrieved token is indeed the metadiscourse marker or whether it is a part of propositional content; discourse analysis was performed to identify the main sections of opinion articles, questionnaire was compiled to measure reader engagement.

The practical significance: The results obtained in the course of investigation could be used to improve the writing of Ukrainian non-native speakers of English. Since metadiscourse markers are closely tied to text comprehension and reader engagement the results can be used in developing methodologies for teaching reading

and writing in English, as well as understanding the native speakers and features of their written discourse.

The structure of research is determined by the research objectives and the scientific logic to coherently present the information. The first chapter explores theoretical perspectives on metadiscourse and the main tenets of opinion article's structure; the second chapter is situated primarily on the quantitative end exploring the distribution of metadiscourse markers across the varieties and explaining the reasons for such distribution; the third chapter is more qualitatively oriented identifying the functions of metadiscourse in opinion articles, as well as the influence on the reader that metadiscourse may have.

CHAPTER 1.

1.1. Theoretical approaches to defining metadiscourse

Metadiscourse, despite being present in every type of spoken or written interaction, poses controversial questions among the researchers in the field. Most broadly it can be defined as a “reflexive capacity of language that is employed by speakers to refer to the language itself” [48, p. 731]. However, the controversy arises when taking a closer look into the metadiscourse in the text and subsequently employing the appropriate methodologies in the analysis.

The term “metadiscourse” was first introduced by Zelig Harris [41]. The name itself stems from the functions of the language proposed by Jacobson, who identified the metalinguistic function of the language. By this is meant that language can be used to talk about language itself.

The study of metadiscourse starts at separating the language used to express information relevant in the communicative situation and the language that comments on the language used. Those two notions are referred to as propositional content and metadiscourse. Hyland defines propositional content as something that can be affirmed, denied, doubted, insisted upon, qualified, regretted, and so on [41, p. 18]. As can be seen, propositional content is the core of the communication, something that is talked about in the interaction. However, any type of exchange cannot exist without metadiscourse. Those are the components of the text that comment on the information presented, providing its evaluation, and also maintain cohesion. Propositional content and metadiscourse are essential in any type of structured exchange of information.

The model of metadiscourse primarily stem from Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar. Halliday identifies three metafunctions of the language that are realized in “our ecological and social environment” [37, p. 30]:

- *The Ideational function* is concerned with how human beings perceive reality and construe it with the help of language. Hyland states that this function is roughly realized through the propositional content in the text [40, p. 26].

- *The Interpersonal function* of the language is evident through the interactions between people, relationship that they build and any other engagements that may happen between them.
- *The Textual function* is the primary means of cohesion and coherence in the interactions. This is the function that helps structure and understand the discourse of any kind.

Even though the first metadiscourse models were based on Halliday's classification of the functions of the language, the author himself, however, does not have the category of metadiscourse in his Systemic Functional Grammar. Nevertheless, having classified the function of the language in such a way, Halliday influenced the researchers in metadiscourse to follow the divisions and present the metadiscourse accordingly. This division can be seen in the works of Vande Kopple, Crismore, Mauranen, Ädel [20; 49; 1]. All of them identify personal and impersonal metadiscourse.

Despite the term "metadiscourse" being introduced in 1959, the substantial research into this area started with the work of Vande Kopple "Some Exploratory Discourse on Metadiscourse" [68]. Vande Kopple's classification has served as a basis for further research in the field (Cheng, 1996; Crismore, Markkanen, and Steffensen 1993) [17; 20] however the problems with categorization and interpretation of metadiscourse markers in Vande Kopple's classification has prompted the researchers to reevaluate and further develop the categorization of metadiscourse.

The main problems concerning metadiscourse arise from the fact that the term itself is quite fuzzy. As it was mentioned before, the primary difficulty lies in distinguishing metadiscourse from the propositional content. And while it seems easy at a first glance, in practice this issue poses challenges for the researchers. The instances of metadiscourse occurrence have to be closely examined in the context. It may happen that the text itself is not about conveying the information but rather about establishing the relationship between the author and the reader, the notion that is called "phatic communion" [40, p.3]. Conversely, the expressions that are typically regarded as metadiscourse markers, as for example *therefore, consequently* etc., may perform a

completely different function in the text such as connecting the arguments or events outside of the text. In this way, such phrases are a part of the propositional content and they don't function as metadiscourse markers. As such, the majority of the works on metadiscourse look into it as a kind of a rhetorical device used to comment on the language employed by the author or as a way for the authors to express their stance on the information presented [1; 16; 41].

The second problem relating the fuzziness of metadiscourse is that depending on the researcher, one and the same instance of metadiscourse in the text can be classified and interpreted differently. Hyland illustrates this case with an example of the phrase “*our conclusion*”. He states that for one strand of the metadiscourse research the phrase can be coded as a frame marker that indicates what the following part of the text will be about. For the other strand of metadiscourse research, the same phrase can be regarded as two separate instances of metadiscourse, where “*our*” can be seen as a self-reference [41, p.4].

Except for the differences in classification of metadiscourse markers, the problems also arise in regards to how to conduct the analysis. Generally, two main approaches in metadiscourse analysis can be identified. When Ädel and Mauranen discuss the divergence in the study of metadiscourse they clearly identify two – a narrow approach and a broad approach [2, p. 2]. Conversely, Hyland views this divergence as a continuum, where the narrow and broad approaches are at the opposite sides of the spectrum [41, p. 6]. And while he acknowledges the differences between those two views, Hyland also points out there are certain studies that may incorporate methodologies and classifications from both sides.

1.1.1. The Narrow Approach

A narrow approach, also referred to as a “reflexive model” focuses on the primary definition of metalanguage, that is the language that describes the language in the text. The most prominent researcher in this area is Anna Mauranen, who treats reflexivity in language as metadiscourse [50, p. 16]. She sees those two notions as roughly synonymous. It has to be noted, however, that by focusing primarily on

reflexivity, she excludes several categories that other researchers treat as metadiscourse markers (for example, text connectors, motivating that with the fact that they don't have any reflexive function). Ädel also contributed to the research in this direction, having elaborated on Mauranen's categories and presenting her own classification of metadiscourse [1].

While Mauranen's classification relies on Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar, Ädel used Jacobson's notions about the functions of the language to develop her own model of metadiscourse. Jacobson names six functions of the language and the corresponding components of speech event – referential (context), emotive (addresser), conative (addressee), phatic (contact), metalingual (code) and poetic (message). Ädel stated that three of those (metalingual, emotive and conative) are indispensable in the research of metadiscourse. Having presented those three categories as the basis, Ädel challenged Mauranen's understanding of metadiscourse as purely textual. Instead, she stated that metadiscourse refers not only to the text but also to the participant of the discourse, namely the writer and the reader [1, p. 18]. The main premise of this statement is that inevitably in the writing process the author will think about their readers and structure the text to facilitate the communication with them.

Ädel makes the distinction between the two types of metadiscourse. First type corresponds with the metalinguistic function of the language and refers to the text itself. She refers to this type as "metatext". The other type concerns the other two functions that concentrate on the interactive aspect of the writing process. This category is referred to as "writer-reader interaction". In addition to this distinction, Ädel further subdivides the metadiscourse into personal and impersonal. While the metatext could contain both categories, the writer-reader interaction is always personal. Another point worth noting concerning Ädel's classification is that there's rarely the occurrence of metadiscourse that would neatly fit into one category, rather they perform multiple functions with one being more pronounced. Table 1 illustrates the classification in the most concise way [1, p. 38]:

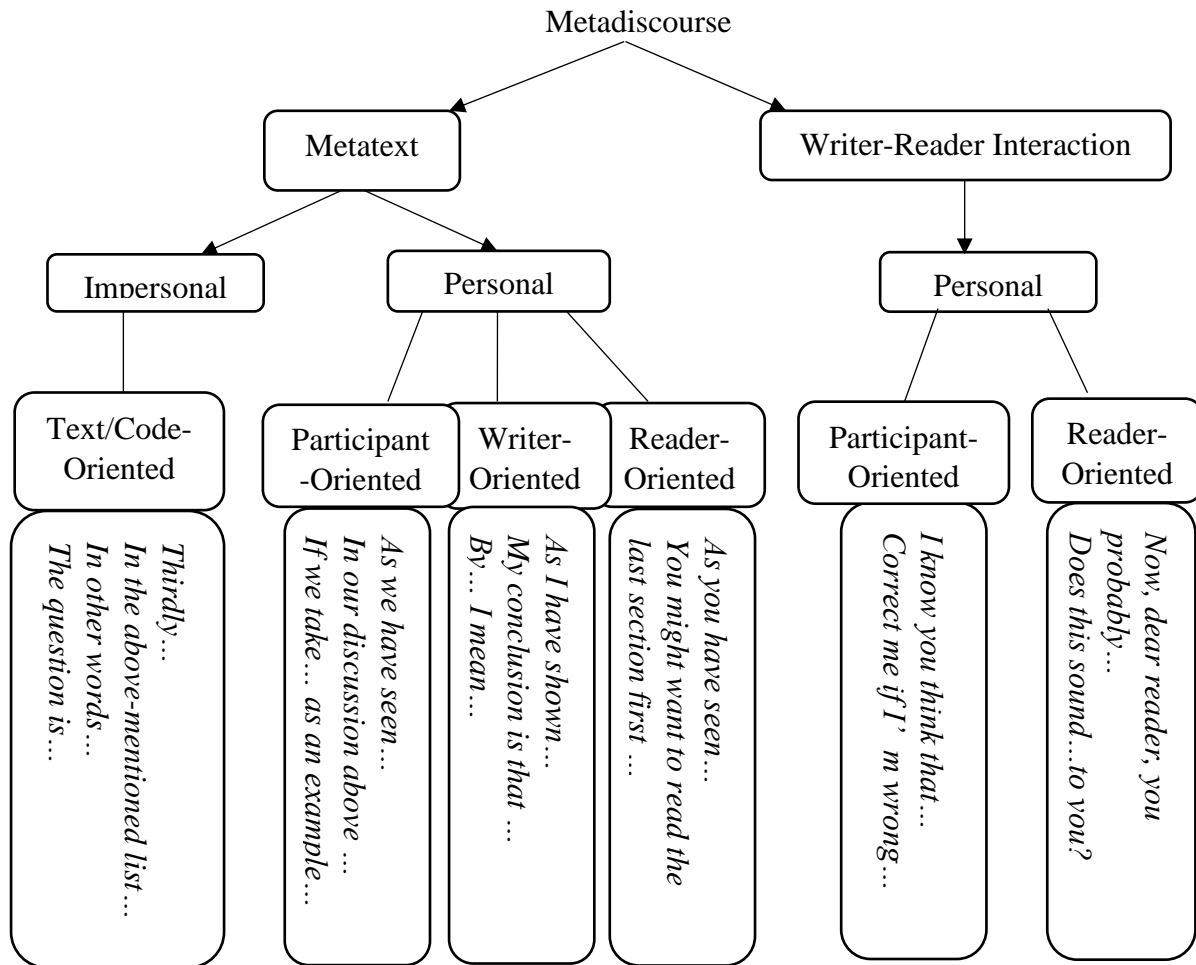


Table 1. Metadiscourse Model according to Ädel

The difference between personal and impersonal metadiscourse lies in how explicit the author is. Personal metadiscourse contains explicit references to the people involved in the interaction while impersonal metadiscourse is more implicit and usually characterized by the usage of passive voice or other impersonal constructions (Ädel, 2006 p. 14).

Having proposed such detailed classification of what metadiscourse is, Ädel has also defined what metadiscourse isn't. As such, she excludes stance markers from metadiscourse. Stance is defined as writer's attitude or evaluation on the proposed idea. Ädel explains her exclusion of stance as a part of metadiscourse by stating that when expressing certainty, disagreement etc. "the author is visible as an opinionated being-

in-the-world. In this way, they display their attitudes to phenomena in the ‘real world’, not strategies undertaken in the world of discourse” [1, p. 39].

Just like Ädel, Mauranen also subdivides metatext further into two distinct categories. In her classification, however, she identifies highly explicit reflexivity and the reflexivity of low explicitness. Those categories are somewhat similar to Ädel’s code-oriented metatext and both classifications contain similar subtypes.

Highly explicit reflexivity refers to the type of metatext “that describes the text itself, its writing and organization” [65, p. 68]. There are three subcategories that illustrate highly explicit reflexivity in the text. Those are reference to the text, discourse labels and addressing the reader.

Mauranen considers reference to the text to be classified as metadiscourse through usage of demonstrative pronouns that indicate proximity (*in this paper, these findings etc.*) and such adverbs of time and place as *here* and *now*. (*The argument here has gone way past causation*) [155].

Discourse labels are the second subtype of the highly explicit reflexivity. The main function that they perform is to signal writer’s intention or name the following discourse act before its occurrence. Discourse labels are usually expressed with the use of illocutionary verbs (*to conclude*) and nouns or adverbs of manner (*in brief*).

The reflexivity of low explicitness refers to the type of metadiscourse that doesn’t point to the text directly. In this group, metadiscourse markers are vaguer, their interpretation is ambiguous, so it’s not always clear whether the reference is to the text itself or to the real world. This group consists of internal connectors, discourse labels and reference to the text and addressing the reader. The last three subcategories are the same as in highly explicit reflexivity. They also could be expressed with the similar phrases or words. However, their role in the text is ambiguous and, in such cases, it is not easy for the researcher to identify for sure whether it is metadiscourse

Internal connectors, being the only distinct category in the reflexivity of low explicitness is similar to what Ädel calls phoric markers. According to her, phoric markers could be regarded as “road signs” in the text that emphasize its organization

and help the reader to orient themselves [1, p. 101]. Those are typically the phrases that show sequences or causation (*firstly, later, subsequently* etc.) [65, p. 69].

It is worth noting that in Mauranen's classification the researcher includes such category as "addressing the reader". Most researchers consider this type of metadiscourse to be personal and referring to something outside of the text. For example, in Ädel's classification it is a separate category. Mauranen also excludes rhetorical questions from her scheme, saying that they refer to the writer and reader relationship, but not to the text itself. This is problematic as she already has the category of addressing the reader in her classification.

Ädel presents a more sophisticated approach to the study of the writer-reader relationship in metadiscourse. She calls this type of metadiscourse "personal" and it is present in both main categories – metatext and writer-reader interaction.

Considering such peculiarities, this strand of study in metadiscourse is often called "the thick approach" [2, p. 3]. The procedure usually consists of retrieving tokens that may have metadiscursive function. Ädel, for example, starts her analysis with searching for personal pronoun *I*, and Mauranen suggests looking for potentially reflexive form such as *put* or *say* [2, p. 3]. Then the researcher goes to analyzing every occurrence in the corpus, excluding instances that are not metadiscursive. Finally, the conclusions are drawn by investigating the most common patterns on the lexical and grammatical levels like it was done, for example Bondi [12], or by classifying the functions performed by metadiscourse in a certain type of discourse like Ädel [1] or Pérez-Llantada [24].

1.1.2. The Broad Approach

The broad approach is also referred to as "*thin*" or "*integrative*" in contrast to the previously mentioned "*thick*" approach. This strand of metadiscourse studies is the one that started the whole inquiry into metadiscourse and the narrow approach developed from here. One of the earliest studies in this area were done by Vande Kopple, but later his classification was developed and reorganized. In his paper Vande

Kopple introduces seven main categories according to which one can distinguish and categorize metadiscourse [68]:

1. Text connectives – those are the elements in the text that maintain its coherence. They are mainly expressed by the phrases that point to the sequential organization of events (*first, secondly, next*) or logical organization of information (*following that, however, subsequently*). This group of metadiscourse markers also include references to the previous information (*as can be seen above, as I mentioned in Chapter 5*) and to the information that will be presented further along in the text (*In the following chapter we will take a closer look into...; the next section explores...*). Topicalizers, which structure information in the text by providing links between the known and the new, are also included in the category. Those are usually the phrases *for example, in regard to, there is* etc.;
2. Code glosses – those are the words or the explanations used to comment on the present notions of the text that may be unknown to the reader. When using code glosses the author has to be aware of their audience's knowledge of the subject. The typical example of a code gloss is the explanation of a term in parentheses or as a footnote in a scientific text.
3. Illocution markers – the type of expressions in which the author explicitly states the action that they are performing. Vande Kopple states that throughout the text the author implicitly performs a variety of actions by presenting the information and employing an intricate system of tenses, moods and voices. Such phrases and clauses as *I hypothesize that, to sum up, we claim* etc. are used to make explicit claim on the author's intention.
4. Validity markers – by using this type of metadiscourse author evaluates their attitude to the truth of the proposition. In this category Vande Kopple includes hedges (*perhaps, may, seem, to a certain extend*) that may indicate a doubt towards the assertion; or emphatics (*clearly, undoubtedly, it's obvious*) that help the author stress the validity of the claim that they are making. Vande Kopple includes into this category one more type of

expressions –attributors (*according to Einstein*). However, he argues this use of attributors presupposes that the author allows the reader to judge for themselves whether they believe the source or not.

