

Verbal Dynamics of Sports: A Corpus Based Analysis of Metadiscourse Markers in Pakistani Cricket Commentary

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Abstract

Metadiscourse is a language strategy that convey the idea that communication is not only about sharing information, but it also entails the attitudes, personalities, and notions of the people. As metadiscourse is an essential linguistic feature, the purpose of this research is to explore metadiscourse markers in cricket commentary by Pakistani commentators. The main objectives of this study are to identify the types of metadiscourse markers used by Pakistani commentators and to analyse their occurrences and how these indicators were used. This research employed Hyland's (2005) metadiscourse model as its theoretical framework to comprehensively study the use of these markers. The mixed-methods approach has been engaged in this research, utilising convenience sampling to select a representative sample of cricket matches commentary by Pakistani commentators. The findings revealed that Pakistani cricket commentators used a total of 2,954 metadiscourse markers, with interactional markers having the highest frequency (2,243), contributing more than interactive markers (711). The most common were engagement indicators (984) and frame markers (500), highlighting their importance in enhancing coherence, clarity, and audience participation in real-time commentary. The study highlights how these indicators enhance viewers' understanding and involvement, improving their comprehension of sports broadcasts and a sport that holds considerable cultural value in Pakistan.

Keywords: Metadiscourse, Interactive Markers, Pakistani Commentators.

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study, delineating its background, research problem, objectives, and significance. It gives reasons for analysing metadiscourse markers in the domain of sports commentary, with a focus on Pakistani commentators in cricket commentary.

When it comes to live broadcasting of sports, commentary is essential for conveying the excitement, complexities, and intricacies of the game to the audience. Sports hold significant national and cultural importance in Pakistan, and the way matches are conducted has a substantial impact on the viewers' experience.

Sports commentary is defined by Ferguson (1983, p. 155) as "the oral reporting of an ongoing action, along with the giving of background information and analysis." "A verbal description of events currently occurring" is how Crystal et al. define a commentary (1969, p. 125). On the other

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hand, sports commentary is easily identifiable. It is a blend of entertainment, objectivity, and story. A conversational segment taken from a television or radio broadcast of a sporting event can easily be categorised as sports commentary by anyone with even a passing interest in sports.

The word "metadiscourse" refers to the self-reflective expressions that writers and speakers use to negotiate interactional meanings in texts. This helps them express their opinions and communicate with readers as fellow members of a specific community (Hyland, 2005, p. 37). Metadiscourse is used as a tool to organise content and capture the reader's attention. According to Hyland (2005), authors use metadiscourse markers (MMs) as rhetorical techniques to convey their attitude and engage with the audience, thereby enhancing the text's readability and engagement.

Recent research, such as the corpus-based study by Liu, S., and Zhang, J. (2021), investigated how metadiscourse is used to increase the persuasiveness of cooperative press releases. The researchers investigate how metadiscourse is used in company press releases. The findings revealed distinct and well-defined patterns of metadiscourse use that enhance ethos, pathos, and logos —three key persuasive strategies. This demonstrates the frequency of attitude indicators and self-mention markers, which improves the promotional value of these texts.

Tanveer, Arslan, and Mahmood (2023) examined the functions of interactional metadiscourse used by male Pakistani columnists in their English-language opinion pieces published in prominent Pakistani publications. The findings demonstrated that male columnists use self-mention markers to build rapport with readers, gain confidence, and bolster their arguments with booster words that increase the writer's relatability and persuasiveness.

By analysing the types, frequency, and function of metadiscourse markers used by Pakistani commentators in a cricket match, this research will fill this gap in the field of linguistics. This study is significant because it will expand the scope of metadiscourse theory by encompassing a new genre, while also providing valuable insights into how language can be strategically employed by Pakistani commentators in cricket matches to enhance viewers' participation and understanding in sports broadcasting, ultimately strengthening the planning and effectiveness of sports commentators.

Research Questions

This research addresses the following questions

Q1: What is the frequency of metadiscourse markers in cricket commentary by Pakistani commentators?

Q2: What type of metadiscourse markers do Pakistani commentators employ in cricket commentary?

Q3: How do these metadiscourse features function in Pakistani commentators' cricket commentary?

Literature Review

This section discusses the theoretical framework, classification, and prior studies on metadiscourse, with the focus on its relevance to both written and spoken communication. It explores the fundamental ideas and notions of metadiscourse markers, examining the variety of models and taxonomies presented by various scholars.

Theoretical Framework

This section of the research presents the model employed as a theoretical framework. In 1959, Zellig Harris used the term metadiscourse to describe the process of understanding language in

action, including the attempts of a writer or speaker to influence a recipient's opinion regarding a text. Writers such as Williams (1981), Vande Kopple (1985), and Crismore (1989) have developed and explored the idea, examining how speakers and writers modify their writing to influence their audience's interpretation. To illustrate this effect, they have gathered and examined a variety of text commentary formats.

Despite its first introduction, the idea garnered minimal traction over the next twenty years. Researchers began to show renewed interest in metadiscourse in the 1980s. According to Hyland (2010), the revival of metadiscourse aimed to question earlier linguistic frameworks that primarily saw language as a means of describing concrete thoughts and facts. Metadiscourse has a broader range of uses in current discourse analysis.

Ädel (2006), Vande Kopple (1985), Crismore et al. (1993), and Mauranen (1993) are among the authors who have developed frameworks for evaluating metadiscourse. These models have significant overlap and redundancy in their classifications, despite their diversity. The metadiscourse model developed by Hyland is used in this work because it is dependable, widely accepted, and thorough in capturing the subtleties of interpersonal communication inside texts.

Hyland's approach divides metadiscourse into two primary categories: interactive (textual) and interactional (interpersonal). It is recognised for offering one of the most comprehensive perspectives on interpersonal factors in discourse (Fu & Hyland, 2014). The present study employed this category, which was first developed by Vande Kopple (1985) and refined by Hyland (2004) and Hyland and Tse (2004), to examine the relationship between text organisation and writer-reader interaction.

