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**INTERACTIONAL METADISOURSE MARKERS  
IN DENTISTRY CASE REPORTS  
МЕТАДИСКУРСИВНІ МАРКЕРИ ВЗАЄМОДІЇ  
У СТАТТЯХ – ОПИСАХ КЛІНІЧНИХ ВИПАДКІВ У СТОМАТОЛОГІЇ**

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Metadiscourse is essential in creating and organizing persuasive discourse, taking into account the norms and expectations of parties involved. The purpose of this study is to explore the use of interactional (interpersonal) metadiscourse markers in dentistry case reports, analyze their functions within the text, and evaluate their effectiveness in establishing the writer's credibility and authority in managing textual interactions. The research material included a collection of 60 clinical case reports sourced from special dentistry journals for 2017 – 2022. The largest share of all lexical interactional metadiscourse markers is represented by hedges, attitude markers are nearly one-third as much, while self-mentioned markers, and, especially, boosters and engagement markers are underrepresented. Deliberate, cautious expressions of scientific claims mainly achieved in the dentistry case reports by using hedges can bring in establishing credibility more than authoritative stances. The prevalence of hedges can be a way for dental professionals to indicate that their statements are not absolute or definitive. This is particularly important in a field like dentistry, where there may be multiple treatment options or varying levels of certainty about diagnoses. Attitude markers are used to evoke agreement among readers and create a sense of shared understanding, drawing the readers into a collaborative framework of agreement. Boosters as signals of confidence and certainty in the claims being made and engagement markers that propagate the author's view are barely present in the dentistry case reports. Most of the interactional markers are located in the Discussion and Conclusion sections.

**Key words:** dentistry case reports, interactional metadiscourse, hedges, attitude markers, self-mention, boosters, engagement markers.

Метадискурс відіграє важливу роль у створенні та організації переконливого дискурсу, максимально враховуючи норми певного жанру, фактор адресата та адресанта. Мета запропонованої розвідки – дослідити використання інтерактивних (міжособистісних) маркерів метадискурсу в статтях – описах клінічних випадків у стоматології, визначити їхню роль у вибудовуванні зв'язку з аудиторією та встановленні належного професійно орієнтованого балансу в позиції автора між його компетентністю та загальним дисциплінарним фондом наукової спільноти. Матеріалом дослідження слугували 60 статей, відібраних зі спеціалізованих стоматологічних журналів за 2017 – 2022 роки. Дослідження показало, що

найбільшу частку серед усіх лексичних маркерів інтерактивного метадискурсу становлять маркери хеджування, майже третину від них складають маркери ставлення, тоді як маркери самозгадування, бустери (маркери посилення) та маркери залучення майже не представлені. Маркери хеджування у досліджуваному жанрі використовуються для зменшення категоричності висловлювань адресанта, зменшення ризику бути необ'єктивним та для демонстрації традиційної для наукової спільноти ввічливості. Маркери ставлення використовуються для м'якого навіювання читачам певної точки зору і створення відчуття спільного бачення проблеми, що поступово веде до процесу досягнення згоди. Маркери посилення як сигнали впевненості та визначеності у висловлених твердженнях, а також маркери залучення, які пропагують авторську точку зору, майже не присутні в досліджуваних текстах. Більшість інтерактивних маркерів виявлені в розділах "Обговорення" та "Висновки".

**Ключові слова:** стаття – опис клінічного випадку, дискурс стоматології, хеджування, маркери ставлення, маркери самозгадування, маркери посилення та залучення.