5. Narrators – this category consists purely of attributors, however Vande Kopple suggests that in this case they perform different metadiscursive function. While attributors as a validity claims function as a way for the readers to define whether they consider the source to be truthful and trustworthy, attributors in the “narrators” category function as a way to point to the source of the information.
6. Attitude markers – this type of category contains phrases and clauses that express author’s attitude towards the information presented. Those could be such expressions as *surprisingly, I find it interesting that, and it is alarming to note that*.
7. Commentary – this category is primarily characterized by the fact that the author addresses the readers directly. In such way author may comment on the reader’s mood or probable reaction to the content of the text. Such phrases as *you will certainly agree that, you might want to read the third chapter first* are typical examples of this metadiscourse category.

Vande Kopple’s classification is one of the first comprehensive attempts to describe metadiscourse. However, it has some issues. Firstly, the category of narrators overlaps with the category of validity claims when using attributors. In many cases, and especially in the scientific articles, attributors perform a variety of rhetorical functions. For example, in the research articles, the attributors may also be used to provide the narrative context and show the progression of knowledge in the field [40, p. 32]. Secondly, illocution markers and validity markers cannot be clearly distinguished in the text as by using such expression as for example *we hypothesize* the author simultaneously describes the action and refers to its validity. Thirdly, in the same way there is little distinction between the commentary and attitude markers.

First attempt to present a more refined classification of metadiscourse was done by Crismore et al. [20] and then later by Hyland [42]. The common feature in all those

classification goes back to the previously mentioned Systemic Functional Grammar by Halliday. In the works of Vande Kopple, Crismore, Mauranen, Ädel two main categories are identified – personal and impersonal metadiscourse [68; 20; 49; 1]. However, Hyland and Tse argue that “what is commonly referred to as *textual metadiscourse* is the result of decisions by the writer to highlight certain relationships and aspects of organization to accommodate readers' understandings” [43, p. 164]. By using the so called “textual metadiscourse markers” the author is organizing the text, making conscious choices to actually guide the reader and show their intentions and evaluations to the reader. Hyland and Tse find it hard to clearly distinguish between the two most common categories in metadiscourse and therefore they state that the textual metadiscourse “contributes to the interpersonal features of a text” [43, p. 164].

Stemming from this assertion, their model consequently distinguishes not between the personal and impersonal (or textual) metadiscourse, but rather between interactive and interactional. The following table illustrates Hyland’s [40] classification:

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive	Help to guide the reader through the text	Resources
Transitions	express relations between main clauses	<i>in addition; but; thus; and</i>
Frame markers	refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages	<i>finally; to conclude; my purpose is</i>
Endophoric markers	refer to information in other parts of the text	<i>noted above; see Fig; in section 2</i>
Evidentials	refer to information from other texts	<i>according to X; Z states</i>
Code glosses	elaborate prepositional meanings	<i>namely; e.g.; such as; in other words</i>
Interactional	Involve the reader in the text	Resources
Hedges	withhold commitment and open dialogue	<i>might; perhaps; possible; about</i>

Boosters	emphasize certainty or close dialogue	<i>in fact; definitely; it is clear that</i>
Attitude markers	express writer's attitude to proposition	<i>unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly</i>
Self-mentions	explicit reference to author(s)	<i>I; we; my; me; our</i>
Engagement markers	explicitly build relationship with reader	<i>consider; note; you can see that</i>

Table 2. Interactional Model of Metadiscourse

The model presented by Hyland is largely based on Thompson and Thetela's model of systems of interactions in various types of discourses [63, p.107]. Even though the researchers don't discuss the issue of metadiscourse, their primary focus is to explore the way the author interacts with a reader in a written text. Various strands of research in metadiscourse also focus on this phenomenon, so it's no wonder that Hyland decided to adopt and develop the model for his research.

The interactive category in Hyland's model serves the purpose of maintaining coherence and guiding the reader through the text. As Hyland states it is not about simply organizing the text, but also about the ability of the author to assess and understand the readers abilities and therefore to appropriately shape the text so as to lead the reader to the desired interpretation and/or conclusion [40].

The interactional category is concerned with the explicit writer's involvement in the text. Those are the markers that convey the author's evaluation, strengthen or weaken their judgement on the propositional content. My employing interactional discourse markers the author engages in a dialogue with a reader, so that is why the main subtypes in this category are hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions and engagement markers.

Concerning method, the thin approach can be considered as purely quantitative, while the thick approach is more qualitatively oriented. The thin approach operates by retrieving (usually on a large scale) all occurrences of a pre-defined list of members of specific subsets. As the words and lemmas on the list are seen as inherently metadiscursive, and that is why the captured occurrences are typically not examined

further. The great advantage of this method is that the retrieval can be highly automatized, which makes it possible to compare frequency and distribution patterns across relatively large bodies of data. The analyst is able to obtain a good overview of the occurrence and distribution of metadiscourse in a given database, which then allows for quick comparisons across genres, registers and contexts of use.

1.2. Newspaper Discourse in the area of Discourse Analysis

1.2.1. Discourse Studies

Discourse studies is a diverse field which incorporates various approaches. As Mills noted, this area is best defined by its relation and opposition to such notions as text, sentence and ideology [51, p. 3]. In linguistics, researchers have proposed various definitions for the term “discourse”. At the same time, Schiffrin et al. state that all of them have in common three main features:

- 1) anything beyond the sentence,
- 2) language use, and
- 3) a broader range of social practice that includes nonlinguistic and nonspecific instances of language [55, p. 2].

Works in discourse analysis are diverse in scope and they focus on extended bodies of speech in its communicative context [52, p. 12]. Instead of purely theoretical examination, discourse analysis looks into language in its practical applications. As such, discourse analysis is not a single approach or methodology but rather a comprehensive field of study that encompasses a variety of methods and techniques for language examination. Furthermore, discourse analysis is highly interdisciplinary. It draws on sociolinguistics and pragmatics and incorporates various strands of argumentation, rhetorical, sociological, literary, and anthropological theory [29, p. 10].

Boholm identifies three main themes in defining discourse [11, p. 24]. The first theme in approaching the definition of discourse is closely connected with language. Brown and Yule define discourse as “language in use” [13], Stubbs – “as language above the sentence or clause” [60], Fairclough – as “a particular way of representing some part of the (physical, social, psychological) world” [30, p. 17]. Gee differentiates between discourse and Discourse, stating that Discourse is embedded in social

institutions and has “props” that define it. Such “props” are words, symbols, deeds, objects, cloths etc. [36, p. 27]. In this sense Discourse contains language and everything else that accompanies it. This notion is close to what Kress and van Leeuwen refer to as “multimodal discourse” [44].

The second stand in defining discourse looks into what kind of language could be called a discourse, whether it is only spoken language or also a written text as well. [11, p. 24]. This idea is closely related to which area of communicative activities can be called a discourse. As such, researchers talk about political discourse, media discourse, legal discourse etc. When understood like this discourse becomes similar to such concepts like genre or text type [10, p. 31].

The third approach in defining discourse concerns, according to Boholm, “the productivity of discourse” [11, p. 24]. For example, Foucault claims that discourse is not only the language and the group of signs that accompany it, but also “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” [34, p. 54]. Similar explanation of a notion is given by Burr, who builds on Foucault’s definition of discourse and refers to it as “meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events” [15, p. 32]. Burr, like many other researchers in the field hints at the relation between language and communicative practices and power. This strand of investigation is a major focus in Critical Linguistics or Critical Discourse Analysis.

Many researchers worked in the area of Critical Discourse Analysis. The first works in the field were done by Bob Hodge and Gunther Kress [38] and then later developed by Norman Fairclough [31; 32], Ruth Wodak [61; 72] and Teun van Dijk [24; 26]. The main premise of the research in this area is investigating how “power and domination operate through language” [47, p. 3]. By exploring power, the researcher in the CDA also look into exclusion, identity, prevailing narratives that are produced in a society and that, in turn, produce dominant and marginalized groups in the society.

Teun van Dijk identified the main requirements in CDA so that the research in the area can yield reliable results:

- CDA has to be “better”. Van Dijk states that this is one of the marginalized fields in modern linguistics and discourse studies, and thus he basically states the main argument in the critical theories – that the not “privileged” have to work harder, work more to achieve the same results;
- Instead of concentrating on the current paradigms and approaches in modern linguistic research, CDA centers its analysis on political and social issues, the interplay of power and inequality
- CDA is multidisciplinary, involving methodologies and practices from other areas of humanities and social sciences
- CDA is not simply a descriptive methodology, it also aims at providing reasons for the existence of current social structures and causality in interactions of individuals within those systems
- “CDA focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society” [27, p. 375].

Other prominent researchers in the area are Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak. Being among the first ones who have formulated the main tenets of Critical Discourse Analysis, they put a solid basis for the research that in thirty years would become quite a mainstream strand in the field of linguistics. Their principles in conducting a research in Critical Discourse Analysis are the following:

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture
4. Discourse does ideological work
5. Discourse is historical
6. The link between text and society is mediated
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
8. Discourse is a form of social action [33, pp. 271-80].

To summarize, discourse is not simply a reflection of existing reality, it is a tool that co-construes it, perpetuates the current social and political systems. Those systems

in turn produce the discourse that favors certain classes and marginalizes the others. “Discourse refers here not only to speech and writing but embraces all systems of signification [45, p. 106], i.e. any kind of meaningful practice that forms the identities of objects and subjects; the principles, orderings or matrices of meanings making something sayable/thinkable/doable at all” [24, p. 2].

Quite popular in the study of CDA is researching the news and media in general. There are studies conducted by... that explore broadcast news, journalism strategies, coverage of certain political events. Among the researchers in this area, van Dijk played an important role. First, he suggested the levels of analysis that can be used when looking at the news. Second, van Dijk introduced the framework to analyze the news discourse and the way it is typically organized.

When talking about the news discourse it is always important to look at the text and context. Text in the news cannot exist independently from the context in which it was produced. These notions echo one of van Dijk’s key points that discourse co-constructs reality. In the course of any investigation, to adequately approach the problem of text and context, the researcher looks at the text level that “accounts for the structures of discourse at various levels of description”, and contextual level that “relate these structural descriptions to various properties of the context, such as cognitive processes and representations or sociocultural factors” [27, p. 25].

Textual level thus can be analyzed in terms of grammar and pragmatics. Grammar however is quite a comprehensive parameter to analyze in modern linguistics. Nowadays, grammar encompasses phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. Van Dijk advocates that in the analysis of the news discourse, the researcher has to pay attention to syntactic arrangement of the sentences and the semantics that the author attempts to convey in their choice of words.

Pragmatics, despite being relatively new strand in the linguistic investigation, plays crucial role in discourse. Pragmatics deals with speech acts. The speech act theory was first introduced by Austin [8] and then further developed by Searle [58]. Among the key concepts of the theory is the notion of performative verbs. Austin states that the idea of a performative utterance is that “it is to be included as a part of the

performance of an action” [8, p. 60]. For example, uttering the words “I apologize” is at the same time performing the act of apologizing. For the performative utterance to be successful, it has to fulfill the felicity conditions. In the news discourse, authors may intentionally or unintentionally perform certain speech acts, and thus their analysis is crucial for the appropriate understanding of discourse, both written and spoken.

While textual analysis of discourse concerns more general and quite usual parameters in linguistics such as syntactic arrangement, attribution of meaning and realization of that meaning, contextual analysis has to look at more complex categories to comprehensively explain the discourse itself. Van Dijk identifies the so-called Macrostructures with the help of which the complexity of discourse can be studied. Those Macrostructure are Style, Rhetoric and Superstructures [27, p. 27].

Style is one of that indicative parameters of Context that is also present throughout the Text. Style manifests through the choice of words, the choice of syntactic patterns and the uses of metadiscursive techniques. However, style is greatly dependent on the context that produces a certain discourse. For example, the style of the lecture would be different from the discussion of the same issue in the newspaper editorial. The factors that influence the style of the author are the audience, the setting and a number of sociocultural parameters that have to be taken into account to successfully achieve the communication goal.

Rhetoric in the scheme proposed by van Dijk’s for analyzing news discourse is not being understood in its classical sense as the discipline that studies the persuasive influence on the audience. But rather, rhetoric is regarded as “as the theoretical subcomponent of discourse analysis that explicates very specific, rhetorical structures only” [27, p. 28]. By this is meant that the rhetoric devices that are employed in the text can be analyzed in terms of why and how. Rhetoric in discourse analysis is optional, while Style is essential, according to van Dijk [27, p. 28]. Style permeates every unit in the text, while Rhetoric concerns the choice of the author to use certain rhetorical devices in a certain way.

The last category to take into account when exploring news discourse in terms of Context according to van Dijk is Superstructure. Those are “schematic forms are

filled with the overall, macrostructural meanings or topics of a discourse” [27, p. 28]. For example, in newspaper those could be Headings or Summary that usually use schematic forms to express the needed meaning. Those will be looked at in more detail in the following subsection.

1.2.2. News Superstructures

In his work “News Schemata” van Dijk poses that news reports are organized according to the conventional schema, this same idea is presented in his work “News and Discourse”, where he refers to such schema as superstructures.

The first category or the superstructure that van Dijk introduces is called Summary. This is typically the part where the reader can quickly decide for themselves whether they are interested in the topic by skimming through the text. According to van Dijk this part usually includes Headline and Lead. Headline could include both the main headline and the subheadline where the author writes few catchy phrases to attract the reader’s attention. Also, the typical Headline would be stylistically marked and have a peculiar grammar structure – incomplete sentences, with articles and verbs or auxiliary verbs lacking, for example [28, p. 162].

One more feature typical of Summary is the so-called Lead. This is the short outline of what, when and where happened. Typically, it could be a first paragraph at the beginning of the article, but quite often it is also first few sentences of the first paragraph. Those superstructures proposed by van Dijk aren’t always separated clearly by paragraphs but rather subjectively determined by the author. Van Dijk also argues that the reader may also in his own way identify macrostructural organization.

Except for the Summary, there is one more category that will always be present in news articles. It is called Main Events. Van Dijk says that this category has a set of certain rules.

First, the events that are being discussed have to be not older than two days and that they have to be relevant to the current situation. This is similar to the idea proposed by Altheide and Snow. They have introduced the concept of media logic that discusses how media chooses what to talk about. A basic principle of media logic is that events,

actions, and actors' performances reflect information technologies, specific media, and formats that govern communication [4, p. 57]. Schillemans notes that the news media report on all the issues of public interest; the formal aim is to bring all important and interesting news to the public's attention [57, p. 55]. The central idea is that media focuses on newsworthiness, that is the news that are both important and interesting. According to Altheide, the mass media and popular culture entertain audiences by dramatizing and presenting events and issues according to predictable narratives that are scripted with emotionally resonant stereotypes and caricatures [4, p. 57].

Secondly, the category of Main Events may have one main theme and several subthemes. It is also common that one article may discuss one event as the main theme, while the other will take the main themes among the subthemes of that one. The focusing and angle of the event depends on the author and the type of publication.

Another category that is usually mentioned in the news is the category of Background. "The presence of background information is often considered a criterion for the quality of news, and that evaluation is evidence for the schematic appropriateness of a Background category in the news" [28, p. 164]. Background is essential for the readers to understand what is happening, and also to the author to introduce their perspective.

Van Dijk distinguishes between present and past backgrounds. The present background of a news event he calls Context, the past background – Past Events. Both add to the understanding of the situation by adding information that is pertinent to the current event even though it may not be directly connected with it.

The next category that is often included in news report is Consequences. Structurally, it follows the Main Events or goes parallel to it. "There is one standard subcategory of Consequences, namely Verbal Reactions. This category contains information about the routinely gathered and quoted declarations of immediate participants and in particular of leading national and international politicians who have opinions or comments on the news events" [28, p. 165].

The last category in van Dijk's classification is Comments. He states that it is not obligatory, however concerning the opinion articles that I analyze, I predict that

they will be quite common. In Comments category the author expresses their stance on the issue and defines possible solutions.

1.2.3. Opinion Articles as a Type of News Discourse

Newspapers' opinion articles look at different domains of life from the various perspectives. When studying this type of discourse, it is important to take into account such factors as the interplay of useful to media and politics, the newspaper(s) in which they appear, and the political context at their time of publication [46, p.1].

Opinion articles are persuasive in nature. Unlike with newspaper editorials which are generally institutional [27], the main aim of opinion articles is to give readers a reliable "voice" and enhance readers' knowledge and beliefs. "The function of opinion discourse is to speak with a convincing "voice" to readers directly" [59]. The distinctive features of opinion articles are that writers can explicitly manifest their subjective attitudes and open judgments of issues [70]. Because of this, texts need to be written in such a way that it can be engaging for the reader as well as it should create a bond between the participants of the discourse.

Several investigations of newspaper opinion discourse have focused on the stance-taking in national newspapers. Arrese and Juana [] explored the expressions of the author's commitment to the validity of the information and the degree of subjectivity in two genres of newspaper discourse: opinion columns and leading articles. The findings of her study indicated there is no significant difference between the two genres in terms of the author's commitment, whereas the two genres differ significantly in the dimension of subjectivity. Tavassoli et al. [63] analyzed the attitudinal language of articles and studied the stances towards the Syrian refugee in two British newspapers with different political orientations, *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph*. Their findings suggested that the attitudes adopted by newspapers have great potential to shape readers' positioning on the refugees issue, either to show the welcoming stance or the unwelcoming stance.