Table 1: Categorization of metadiscoursive features

Categories	Functions	Examples
Interactive	Help to guide the reader through the text	
Transitions	Express semantic relation between main clauses	but, in addition, thus, and
Frame markers	Refers to discourse acts, sequences, or text stages	To conclude, finally, my purpose is
Endophoric markers	Refers to information from other part of the text	See figure, noted above, in section 2
Evidential	Refers to source of information from other text	Z states that, according to x, (Y, 1990)
Code glosses	Help readers grasp meanings of ideational material	Such as, namely, e.g., in other words
Interactional	Involve the reader in the text	
Hedges	Show doubt and negation, open space negation	Perhaps, might, possible, about
Boosters	Writer's certainty and confidence, open space negation	Definitely, in fact, it is clear that
Attitude markers	Express writer's attitude to proposition	I agree, unfortunately, surprisingly
Self-mention markers	Explicit reference to author (s)	I, we, my, our, mine
Engagement markers	Explicitly refer to or build relationship with readers	Note that, consider, you can see that

These ideas are included in the classification technique shown in Table 1. It is predicated on a functional paradigm that views writers' relationships with the written content, the writer, or the reader as metadiscourse. It recognizes the contextual specificity of metadiscourse and, with more nuance, recognizes the organizational and evaluative aspects of interaction by utilizing Thompson and Thetela's (1995) distinction between interactive and interactional resources (Hyland, 2001a; Hyland and Tse, 2004). While the model is heavily influenced by Thompson and Thetela's concept, it broadens its scope by including components of attitude and participation (Hyland, 2001a) and building upon earlier metadiscourse models (Hyland, 1998a and 2000).

The framework recognizes that the two aspects of interactions that comprise metadiscourse are: Each written or spoken communication must have these two characteristics, which are reflected in a range of rhetorical devices that each play a more specific function.

Interactive Metadiscourse

A writer's awareness of their audience and efforts to match their expertise, interests, and expectations are reflected in the interactive element of metadiscourse. There are five main categories in it. Through conjunctions and adverbial phrases, transition markers (such as "but," "thus," etc.) link discourse stages and clarify the connections between arguments. Frame markers (such as "finally," "to conclude") convey subject transitions, goals, sequencing, and textual boundaries, so defining the discourse's structure. By tying ideas together across the discourse, endophoric indications (such as "noted above," "see Fig.") help readers grasp information that is placed elsewhere in the text. Evidential indicators that cite outside sources, like "according to X" and "Z states," increase trustworthiness. Evidentials is "metalinguistic representations of a concept from another source," according to Thomas and Hawes (1994) (p. 129). Code glosses (e.g., "namely," "for example"), which are predicated on the reader's comprehension, provide additional explanations to clarify or amplify statements.

Interactional Metadiscourse

Conversely, the interactional element shows how the author interacts with the reader, expressing position and urging involvement in the discussion. According to Hyland (2005), hedges (such as "might," "perhaps," etc.) "show the writer's choice to acknowledge other opinions and viewpoints and so withhold total commitment to a proposition" (p. 52). They also allow the writer to acknowledge alternate viewpoints and demonstrate tentativeness. Boosters (such as "clearly," "obviously") assist the writer make stronger statements by expressing assurance and highlighting shared comprehension (Hyland, 2005, p. 52). Attitude markers use verbs, adverbs, and adjectives to express emotions like "importance" or "agreement." The author's identity and stance are reflected in self-mention, which includes the use of possessives and first-person pronouns. According to Hyland (2005), authors "consciously choose to adopt a certain posture and a contextually located authorial identity" (p. 53). Finally, to engage readers in the conversation, engagement markers (e.g., "notice that," "you can see") use pronouns like "you" and "we," as well as orders and inquiries (Hyland, 2005, p. 54). Together, these interactive elements increase reader engagement and make the author's position in the text more apparent.

Empirical Framework

Scholars have investigated the term metadiscourse from several perspectives with the aim of pinpointing its features. This section deals with the existing studies with a primary focus on

multifaceted approaches observed through metadiscourse. The present research has considered a number of studies.

To comprehend the language in a better way, Zellig Harris coined the phrase “meta discourse” in 1959. It alludes to the speaker's or author's attempts to influence the reader's interpretation of a work. The notion has been elaborated upon by writers notably Williams (1981), Vande Kopple (1985), and Crismore (1989), who have studied hedges, connectives, and other forms of text commentary, among other communication aspects. They demonstrate how writers and speakers exert influence over their written or spoken words, influencing readers' comprehension in a manner that aligns with the speaker's intention.

The term metadiscourse is frequently defined as “talk about talk” or “discourse about discourse.” These definitions highlight the way it looks inward to refer to elements of the text itself, a function known as self-referentiality (Hyland 2005, p. 16).. A text's meaning is derived from the interaction of two elements: the discussion of the experiential world and the process of presenting the material in a way that is logical, clear, and persuasive to a particular audience (Hyland & Tse, 2004).

These are some previous researchers which highlight the importance of metadiscourse across different genres. Firstly, Tang (2017) analyzes the usage of metadiscourse by teachers in classroom discourse with the aim of understanding the role that metadiscourse plays in scientific education, particularly in terms of improving students’ engagement and understanding during classroom interactions. The aim of this study was to determine and characterize the types of metadiscourse used by educators to analyze their impact on students' knowledge retention. In order to segment and classify the teacher-student interaction across several courses, the research employs video analysis along with anthropological study. The findings revealed that teachers used six primary forms of metadiscourse, including evaluative markers and text connectives, which significantly enhance the structure and comprehension of scientific information and create a meaningful and better learning environment for students.

Birhan (2021) explored the use of metadiscourse in book review articles across three disciplines. The aim of this research was to examine how three academic disciplines—computer science, English language, and education—used interactional and interactive metadiscourse features in book review articles. This research aimed to comprehend the patterns of these metadiscourse features by identifying the specific strategies writers employ to interact with the reader and express their opinions, and to ascertain the frequency of these markers' usage. The researcher analyzed a subset of 99 book reviews; 11 articles from each academic field were selected from scholarly publications. The findings show that, comparing English-language articles to other academic disciplines, there is a significant difference in the use of metadiscourse with high frequency.

Liu and Zhang (2021) conducted corpus-based research to determine the use of metadiscourse to improve the persuasiveness of cooperative press releases. With the aim of comprehending the linguistic strategies employed to get results that are compelling. The researchers analyze how metadiscourse is used in corporate press releases. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, comprising discourse analysis and chi-square testing, we examined 99 press releases from three major retail companies. The results revealed discrete and well-defined metadiscourse use patterns that boost persuasive strategies, including logos, pathos, and ethos.