**Introduction.** Medical case reports serve as essential documents in the medical field, bringing to light very rare clinical phenomena, providing the description of a new treatment, adverse effect of medication, evidence that might suggest a new mechanism for a disease process, or a new intervention. The literature on case reports emphasizes the significance of these reports as a stepping stone for further trials and research. Though the medical case report as a genre has been in disfavour with the medical discourse community, at present, it is considered as an important tool in scientific communication, providing a unique narrative of the medical problem, clinical presentation, diagnosis, treatment of a patient and treatment outcomes. F. Salager-Meyer (1994, p. 152) classifies clinical case reports as one of the four major types of written medical texts, together with editorials, review articles, and research papers. The growing importance of clinical case reports contributing to the evidence-base medicine had led to so-called a “renaissance of the case report literature” (Smalheiser et al, 2015; van der Wall, 2016). K. Akers (2016, p. 147) states that “the revaluation of case reports has taken place both in general medical journals and in journals founded solely to publish cases”. B. Hurwitz (2017, p. 65) underlines that “Modern clinical case reports are problem-solution accounts of how an individual’s felt experiences of illness have come to be understood in terms of disease categories. Authored almost invariably by those who have played some part in the medical assessment of the patient, published case reports are crafted statements of witness marked by scene-setting strategies and graphic descriptions of clinical findings”.

Dentistry case reports are a form of medical case report that focuses specifically on dental cases. At present, there is a growing global attention towards the importance of maintaining good oral health. Oral diseases are still a major public health problem in high income countries and the burden of oral disease is growing in many low- and middle income countries. Poor oral health is known to be associated with various systemic diseases, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and even certain types of cancer, not to mention that poor oral health can have a significant impact on an individual's quality of life and self-esteem. Thus, increased attention towards oral health, as well as bioengineering advances in dentistry promote the growth in the publication of clinical case reports, which describe individual cases of oral health conditions, ranging from routine dental treatments to more complex cases involving dento-facial surgical interventions. Database (MEDLINE, PubMed, Scopus) searching for 2018 – 2021 has revealed about 150 Scopus-indexed journals in the category of dentistry, oral surgery and medicine that typically include clinical case reports, represented under the special headings, e.g. “Practice” in *BDJ*, “Clinical Dentistry” in *JADA*, “Case Reports” in *Journal of Dentistry*. There is the number of dentistry journals exclusively publishing clinical case reports, e. g. *Case Reports in Dentistry* (India), *Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Cases* (Japan), *Journals of Case Reports in Dental Medicine* (Indonesia), *Case Reports in Dental & Oral Biology* (India). Nevertheless, the genre of dentistry case report seems as underrated by linguists and discourse analysts. The literature contains a wealth of scientific reports addressing the language, style, and genre features of medical case reports (Nissen and Wynn, 2014; Hung et al, 2010; Spafford et al, 2006; Lysanets et al, 2017), but only a few efforts have been made to specify the generic characteristics of dentistry case reports (Mijomanovic, 2021).

Dentistry case reports as any other genres of professional dentistry discourse are characterized by an abundance of specialized terminology, coupled with convoluted syntactic arrangements, and adhere to genre-specific and academic conventions. Metadiscourse markers are considered a crucial element of effective academic writing, and their absence can undermine the credibility and professionalism of the text. Based on the literature of metadiscourse resources, they have been extensively investigated in the context of scientific texts such as biology, architecture, and engineering, and in social texts of psychology, mass communication, linguistics and literature, business, while the literature on the metadiscourse in dentistry professional discourse is relatively limited (Kostenko, 2022; Kostenko and Solohor, 2022; Khalili and Sattarpour, 2020). Therefore, there is a need for investigating the role of metadiscourse markers in this specific context. Understanding how and why dentistry clinicians use these markers can provide valuable insights into the conventions and expectations of writing in dentistry. This study seeks to explore the use of interactional (interpersonal) metadiscourse markers in dentistry case reports, analyze their functions within the text, and evaluate their effectiveness in establishing the writer's credibility and authority in managing textual interactions.