Additionally, there are also some cross-linguistic investigations on the construction of stance in newspaper opinion discourses. Through a corpus-based

contrastive study, Pérez-Blanco [53] analyzed negative evaluative adjectives in English and Spanish opinion discourse and discussed the observed cross-cultural differences in the construction of attitudinal stance. Drawing on Hyland's model of stance markers, Babapour and Kuhl conducted a contrastive study on English and Farsi newspaper opinion articles to investigate the frequency of different types of stance markers. Their findings revealed that hedges and self-mentions used by English columnists are significantly more frequent than Farsi columnists, while Farsi columnists use a large number of boosters and attitude markers to construct their stance [9]. These contrastive studies reveal interesting similarities and differences of stance expressions in different languages.

Opinion pieces take a more personal interactional position, adopting a clear perspective towards both their topics and their readers by establishing a stance early on in the piece and supporting this with a range of warrants for their opinions. What is key to opinion texts is the writer's explicitly subjective attitude and open judgments of the issues (Wang 2008). Here the writer constructs a textual voice |with the status and authority to evaluate and opine on particular issues of the day, engaging with and seeking to overcome alternative viewpoints.

CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER 1

In this chapter I gave the definition of the metadiscourse. It is the language that is employed to talk about the language used in a certain type of discourse. I also presented two main approaches to the study of metadiscourse, which are different in defining metadiscourse and research methodology.

The narrow approach, also referred to as “thick” primarily focuses on the reflexivity of a language. The most prominent researchers in this area are Ädel and Mauranen. The main principle of their methodology is that after searching for the potentially metadiscursive tokens, they then analyze the results quantitatively separately.

The broad approach, vice versa, searches for already predefined sets of metadiscourse markers and then it makes it easier to compare metadiscourse across registers and varieties. The most prominent research in this area is Hyland.

After exploring theoretical works on metadiscourse, I outlined the research in the areas of discourse studies, particularly in the news discourse. Following van Dijk’s typology, the main categories of news discourse were identified.

The last point in the chapter is dedicated to the research in opinion articles and the features that are typical for this type of news discourse.

CHAPTER 2. DISTRIBUTION OF METADISCOURSE MARKERS ACROSS VARIETIES

2.1. Distribution of the metadiscourse markers across British, American and Ukrainian opinion articles

Following Hyland's interactional model of metadiscourse, I have analyzed metadiscourse markers used in the opinion articles in British, American and Ukrainian newspapers, all written in English. Since I adopted the broad approach in my analysis, I have also used the common methodology within this framework. Corpus methodology in this case is used in the same way as it is used when working with pragmatics. By searching for already predetermined set of lexical items, it is possible to then identify the phenomenon in the text with closer examination [3, p. 9].

Even though the research in this area is quite substantial and there are non-exhaustive lists of the lexical items available, I have decided to compile my own, considering the fact that to date no research has been done to compare British, American and Ukrainian opinion articles. There are two main sources for the list of words that were searched for. First, I used already predefined sets of words and phrases largely based on Hyland. Second, just like Zhang [74], I surveyed every 10th article in the corpus for the metadiscourse markers and then included them in my search. The list of the words that were searched for is included in Appendix 1.

After searching for the tokens, each occurrence was examined individually to determine whether the token is in fact a metadiscourse marker or whether it is a part of propositional content.

The data for analysis consists of the corpus of 75 thousand words. Each subcorpus – British, American and Ukrainian has 25 thousand words. Each subcorpus is balanced in terms of the wordcount and the topics covered. For each subcorpus I have chosen articles from the three popular online newspapers of each country. Therefore, the data in British subcorpus consists from the articles of *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian* and *The Independent*; the data for the American subcorpus was taken from the articles from *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and *USA Today*; the Ukrainian subcorpus consists of the articles from *Unian*, *Business Ukraine* and

KyivPost. To ensure that there is consistency in the thematic orientation of the articles, I have chosen the articles that covered the following topics: *International Affairs*, *Covid*, *Internal Problems*, *Culture and Economy*.

Having conducted the search for the metadiscourse markers I have found that the writers of the British and American opinion articles employ more metadiscourse markers than Ukrainian. Table 2.1. illustrates the distribution of the metadiscourse markers across the varieties:

Category	UK	US	Ukraine
<i>Transitions</i>	346	350	316
<i>Frame markers</i>	10	12	33
<i>Endophoric markers</i>	0	0	3
<i>Evidentials</i>	39	82	39
<i>Code glosses</i>	28	28	26
<i>Hedges</i>	47	38	26
<i>Boosters</i>	30	28	39
<i>Attitude markers</i>	18	17	19
<i>Self-mentions</i>	0	7	22
<i>Engagement markers</i>	77	41	46
Total	595	603	569

Table 3. Distribution of metadiscourse markers

Most notable, perhaps, is the abundance of engagement markers in British opinion articles, the use of evidentials in American newspapers, and an overwhelming amount of metadiscursive self-mentions in the Ukrainian opinion articles. Each of these categories will be discussed further in the chapter and the possible reasons for such occurrence will be suggested.

2.2. Interactive metadiscourse markers

2.2.1. Transitions

This is the most common type of metadiscourse, which is not surprising. Transitions are mostly conjunctions or adverbials that connect the arguments in the text. They are used to maintain coherence and organization of the text. By using transitions, the author can move to the next point of their argument, present a contradicting opinion or elaborate on the point they are making. Thus, transitions can be divided into three main groups: addition, contradiction and consequence. The following table illustrates how these markers are distributed in different varieties:

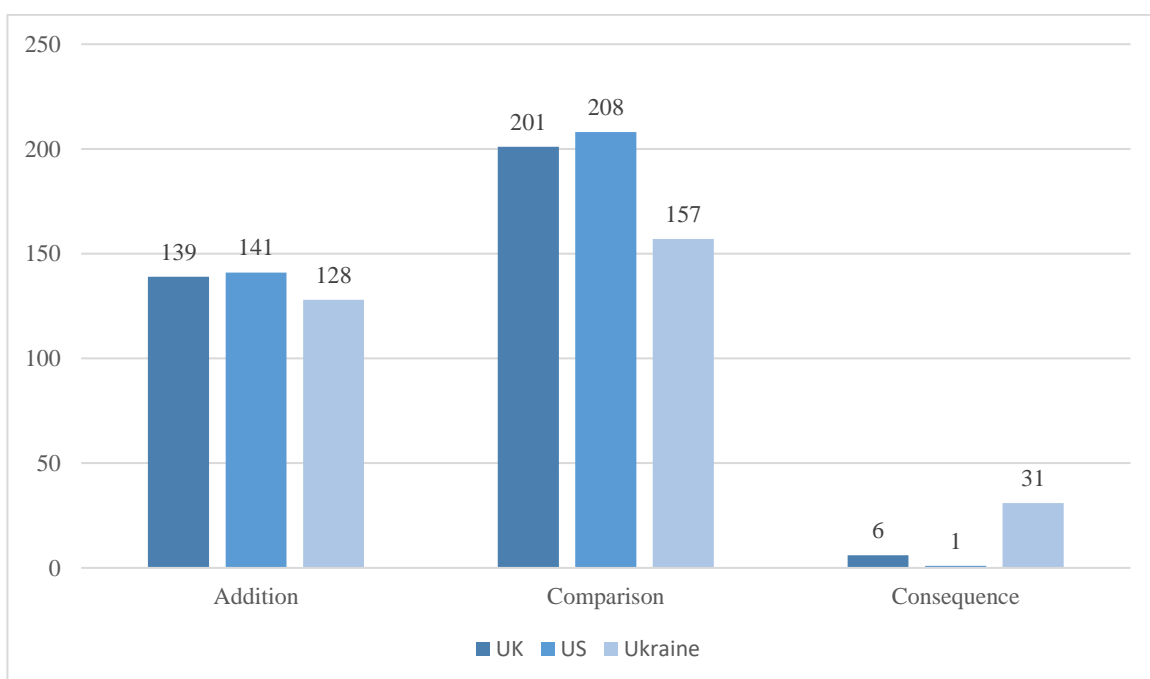


Table 4. Transitions

Interestingly, while addition has fairly the same distribution across the varieties, the results differ in regard to comparison and consequence. While British and American opinion articles prefer to illustrate the point by comparing or contrasting, Ukrainian opinion articles also tend to draw conclusions. Even though metadiscourse markers of consequence are not the prevailing ones, they are still used significantly more often in the Ukrainian opinion articles.

First, transitions that serve the purpose of addition are mainly expressed by such phrases as *and* and *in addition*. Even though *and* has the highest frequency in the every

subcorpus (642 tokens, 693 tokens, and 639 tokens in the British, American and Ukrainian subcorpora respectively), only the metadiscursive instances of the conjunction were included in the analysis. Consider the following example:

*Now is the time to invest in Northern Powerhouse rail, **and** a metro rail system for the West Midlands, as well as a massive programme of improvements for the roads and gigabit broadband for every home. **And** we are the only party that can conceivably deliver this programme, because we are the only party that understands the balance and symmetry at the heart of the UK economy. [110]*

The excerpt has two instances of *and*. The first time however, it is used as a part of the propositional content where the author enumerates the phenomena in the real world using *and* as a conjunction. The second time *and* is used, it adds to the author's point, strengthening the argument. Therefore, it performs metadiscursive function.

In addition is inherently metadiscursive, however as a transition marker it is used less frequently as *and*:

*After all, it was precisely due to their media pool that the OPZZh once managed to crush the OppoBloc and all other competing projects. **In addition**, this shifts the balance of power within the OPZZh itself – between Liovochkin's and Medvedchuk's groups [127].*

The most common category among the transition markers is comparison. This category has the words that indicate similarity between to things or difference between them. Therefore, the words that were searched for to identify this type of metadiscourse are: *but; still; yet; just as; however; similarly; by contrast*. Almost all metadiscourse markers were used with the similar frequency. However, I have observed some peculiarities regarding the use of *yet* and *however*.

In British articles *yet* is primarily used as a conjunction and a metadiscourse marker; in American articles, it is almost equally used as an adverb of time and as conjunction; while in Ukrainian articles, the role of *yet* is almost exclusively the one of an adverb of time. Meanwhile, the most common transition to indicate contradiction is *however* (there were 56 tokens retrieved in Ukrainian subcorpus in contrast to 8 and 15 of British and American subcorpora):

*It is obvious that Europeans have questions regarding the anti-corruption dynamics in Ukraine. **However**, who said that the fight against corruption is a matter of one day? [144].*

Another type of transitions is consequence. These relations show the author's train of thought, and to look for this type of metadiscourse the following words were searched for: *thus* and *therefore*. They do not constitute a large part of the corpus, and again the Ukrainian opinion articles stand out by having a lot of this type of metadiscourse:

*In today's world, the aggressor is interested not in the territory, but in **Therefore**, the creation of a memorial in Babyn Yar should become not only a good deed but also a focus of state attention [119].*

Generally, in terms of transitions British and American opinion articles have roughly the same amount of transitions, while Ukrainian ones have less. This is illustrated by table:

	UK	US	Ukraine
<i>Addition</i>	139	141	128
<i>Comparison</i>	201	208	157
<i>Consequence</i>	6	1	31
Total	346	350	316

Table 5. Distribution of transitions

At the same time, British and American articles are more versatile, with the same markers performing different functions and generally having a more varied choice of words.

2.2.2. Frame markers

Frame markers are the type of metadiscourse that is primarily used to structure and organize the argument in the text. Author uses it to guide the reader through the stages or the arguments of their proposition, or to signal the discourse goal in the certain part of the text. The table illustrates the distribution of frame markers in the opinion articles across three varieties:

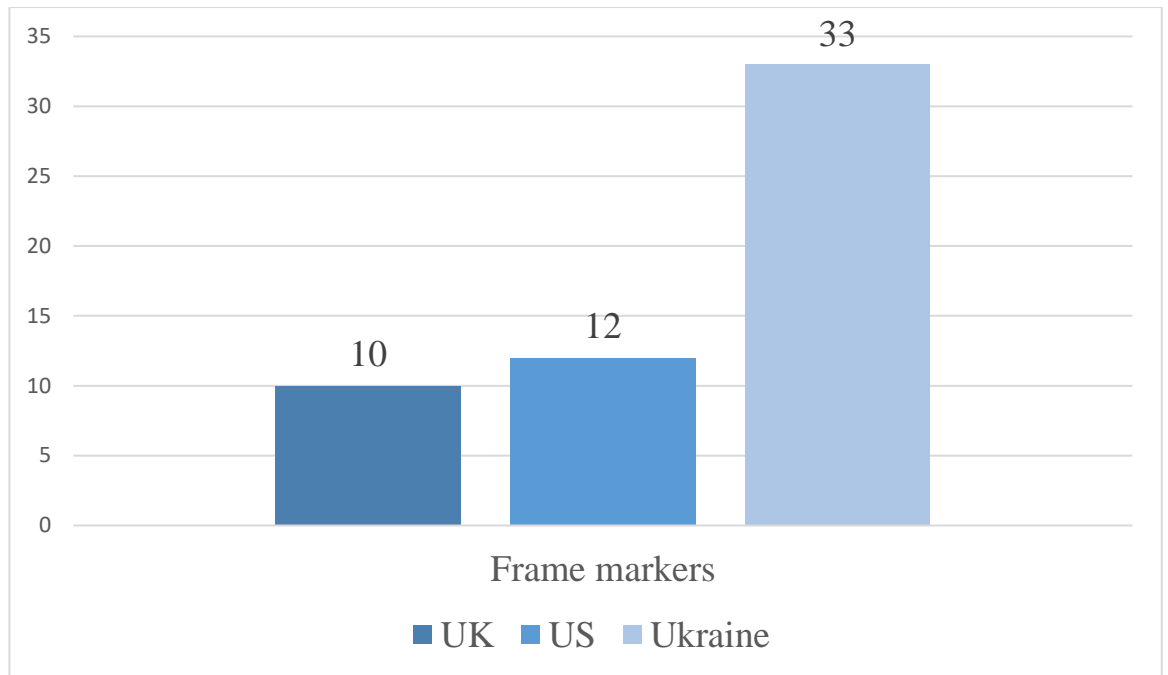


Table 6. Frame markers

Ukrainian opinion articles have the highest occurrence of frame markers. Judging from the findings, it appears that the Ukrainian writers tend to structure their opinion articles as typical opinion essays having more formal frame markers that might indicate the shift of topic or explicitly structure their argument.

The words that were searched for to identify the metadiscourse that structures the text or argument are *first*, *second*, *for starters*, *next*, *at the same time* and *finally*. Once again, every instance was examined and non-metadiscursive tokens, as the one below, were excluded from the analysis:

*Lane is shown as the officer who **first** confronted Floyd after he refused to show his hands [154].*

In this example *first* is just the adverb of time in the subordinate clause. Metadiscursive occurrences of the suggested words comment on the text itself or the author's opinion and are illustrated below.

*Why? **First**, accountability would be increased: all decision making would rest with Parliament again...*

***Second**, economic policies would need to shift to attract capital and to help the economy readjust to our exit from the single market and customs union [150].*

The above example clearly shows that the words here serve the function of structuring the author's argument. In this example, another metadiscourse strategy is used – rhetorical question. It is one of the engagement markers which helps in the establishing relationship between the writer and the reader. Engagement markers will be discussed further in the chapter.

One of the interesting observations is that in British and American articles *first* and *second* are used as sentence adverbs without any additional words:

Second, *what happens in Israel matters to America, too; Israeli politics are also part of Washington's strategy for the Middle East* [140].

Ukrainian authors however never use such words on their own. Even as a metadiscourse markers, *first*, *second* etc. usually function as a noun modifier thus making the whole phrase metadiscursive:

*What could this mean for Ukraine? ***The first and most obvious answer*** is that the country will witness the steady outflow of technical experts and entrepreneurial innovators* [95].

Some more colloquial options like *for starters* were not present in Ukrainian articles, which again indicates that Ukrainian authors tend to be more formal in their writing and less versatile in their choice of words.

Frame markers not only indicate the step-by-step organization of the argument, but also, they are employed to announce a discourse goal. When using such phrases as *to conclude*, *argue*, *as a result* and *I propose*, author communicates to the readers what is it they intend to show in the following sentences:

*At the risk of feeding the hysteria on Fox News, ***I propose*** that we cancel the cant phrase “cancel culture” because it has long since become divorced from reality.*[80]

This is the second sentence in the article and with the phrase *I propose* the author signals his intention and basically puts forward the thesis of the whole article. Curiously, this subtype of frame markers is not as common as the frame markers that indicate the stages in the argument the author is making.

To convince the readers, the authors need to present their opinion coherently and clearly, which justifies the usage of the words that indicate the stages of discourse. On the other hand, the author doesn't need many markers to announce their discourse goals. In opinion article those goals are typically announced in the headline, subheadline or in the first paragraph:

“Boris Johnson’s priority is to maintain delusion that Britain has anything to offer a world that moved on without it”

Brexit Britain’s ‘strategic priorities’ in the coming years will not be decided by Britain, which has chosen to take the narrow road out into the cold [132].

The two paragraphs above are a headline and subheadline respectively from the article from the Independent. The author doesn't employ any metadiscursive markers here. His discursive goal is clear regardless.