Boginskaya (2022) analyzed the use of metadiscourse markers in English language research article abstracts by Russian writers in the domain of engineering and applied linguistics. The study's goal was to investigate the rhetorical structure and metadiscourse characteristics of these abstracts. The objective of the research was to determine how often these features occur and to identify the types of features that are used in these fields. A corpus of 146 research article abstracts was generated

and analyzed from different journals. The findings reveal specific variations in the use of metadiscourse markers, showing distinct rhetorical techniques across academic disciplines and emphasizing the importance of these markers in enhancing the persuasiveness and coherence of scholarly writings.

Siddique et al. (2018) conducted an analysis of the metadiscourse features in the editorials of the *Frontier*, *Dawn*, *The News*, and *The Express Tribune*, four English-language Pakistani newspapers. For this study, a corpus of 250 editorials from each newspaper was assembled. These editorials were analyzed using the corpus tool AntConc 3.4.4.0. The Hyland's (2005) interpersonal model was used in this study. The findings indicate that, out of all Pakistani publications, *The Frontier* used framing techniques the most. According to the research findings, meta-discourse improves readers' decision-making abilities. Additionally, 121 items from Hyland (2005) were recommended for further examination by this investigation.

Tanveer, Arslan, and Mahmood, (2023) focused on the functions of interactional metadiscourse employed by male Pakistani columnists in their English-language opinion columns in prominent Pakistani newspapers. The purpose of this research was to particularly analyze self-mention and boosters' patterns and their frequencies in order to determine how effectively these linguistic indicators were used to structure conversation. Ninety opinion columns from three well-known newspapers were selected and analyzed using a mixed-methods approach. The result showed that male columnists use self-mention markers in order to establish a relationship with the reader, gain confidence, and support their opinions by using boosters, which increase the writer's persuasiveness and relatability.

The research by Siddique et al. (2018) examines the use of hedges as metadiscourse markers in Pakistani English newspaper editorials. The goal of this study was to determine the types and frequency of hedges used in editorials in order to better understand the tactics employed by writers to generate uncertainty and attention. For this purpose, Siddique, A. R. et al. (2018) make a corpus of 1000 editorials, 250 from each of the four newspapers: *The Dawn*, *The Frontier*, *The News*, and *The Express Tribune*. The method involves establishing a new framework to classify hedges into conditional clauses, uncertainty, and impersonal expressions. The findings reveal that *The Frontier* has the highest frequency of hedges, and that writers often use these features, which enable readers to form their opinions.

By employing Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis and Halliday's transitivity theory, Fatima, Latif, and Arslan (2024) investigated Pakistani cricket commentary in order to analyze how language affects ideas. The objectives of this study include demonstrating ideological perceptions along with determining the types and frequency of transitivity processes. By using a mixed-method approach, the researchers use UAM corpus tools to analyze transcripts from five cricket matches. The results show that the dominant processes in commenting are material, relational, and cognitive, and they have a significant impact on the construction of ideologies.

While metadiscourse has already been intensively studied in academic contexts, less has been studied about its role in spoken discourse, particularly in sports commentary. However, the models of metadiscourse provide the best lens to analyze these indicators, as the majority of the study examines business, academic, and literary discourse. As the previous research mostly focused on the written discourse, there is a research gap on the use of metadiscourse markers in spoken communication, specifically in sports discourse. Through analyzing the frequency, types, and functions of metadiscourse markers in cricket commentary employed by Pakistani commentators, this research aims to fill this gap and improve the comprehension of spoken metadiscourse in the dynamic and specific context.

Research Methodology

This section deals with the research methodology and have sub parts:

Research Design

The research employed the mix method approach to explore the different types and frequencies of metadiscourse used by the Pakistani commentators in cricket commentary. This approach integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection, analysis, and understanding of the research questions. The quantitative approach will be used to ascertain the frequency of metadiscourse markers used by Pakistani commentators in cricket commentary, while the qualitative method will be applied to determine the types of these indicators and to analyze their function in audience comprehension and interaction.

Data Collection and Corpus Development

The population of this research consist of cricket commentary delivered by Pakistani commentators extracted particularly from the cricket matches. The sample consists of transcripts of commentary by Pakistani commentators on the cricket matches. Domestic (matches between Pakistan teams) and international cricket matches are included in the sample. Through convenience sampling, a representative sample of cricket commentary by Pakistani commentators has been selected. Convenience sampling will be used to select a representative sample of 50 cricket matches. The source of data collection will be primary, as the data will be collected from different online resources such as YouTube and official websites. Pakistani male and female commentators' commentary was selected for the corpus.

There were multiple stages in the data collection. In the first step, the commentary of the cricket match delivered by Pakistani commentators is transcribed according to the particular set of transcription rules. No automatic or AI-driven transcription tools were used for the commentary due to the unique nature of the text, especially when it comes to proper names and terminologies. The transcription process was done manually in the Word files. Then, in the next step, this text was collected in the notepad files separately.

Formation of the List of Metadiscourse Features

List of metadiscourse features were divided into two different categories: Interactive and Interactional. For this study the list of words was taken from Siddique, Mahmood, and Iqbal (2018).

Table 2: Formation list of metadiscourse markers

Categories	Sub categories	Total no of markers
Interactive	Transitions	28
	Frame markers	80
	Endophoric markers	11
	Evidential	26
	Code glosses	22
Interactional	Hedges	79
	Boosters	75
	Attitude markers	69
	Self-mention	11
	Engagement markers	73

Table 3: Total number of Interactive markers according to the number of words

Interactive markers			
Categories	Total no of markers	Categories	Total no of markers
Transition		Evidential	
One word	19	One word	20
Two words	5	Two words	6
Three words	4		
Frame markers		Code glosses	
One word	36	One word	7
Two words	27	Two words	11
Three words	17	Three words	4
Endophoric markers			
One word	6		
Two words	5		

Table 4: Total number of Interactional markers according to the number of words

Interactional Markers			
Categories	Total no of markers	Categories	Total no of markers
Hedges		Self-mention	
One word	69	One word	7
Two words	6	Two words	4
Three words	4		
Boosters		Engagement markers	
One word	64	One word	64
Two words	5	Two words	8
Three words	6	Three words	1
Attitude markers			
One word	68		
Two words	1		

Data Analysis

A systematic approach was used in order to explore linguistic features, metadiscourse markers in cricket commentary to analyze the collected data. This section delineates the tools for textual analysis following a thorough examination of the findings. To highlight the function of a metadiscourse marker, this part also involves the subsection of discussion.