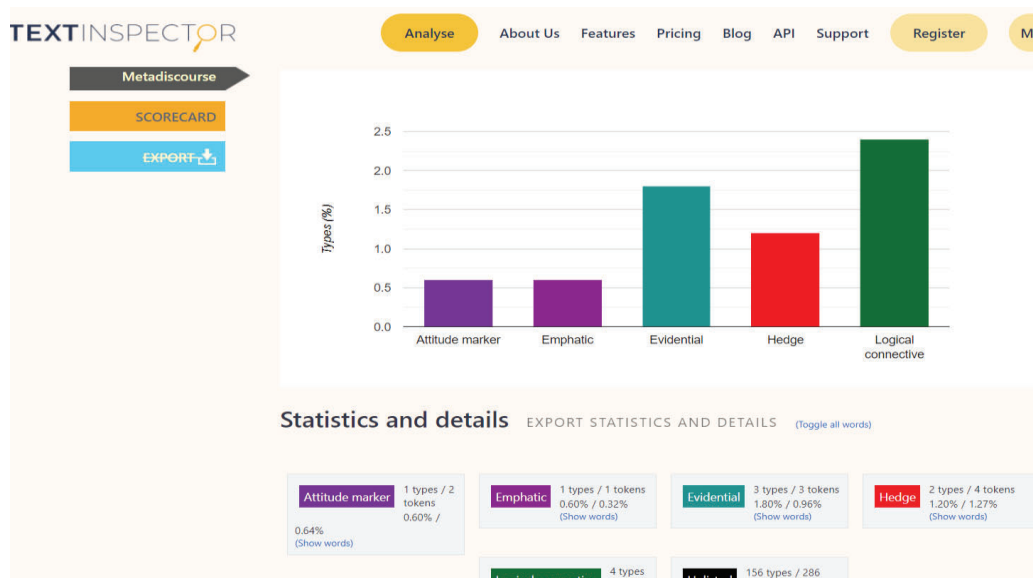
**Materials and Methods.** The focus of this study, which is both descriptive and exploratory in nature, is to elucidate natural phenomena observed in texts. The research material included a collection of 60 clinical case reports sourced from ranked dentistry journals, such as *Case Reports in Dentistry*, *Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Cases*, *Contemporary Clinical Dentistry*, *Journal of Research in Dentistry*, *Journal of Dentistry*, and *Dentistry Journal* for 2017 – 2023.

To investigate interactional metadiscourse markers, the following methods, which can help capture the nuances and complexities of how writers use language to engage with readers and present their ideas, were used: content analysis for identifying and categorising the interactional markers in the texts; discourse analysis, focusing on the ways in which language is used in context to create meaning and interact with readers.

The Hyland metadiscourse model (2005, p. 49) was used to identify and classify metadiscourse markers exploited in the dentistry case reports (CR) texts. The CR texts were closely examined to identify interactional markers and their frequency, and then analyzed in terms of their meaning and function.

All texts were scrutinised word by word and, in addition, processed using Text Inspector, a powerful web-based text analysis tool that provides reliable research-based information on a text's complexity, lexical composition, word frequency, character count, and more. This tool can recognize fourteen categories of metadiscourse markers based on S. Bax et al.'s classification (2019, p. 81), which was built upon Hyland's taxonomy (2005, p. 48–50). Findings on the metadiscourse markers per text are presented as both a table and a graph (splited into tokens and types) as given in the Photo 1.