2.2.3. Endophoric markers

This category is included in Hyland's classification of metadiscourse, however initially I was planning to exclude it altogether from my analysis. The reason for this is that endophoric markers are very common in research articles, master's or doctoral theses or any other scientific or semi-scientific text. Those are the *phrases as previously mentioned, the following passage illustrates, as noted above* etc. This type of metadiscourse is common in scientific writing as the authors have to constantly refer to the previous arguments to substantiate their claim or to point to the following parts of the text that might later explain their point, or both.

Opinion articles are different in this regard. Authors generally have a stronger stance on the issue and the whole article is structured in a way to convince the reader to at least consider their standpoint if not completely adopt it. Therefore, there is little reference to the previous argument, if any. The article itself is an argument.

It is reasonable to say that opinion articles have more in common with opinion essays that students are assigned to write at their English class, rather than with the scientific research articles. Therefore, it stands to reason that no endophoric markers were present in British and American opinion articles. Considering the findings in

general, it also stands to reason that there are endophoric markers present in Ukrainian articles:

What should we do? I have written before – we have to build pragmatic trade and economic relations with the key EU countries, to develop an original approach [144].

Ukrainian writing tends to be more formal, more akin to the opinion essays or research articles, therefore it is no wonder that endophoric markers are sporadically present in the Ukrainian opinion articles, which is uncommon for British and American varieties.

2.2.4. Evidentials

Evidentials are the type of metadiscourse that refers the reader to the source of the given information. In opinion articles, this type of metadiscourse is among the three most common types of metadiscourse.

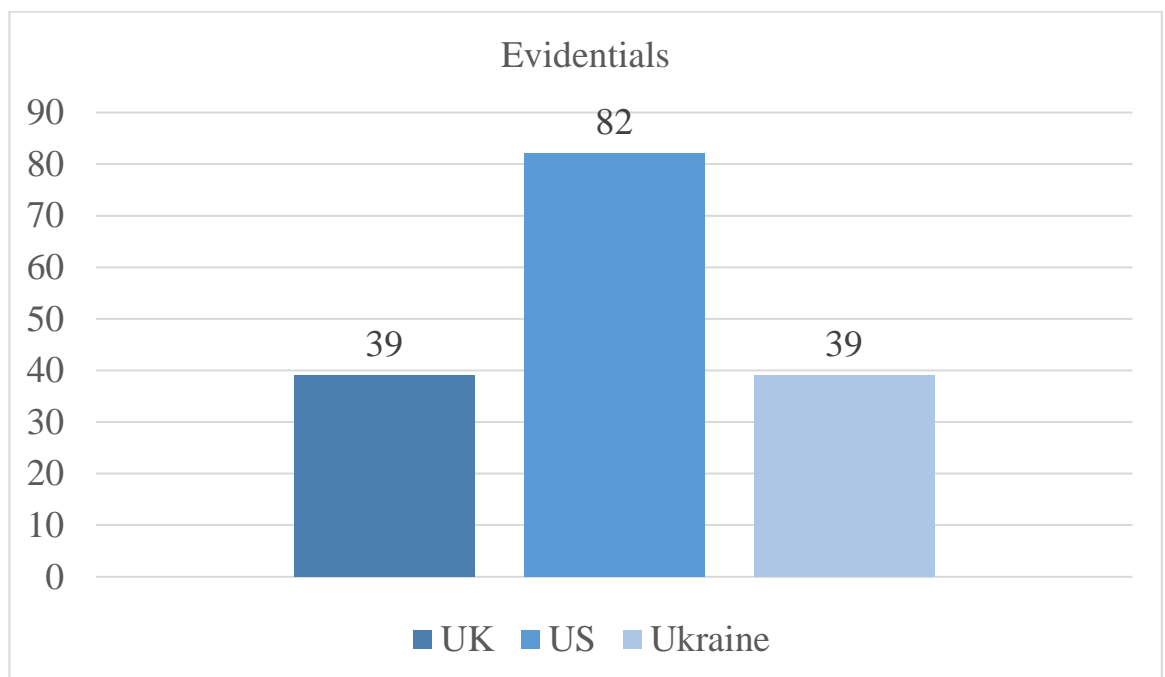


Table 7. Evidentials

Despite the fact that in the opinion articles the authors argue to prove their point of view, they still use evidentials either to support or refute the claim or to illustrate the topic.

Evidentials can be employed in the texts in a variety of ways, mostly the authors refer to the words of other people or to the research findings by using reporting words. That is why to find this type of metadiscourse the following words were searched for: *joked, told, tell, argue, respond, tweet, write, demand, according to, announce, said, says, define, conclude, report.*

The most common phrase in all three varieties is *according to*:

According to a study published last September from researchers at King's College London, 60,000 people in the UK were likely to have been suffering from long Covid [104].

In this example, *according to* refers to the findings of the study. And in the broader context, the author uses the information to support his claim that a lot of people had a long Covid rather than the soft form of the illness. She then proceeds to explain the definition such form and advocates for the care that is needed in this case. The argument itself and the whole opinion article gains more legitimacy by presenting factual data rather than simply pushing one point without any substantiation.

Another way of using evidentials is referring to the words of a certain person. This reference can serve two purposes. The first purpose is, just like with the reference to the research, to substantiate author's claim:

*Vladimir Konstantinov, a Ukrainian citizen but now speaker of the Russian-controlled 'Crimean parliament', **told** journalists on 10 March that they are planning "a law suit against Ukraine due to the losses caused to the peninsula by the water brigade" [87].*

In the example above, the author uses the verb *to tell* to convey the quote. Here the reference to the source is used to show the stance opposite to the author's, which then allows the author to argue the proposition.

The second way in which evidentials are used are in a more narrative setting. In American opinion articles, it is more common to use evidentials in this way rather than in British and Ukrainian. Let's look at the following example:

*When FKA Twigs filed a lawsuit against her ex-boyfriend Shia LaBeouf for abuse, CBS' Gayle King **asked** her: "Why didn't you leave?" Just a few weeks later,*

Norah O'Donnell asked Charlotte Bennett, an accuser of New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, the same question.

So why do survivors stay?

*While Twigs refused to answer the question, Bennett **responded**, "It didn't feel like I had a choice."*

The example contains two evidentials – *asked* and *responded*. They here serve the double function. On the one hand, these are the instances of metadiscourse that signify the reference to the external source; on the other hand, they are enclosed in more narrative construction, a propositional content that sets the stage for further development of the issue.

With this paragraph the author starts to explain the problems that the victims of sexual assault have to face. There are no explicit opinion markers, however those three paragraphs make for a strong opening point.

2.2.5. Code Glosses

Code glosses are the type of metadiscourse that provide additional information to the points presented in the text.

Interestingly, the distribution of code glosses among the three varieties is practically the same, as the table illustrates:

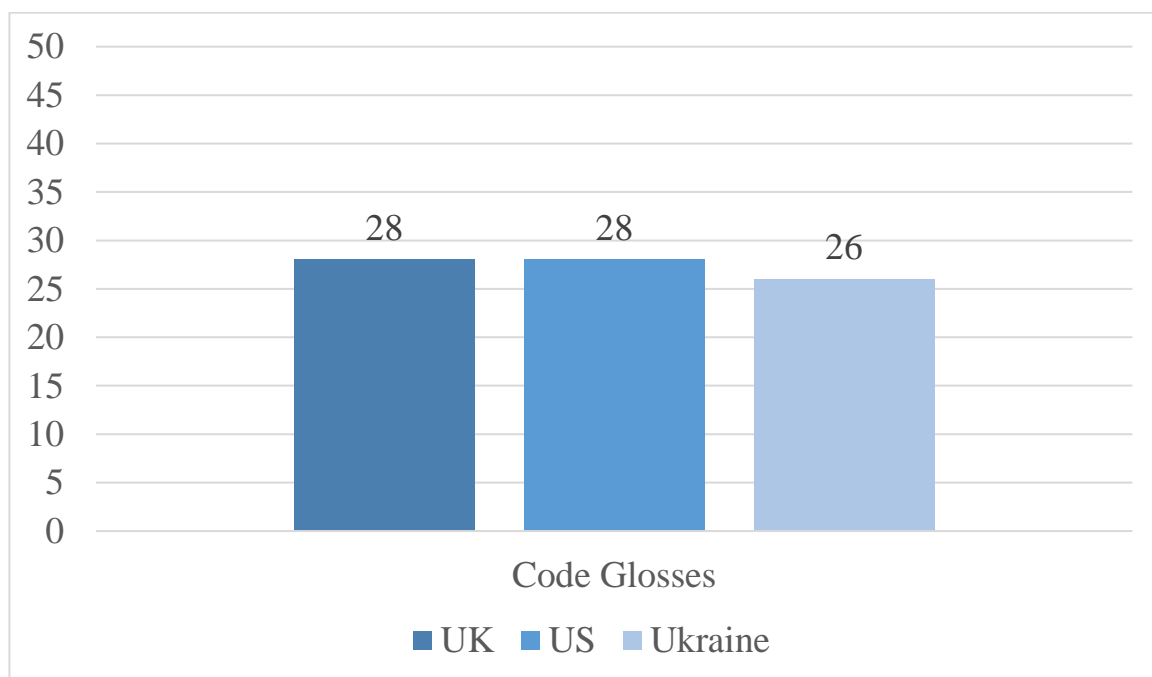


Table 8. Code Glosses

The lack of stark distinction across the varieties could be due to the fact that the opinion articles are directed at the wide audience that is interested in the publication and the information that is presented. The article cannot possibly have too many words or notions that are unknown to the reader. The author has to balance the information they are presenting to make the reading accessible and engaging. Since code glosses are employed to explain something that is not known or might not be known, it is no wonder that the three subcorpora show practically the same occurrence of this type of metadiscourse markers.

The additional information that code glosses refer to are the notions that might be unknown to the reader. Each time a notion like that appears in the text, the author will try to ensure reader's understanding of it by giving definitions, examples or explanation. Based on this information the words that were used to search for these instances of metadiscourse are: *like, called, I mean, in other words, known as, namely, e.g., such as, that is, define and in simple words.*

Code glosses are employed in the varieties of ways, expanding on the information about certain words or concepts.

*In some areas badly hit by coronavirus, **such as** London and the West Midlands, postal deliveries have often been sluggish and erratic, as the increased number of parcels, social distancing in sorting offices and staff infections hamper Royal Mail.*

The paragraph above illustrates how code glosses can be used to provide examples. *Such as* refers to “*some areas*” and then connects it to concrete cities like “*London and the West Midlands*”. Code glosses can provide additional information by introducing the author's views or conclusions:

*Not so long ago, Facebook creator Mark Zuckerberg announced that his social network would become more encrypted, with an emphasis placed on personal communication. **In other words**, the shift towards privacy is gaining momentum [94].*

In this paragraph, code gloss is employed in a way to summarize what the author means. First, he presents the facts referring to the words of a known person and then he explains what point he is making with the previous sentence.

2.3. Interactional metadiscourse markers

Interactional metadiscourse markers are the ones that directly inform the reader, refer to the reader or engage in any sort of interaction with them. They have few subtypes: hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions, engagement markers.

2.3.1. Hedges

Hedges are the types of phrases that express ambiguity, uncertainty and generally make the statement less strong. Predictably, there is a considerable variation in this subtype of metadiscourse markers:

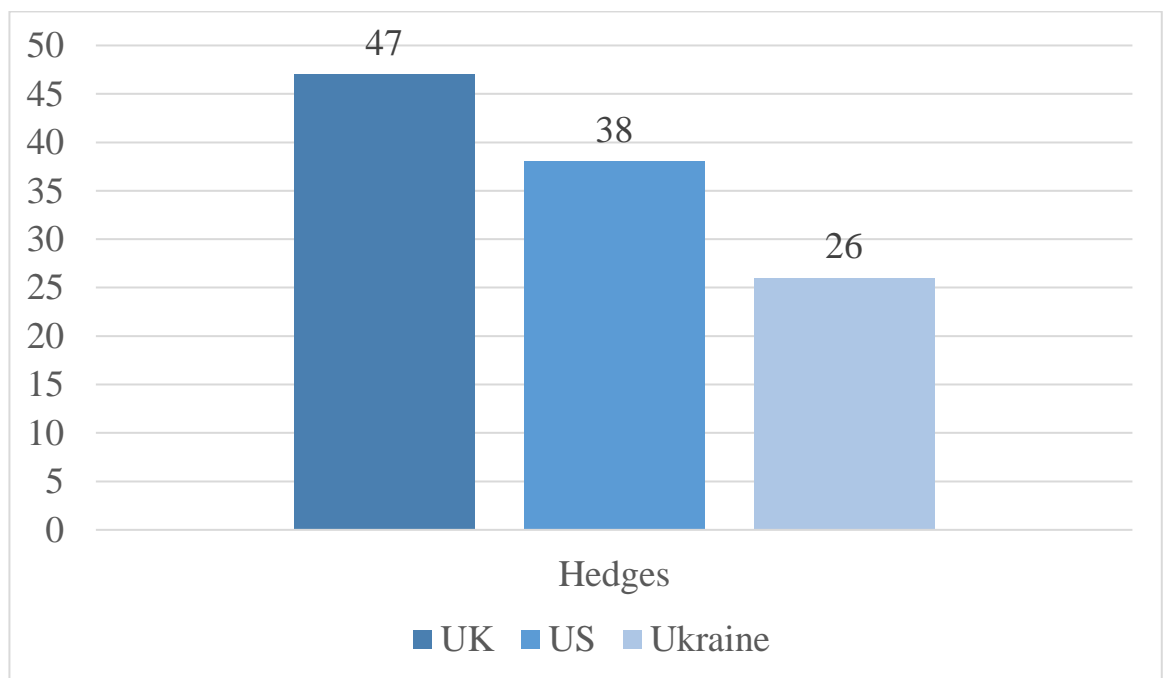


Table 9. Hedges

The trend that the table above illustrates is quite clear. It is generally agreed upon that British English tends to be less direct in its expression. The data extracted from the Ukrainian subcorpus also doesn't seem to be out of ordinary. In Ukrainian language hedging is not a common tool that authors would use. Ukrainian language is generally more oriented in here and now rather than in the hypotheticals and tentative forms that English has, and British English frequently employs.

Hedges can be expressed in a variety of ways in a language. After surveying the articles, the following words were selected to look for: *usually, in general, generally, perhaps, possible, might.*

Most common, perhaps, is the verb *might*, which is inherently more tentative than the other words that express the modality of possibility:

*As further developments proved, most likely, this explanation **might** as well be true: it was precisely Antonov that became the bone of contention to spark a real fallout between Ukroboronprom and the ministry [146].*

In this sentence, the author is not very sure in his own claim. This is just a supposition. In this sentence not only *might*, but also such phrase as *most likely* point at wavering opinion of the author. He is trying to make the claim, but in the same way it presents that claim not very strongly.

However, not every instance of *might* is an instance of metadiscursive doubt. *Might* has a range of modal meanings and sometimes it functions in indirect or hypothetical clauses:

*It has already been suggested that, given Harry and Meghan chose to tell Oprah Winfrey that a member of the royal family had asked how dark the colour of the skin of their baby **might** be, but declined to provide the name of said member, and have thereby cast potential aspersions over them all, it **might** be possible for all of the rest of the family to retaliate by suing them for libel [132].*

This paragraph above is a good illustration of two different meanings of *might*. The first one is an instance of the reported words in a hypothetical future, while the second one is the supposition, a claim he is making about the future (though in a tentative way).

Another, quite common way of hedging the argument is using adverbs with modal meaning of possibility like *perhaps* or *possibly* or the phrases that contain these words. In the same way as with *might*, these adverbs soften the claim presenting one of the probable/favourable version of events, but not the absolute certainty about them:

*Moreover, **it is possible that** OPZZh competitors will make use of the situation [127].*

To prove his point, the author uses two metadiscourse markers. One is a transition *moreover* that adds to the previous point that he is making in the text, another

one is a metadiscursive clause *it is possible that* that indicates the possibility that certain events might happen.

Conversely, when possible is used as an adjective that modifies the noun it is devoid of metadiscursive meaning, as it refers exclusively to that noun and doesn't comment on the language in the text:

*Congress **should** forcefully remind Biden of that at every possible opportunity [129].*

The sentence above is not devoid of any metadiscursive meaning. The author uses attitude marker *should* to comment on the propositional content, however *possible* in here is the part of that propositional content.

Another type of hedges that authors employ to make the claim more tentative is using adverbs of frequency like *usually* and *generally*. With such words the sentence loses its absolute quality and event described in a propositional content is presented in more trivial way:

So far, we have seen signs of the first Brexit effect: the Tory government is generally much keener than its recent predecessors to deliver for the electorate [150].

The author here is clearly making the claim about Tory politics. However, he isn't being absolute about it. By using *generally*, the author presents the claim in a manner that presupposes more common state of affairs. It doesn't make the party stand out in any way, but rather makes it a more usual occurrence.

Interesting point is to be made about the phrase *in general*. In British English it is used as a frame marker, signalling the final stage of the discourse. The authors use the phrase to summarise or conclude their argument as in the example below:

In general, the Brussels insistence on tough disciplines to curb subsidies to dying industries and crony capitalists has been healthy and we would do well to keep it [83].

The author doesn't downplay the strength of his argument in the sentence above, he draws conclusions and clearly outlines his point. That is why it is important to consider each metadiscourse marker separately. Sometimes what initially can be thought of as one category appears to be completely different. Only after careful

consideration of each instance of metadiscourse their proper type and function can be determined.