Tool for Data Analysis

The software which was used to determine the frequency of the metadiscoursal features was AntConc which was used for textual analysis. The version of software which was used to conduct the corpus analysis was AntConc 3.5.9 (Anthony, 2020).

Analysis

The types, frequency, and functions of the metadiscourse markers employed by Pakistani commentators in cricket commentary are thoroughly investigated in this section. These markers are divided into two categories: interactional and interactive (Hyland, 2005; Hyland & Tse, 2004) which further divided into subcategories. This research provides an in depth comprehension of how these indicators function in the specific context of cricket commentary in sports discourse. To identify the language techniques employed by Pakistani commentators, each category including one-, two-, and three-word markers is examined to find out the most frequently used markers.

Interactional Markers

According to Table 5, Pakistani commentators' narratives about cricket commentary have been significantly influenced by interactional metadiscourse markers. These indicators improve the coherence and construction of the commentary. Interactional markers include these five subcategories (Hyland, 2005): transition markers, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidential markers, and code glosses. The total occurrences of interactional markers are 711, out of which 500 were frame markers, which were the most frequent interactional markers. On the other hand, 52 instances of transition markers function to create logical connections between sentences and events. However, these markers were infrequent; they served the important purpose of sustaining narrative coherence and effectively connecting game events. The 41 occurrences of evidential indicators provide reference to previous information and help to support the external validation, such as players' previous performance and historical statistics.

Table 5: Interactional markers and their frequencies

Markers	Frequency
Transition markers	52
Frame markers	500
Endophoric markers	1
Evidential	41
Code glossess	117
Total	711

Code glosses, which have been used 117 times, demonstrate the commentators' endeavor to elaborate on the game events, keeping the commentary accessible and for a wide range of audiences. Perhaps as cricket commentary is fast-paced and real-time, endophoric markers with just 1 occurrence reveal the less reliance on referencing other parts of the text.

Transition Markers

For the in-depth understanding of the roles and frequency of the interactional markers, its subcategories were further analyzed. Transition markers are used to create coherence and cohesion. Table 6 shows that there were 52 occurrences in all, with 50 incidents of one-word markers and just 2 of two-word transition markers. The necessity of brevity in cricket commentary, when rapid and effective communication is important, highlights the predilection for one-word markers.

Table 6: Frequency of Transition markers in cricket commentary

Transition markers according to their number of words	Frequency	Examples
One-word	50	All the openers who've been uh batting especially while chasing.
Two-word	2	Confirmation that's a brilliant catch even though Colin Munro needs no motivation Fakhar Zaman gone for ten. Lahore sixteen for two. [applause]
Total	52	

With just 2 instances, two-word transition markers underline the limitations of cricket commentary, where longer expressions break the speed of narration.

Frame Markers

According to Hyland (2004), frame markers serve as essential interactional metadiscourse tools that guide audiences and readers through a discourse or text by recognizing, sequencing, and transitioning between sections. Table 7 provides an extensive examination of frame marker frequencies based on their specific roles and structural forms (one-, two-, and three-word markers). This explanation displays the findings in the context of the problem statement and research questions.

Table 7: Frequency of frame markers in cricket commentary

Frame markers according to their number of words	Frequency	Examples
One-word	434	Hello and welcome to a grand afternoon once again here a hot day in Faisalabad in Iqbal Stadium bringing in you match 3 of the Bahria Town Champions Cup is the first outing for the Dolphin and Lake City Panthers will have their second.
Two-word	45	So far , the Lahore Qalandars have gotten off to a strong beginning with both the batters.
Three-word	21	No issue there that's a very clear uh catch big boundary on that side little fumble pounced it nicely if the gone that's a big wicket at this stage because he can be really dangerous 171 for three.
Total	500	

The occurrence of frame markers according to the structure, grouped by word count, is shown in Table 7. The overall frequency of frame markers occurs 500 times, with one-word markers predominating with 434 instances, followed by two-word markers with 45 occurrences and three-word markers with 21 instances. With the constraints of real-time speech, this distribution indicates a preference for efficiency and conciseness in cricket commentary by Pakistani commentators. The frequency of one-word frame markers indicates the extent to which Pakistani commentators communicate game stages in a straightforward manner.

Endophoric Markers

According to Hyland (2004), endophoric markers are interactive markers that refer to other discourse segments, improving textual cohesiveness by developing connections between ideas. However, the frequency of these markers indicate that these markers were rarely used by Pakistani commentators in the context of cricket commentary. According to Table 8, just 1 endophoric marker was found in the whole sample, and that one case was the one-word marker "See." This analysis emphasizes the negligible function of endophoric markers in the impromptu and immediate context of the sports commentary.

Table 8: Frequency of endophoric markers in cricket commentary

Frequency of endophoric markers according to their number of words	Frequency	Examples
One-word	1	Normally you see him do that with gloves behind the stones but what a great outfielder.
Total	1	

The rarity of endophoric markers illustrates how instantaneous description is prioritized over referential connection in cricket commentary.

Evidential Markers

An important component of interactive metadiscourse, evidential markers serve both the roles of enhancing the speaker's credibility and attributing knowledge to external sources. Their strategic use in cricket commentary by Pakistani commentators reflects the commentators' attempts to bolster their statements and perspectives. By linking the commentary to reliable sources, these markers not only reinforce the content but also audience confidence.

Table 9: Frequency of evidential markers in cricket commentary

Evidential markers according to their number of words	Frequency	Examples
One-word	37	Yeah, it's a very technically sound player now when he occurs the ball like you said he just helps it on its way it doesn't try to over hit it.
Two-word	4	According to , the game analyst Multan Sultan attained the success when the target was under 150 runs.
Total	41	

There are 41 instances of evidential markers employed by Pakistani commentators in cricket, which are divided into one-word markers (37 occurrences) and two-word markers (4 occurrences). This distinction highlights the need for precise live commentary when time constraints and the dynamic nature of the game need brief information.

Code Glosses

According to Hyland (2004, 2005), code glosses are interactional metadiscourse markers that help to reiterate, elucidate, and expand the information that has been provided before with the goal of making sure that the listener has properly comprehend the message. These indicators play a vital role in cricket commentary because of the sports discourse's instantaneous nature and the audience's diversity, which can include passive audiences, people who are not as familiar with cricket-specific jargon, and die-hard fans.