Photo 1

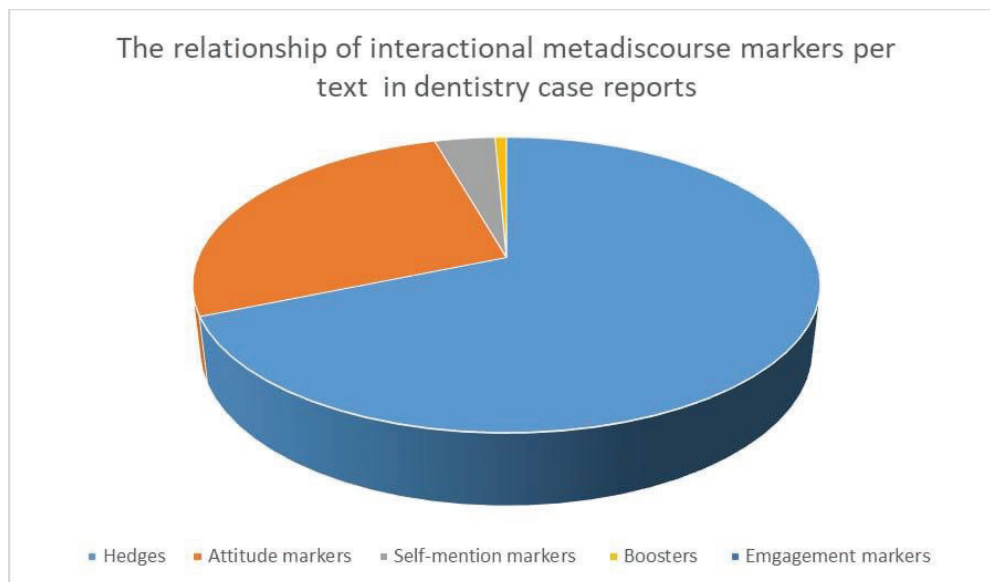


Metadiscourse analysis data obtained by applying *Text inspector* web tool

**Results and Discussion.** The choice of metadiscourse markers is influenced by a variety of factors, including, first of all, discourse type and genre conventions. In the broadest sense, medical intraprofessional discourse is “in and about healing, curing, or therapy; expressions of suffering; and relevant language ideologies” (Wilce, 2009. p 203); communicative purposes of clinical CR include coordination of care, diagnosis and treatment, patient safety, professional development, and conflict resolution. In terms of common structural properties of dentistry CR, it is important to indicate the following: the average word count of the texts is 1500 words, but can range from 900 to 2000 words that can be explained by the communicative purposes, for example, a case report can aim solely at providing diagnostic information, or serve more communicative goals, such as depicting the first reported case, elaborating on the treatment outcome, or bringing attention to a rare side effect. The textual macro-structure of DCR consists of four to five blocks: introduction, providing background information on the medical condition being discussed and explain why the case is significant; case presentation, giving a detailed description of the patient's medical history, examination findings, diagnostic tests, and treatment; discussion, interpret the case in light of relevant research and literature, highlighting any unique or unusual features of the case and their clinical significance; conclusion part, summarize the key findings of the case and their implications for clinical practice.

The findings obtained by the applying *Text instructor* demonstrate that the average percentage of overall metadiscourse per text makes up 9.22%. The interactional markers (5.13%), dealing with the expression of the opinion of the writer, and his / her relationship and interaction with the readers and performing the interpersonal metafunction by M. Halliday (Halliday, 1985 cited by and Van de Velde, 2010, p.130) are somewhat inferior to the interactive markers (4.09%) that assist the readers to navigate through the text and related to what M. Halliday called the textual metafunction. The interactional markers referring to the writer’s “explicit interventions to comment on and evaluate material” (Hyland and Tse, 2004, p. 168) split into five subcategories: hedges, boosters, self-mentions, engagement, and attitude markers. Figure 1 below shows the total frequency of their occurrence: most of all interactional metadiscourse markers are represented by hedges (68.3%), attitude markers constitute (26.7%), self-mention markers (3.7%), the parts of boosters and engagement markers are negligible.

Figure 1



The findings regarding the frequency of hedges in CR align with common patterns indicating that hedges are the most widely employed interactional markers in scholarly publications (Mojica, 2005; Gries and David, 2009; Elheki, 2018; Hyland, 2006; Hyland, 2007). Hedging is an important metadiscursive strategy for writers to mark their epistemic stance and position writer–reader relations in general and to reduce the force of propositional statements in particular. Hedges are used to negotiate



interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community. K. Hyland elaborated on the functional definition when he writes that hedges are “used to qualify a speaker’s confidence in the truth of a proposition [...] which we routinely add to our statements to avoid commitment to categorical assertions” (1998, p. 196). By J. Swales, edges are also used to distinguish facts from opinion, or “honesty, modesty and proper caution” (1990, p. 89), or to facilitate other possible perceptions from readers. In general, in the CR texts hedges let alternative voices come into play by putting the propositions under discussion.