2.3.2. Boosters

Boosters are opposites to hedges. Instead of making sentences softer and more tentative liked hedges do, boosters add strength to the argument, hence the name. In my list I have included the following expressions to search for metadiscourse markers that can be classified as boosters in opinion articles: *of course, in fact, inevitably, significantly, yes, importantly, definitely, it is clear that, clearly, obviously, certainly.*

The use of boosters in opinion articles also yields disparate results, however they are directly opposite to the use of hedges. While British and American English have practically the same frequency of using this metadiscourse, Ukrainian English is quite different in this regard:

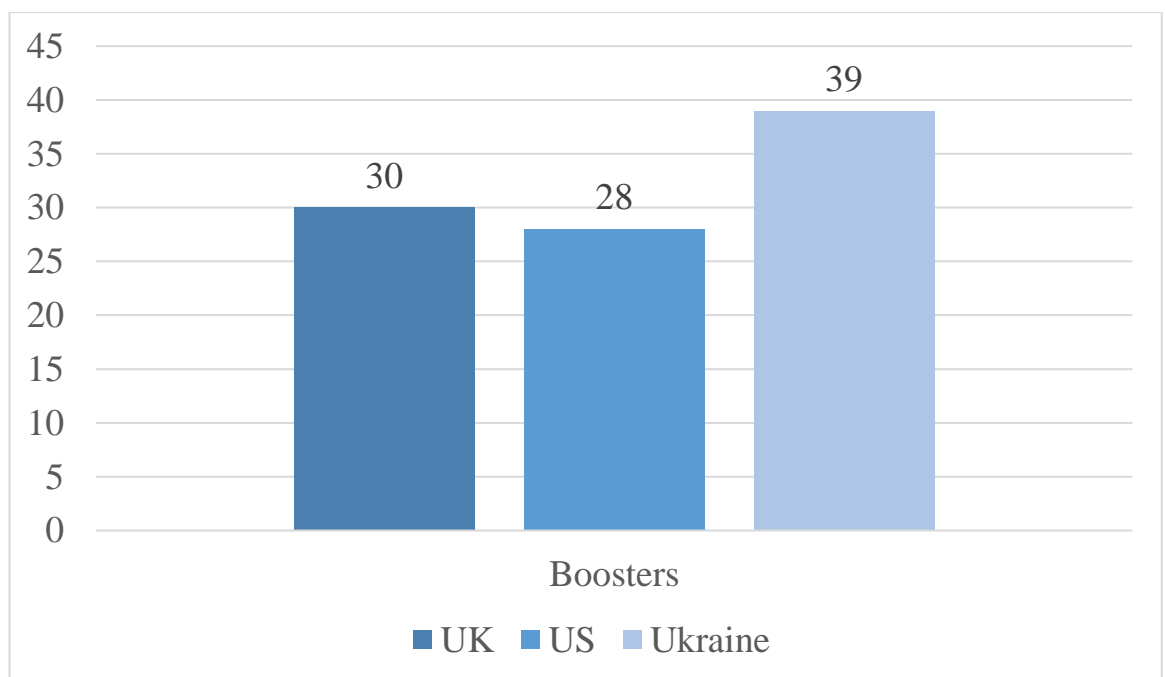
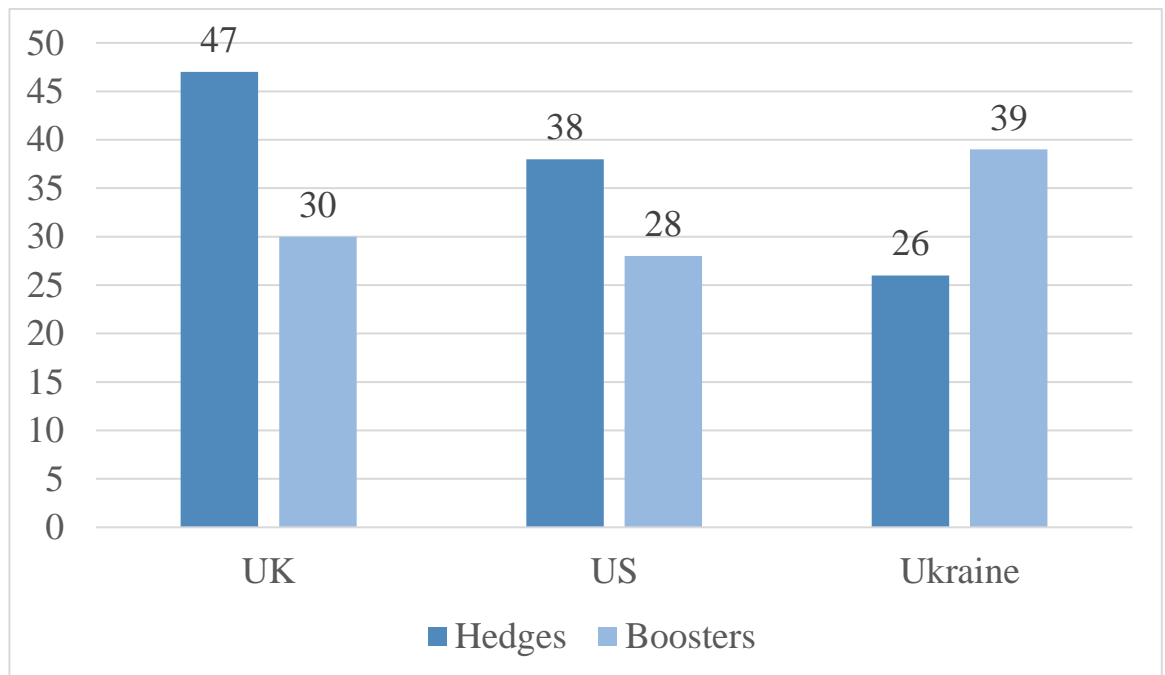


Table 10. Boosters

Ukrainian variety clearly favours the use of boosters and in the course of the analysis I have encountered boosters that are exclusively used by Ukrainian writers of opinion articles. However, despite the fact that the Ukrainian variety prefers to use boosters more than the other two native varieties, it still uses less boosters than British

and American varieties use hedges. To clarify this statement let me demonstrate Table 2:



Table

The data demonstrates that despite the overuse of boosters in Ukrainian English, it still employs less interactional metadiscourse markers, presenting more factual information and less comments on that information.

The main difference of boosters from all the other subtypes of metadiscourse is, as Hyland said, that they “allow writers to close down alternatives” [40, p. 52]. In this way, the author and the reader cooperate in the creation of the narrative that is prevalent throughout the opinion article. The paragraph that I present below demonstrates how that narrative is crafted:

*As Rachel Dwyer, a sociologist at the Ohio State University, has shown, the “care economy” — jobs tending to young, old, disabled and sick people, ... — is the locus of significant employment growth. Such workers, ***of course***, have borne the worst of the pandemic’s dangers [160].*

The author here talks a particular employment sector and the effects that the pandemic had on it. The reader cannot possibly know that this sector is the most affected from COVID, neither can he deduce it. However, by employing the booster

of course, the author as if already knows what exactly the reader knows. Therefore, the reader has no other choice but to agree with the argument, since the way the argument is presented in the article appears to be in complete correlation with what the reader knows and believes.

The most common boosters that are present in all three varieties are *of course*, *in fact*, *definitely* and *certainly*. There are some boosters however that are present either only in British English or in Ukrainian English. For example, *yes* is used only in British opinion articles:

Yes, *of course, I am happy about us rolling out the vaccine.*

In the sentence the booster *yes* is used with another booster *of course* that adds strength to the argument even more.

Ukrainian variety has even more boosters that are peculiar to this variety. Interestingly, this is the only category of metadiscourse that has so many unique words. There could be two reasons for it. Firstly, the Ukrainian authors seem to use a lot of boosters in their native language and secondly, the Ukrainian language has a wide variety of lexical means to strengthen the proposition. Boosters that were found only in the Ukrainian opinion articles are *inevitably*, *significantly*, *importantly*, *it is clear that*. Some of these phrases are translations from the Ukrainian, as in the example:

Russia is actively trying to use the tools of historical memory for its purposes.

Significantly, *Russian President Vladimir Putin has personally focused on the subject of Holocaust hybridization since the end of 2019 [146].*

Clearly, in the paragraph the author would use the Ukrainian word “показово”. And since English is not his first language, he tries to find the best substitution for the word.

Another interesting point I would like to make is that just like with the frame markers, in Ukrainian opinion articles authors prefer to use clauses rather than sentence adverbials. Let’s take the following sentence as an example:

It is clear that *Ukraine has never had more economic potential than today.*

There are no reasons not to use *clearly* as a booster in the sentence. At the same time, *clearly* is never used as a booster in the Ukrainian subcorpus. Usually, it acts as an adverbial modifier like in the sentence below:

This practice works in all development-oriented countries that clearly understand their goals in the world.

Clearly in this sentence is not metadiscursive, which is the exact opposite of the usage of the adverb in British and American varieties.

3.3.3. Attitude markers

Attitude markers are used to express author's emotional reaction on the information presented. Across the varieties, there is practically the same frequency of using attitude markers:

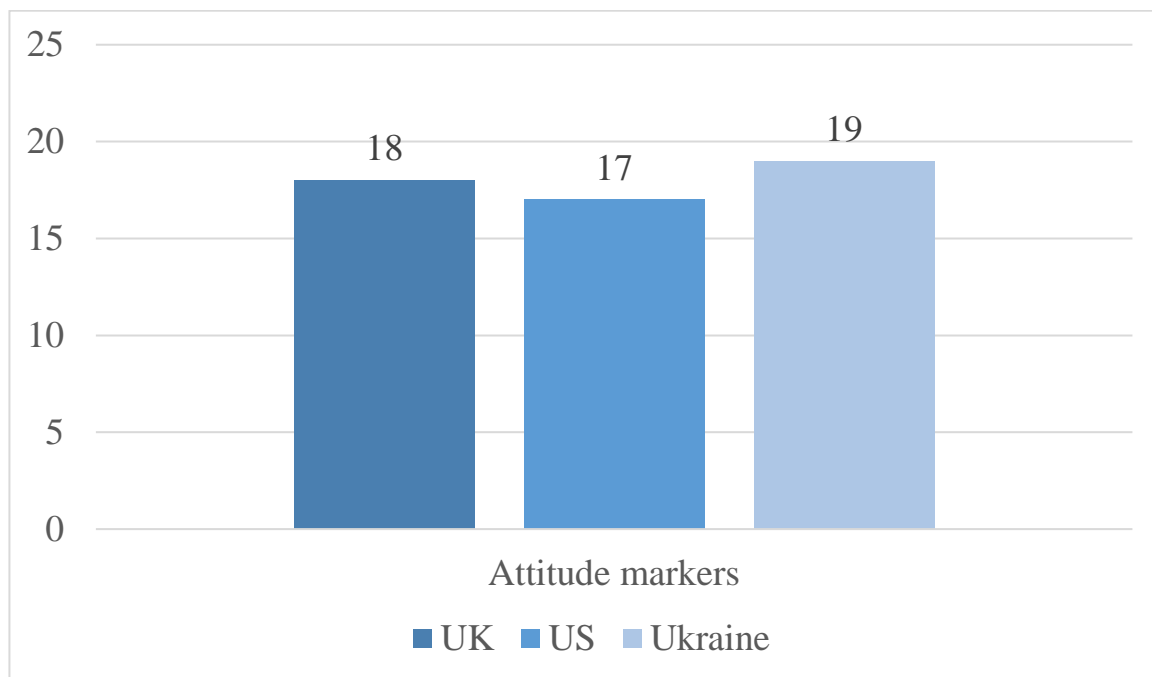


Table 11. Attitude markers

Such results are not surprising. In opinion article it is common to express the author's attitude towards the situation. And despite this metadiscourse marker having the similar occurrence, the data diverges across other parameters that elicit the differences in the varieties.

As Asher suggest in his typology of attitude verbs, such verbs can express doubt, surprise, regret and the whole range of emotions [6]. In opinion articles, it's not only

the verbs that can be regarded as attitude markers, so to objectively measure the occurrence of this subtype of metadiscourse, I searched for the following stems: *sure*, *fortune**, *believe*, *true*, *know*, *expect**, *regret**, *surprise**, *hope**, *doubt**, *opinion*.

Quite often attitude markers will be used with the first person pronouns, which is also a typical feature of another category of metadiscourse markers – self-mentions. Hyland states that when the author uses first person pronoun, they already engage readers in the text, thus performing metadiscursive actions. Ädel has a different view on the problem, stating that not every use of “I” is metadiscursive [1]. The category of self-mentions will be discussed further; however, it is important to note that it is only natural that the authors will use first person pronouns to express their attitude on the issue:

***We believe** that every child in the country should have the same opportunity to express their talents and make the most of their lives – and that is why we are investing £14bn now to increase funding for every primary and every secondary school in the country [110].*

The example illustrates the author’s attitude on the issue. He uses non-exclusive *we* to indicate his belief as a part of the commonly spread ideology.

Even though the distribution of attitude markers is practically the same across varieties, Ukrainian subcorpus has a number of peculiarities that are worth mentioning. First, in the Ukrainian opinion articles, the authors have a smaller number of unique attitude markers. By this I mean that the words that are quite commonly used in British and American varieties are absent in Ukrainian subcorpus. Such words as *true*, *know*, *regret* were not found.

Second, Ukrainian authors prefer to use either passive or impersonal construction. I have made this point before concerning other types of metadiscourse, but having encountered this phenomenon so many times I believe that this is a typical pattern for Ukrainian writing:

***It is no surprise** that immediately after news of President Zelenskyy’s decree, some experts recalled that Ukrainian personal data protection legislation has been in*

place for a long time but actually has relatively little in common with contemporary realities [92].

With the clause *It is no surprise that* the author doesn't just express the general consequence of the action, he also shows his attitude, but in a very indirect form.

3.3.4. Self-mentions

This category of metadiscourse is best identified when searching for personal pronouns and their oblique forms, as for example, *I, me, we, our* etc.

Opinion articles are replete with those kinds of pronouns, however, the main problem in this case is separating metadiscursive *I* from *I* used in the propositional content. Let's look at the example below:

*After a year of stay-at-home orders in Los Angeles, **I** wasn't surprised that my habits took a notable turn for the odd **I**'ve taken up rock tumbling and rewatched every Harrison Ford thriller. But what **I** could not see coming was the gradual return of my long-lost Southern accent* [123].

In this paragraph the author uses *I* three times, however, all three instances refer to the propositional content, i.e., to the real world. Those personal pronouns here are used to talk about the author's personal experience, it is a part of the story, a narration that is used to illustrate the point, but not the comment on the presented issue.

Interestingly, British newspapers usually use self-mentions as a part of the narration. American variety, has instances, however few, when *I* is used in metadiscursive meaning:

*In particular, there is a sense — a strictly limited sense, **as I'll explain**, but real nonetheless — in which the legislation, in addition to reviving the notion of government as the solution, not the problem, also ends the “end of welfare as we know it.”* [114]

The type of metadiscourse as presented above is quite common in research articles as many studies have proven. Here the author comments on his own text, referring to the notions that will be described further.

The interesting type of self-mention was identified in the course of qualitative analysis when looking at the broader context of one of the metadiscourse category. First, let me introduce the paragraph and then I'll explain its peculiarities.

We should not be a Hawk or a Dove on China, but we should be China Realists.

***The Realist says** that, like it or not, China is now a powerful strategic adversary of the West.*

*At the same time, **says the Realist**, we have to prevent the influence of Chinese money and presence around the world from corroding the essential attributes of democracy by suppressing dissent.*

*Ah, says the Hawk, this is like a new Cold War then? We talk to them about arms control but otherwise it becomes a wholly confrontational relationship? No, **the Realist has to explain** [103].*

The author here presents two different views on China, one – antagonistic (*the Hawk*), and one realistic (*the Realist*). It is clear that the author himself is the proponent of the realistic view, and he quite forcefully inserts himself in the text. However, he does not use explicit metadiscourse markers that conventionally indicate self-mention. At the same time, the reader, just like the researcher can clearly see that this is the metalinguistic instance of author-reader interaction.

3.3.5. Engagement markers

Engagement markers is the last category in the interactional metadiscourse. By using those the author directly involves readers in the text, appealing to the shared knowledge and stimulating critical thinking and dialog.