Table 10: Frequency of code glosses in cricket commentary

Code glosses markers according to their number of words	Frequency	Examples
One-word	104	Sluggish piece of running would mean that he will have to depart for thirty-nine and UMT Markhors half the side back in the hut for 102.
Two-word	13	So the front foot check is absolutely fine in fact all behind the line and uh Abdul Samad will have to depart. It's once again been the batters themselves.
Total	117	

As shown in table 10, code glosses with 117 instances in Pakistani cricket commentary are included in the dataset. These are divided into one-word markers (104 instances) and two-word markers (13 instances). This distinction signifies the linguistic choices made by Pakistani commentators to create a balance between the need for clarity and the urgency of the situation.

Interactional Markers

Pakistani commentators employed a wide range of interactional metadiscourse markers, as shown in table 11. The corpus of cricket commentary employs a variety of interactional metadiscourse markers, including self-mention to make the commentator's subjective involvement, hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and engagement markers. These strategies help the commentators by revealing their patterned usage during live commentary and indicating how they all cooperate to preserve coherence and listener engagement in a fast-paced broadcast environment (Hyland & Tse, 2004; Hyland, 2005; Lakoff, 1972; Hyland, 2002; Vande Kopple, 1985).

Table 11: Frequency of interactional markers in cricket commentary

Interactional markers	Frequency
Hedges	322
Boosters	526
Attitude markers	126
Self-mention	285
Engagement markers	984
Total	2243

Hedges were used 322 times by Pakistani commentators in cricket commentary functions to moderate and qualify the claims and encourage the attention when interpreting live events. Hedges

permits the commentators to control the inherent uncertainty of fast-paced play without undermining their analytical credibility by adding a degree of tentativeness. (Lakoff, 1972).

Boosters intensify claims and draw attention to pivotal aspects in the match with 526 instances. Their succinct but emphatic style adds dramatic momentum to the broadcast and increases certainty.

There are 126 instances of attitude markers, which add the speaker's evaluative attitude to the commentary, whether it be a feeling of surprise, regret, or approval. These markers improve the audience experience and develop a deeper connection with the action by incorporating emotive nuance into factual descriptions.

Self-mention markers were employed by Pakistani commentators 285 times to bring out the commentator's opinion and serve as an indication to viewers that the commentary is a subjective interpretation rather than an impartial account.

With 984 occurrences, engagement markers are the most prevalent in the cricket match commentary. Commentators engage the audience effectively by directing attention, encouraging reflective thinking, and controlling the pace of the commentary. Engagement markers are essential for maintaining attention and generating a full-fledged broadcast experience by actively involving listeners in the match narrative (Hyland & Tse, 2004).

Hedges

An overview of hedges employed in cricket commentary is shown in Table 12, with special attention to word length. According to the data, one-word markers constitute each of the 322 hedge occurrences found in the corpus. This indicates that Pakistani commentators have a clear predilection to use hedging terminology that is concise as well as efficient. When time constraints and the necessity for fluid communication demand concise language selections, one-word hedges are particularly effective for the immediacy of cricket commentary.

Table 12: Frequency of hedges markers according to their number of words in cricket commentary

Hedges according to their number of words	Frequency	Examples
One-word	322	They were desperate to break this partnership Karachi Kings and in the third overcame about a soft dismissal left hand of Munro walking back after scoring nine. It's twenty-eight for one.
Total	322	

Language economy, a quality of effective communication under duress, is illustrated by the reliance on one-word hedge markers. Without weighing down the audience with complex systems, these markers allow the Pakistani commentators to immediately offer tentative comments while maintaining their focus on the action.

Boosters

Table 13 provides the summary of the adoption and distribution of booster markers in cricket commentary, which is arranged by word count. As a type of interactional metadiscourse marker,

boosters are used to point out certainty, reaffirm statements, and convey confidence in the commentary. Overall, 526 boosters were found in the corpus; the most common boosters were one-word booster markers, which occurred 498 times; two-word boosters, with 24 occurrences ; and three-word boosters, which appeared just 4 times. The linguistic preferences of Pakistani cricket commentators, who like to communicate in a concise and straightforward manner, are depicted by this distribution.

One- word markers are straightforward but influential, enabling Pakistani commentators to show assurance and emphasize important aspects of the game in real time.

Table 13: Frequency of boosters in cricket commentary

Booster markers according to their number of words	Frequency	Examples
One-word	498	This is their combination he just mentioned. Shadab two changes good addition all around he is an all-rounder Arafat as really and let's have a look at the Nurpur Lions being led by Shaheen Shah Afridi.
Two-word	24	Action continues at the National Bank Cricket Stadium third game here third game for the home side in Karachi of course and they'll want to get on winning ways they need to chase down 190 Shan Masood versus David Willy and if you're one for matchups will has gotten him four times in all T20s.
Three-word	4	The fact that Babar showed brilliant performance in the first two overs of the match shows his ability to perform even under pressure.
Total	526	

With a frequency of 24 occurrences, two-word boosters add another level of complexity and intensity. The least common kind of boosters in cricket commentary are three-word ones, which appear just four times. The limitations of live sports commentary, where linguistic economy is crucial, are reflected in their scarcity.

Attitude Markers

A comprehensive examination of attitude markers employed by Pakistani commentators in cricket commentary is provided in Table 14, which further provides the details regarding the linguistic strategies used in cricket commentary by Pakistani commentators to express their own feelings, personal views, and attitudes. These attitude indicators were further divided into two, which are following one-word markers (122 occurrences) and two-word markers (4 instances). The importance of these markers can be underscored by a great majority of one-word attitude markers of the total count. These markers make it feasible for the Pakistani commentators to combine the emotive and evaluative aspects without reducing the debate's authenticity.

Table 14: Frequency of attitude markers in cricket commentary

Attitude markers according to their number of words	Frequency	Examples
One-word	122	Not given out and then Malik just hitting it nice and straight with full blade hit hard one bounce into the boundary what an important boundary in the context of the game they needed that that was desperation from Malik.
Two-word	4	Now you have to ask the bowler, batter was under pressure with those two top deliveries, why did he need to change the line or the length, there he goes wide and that's cut into the gap for four, the fun continues here for Islamabad United. [Applause]
Total	126	

On the other hand, two-word attitude markers with the frequency of 4 of total, make a less significant share. The infrequent use of these markers in Pakistani cricket commentary reflect the special function of these markers in the commentary.