Hedges in the CRs fall into two major categories: lexical and syntactic markers. The most common lexical hedging devices are represented by modal auxiliaries *might*, *can*, *will*, and *may* as the most often used:

*Intraorally, myofibroma presents as slow-growing painless mass with an intact overlying mucosa, but some **may** demonstrate rapid growth, which **may lead** to misdiagnosis as a sarcoma. Myofibroma of the gingiva **may** involve the underlying bone as the present case (Atarbashi-Moghadam et al, 2018).*

*GFAP **might** contribute to produce macro-complexes to start effective nerve renewal (Atarbashi-Moghadam et al., 2017).*

*Loss of dental tissue **can** also result in sensitivity, pulp necrosis, and pain (Prescinotti et al., 2022).*

*The effective alteration of the Gn-point to Co-point < ... > changing an angle NBA - PtGn at the time genioplasty **will generally** have a positive effect on the chins appearance (Logvynenko, Dakhno, 2018).*

Adverbs (*relatively, seemingly, generally*), including epistemic adjectives (*possible, certain, potential, probable*) and adverbs (*probably, likely, seemingly*), which are markers of epistemic modality and concerned with the writer’s assessment of the truth value of the proposition, rank the second position in the frequency per a CR article:

*On the other hand, to avoid **potentially** harmful consequences to the teeth, non- or minimally invasive treatment options have emerged. Although the exact etiology of bruxism is still uncertain and **probably** multifactorial, the consequences are varied and include temporomandibular disorders, headaches, <...> (Moreira et al., 2019).*

***Generally**, PEN/SCN is considered as a reactive hyperplastic course but the pathogenesis of this lesion remains unclear (Atarbashi-Moghadam et al., 2017).*

Epistemic verbs, adjectives and nouns are far less frequent per a CR text compared with the hedging adverbs:

*A 35-year-old man with non-contributory medical history presented to the endodontic clinic <...> for evaluation and **possible** treatment of tooth #43. (Alquthami et al, 2018).*

*Some authors **suggested** that placement of ceramics over the occlusal surfaces **can** lead to wear of the opposing dentition (Moreira et al., 2019).*

*Composite flaps also provide the **possibility** for stable dental rehabilitation with the use of dental implants in the neo mandible (Desai et al. 2020).*

In this study we have not investigated syntactic hedging in detail, although even a cursory glance at the articles suggests that it is quite widely used in modulating specialized discourse, especially by using passive voice constructions, if-clauses for hypothetical constructions, and that-clauses, impersonal subject + non-factive verb. We can presume that syntactic forms of hedging are generally used in dentistry case reports, as they are often used in academic writing to express caution or uncertainty about the findings or conclusions presented. However, it would require a comprehensive analysis of dentistry case reports to determine the types, frequency and extent of syntactic hedging used in this genre.

By their functions, lexical hedges in the CR text are typically exploited as shields and approximators (Salager-Meyer, 1994). Shields, devices used to avoid personal self-ascription and disclaim responsibility, are mainly represented by modal verbs and epistemic lexemes. Within the group of shields, we can distinguish a subcategory of hedges expressing personal doubt and direct involvement, also known as plausibility shields:

*Seemingly, our case was an example of extraosseous myofibroma with some evidence of underlying bone involvement (Atarbashi-Moghadam et al, 2018).*

*From our point of view segmental chin osteotomy is more accurate technique (Logvynenko, Dakhno, 2018).*

The next subcategory, known as “attribution shields”, which expresses the author’s attitude by citing others’ opinions indirectly, is less prevalent compared to the plausibility shields: *According to the literature, complicated crown-root fracture is common reason for tooth extraction because of consequent periodontal tissue involvement (Vignesh et al, 2018).*

As shields are hedges that change the relationship between propositional content and the speaker by implicating a level of uncertainty with respect to speaker’s commitment, approximators are hedges that affect the content of a proposition (Chen and Zhang, 2017). Approximators found in the CR texts are used to express degree, quantity, frequency and time:

*This lesion is **usually** detected in the posterior mandible of women, **predominantly** in the fifth decade of life (Mashhadiabbas et al, 2023).*

*Nowadays, this problem **can be slightly** overruled by means of specific preprosthetic and -implant guiding software (Moreira et al. 2019).*