Engagement markers is among the most common metadiscursive strategies used by the authors across varieties. The following table demonstrates it:

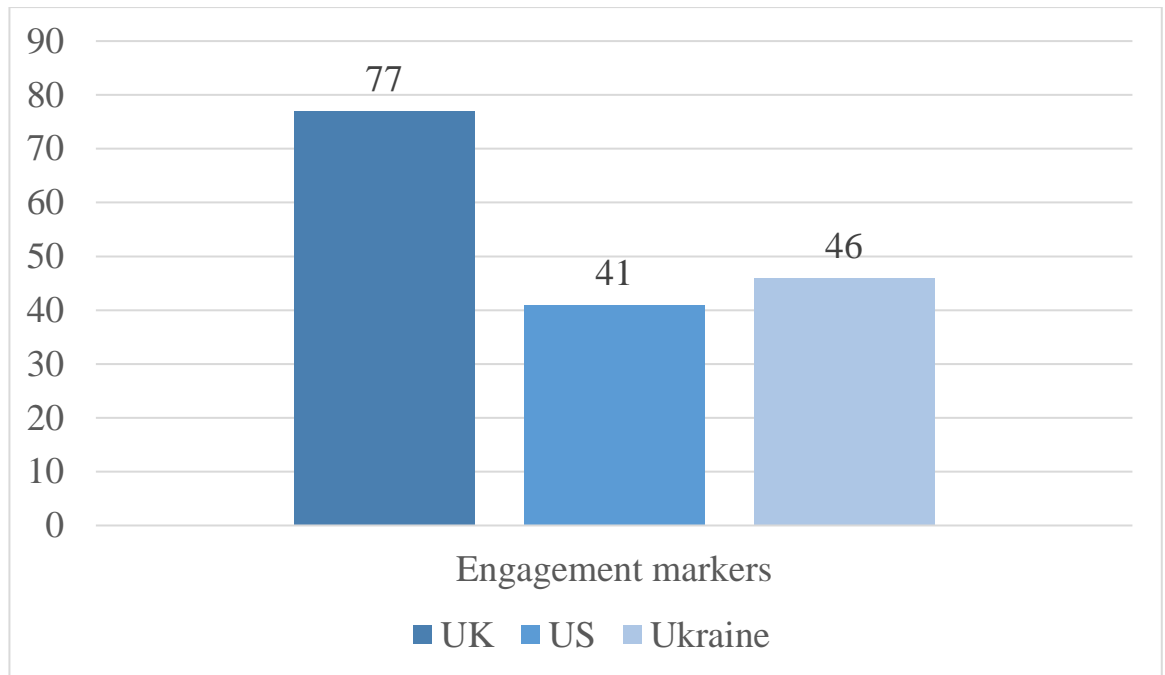


Table 12. Engagement markers

The interesting point here is that while American and Ukrainian opinion articles have comparably the same distribution of engagement markers, British English uses a lot more of those.

The most common ways to engage the reader in the interaction is using questions, directly addressing the reader, so the words that were searched for in the corpus are *you*, *remember*, *hold on*, *reader* and rhetorical questions.

The most common among all three varieties were the rhetorical questions, and in British opinion articles they are present in every article and often there are more than one question per article, as in the example below:

What do we think of when we think about Europe? Culture, cuisine – Brigitte Bardot, Gina Lollobrigida? Getting lucky with a sexy student on an Erasmus exchange? No one could deny that these wonderful things exist and that they're a joy to the world. [81]

British English is also the only variety that engages the readers by mentioning them:

If any readers are having doubts about the wisdom of getting the Oxford/AstraZeneca, I'll say to you exactly what I just said to my wife – have it [161].

Even though it is not the direct address, the author does address the readers, particularly those who are having doubts concerning vaccination.

Engagement markers, just like attitude markers often have author's self-mentions:

Let me remind you that Poland and Lithuania have been discussing for several years the responsibility of local Nazi collaborators for participating in the Holocaust, and these discussions are difficult.

The phrase let me remind you is the classic example of an engagement marker and an explicit interaction between the author and the reader, as it uses personal pronouns to initiate the dialogue.

CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER 2

In the chapter I have analyzed the main types of metadiscourse markers and presented their usage across three different varieties. The most abundant in the usage of metadiscourse is American opinion articles with British opinion articles employing slightly smaller number of those, 603 and 595 respectively. Ukrainian authors of opinion articles use significantly less metadiscourse markers – 569.

Across the categories, the discrepancies in the usage of transitions, frame markers, evidentials, hedges and engagement markers stand out the most.

In British and American varieties transitions are used more than by Ukrainian authors, which contributes to native varieties having more smooth and coherent flow of the events. Evidentials are extremely popular among the American authors, while the speakers of British English use disproportionately large number of hedges and engagement markers, most of which are rhetorical questions.

Among syntactic peculiarities of the use of metadiscourse markers I have observed that the writers of the Ukrainian opinion articles prefer to use impersonal forms and passive constructions. Ukrainian variety is also the only one where the overwhelming number of frame markers was used – 33 tokens (compare – 10 and 12 tokens in British and American variety respectively).

CHAPTER 3. METADISCOURSE MARKERS IN OPINION ARTICLES

This chapter explores those functions, proposes clear classification of these functions and provides examples that illustrate the point I'm making. The next point in the chapter is dedicated to the exploration of the structure of an opinion article and which discourse functions of metadiscourse are prevalent in at which stage. The chapter concludes with the description of the survey of the reader engagement. The results of the survey are explained and the role of metadiscourse on reader is defined.

3.1. Identifying discourse functions of metadiscourse

Despite the preponderance of works on the topic, there are various approaches to how to discern the discourse functions that metadiscourse performs. While Hyland suggests that his classification of the metadiscourse markers inherently illustrates the discourse function those markers perform, Ädel takes a more nuanced approach. However, both of those, just like classifications by Vasilyeva, Vande Kopple, Perez-Llantada and others [68; 69; 52] look into the discourse functions performed by metadiscourse markers in scientific articles or research abstract. Classification that I suggest draws on those approaches and presents a coherent set of categories that can be identified in the data. The classification is also specifically designed to describe the discourse functions of metadiscourse in opinion articles.

First of all, the classification has two main groups – text-oriented and participant-oriented functions. Text-oriented functions of metadiscourse are primarily concerned with topic and content. They help navigating and structuring the text, adding strength to the argument or weakening it. Participant-oriented functions are aimed at engaging the reader or explicitly expressing author's opinions. The classification is best illustrated by the following table:

Text-oriented functions	Defining
	Focusing
	Concluding
	Exemplifying
	Adding

	Contradicting
	Validating
	Strengthening
	Weakening
Participant-oriented functions	Clarifying
	Appealing to the Reader
	Aligning with the reader
	Reminding
	Eliciting critical thinking

Table 13. Discourse Functions of metadiscourse

Now, the functions will be described in detail further in the chapter by explaining which discourse functions are performed by which metadiscourse markers and providing the examples to each.

3.1.1. Text-oriented functions of metadiscourse

One of the functions that was identified in the course of the research is *Defining*. This function has been identified by the researchers before and considering the fact that the majority of the research in the area concerns research articles, it's no wonder.

Defining is one of the central discourse functions that can be performed by metadiscourse in a scientific text. It is not as common in a research papers however the authors still use it to explain the notion that is pertinent to the topic they're arguing on.

This function is realized by the use of code glosses. As it was mentioned before, code glosses are the markers that supply additional information to the reader to help their understanding of the content. The following example illustrates the use of code gloss in a defining function:

***In fact**, in the British population of 65 million people, **we'd** expect to see several cases of blood clots every single day, in people who have never suffered from them before. **This is known as** the "background amount" and, **generally**, it will disproportionately affect the older generation [161].*

The above example contains four instances of metadiscourse markers, however for now let's concentrate on the phrase *this is known as*. Here the author defines what the "background amount" is. The definition here is done by means of cataphoric reference and yet it clearly defines the concept the author is talking about. The other metadiscourse markers that are present in the paragraph above are a booster (*in fact*), an attitude marker with a self-mention (*we'd expect*) and a hedge (*generally*). The discourse functions that they perform will be discussed further in the chapter.

There is another point that I have to make before going into explaining the next discourse function. **Defining** is not the only discourse function that is performed by employing code glosses, but the more detailed look into this will be presented when I will be discussing the functions of **Exemplifying** and **Clarifying**.

Another function that was frequently encountered in the corpus is **Focusing**. This discourse function is included in Ädel's and Perez-Llantada's classification [54]. In their models this function is however preceded by the function of **Introducing**. This discourse function has not been encountered in opinion articles. **Focusing** however is quite common.

Focusing is the type of discourse function that serves as a reminder for the reader of what has been said before, or more frequently a literal focusing on the issues presented. After the author presents their thesis in the opening paragraph, they usually go into more detail to explain it and present the arguments to support it:

Both centres have a similarly global, buccaneering approach to finance.... It would be simple to recreate that partnership. Like how?

For starters, British and Dutch regulators could start working together to agree common rules and standards....

Next, and perhaps more importantly, the City's banks, asset managers, insurers, lawyers and accountants, could just informally agree among themselves that Amsterdam would be their EU outpost... [117]

The paragraph above is a great illustration of how the discourse function of **Focusing** is performed in an opinion article. By starting with a proposition that is expressed by the sentence and the rhetorical question as a metadiscourse component,

the author then proceeds to go into detail of what can be done to illustrate their point. He does that by employing such frame markers as *for starters* and *next*.

Another function that is performed by frame markers is **Concluding**. Just like with the frame markers of this subtype, this instance of discourse function is not very frequent in opinion articles. It is present nevertheless:

To conclude, vaccines which are now administered both in the EU and in Ukraine are not yet approved definitively by respective medical authorities and are marketed due to medical emergency provisions [75].

The frame marker *to conclude* is used at the end of the article to show the results of the author's logical thinking and underscore their point.

Exemplifying is another discourse function that is performed with the help of code glosses. This function is visible when the author elaborates on the point by providing concrete examples from the world. It is different from **Defining** that provides the explanation of the term, not the way it manifests. Let's look at the following examples:

(1) **Usually**, questions about possibly excessive government entanglements with religion have involved governments somehow endorsing or otherwise promoting religion (***e.g.***, crèches on public property, or prayers at public events) [159].

(2) **Essentially**, the precautionary principle is an element of **what we would once have called** risk management but without the risk, which must be almost entirely removed [111].

Examples (1) is different from (2) in that it explains the notion by providing concrete instances to the reference in the material world. In example (2) the explanation is done by means of another abstract idea, with reference to the textbook definition.

Another discourse function that was identified in the course of the research is that of **Adding**. As the name explicitly indicates, this function is used when the author expands on the information initially provided. The following paragraph exemplifies this function:

*But the American Rescue Plan Act, closely following proposals from Senator Michael Bennet, reinstates significant aid for children. **Moreover**, unlike most of the act's provisions, this change (like enhanced Obamacare subsidies) is intended to outlast the current crisis [114].*

Here **Adding** is done by using transition *moreover*. Another, quite obvious way to perform this function in the text is using the transition *in addition*, like in the following example:

Besides, OMV Petrom has already received the right to explore and produce hydrocarbons on the Black Sea shelf of Georgia and Bulgaria.

***In addition**, back in 2012, the Romanian company together with the U.S.-based ExxonMobil discovered a large gas field 170 km off the coast of Romania on the Neptune block [130].*

In both examples, the transition serves as a metadiscourse marker to indicate the continuation of the argument. The arguments themselves belong to the real world, however, that continuation is inherent in the text itself.

Another function that is commonly performed by transitions is **Contradicting**. Just like with **Adding**, the transitions are used between the two arguments referring to the real world. However, when the function of contradicting is performed, the second argument presents the opposite perspective, not the supportive one:

*All this sounds promising. **However**, the initial innovations of the incoming administration in the taxation sphere leave considerable room for doubt [93].*

The interesting example above is a good illustration of the discourse function of **Contradicting**. The transition *however* presents contradiction between the two sentences. While in the first sentence the argument about the policy “*sounds promising*”, in the second sentence that is prefaced with the discourse marker we can see such words as “*leave considerable room for doubt*”. The second sentence clearly presents the author’s view that is contradictory to the promising expectations of the government.

One of the major text-oriented functions in opinion articles is **Validating** the claim. To ascertain that the words in the text are in fact to be believed and that they belong to the credible source the author will use evidentials:

*The government is very keen to show us it has already learnt lessons; delaying the official inquiry into its handling of the pandemic gives it more time to convince us on this front, and potentially dilutes the investigation's impact. Yesterday's review of foreign policy **announced** the creation of a "situation centre" at the heart of government, aimed at "improving our use of data and our ability to anticipate and respond to future crises."* [102].

The evidential *announced* refers to the review of foreign policy by the US government, the sentence as a whole illustrates the point the author is making in the previous sentence about the way the government handled the pandemic and the dubious way forward. In such way the function of **Validating** is performed.

The last two text-oriented discourse functions that I have identified in the opinion articles are **Strengthening** and **Weakening**. Those functions are performed by boosters and hedges respectively.

The discourse function of **Strengthening** adds power and credibility to the argument. Unlike **Validating** that adds credibility by referring to the words of the external sources, **Strengthening** presupposes the author's own opinion:

*The artificial currency cannot however simply be created except by the "miners" with supply being controlled by the means of production from digitally secure "mines" (secured by blockchain technology, which marks every transaction). **In fact** there is a fixed supply of 21 million bitcoins* [84].

The second sentence starts with the booster *in fact*, that supports the argument about the mining of Bitcoin. The sentence doesn't give the examples, it does however add the to the author's argument. Quite often the functions of **Adding** and **Strengthening** appear together, or rather it would be wise to say that by strengthening the argument author adds to it, and vice versa.

Weakening of the argument happens when the author instead of simply stating the fact or presenting their opinion employs hedges in their claim. By employing

hedges, the author might open up the floor for doubts as the reader doesn't perceive them as having a strong stance. This is illustrated by the following paragraph:

*There **may** be ways to change that — but **probably** not without spending lots of taxpayer money, **perhaps** through a proposal by Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) for a 10-year, \$392 billion program to subsidize trade-ins of older gas-powered vehicles for plug-ins [115].*

In the paragraph there are three hedges. All of them make the author's claim softer and not so resolute. The reader has the impression that the author just puts forward only one of the possible scenarios.

3.1.2. Participant-oriented functions of metadiscourse

Another major category among the discourse functions of metadiscourse is participant-oriented function. The primary distinction of those functions from text-oriented functions is that they are at the core of writer-reader interaction in the text. Those functions are the way for the authors to connect with their readers, address them and make them more engaged in the discourse.

The best way to explain the difference between those two categories is by looking at the function of *Clarifying*. *Clarifying* is another function that is realized by employing code glosses. But unlike *Defining* or *Exemplifying* it aims at the reader, not at the text. Let's look at the three following examples:

- (1) *Public order offences, meanwhile, include the charge of "incitement", **defined** as any attempt "to influence public opinion ... in a manner which may harm public peace or public order" [99].*
- (2) *Moreover, in Ukraine Ukrainian journalists still get information mainly from the international media and from scientific sources, **such as for instance** The Lancet journal [75].*
- (3) *Since people could never judge for themselves what risks were attached to certain activities, someone would have to do it for them, **namely** the state [111].*

All of the three paragraphs employ the same type of metadiscourse markers – code glosses. Some might even say that they are very similar to each other. However, by looking more carefully, we can see the difference. In the example (1) the author clearly presents the definition of the word “*incitement*”, in the general abstract terms; example (2) provides the explanation by giving the examples from the real world. Example (3) even though similar to the example (2) in that it presents the information from the real world outside of the text, example (3) is about adding the information, thinking about the reader, explaining the perspective. Example (3) contains more implicit meaning than example (2).

One of the most interesting functions of metadiscourse is *Appealing to the Reader*. This is usually done by using attitude markers. The appeal is mostly done by addressing the emotions of the reader or their current state of mind:

*If, earlier, only miniature offshore states found themselves placed on such lists, now we are also seeing the inclusion of far larger and more competitive global economies. **It is worth pausing** to explore why this might be an alarming trend [91].*

The paragraph illustrates how the author presents the argument in the first sentence, and then the next sentence starts with a metadiscursive phrase *It is worth pausing to explore* to engage the reader in the statistics, ask him a question. In this way the author initiates a dialogue.

Also, this function is the way for the author to introduce their own perspective and convince the reader of to at least consider the possibility of another point of view.

Very similar to the function *Appealing to the Reader* of but perhaps more interesting is the function of *Aligning with the reader*. This function is mainly performed by the use of metadiscursive self-mentions. When the author uses *we* or the phrases of similar kind, he takes the perspective of the reader, presenting it as the perspective of both reader and the writer:

*When the time comes and Biden does take questions in a formal news conference setting, I hope reporters make good use of their time to ask thoughtful, insightful, realistic questions that actually matter to the American people. Otherwise, it's just theater, and **I think we've** all had more than enough of that.[76]*

The reader in mind of the author of the previous paragraph is the American people. And discussing Biden's unwillingness to have a press-conference, the author assumes that the readers of the article have the same view on this issue.

The two last functions that were identified in the course of the research are **Reminding** and **Eliciting critical thinking**. Both of them are performed by rhetorical questions. Rhetorical questions are especially common in opinion articles and thus they perform the variety of functions.

Eliciting critical thinking is one of the most common functions performed by the rhetorical questions. One might even say that this is the inherent property of this rhetoric device. However, it is not always the case. Sometimes, authors answer the questions that they have posed throughout the article and sometimes they just leave the readers hanging. Let's look at the following examples:

- (1) *What could this mean for Ukraine? The first and most obvious answer is that the country will witness the steady outflow of technical experts and entrepreneurial innovators [95].*
- (2) *Everything great about Europe existed long before the EU; it's telling that their theme tune Ode to Joy was composed by Beethoven in 1824. Couldn't this brave new EU world produce a new one? [81]*

In the first example the author answers the question right away in the next sentence, while the second example illustrates how the author makes the reader find the answer for themselves. Interestingly, the first instance usually occurs in the beginning of the article, while the second – in the end. The reason for that will be explained in the next subpoint in the chapter.