Self-mention

With the frequency of 285 occurrences, Table 15 provides an in depth analysis of the incidences of self-mention markers in cricket commentary. First-person pronouns and possessive pronouns tend to be employed as self-mention indicators as they provide insight that how Pakistani commentators used these linguistic tools indicate their involvement in the action.

Table 15: Frequency of self-mention markers in cricket commentary

Self-mention markers according to their number of words	Frequency	Examples
One-word	285	Yeah, you're right and my bad that was a good shout and rightly so give it out four, three that's a huge scalp captain goes ninety-three for five.
Total	285	

The rapid and efficient nature of cricket commentary is reflected by the only category of one-word self-mention markers. The necessity for preciseness and clarity because of the dialogue's fast-paced nature can be successfully fulfilled by the use of one-word self-mention markers. The absence of two- or three-word self-mention markers is further backed with the simplicity and spontaneity that are preferred to maintain the flow of cricket commentary.

Engagement markers

The comprehensive analysis of engagement markers presents the summary of its frequency in cricket matches, which is provided in table 16, with the total occurrences of 984. The two main categories of these markers are one-word markers (828 occurrences) and two-word markers (156 occurrences), which were used for enhancing the interaction, communication, and engagement

between the commentator and the audience in the game. The highest frequency of one-word engagement markers emphasizes the requirement of cricket commentary to be intelligible and spontaneous in nature, with speaking pace that matches the dynamic nature of the game.

Table 16: Frequency of engagement markers in cricket commentary

Engagement markers according to their number of words	Frequency	Examples
One-word	828	There is one fielder on the onside in terms of the fielder at mid-on here we go action time.
Two-word	156	He's picked him up and he's picked him up proper read the lent very early standing tall or you might suffer, and this will be a take yes taken look at Ali Raza enjoy his first wicket have a look he has a few words to say very run an Naveed like he is one of his students.
Total	984	

Discussion

The functional explanation of the metadiscourse was investigated and identified in this section that was analyzed in the previous section. The instances aim to examine the aspects in which different markers add the factor of effectiveness in cricket commentary as a communication technique.

Interactive Markers

Transition Markers

1: *Can be a good all-rounder, just pass that first slip down to the boundary for four it was deliberately cut by Irfan Niazi realizing there is still a slip there was played hard into the ground it will require super reflex to get a hand to it.*

In this instance, the word "still" subtly suggests that the game's circumstances are unchanged even while the player is actively participating which aligns with the function of these markers such as the sequence of the games are expressed by the commentator.

2: *All the openers who've been uh batting especially while chasing.*

The term "while" in the above example of cricket commentary was employed by Pakistani commentators to create a relation that involved two concurrent occurrences: the openers who were batting and hitting the short and the chase after a target.

3: *Confirmation that's a brilliant brilliant catch even though Colin Munro needs no motivation Fakhar Zaman gone for ten. Lahore sixteen for two. [applause]*

Through the shift in the emphasis and logical contrasts, using transition markers such as "even though," which indicate concession and contradiction, Pakistani commentators guide the audience. By establishing the logical coherence to allow the viewers to understand the unrelated components, the commentator sustains an organized narrative flow.

Frame Markers

4: *Hello and welcome to a grand afternoon once again here a hot day in Faisalabad in Iqbal Stadium bringing in you match 3 of the Bahria Town Champions Cup is the first outing for the Dolphin and Lake City Panthers will have their second.*

The word in the above example, "first," serves the function of frame markers and indicates the debut of the Dolphin team in the Champions Cup. This develops an orderly pattern in the flow of information, emphasizing that it is the most important point to be discussed.

5: *No issue there that's a very clear uh catch big boundary on that side little fumble pounced it nicely if the gone that's a big wicket at this stage because he can be really dangerous 171 for three.* "At this stage," employed by the Pakistani commentator in the example (5), plays the role of frame marker as it indicates the current juncture in the cricket match, accentuating the importance of the player being tossed at this crucial stage. It helps the spectators to understand the impact of the event in the game through the development of the chronological framework.

Endophoric Markers

6: *Normally you see him do that with gloves behind the stones but what a great outfielder.*

Endophoric markers are used to guide the audience's focus to the different parts of the text and speech. In the above instance, "see" alludes to the player's typical behavior that has already been addressed in the statement, as it is referring to the previously mentioned action; it functions as an endophoric marker.

Evidential Markers

7: *Yeah, it's a very technically sound player now when he occurrences the ball like you said he just helps it on its way it doesn't try to over hit it.*

The phrase in the above example "like you said" connects the statement of the prior commentator and gives credibility to the observation of Pakistani commentators by developing a prevalent perspective and prior information to make sure that the viewers understand the statement as a continuation and the confirmation of a previous statement.

8: *Not just late late by a good four five seconds a discussion on for too long it doesn't matter it could have been the height it could have been down leg side as well and like you said Sikander is almost like Amir Jamal's convinced Faisal Afridi to raise the finger.*

In the example (10), "said" as an evidential marker points out that the Pakistani commentator's remark is not an isolated analysis; it is an amplification and consensus with the prior statement of the other Pakistani commentator. The audience creates a link and perceives the events with the extra layer of reference, which enhances the impression of commentary conversation. In the frantic world of sports,

Code glosses

9: *There you go Kamran Ghulam looks to come back for the second will do so or will he, he prodded the bat once again along the lines he still go to his 100 because he has completed one run.*

The word "or" in the example as a code gloss conveys the ambiguity about the outcomes by giving an alternative perspective of the prior words. The use of "or" as a code gloss brings the focus of the audience to the two possibilities in the emerging events by creating suspense and curiosity in the commentary.

10: *Sluggish piece of running would mean that he will have to depart for thirty-nine and UMT Markhors half the side back in the hut for 102.*

In the above example, the code gloss "mean" gives the outcome of slow running to articulate it precisely. The commentators make sure that the commentary is comprehended by the audience through the connection being presented by relating the action to its consequences. The marker

enhances the logical flow of the commentary as an intersection between observation and explanation.

11: *So the front foot check is absolutely fine **in fact** all behind the line and uh Abdul Samad will have to depart. It's once again been the batters themselves.*

"In fact" in this instance highlights the accuracy and reliability of the prior assertion to reinforce its precision. This marker helps to verify the observation's actual foundation, giving an element of validation to the remarks.