The last function identified is the function of **Reminding**. While also performed with the help of the rhetorical questions, the author may also use transitions or frame markers to highlight his point:

It's hardly a sophisticated argument. But when is it? Instead of dialogue, we have memes and putdowns and dismissals of "Boomer" and "Karen" and "gammon".... [118]

The author doesn't simply remind the reader of what is happening by asking the question. The question serves as a pretext for the further explanations.

3.2. Realization of functions throughout the opinion article

Following Van Dijk's classification, I looked at the opinion articles in my corpus and identified which discourse functions of metadiscourse are performed throughout those articles. By skimming through the articles, I have identified which categories are present in the opinion articles, their distribution and also, functions that are the most prominent across those categories.

The first category in van Dijk's classification is Summary. This is the way for the author's to briefly present what the article will be about and characterize the main points that will be touched upon.

Summary has two main sections – Headline and Lead. In the Headline there are no metadiscourse markers generally. The only metadiscursive elements there are rhetorical questions, however they are scarce. The distribution of rhetorical questions in Headlines generally reflects their distribution throughout the three subcorpora: British English has 4 headlines with rhetorical questions, while Ukrainian and American have only 1 each. This proportion is expected as British English showed a higher frequency of engagement markers, mainly rhetorical questions at the very beginning. However, let's take a close look at the British headlines as not all of them are purely metadiscursive engagement markers:

- (1) *People with long Covid urgently need help. Why can't we access it?* [104]
- (2) *What happens if we're not interested in going to the shops when they reopen?*
[77]
- (3) *How can Westminster save the UK when it doesn't understand what unionism is?* [112]
- (4) *Will more data really lead to better government decision-making?* [102]

Among the examples, two headlines are metadiscursive while the other two are simply engaging the reader by presenting the author's thesis in the form of question. Even though Hyland argues that posing a question in the text is already a

metadiscursive attempt of the author to communicate with the reader, the Headlines above demonstrate the opposite.

Examples (1) and (3) are metadiscursive as they comment implicitly on the already given information. That is, the readers are already given the information concerning the contents of the article either in the sentence before the question as in the example (1) or the question itself is constructed in such a way that the main idea is to criticize or make readers think more deeply about the issue as in example (3). The information presented in those headlines is not new, this is the authors way to talk to the reader. The discourse function that is realized through the use of rhetorical questions here is Eliciting critical thinking.

Conversely, examples (2) and (4) are not aimed at making reader think critically. They look more as an inquiry or an FAQ section on a website. That is why I argue that those headlines are not metadiscursive at all.

Van Dijk also posits that subheadline is the part of the Headline category. However, it is worth noting that subheadline is present only in the British newspapers, the Ukrainian and American varieties omit this subcategory. In Ukrainian opinion articles the main headline is usually followed by the lead, where the authors state their opinion.

In the variety where the subheadline is present, the results were not unexpected. There are very few metadiscourse markers present in the category of subheadline. Not surprisingly, there was one instance of rhetorical question, and five instances of using transition markers to present the opposing argument:

*Civil cases lost by other banks only led to financial penalties, **but** the verdict here may hit its reputation [136].*

In the paragraph above, the transition marker *but* serves as a device to present the opposing view on the issue and thus the discourse function that is being realized here is that of Contradicting.

Another essential category of the Summary is called the Lead. In here authors briefly outline what the article will be about. In opinion articles, this is also the category where the author explicitly states his view on the issue and what kind of position they

are taking. That is why the two most common functions in the Lead are Strengthening and Contradicting.

When the author agrees with the prevailing discourse in the society, the first thing they mention is that view and then there is typically a booster that strengthens this argument:

*As the Beijing Olympic Games approach, **it is increasingly clear** that China, under the control of the Chinese Communist Party does not deserve an Olympic showcase [139].*

The clause *it is increasingly clear* contains a booster that expresses author's opinion on the issue. That is why the function that is performed here is Strengthening.

Opposite to this is the function of Contradicting. It is usually performed with the help of transition, as in the example below:

*The relief bill President Biden just signed is breathtaking in its scope. **Yet** conservative opposition was remarkably limp [114].*

Sometimes the authors appeal to the reader by aligning their perspectives and reminding of the current discourse in the country:

***I** don't understand why the patriarchy let women have makeup. It took most of the good stuff; **why would it let us have the sparkle?** [98].*

The metadiscourse markers that are used here are self-mention and rhetorical question. By explicitly putting herself in the story, the author does not simply state her opinion, but she also presumes that the reader holds the same opinion. This is how the function of Aligning with the reader is realized. The rhetorical question here performs the function of Reminding.

The next category that van Dijk identifies in his superstructures of the news is Main Events. This category is indispensable in news coverage. In opinion articles it is also present, however it does not take too much space in comparison with other categories. Another peculiarity of the main event is that it should be comparatively "new". However, "new" is quite a vague category in modern political climate. Thus, almost every other article in every variety talks about Covid and we've had pandemic for more than a year already. Britain is preoccupied with Brexit that has been dragging

for years, while Americans are still writing about the so-called “cancel culture”. The Ukrainian authors thoroughly engage in the exploring relationship with Russia and the EU. None of this is new, however there are some developments that are made in the context of these topics. The main event is usually mentioned at the beginning, and considering the complexity of the topics that are covered, it is tightly intertwined with the category of Background.

When main event is usually presented, the authors except for this may define certain terms in relation to the situation or as it often happens in the American opinion articles may validate the claim that they’re making by referring to the words of the authorial figure:

Joe Biden’s big virus relief plan is about to become law. And the Senate has confirmed Merrick Garland as attorney general.

*“The president and his team must be thrilled that Senate Republicans are proving to be more fair and more principled on personnel matters than the Democratic minority’s behavior just four years ago,” **said** Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell just before the Garland vote [86].*

In the paragraph above the main event is about confirming an attorney general and Biden’s relief plan. When the event is presented, no metadiscourse markers are used. However, to sound more credible and to ensure the validity of event evidentials are used. In here, evidential is performing the function of Validating.

The category of Background is tightly intertwined with the category of Main Events, sometimes it is hard to distinguish between those two categories. This could be due to the fact that the majority of opinion articles focus on consequences and comments of the event, not its description. When the description for the event is provided, it is usually quite concise and contains only factual information.

Among most common usages of metadiscourse markers when presenting background information is employing engagement markers. Those are usually rhetorical questions or the verbs directed at the reader:

*If you want to understand the impact of a Corbyn government on ordinary people, **remember** that under this government he has voted AGAINST tax cuts worth £7,800 for people on modest incomes [110].*

In the article from which the paragraph above is taken, the author, namely Boris Johnson, argues the benefits of Brexit. And, of course, as a politician he criticizes the previous administration. He needs to prove his point and to do that Johnson refers to the past events. By providing this information he forms a background against which his argument is more convincing.

In order to make the reader more engaged in the written interaction of an opinion article, he uses engagement marker *remember* that is inherently directed at the other participant of the interaction. Here, the engagement marker performs the function of Reminding.

The function of Reminding can also be performed by rhetorical questions:

*While **we** have become accustomed to the fact that one needs to undergo fingerprinting in order to obtain a passport (something only previously required by those who had committed a crime), **we** have stopped noticing the widespread use of surveillance cameras. With their ubiquitous use, however, the big question remains. **Have we** actually become any safer? [94].*

In the paragraph above the author refers to the general state of affair in the country, asking the reader to look around and look back to assess the situation. In here also self-mentions are employed to make the reader feel more included in discourse.

Based on my observations, metadiscourse markers are more prevalent in the categories of Consequences and Comments.

Even though van Dijk states that the category of consequences is optional in news discourse, it is always present in opinion articles. Quite often authors not simply present the consequences of the event that is described but rather they model possible outcomes. The prevailing discourse functions in this section are Focusing, Adding and Strengthening.

The function of Focusing is primarily realized with the help of frame markers that help the reader to organize and orient themselves in the text. Even though the

discourse function of Focusing in the category of Consequences is common across all three varieties, it is especially prevalent in the American English:

*What's ahead is a three-step process to get regional and international buy-in. **First**, the United Nations is expected to convene a quick meeting of foreign ministers — probably from the United States, Russia, China, Pakistan, India and Iran. This group would give its blessing to cease-fire negotiations and political transition talks between the Afghan parties.*

***Next** would be a round of talks in Moscow, starting March 18, organized by Zamir Kabulov, Russia's special envoy to Afghanistan. He would convene what the Russians call the "enlarged troika" group, which includes Russia, China, the United States, Pakistan and Iran.*

***The last round** envisaged by Blinken would be meetings in Turkey, perhaps beginning in early April, between Taliban and Kabul government representatives [106].*

Here the author discusses the peculiarities of Biden's international politics. After he presented the main event and general intentions of the president, the author goes into explaining how those intentions will influence the international community and which steps need to be taken.

The next widely spread discourse function in the category of consequences is Adding. The purpose of employing metadiscourse markers to realize this function could serve double purpose. On the one hand it indeed adds to the argument, presenting a clearer and more coherent view. On the other, it also adds strength to the argument:

*In particular, there is a sense — a strictly limited sense, as I'll explain, but real nonetheless — in which the legislation, **in addition** to reviving the notion of government as the solution, not the problem, also ends the "end of welfare as we know it." [114]*

While in the paragraph above the functions of Adding and Strengthening are performed simultaneously by using transition, quite often the function of Strengthening is performed separately. In this case, boosters are used:

*But when you raise the issue of the Crimea, Donbas, or human rights violation and Navalny's arrest, be ready for a portion of thick slop pouring on your head. **In fact**, it is what the EU's chief diplomat Joseph Borrell felt [143].*

The booster *in fact* is used in the beginning of the sentence to go into more detail and to add to the argument presented in the previous sentence.

The last category that van Dijk identifies is the category of Comments. This category is present in every opinion article analyzed. I would rather say that this category is inherent in opinion articles.

The category of Comments is also abundant in participant-oriented discourse functions. The most common functions that were identified in this category are Appealing to the reader, Aligning with the reader and Focusing.

Focusing is the only text-oriented discourse function that is widespread in the category of comments. That could be due to the fact that in the category of Comments authors may preset their own solutions to the situation. In such case, again the function of Focusing could be used, especially if they discuss a complex issue:

In order to have civil service work like a clock and serve citizens, it is essential not only to root out corruption and excessive bureaucracy but also to make the state a sought-after and competitive employer.

The latter requires three things.

Firstly, *it requires open and fair merit-based recruitment to civil service, offering equal opportunities to all citizens and ensuring that best talent wins. Recently, Parliament endorsed the bill reinstating competitions temporarily suspended due to COVID-19.*

Secondly, *there should be fair pay linked to concrete performance results and compatible with the market. The government has launched a civil service salary reform based on job classification, with the initial pilot project underway.*

Finally, *a new civil service culture needs to be nurtured and instilled, with modern rules guiding performance, opportunities for learning and professional development, spirit of leadership, mutual respect, embrace of innovation and focus on serving citizens [125].*

The paragraphs above illustrate how Focusing usually works in an opinion article, but it is also interesting for us as it is a common way for authors to present their opinions on the issue. The category of Comments is disseminated in every part of the opinion article, as any argument that is being presented, any reference that is being made is chosen by the author of the article intentionally.

The next most common function in the category of comments is Appealing to the reader:

*After a two-decade war, the mullahs may disagree. **It is important** that our 20-year commitment of billions of dollars and thousands of casualties not be squandered in pursuit of a false peace [128].*

By starting the sentence with a clause *It is important*, the author appeals to readers, making an attempt to convince them of the peace in Afghanistan should be given more consideration and shouldn't be rushed.

Quite similar to this function is the discourse Function of Aligning with the reader. This function is mainly performed by the use of metadiscursive self-mentions. When using *I* or *we*, the author includes his perspective in the discursive interaction with the reader in writing:

*With animosity **our** first language, there are few matters on which **we** are unable to fall out. Last week's totem of inter-age discord, Meghan Markle, was simply another incarnation of the same, by now endless, argument... [118].*

The author of the article talks about the divide that on her opinion is present in modern society – the generation gap. By using *our* and *we* she likely intentionally says that the reader is of the same opinion. In fact, she doesn't allow the reader to have another opinion.

3.3. Persuasive Effect in opinion Articles

This subsection is dedicated to measuring reader engagement in opinion articles by native and non-native speakers of English. First, I will describe the design of the questionnaire. Then I will present the results of the survey.

3.3.1. Questionnaire design

The use of metadiscourse markers has been linked with the reader engagement and persuasion. To measure whether the number of metadiscourse markers in the text influences the way the reader is engaged in the text and also how persuaded they are by the written piece, I have decided to conduct a survey. The study of similar kind was conducted by Dafouz-Milne [23]. She was exploring the persuasive effect of metadiscourse, comparing English and Spanish editorials.

For the survey I have chosen four text – two of them from the subcorpus of the native variety and the other two from the subcorpus of Ukrainian opinion articles. One of the texts from the native variety had a high occurrence of metadiscourse markers, another – low occurrence of metadiscourse markers. The texts from the non-native variety have been chosen according to the same principle.

The opinion articles in my research have been thematically divided into five main topics: International Affairs, Covid, Internal Problems, Culture and Economy. Even though the articles may fall under the same thematic orientation, their content is quite different. For example, in the British subcorpus the main news concerning International Affairs talk about Brexit and the relationship in the EU, in the American subcorpus within the scope of this topic the authors primarily discuss Biden's politics towards the war in Afghanistan; in the Ukrainian subcorpus, predictably, this niche is occupied by the relations with Russia. The same concerns Culture, Economy and Internal Problems as every country faces unique challenges right now which is reflected by their media and news discourse.

Considering all those factors, the only topic that could appeal to the large audience was Covid. I originally had some reservations about using it as for the most part people are fed up with the news about the pandemic and quite tired with taking surveys about the same issue. However, this topic is inherently less biased and oriented towards larger audiences than all the others. Of course, the opinion articles within this theme also contain notions and realia that are relevant to their target audiences, i.e., citizens of the country in which newspapers are being issued.

The next issue that I encountered in designing the questionnaire is the size of the texts. Each text is approximately 700-800 words long. If I had asked the respondents to rate the texts in an order that they are presented in the questionnaire, the last text would likely have the lowest score in terms of engagement, regardless of the criteria of measuring that engagement. That is why, I opted for creating three focus groups with each receiving different sets of text to rate in terms of engagement:

1. A text from a native variety with high frequency of metadiscourse occurrence and a text from a native variety with low frequency of metadiscourse occurrence
2. A text from a native variety with high frequency of metadiscourse occurrence and a text from a non-native variety with high frequency of metadiscourse occurrence
3. A text from a native variety with high frequency of metadiscourse occurrence and a text from a non-native variety with low frequency of metadiscourse occurrence

The respondents were asked to rate the text according to two parameters answering the following questions:

- How engaging the text is?
- How persuasive the text is?

For each question there was a scale from 1 (“*not interesting at all*” for the engagement parameter and “*not convinced*” for the persuasion parameter) to 5 (“*couldn't stop reading*” for the engagement parameter and “*completely convinced*” for the persuasion parameter) for the readers to rate their experiences with the text.

The similar study conducted by Dafouz-Milne (2008) where she loosely adapted Connor [18] and Connor and Lauer’s [19] model for persuasive writing and contained three basic criteria for evaluating persuasive effect. Those criteria are rational appeals, credibility appeals and affective appeals [23, p.101].

Rational appeals are logical lines of reasoning. Those arguments based on the structure of reality, offering argumentation by example, illustration and model, and

analogy and metaphor. This category also contains comparisons, facts and statistics, and cause and effect examples.

Credibility appeals include the writer's personal experience, knowledge of the subject, and awareness of the audience's values. This is usually manifested by the use of personal pronouns and personal references to build a credible textual persona, an author that the reader can trust.

Affective appeals include the use of concrete and charged language, of vivid pictures, and of metaphors to evoke emotion and sentiment in the audience.

Based on this data, Dafouz-Milne created descriptors in her survey to help the readers rate the text on the scale of persuasiveness from 1 to 5. In my study I decided to avoid using the descriptors as they are quite lengthy and require the reader to pay too much attention to what the information was presented and how it was done. When reading an opinion articles, readers don't usually bother with such questions, unless of course they are the researchers in linguistics or discourse analysis.

The main goal of my questionnaire was to determine the persuasive effect of the opinion articles and whether it is indeed so dependent on the metadiscourse markers use as the previous researchers have claimed to be the case in academic discourse. Therefore, instead of descriptors I added another question with the possibility of multiple choice so that the readers can decide for themselves after reading both texts what were the main factors that influenced their decisions in rating the text.

The first three categories were based on the same categories that Dafouz-Milne used, that is rational appeal, credibility appeal and affective appeal, however, as the majority of my respondents are not the experts in linguistics and/or rhetoric I rephrased some words, so that the three choices for the main influencing factors were:

- Logical appeal
- Emotional appeal
- Author's knowledge of the topic.

Next, I wanted to check whether the other factors played any significant role in respondents' answers, so based on the three levels of linguistics analysis and loosely

based on van Dijk's classification of microstructure I have also included the following options for the readers to choose from:

- Author's word choices (corresponding to semantics in grammatic level of analysis in van Dijk);
- Organization and structure (corresponding to syntax in grammatic level of analysis in van Dijk);
- Rhetorical devices (corresponding to rhetoric in van Dijk's classification of macrostructures).