Interactional Markers

Hedges

12: *They were desperate to break this partnership Karachi Kings and in the third overcame **about** a soft dismissal left hand of Munro walking back after scoring nine. It's twenty-eight for one.*

The word "about" was used to suggest an approximation of the phrase "a soft dismissal." It indicates that Pakistani commentators give an interpretation that is subjective instead of conveying a certain and definite statement about Munro's rejection. By using the word "about," the commentator is trying to avoid overcommitment to the statement's accuracy.

13: *They've got a good batting lineup they have got Muhammad Amir and Hasnain back in place of Sohail Khan and Wasim Junior but what **would** be really interesting for me is the spin trio.*

A tentative statement about the commentator's enthusiasm in the spin triple is presented by the utilization of "would" as a hedge marker. The word "would" conveys the commentator's perspective rather than articulating the real truth by suggesting that the statement is hypothetical and personal. This reduces the boldness of the statement, which helps the viewers on the subject without seeking definite consent.

14: *Could be a wicket here **could** be a wicket here big appeal from uh the Lahore Qalandars bowler wicket keeper everyone gone up and uh review is taken straight away.*

The use of a hedge marker "could" convey the possibility of a wicket eventually rather than showing the certainty of the outcome. Through the employment of this marker, Pakistani commentators show the unpredictability of the event and avoid the probability of overstating the statement that the wicket is being taken away.

Boosters

15: *This is their combination he just mentioned. Shadab two changes good addition all around he is an all-rounder Arafat as **really** and let's have a look at the Nurpur Lions being led by Shaheen Shah Afridi.*

In this instance, "really" expresses the commentator's strong confidence in Arafat's skill as an all-around player and in the value of the modifications. The use of "really" by Pakistani commentators is to inform the viewers about the certainty of the statement based on the knowledge and the perception.

16: *More runs this one **should** be a boundary. Reverse good connection and a foul for a moment. Is hit it in the air has he got the gap oh brilliant work absolutely brilliant ran across made sure he caught it and then passed it back.*

The word "should" conveyed an abundance of hope depending on the commentators' judgment of the movement and shot quality. Since it allows the space for ambiguity and also expresses the confidence in the outcome that is expected.

17: *Action continues at the National Bank Cricket Stadium third game here third game for the home side in Karachi **of course** and they'll want to get on winning ways they need to chase down*

190 Shan Masood versus David Willy and if you're one for matchups will has gotten him four times in all T20s.

The term "of course" shows the commentator's opinion that the statement is evident and widely appreciated. It pays attention to the desires that are unavoidable with their circumstances, and the openers' team is motivated to do well. This marker develops an impression of shared comprehension between the speaker and the listener.

Attitude markers

*18: Not given out and then Malik just hitting it nice and straight with full blade hit hard one bounce into the boundary what an **important** boundary in the context of the game they needed that that was desperation from Malik.*

In this example, "important" plays the role of attitude marker by communicating the commentator's opinion toward the Shoaib Malik boundaries. By using this attitude marker, the commentator informs the audience about this critical situation while emotionally invested in the unfolding events.

*19: Again too full of this time **even** a better shot, was wait for the umpire probably a bounce to the fence.*

By emphasizing the fact that the shot surpasses the previously established benchmark, the term "even" signifies the commentator's appreciation for this action. The skills shown in the shot were highlighted by commentators' evaluation and provide depth. This makes the statement more interesting and accessible to understand for the listener.

*20: Now you **have to** ask the bowler, batter was under pressure with those two top deliveries, why did he need to change the line or the length, there he goes wide and that's cut into the gap for four, the fun continues here for Islamabad United. [Applause]*

The term "have to" indicates that bowler decision making is a subject to be judged and required for the observation. This shows that the decision of the bowler is not good enough for the moment and it expresses the commentator's critical opinion. This demonstrates the tactical choice of these markers for the better comprehension of the audience.

Engagement markers

*21: There is one fielder on the onside in terms of the fielder at mid-on here we **go** action time.*

The term "go" was used to indicate the commencement of a thrilling endeavor decisively and swiftly. As this marker "go" motivates the viewers and amplifies their anticipation while improving the experience of the audience to watch the match and to engage in it.

*22: Because of what we've been talking **about** the kind of impact these two destructive men bring about and Alex Hales probably right up there in terms of destruction with the bat sky this one nicely held by Kush Dil Shah and in terms of matchups now David Willey can add one more to that you' got him out six times now and not for two too many just the two tonight for Alex Hales. Islamabad nine for one.*

In the above example, as a discourse connector, the word "about" evokes the prior discussion and provides new insights regarding the player's possible effect. Through promoting the spectators to think about the previous discussion, it creates a bridge between the early and present conversation. This improves the discourse analytical rhythm and keeps them engaged in the match.

*23: He's picked him up and he's picked him up proper read the lent very early standing tall or you might suffer, and this will be a take yes taken **look at** Ali Raza enjoy his first wicket have a look he has a few words to say very run an Naveed like he is one of his students.*

Through guiding the audience's focus to a specific point of analysis, the engagement marker "look at" stresses the responsibility to look at the player and how he enjoys his wicket to engage the audience and emphasize the certain topic that is under discussion during the event.

Self-mention

24: While I absolutely agree with unorthodoxy and improvisation in T20 cricket.

The use of "I" in the commentary by Pakistani commentators in this example shows the prominence of the commentator's individual perspective. As the commentator expresses his own perspective, it reduces the gap between the commentator and the spectators and connects with them.

25: Yeah, you're right and my bad that was a good shout and rightly so give it out four, three that's a huge scalp captain goes ninety-three for five.

In the expression "my bad," "my" is employed as a self-mention marker when commentators realize the mistake and neglect. This marker makes the commentary relatable for the audience. This creates the connection between the audience and the listener.

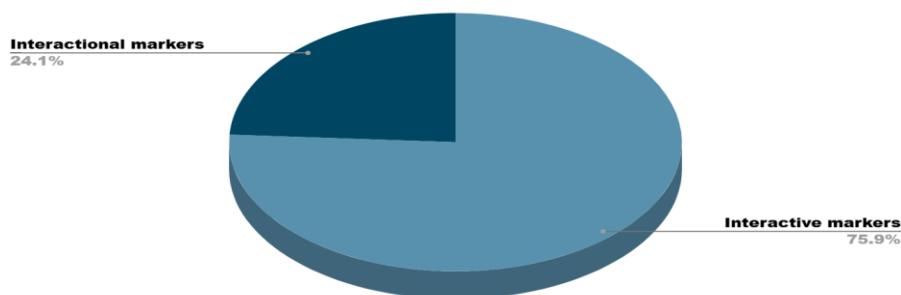
26: So, the Lake City Panthers have won the toss and of course we all know they've decided to bat first. [Music]

The marker "we" in the example (26) develops an impression of common knowledge and agreement between the commentator and spectators. This shows the expression of mutual decision to agree on that they choose to bat first.

Concluding Remarks

This section explains the findings of the study by addressing the research questions and objectives and illustrating the sanctions, frequencies, and significance of exploring these markers in the cricket commentary employed by Pakistani commentators to shape the audience's understanding. Graphical representation illustrates the metadiscourse markers used in cricket commentary by Pakistani commentators. The distribution and prevalence of different types of markers can be visually insightful in these charts, which help to understand their frequency and reveal the types of markers.

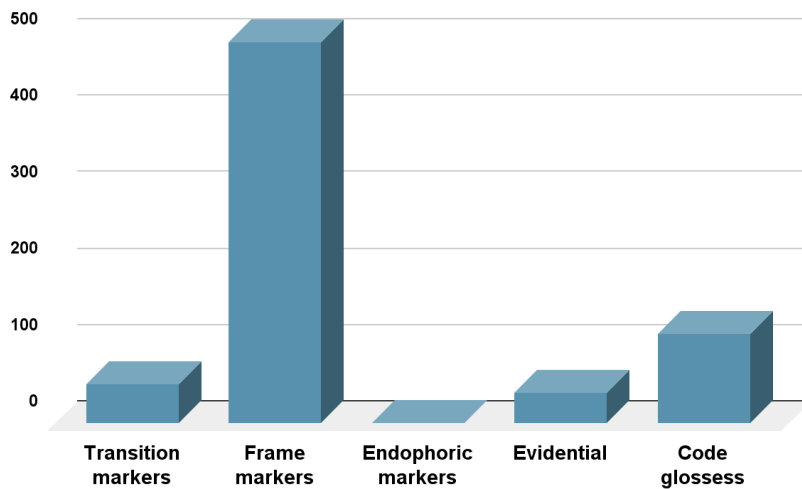
Figure 1: Graphical representation of Metadiscourse markers in cricket commentary



The use of interactional and interactive metadiscourse markers employed by Pakistani commentators in cricket commentary is shown in figure 1 which highlights the overall distribution. According to quantitative analysis international markers occur with 2243 occurrences more often

than interactive markers with 711 occurrences . This dominance indicates the unpredictable and interactive nature of the cricket commentary emphasizing the audience engagement and offering real time insight.

Figure 2: Graphical representation of Interactive markers in cricket commentary



The subcategories of interactive markers and their distribution are displayed in figure 2. The majority of this category was made up of frame markers, with 500 occurrences. These markers guide the viewers through the sequence of actions, organize the conversation, and are important for brevity. Other categories are evidential markers (41 occurrences), transition markers (52 occurrences), endophoric markers (1 occurrence), and code glosses (117 occurrences). To develop an understandable narrative for the spectator shows the deliberate use of frame markers by Pakistani commentators to organize the commentary.

Figure 3: Graphical representation if interactional markers in cricket commentary

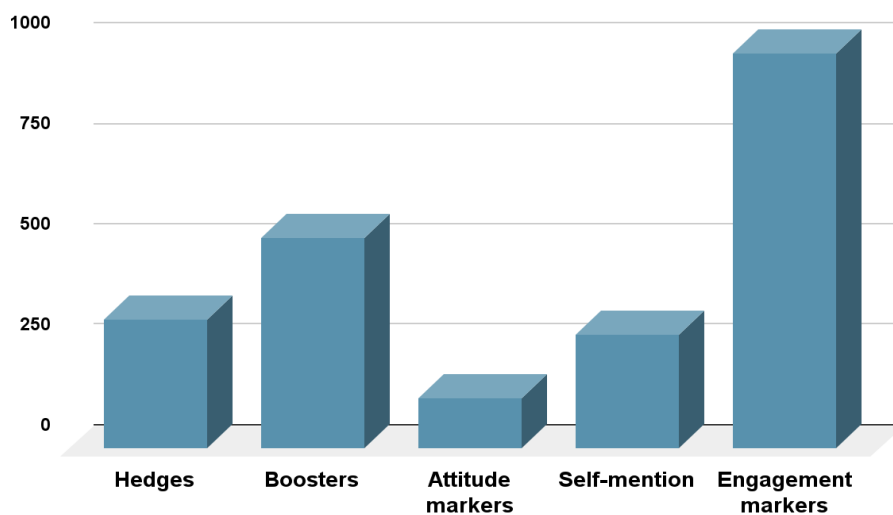


Figure 3 shows the distribution of interactional markers, where engagement markers are the most frequent, with 984 occurrences. To develop a participatory setting and to communicate with the audience directly and to involve them in the fast-paced game, engagement markers are important. Boosters (526 instances), self-mention (285 instances), attitude markers (126 instances), and hedges (322 occurrences) are other notable categories. The Pakistani commentators used these markers to connect with the audience and increase their enthusiasm.

This study identified 2,954 metadiscourse markers in Pakistani cricket commentary, categorized into interactive (711) and interactional markers (2,243), with the latter being more dominant. Among interactive markers, frame markers (500) were most frequent, helping structure the discourse and guide audience understanding. Engagement markers (984) were the most prevalent interactional markers, showing commentators' active efforts to involve the audience during crucial game moments. Other interactional markers, such as boosters, hedges, attitude markers, and self-mentions, were also employed to express certainty, flexibility, emotional tone, and personal stance, making the commentary more vivid and relatable.

These findings align partially with Aleksander's (2019) broader comparative study on sports commentary, confirming the uniqueness of this register. However, this research contributes specifically by focusing on the linguistic strategies of Pakistani commentators in real-time cricket commentary. It highlights how these markers reflect the spontaneous, fast-paced nature of the genre and enhance clarity, coherence, and engagement. The study successfully meets its objectives and fills a gap in the literature on spoken metadiscourse in sports contexts.

Future recommendations include expanding the corpus to other sports for comparative analysis and exploring metadiscourse use in different languages to uncover cultural and linguistic variations. Additionally, investigating audience perceptions of metadiscourse markers could provide deeper insight into their effectiveness in enhancing communication and viewer engagement. These directions would enrich the understanding and application of metadiscourse in sports broadcasting.

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