I added one more option that I was concerned might influence the engagement of the readers – The length of the text.

The full questionnaire sample with questions and grading scale is available in the Appendix 2.

The questionnaire was disseminated through various WhatsApp chats and Facebook groups of my peers, so respondents' age is in range from approximately 20 to 26-27 years old. All of them are university students from various backgrounds both academically and ethnically.

All in all, there were 12 respondents for each focus group, in each group 6 native speakers and 6 non-native speakers of English, their level of English was self-reported as proficient.

3.3.2. Reader engagement

Since the readers have been rating the text across various parameters, for the objective and clear representation of the results I would like to discuss those parameters separately.

The two main parameters that the readers were rating the texts on were engagement and persuasiveness of the text. The main idea of all four text was a discussion on vaccination – whether it is worth it or not or if the readers should do it if given the opportunity.

Concerning the parameter of *persuasion*, the results don't differ much in terms of nationality and variety, except for one interesting thing. Native speakers rate the

persuasiveness of texts native and non-native varieties generally to be 3 or 2, while the persuasiveness of the non-native varieties is rated at 3 or 4. Non-native speakers rate persuasiveness of the native text to be 4, while the persuasiveness of the non-native text is rated overwhelmingly to be 3.

From the results above it can be seen that the speakers of their own variety tend to rate the persuasiveness of the text to be lower than the persuasiveness of the variety that is not native to them. I argue that this could be due to the fact that the prevailing discourse in their country has been already established and promulgated by either social media or newspapers. The majority of people already have a clear stance on the issue of vaccination and thus the opinion articles would have little to no effect on them regarding changing their opinion on the issue. On the other hand, there is a small likelihood that the speakers of those varieties were exposed to the narratives common in the articles in the other countries, especially Ukraine. Thus, this could be the reason why native speakers of English rated Ukrainian articles to higher on the scale of persuasiveness – they were genuinely interested in the discourse as it was something different from what they usually hear every day.

The same logic could be applied to the Ukrainian speakers. Generally, the Ukrainians are not particularly involved in British politics that's why, not knowing the prevailing narratives of the country, they considered the two texts that were presented to them to be convincing enough and rated them higher than the Ukrainian texts, the context of which is well known to them. Another factor that could have influenced their decision is the inherent bias in regarding native speakers of English as those who know better and write better. Even though I tried to minimize the influence of such bias by removing the name of the author and the source of the publication, the content of the articles might have given away which variety is the native one, and, for the majority of the Ukrainians per se stands higher in the hierarchy of credibility.

Judging from the obtained results, it appears that the use of metadiscourse markers had no effect on the persuasiveness of the text. However, this is not the case with engagement, where an interesting correlation was discovered.

Concerning the parameter of *engagement*, there are clear evidence that the use of metadiscourse markers influenced the rating of the texts. The majority of the non-native speakers of English have rated the texts containing metadiscourse markers to be 4 or 5 on the scale of engagement, regardless of the variety. At the same time, the most common answer on the engagement scale for the texts with low frequency of metadiscourse markers occurrence from the non-native speakers was 3.

The results show that metadiscourse markers are essential for the non-native speakers to orient themselves in the text, they boost their engagement in the discourse and facilitate their understanding of the content.

For the native speakers, the use of metadiscourse markers appears not to make any big difference. All the texts, with and without metadiscourse markers of both native and non-native variety, were rated mostly 3 to 4 with no significant difference.

However, I still argue that metadiscourse markers have played a role in engaging the readers. When answering the question of what was the main factor that influenced their rating of the texts, the readers overwhelmingly chose the options “*Author’s word choices*” and “*Organization and structure*”. Even though the phrases seem a bit vague they still point to the use of metadiscourse markers, as those markers are the one that organize, structure and create the interaction between the author and the reader.

This conclusion is in line with the third most popular option for reasons for rating the text – “*Logical appeal*”. This criterion demonstrates the author’s ability to clearly and accurately present the information, make reader question and analyze the data. So far, the studies on metadiscourse have proven that metadiscourse markers play significant role in presenting that.

CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER 3

Chapter 3 explores how metadiscourse markers function in the opinion articles and the role that they play in engaging and persuading the reader when reading the said article.

First, I have identified the main discourse functions that are realized with the help of metadiscourse markers. My classification is based on Ädel and Perez-Llantada, however I have adjusted it to fit the specificity of an opinion article. The functions that were identified can be divided into two main categories – Text-oriented discourse functions (Defining, Focusing, Concluding, Exemplifying, Adding, Contradicting, Validating, Strengthening, Weakening) and Participant-oriented discourse functions (Clarifying, Appealing to the Reader, Aligning with the reader, Reminding, Eliciting critical thinking).

Next, I looked at how those functions are distributed throughout the news superstructures as defined by van Dijk. Summary has the highest frequency of Eliciting critical thinking, Contradicting and Validating. Main Events usually do not contain metadiscourse markers and presented in a rather dry factual way. Consequences contain a high number of such functions as Focusing, Concluding and Adding. And, finally, Comments that are an inherent part of opinion articles have a high frequency of Participant-oriented discourse functions, mainly Appealing to the Reader, Aligning with the reader and Eliciting critical thinking.

The last part of the chapter is dedicated to measuring reader engagement. For that purpose the questionnaire was created that proved that the text with metadiscourse are more engaging, however not more persuasive. Another important finding is that non-native speakers of English rate text that contain more metadiscourse markers as more engaging, while native speakers don't show the same tendency. It follows that non-native speakers require more metadiscourse elements to perceive the text better.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper explores the use of metadiscourse markers in opinion articles. In the first chapter I have defined what metadiscourse, exploring the fuzziness that is related to the definition. The main issues in defining metadiscourse are the complexity of identifying it in the text and distinguishing metadiscourse from the propositional content; the differences of classification in the type of metadiscourse and consequently, two different approaches and methodologies in studying metadiscourse.

After that, I in detailed described the narrow approach that is concerned primarily with the reflexivity of the language and the broad approach that operates on the basis of having already identified set of inherently metadiscursive markers. The methodologies within those two strands of the study of metadiscourse were also described. The narrow approach operates by searching for potential metadiscursive elements and then further examining them closely in the context, while the broad approach is primarily used to explore metadiscourse across various registers, genres etc.

Another premise of my study is looking into how metadiscourse functions in opinion articles, therefore I have explored what are the peculiarities of the news discourse, their structure and also, what are the specific features of opinion articles and opinion discourse in comparison with other subtypes of news discourse.

Chapters 2 and 3 are dedicated to the analysis of the data. The data for analysis was taken from opinion articles from major online newspapers across three different varieties – British, American and Ukrainian. The data was then used to compile a corpus of 75 thousand words with each subcorpora having 25 thousand words.

Chapter 2 focuses primarily on the results obtained by using quantitative methods. Following Hyland and Zheng I have compiled a list of metadiscourse markers and then analyzed the frequency of their occurrence across three varieties. Each of the varieties has their own peculiarities. Thus, British English has an overwhelming number of hedges and engagement markers. These findings are in keeping with the previous research in the field that has yielded similar results.

American English uses a great number of evidentials, which points to the fact that the authors of the American opinion articles tend to substantiate their claim with references to external sources. This trend has not been observed in British and Ukrainian opinion articles. So, if looking at the native varieties, the main categories that they differ in are Hedges, Engagement markers and Evidentials.

Ukrainian variety shows an unusual preference for Frame markers and Boosters. One of the possible explanations to this could be culturally and academically defined ways of writing essays in schools. Such essays have a very rigid structure that is evident even in opinion articles written by the speakers with the high proficiency in English. Syntactically, Ukrainian opinion articles tend to use impersonal forms and passive constructions.

While chapter 2 can be regarded as being on a more quantitative end of the analysis, chapter three primarily discusses the finding that I discovered qualitatively. To reach the conclusions in that case I have analyzed in more detail every metadiscourse marker in the context to determine which function this marker performs. Then I have looked at which functions are prevalent depending on the news superstructure according to van Dijk.

Concerning identification of discourse function, I based my classification on the classifications by Ädel and Perez-Llantada. Considering how complex metadiscourse is, I divided the functions into two main categories: Text-oriented and Participant-oriented. Text-oriented functions are those that comment on the text, add or contradict the argument. Among the text-oriented discourse functions are Defining, Focusing, Concluding, Exemplifying, Adding, Contradicting, Validating, Strengthening and Weakening. Participant-oriented discourse functions are the types of functions where the metadiscourse is used to engage with the reader. Those functions are Clarifying, Appealing to the Reader, Aligning with the reader, Reminding and Eliciting critical thinking.

Having identified the functions, I analyzed opinion articles in terms of news discourse superstructures and explored which function are prevalent depending on the superstructure. Summary has the highest frequency of Eliciting critical thinking,

Contradicting and Validating. Main Events usually do not contain metadiscourse markers and presented in a rather dry factual way. Consequences contain a high number of such functions as Focusing, Concluding and Adding. And, finally, Comments that are an inherent part of opinion articles have a high frequency of Participant-oriented discourse functions, mainly Appealing to the Reader, Aligning with the reader and Eliciting critical thinking.

The last part of the research is concerned with reader engagement and persuasiveness. To measure those, I created the questionnaire and judging from the respondents' answers it appears that the use of metadiscourse markers had no effect on the persuasiveness of the text. However, this is not the case with engagement. The results show that metadiscourse markers are essential for the non-native speakers to orient themselves in the text, they boost their engagement in the discourse and facilitate their understanding of the content. Native speakers however, do not rely on metadiscourse that much. The results showed no significant discrepancy in the native speaker rating of engagement concerning the frequency of metadiscourse markers use in the articles.

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APPENDIX

Figure 1

List of metadiscourse markers

Interactive metadiscourse markers:

Transitions – *in addition; but; thus; and; still; yet; just as; however; therefore; similarly; by contrast; contrary to; moreover.*

Frame markers – *first; second; for starters; next; at the same time; finally; to conclude; I argue; as a result; propose; in general.*

Endophoric markers – *referred; written before.*

Evidentials – *joked; told; tell; argue; respond; tweet; write; demand; according to; announce; said; says; define; conclude; report.*

Code glosses – *like; called; I mean; in other words; known as; namely; e.g.; such as; that is; define; in simple words.*

Interactional metadiscourse markers:

Hedges – *usually; generally; perhaps; possible; might;*

Boosters – *of course; in fact; inevitably; significantly; yes; importantly; definitely; it is clear that; clearly; obviously; certainly.*

Attitude markers – *I'm (I am) sure; unfortunately; we (I) believe; true; I know; I expect; regret(tably); surprised; hope; doubt; in my opinion.*

Self-mentions – *Let me; I; we; my; me; our.*

Engagement markers – *you; rhetorical questions; remember; hold on; reader.*

Figure 2
Questionnaire sample

What is your level of English?

- Beginner
- Intermediate
- Proficient
- Native

Now you will read two texts and you'll have to evaluate on the scale how persuasive and/or engaging they are

Text 1

Whether they mean to or not, Europe's petulant leaders are promulgating an anti-vaxxer message

I had my first jab last week and I literally didn't feel a thing. In fact, I wondered if it had happened at all. Where was that terrible knitting-needle thing you see plunged into people's arms on the TV news?

The gusting rain outside could not dampen the festive atmosphere in the queue. It was like being seven years old and lining up to meet Father Christmas. One of the marshalls joked that he'd volunteered "just to get out the house". He told us we'd be having the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine. They'd had some of the Pfizer earlier on, but this one was much easier to store.

A woman in front of me said she'd be injected with absolutely anything "if I can go out and eat a meal I haven't cooked myself". That pretty much summed up the mood. Despite what the polls say, I reckon most people are done with Covid and lockdown.

Friends warned me about possible side effects – fever, headache like a shoe-last buried in the back of your skull – but I didn't have any. Except feeling tired, fed up and shouting at Matt Hancock, which is par for the course these days.

In general, our group felt lucky to have got the AstraZeneca. I was about to say I was surprised that so many European countries have suspended the Oxford vaccine rollout amid safety fears.

But that wouldn't strictly be true. I mean, how many people could have predicted that the arrogant, unaccountable, fabulously incompetent EU would rather act spitefully and punish British success by cutting off its nose to spite its face than protect its citizens from severe illness and death?

Apart from the 17,410,742 prophetic geniuses who voted for Brexit, that is. Fifteen EU states have "paused" use of our vaccine, despite the fact that the EMA, Europe's medical regulator, has said that the benefits "outweigh the risks of side effects". First, Austria reported that a person was diagnosed with blood clots and died 10 days after they received the vaccination. Another was hospitalised with a pulmonary embolism. Germany reported "cases" of cerebral blood clots and said further investigations were necessary. More people are dying of excess strudel in Baden-Württemberg than the British vaccine.

No connection, I'm sure, between this scientifically unjustified response and the dire headlines European leaders are attracting for failing to secure enough vaccine. Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats slumped to their worst-ever election defeat in two states this week. Apparently, the Germans are not impressed by their Government's distinctly un-German, chaotic response to the pandemic.

The UK's decision to pursue a successful, independent vaccine strategy has acutely embarrassed the EU. That's what this tantrum is about. While the Europeans are playing "We didn't want your vaccine anyway, so, ner!", all remaining over-50s in the UK are expected to be called up for a vaccine in the coming days. A sudden surge in supply means that half of all British adults will have had a jab by the end of the week. If you can't join 'em, beat 'em. Honesty about vaccine safety is essential to maintain public confidence, which has been incredibly high so far in the UK. Whether they mean to or not, though, Europe's petulant leaders are promulgating an anti-vaxxer message, which could result in thousands of unnecessary deaths.

With fewer than three dozen cases of blood clots after more than 10 million vaccinations, the AstraZeneca jab carries the same risk as taking the Pill.

Funny, no one is talking about suspending that, are they?

How engaging the text is?

	1	2	3	4	5	
not interesting at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	couldn't stop reading

How persuasive the text is?

	1	2	3	4	5	
not convinced	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	completely convinced

Text 2

Information about the free coronavirus vaccine to be supplied to Ukraine first emerged about a month ago. It was then that the global COVID-19 vaccine access facility (COVAX) offered guarantees to the Ministry of Health. According to the ministry, the number of vaccine shots set to be supplied should be sufficient to vaccinate (as early as the first half of 2021) some 4 million Ukrainians.

Discussions on mass vaccination have been on top agenda recently. According to chairman of the commission on biosafety and biological protection at the National Security and Defense Council (NSDC) of Ukraine, Academician with the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine Serhiy Komisarenko, it will be possible to start it not earlier than the middle of next year. After all, all the infrastructure and logistics must be prepared to this end.

Vaccination is a simple and effective way to protect people from infectious diseases

However, it turned out that not all Ukrainians are open to such prospects. According to a survey conducted by the Rating Sociological Group in late November, even if the vaccine against coronavirus is free, some 40% of citizens are unwilling to get the shot. If they have to pay for the vaccine, 57% of respondents say they'll oppose vaccination...

In fact, vaccination is a simple and effective way to protect people from infectious diseases. And this protection is active even before people come into contact with various infections. Our immune system responds to the vaccine and develops immunity against the pathogen. Are all people fully protected? Of course, not. But if most people are vaccinated, collective immunity is formed. This protects those who can't get vaccinated due to other health conditions.

In Ukraine, vaccination is carried out according to the vaccination calendar for children, while adults are vaccinated as well. Everyone can be vaccinated against the flu every year because the strains keep altering, so the immunity is short-lived.

Thanks to vaccinations, we have many infections under the vaccine control, while the number of severe infections has decreased.

But what about vaccines for COVID-19? At the moment, they are being developed and tested, but I think they will arrive in Ukraine no sooner than the end of spring or summer next year. And more likely, they will be supplied in the fall of 2021. So by the time the first doses are offered to Ukrainians, many other people beyond Ukraine will have already gotten the vaccine.

Are these vaccines safe? Like any vaccine, it will have indications and contraindications. Before the start of mass vaccination, the drug is thoroughly researched and tested. Therefore, no one will use the vaccine forcibly, especially if risks persist.

If most people are vaccinated, collective immunity is formed

Is a single dose enough? If the immunity is short-lived, the risk of re-infection remains high. After all, at present there are repeated cases of reinfection. Besides, coronavirus mutation can't be ruled out under the influence of various factors. Therefore, there is a high probability that vaccination will be required, as with the flu.

It's for the government to decide on whether or not to administer the vaccine and which plan should be implemented. Here, each country has its own rules. Until now, no one has been forced to get vaccinated in Ukraine, I think nothing will change in this regard. Therefore, citizens, together with their family doctors, are free to choose their path – to get vaccinated or play Russian roulette.

No matter what, we will no longer go back to pre-quarantine times. The world has changed. Priorities, visions, attitudes to health have changed as well. We must remain vigilant and realize that more infections could emerge in the future, so it's better to have under control at least the familiar ones. So, if there is a chance to get protection, why not use it?

How engaging the text is?

1 2 3 4 5

not interesting at all couldn't stop reading

How persuasive the text is?

1 2 3 4 5

not convinced completely convinced

What influenced your choices?

- Length of the text
- Organization and structure
- Author's word choices
- Rhetorical devices
- Emotional appeal
- Logical appeal
- Author's knowledge of the topic