*That surgical procedure has **some** disadvantages: aesthetic deformation in the form of an hourglass and step like shape of the mandible contour (Logvynenko, Dakhno, 2018).*

Our findings demonstrate the shields in the CR text are more preferable than approximators that, in our opinion, can be attributed to the following reasons. First, shields help to maintain objectivity: dentistry case reports as a genre of academic writing aim to provide a factual and objective account of a patient's condition and treatment. Using shields allows the writer to maintain objectivity and avoid making unfounded or exaggerated claims. Secondly, case reports often deal with uncertain or complex situations where the authors may not have complete confidence in the accuracy of their statements therefore the shields may be used to indicate that the authors are not fully committed to the truth of their propositions, allowing them to express their ideas with greater caution and avoid making definitive claims that could later be proven incorrect. Furthermore, approximators may be perceived as imprecise or vague in clinical case reports where accuracy and specificity are important. According to a study by B. Fraser and K. Hyland, approximators are less common in medical research articles than other types of hedges, such as shields and boosters (Fraser, 2010; Hyland, 2005). Our findings align with Hyland's research (Hyland, 2005), which suggests that shields are frequently employed in medical research articles to convey a sense of uncertainty and mitigate the force of assertions. As for their distribution throughout the CR texts, they are densely located in the discussion section: this is because the discussion sections often present contentious claims that require more negotiation between writer and reader and consider alternative perspectives.

Attitude markers have been found as the second frequently used interactional markers (26.7%) in the dentistry CRs. In the study, we consider these markers in the most general sense as words that convey the writer's opinion, evaluation, or attitude towards the information presented in the text. According to R. Hyland (2008, p. 5), attribute metadiscourse can be defined as the writer's textual voice or recognized personality within a community, and it can aid in shaping the assessment within clinical case reports. Evaluation in the dentistry CRs is emphasized and enhanced by employing attitude markers appearing in the form of adjectives (e.g. *important, excellent, successful, difficult*), attitudinal verbs (e.g. *expect, prefer, agree*), adverbs (e.g. *only, dramatically, essentially, unfortunately, importantly*), and attitudinal nouns (e.g. *importance, significance, lack, disadvantages*):

*Intra-socket transplantation of a natural tooth has **significant** advantages over bridge replacement or dental implant treatment (Khaiat, 2019).*

*Another **important** part of HRQoL is dental rehabilitation to achieve optimal occlusion (Smeets et al., 2018).*

*GFAP **might contribute** to produce macro-complexes to start effective nerve renewal (Parize et al, 2022).*

*A medium grit diamond bur with rounded edge was used to **ensure** a minimum axial wall thickness for zirconia (Moreira et al., 2019).*

*Best results in dental rehabilitation are achieved using bone grafts with soft tissue reconstruction, although the number of successful dentate reconstructions can be **disappointing** (Salviano et al., 2023).*

*Unfortunately, not everyone has the financial means to afford multiple dental implants, so if implants are too expensive then, subsequently, this **favours** hard tissue reconstruction with patient-specific plates only (Smeets et al., 2019).*

Attitudinal lexicon in the CRs is employed to convey the author's perspective on the significance or relevance of the case, to focus on the critical evaluation of diagnosis and treatment approaches, treatment outcomes (*important, significant, disappointing, contribute, ensure, favour*) and to guide the reader's interpretation of the presented case or findings using adverbs like (*importantly, notably, interestingly, etc.*), to draw attention to specific aspects of the case. The use of attitude markers in CRs appears to evoke agreement among readers and creates a sense of shared understanding, drawing the readers into a collaborative framework of agreement. Attitude metadiscourse markers are mostly found in the Discussion and Conclusion sections, though can be present in the Introduction as well.

Other interactional markers in the dentistry CRs are far less significant in organizing the text: self-mentions make up 3.7%, while boosters and engagement markers make up negligible shares of 0.7% and 0.6% per text respectively, therefore they are left out of the study. Boosters, words used to strengthen or emphasize a point or argument, and engagement markers may be seen as unnecessary or even inappropriate dentistry case reports, which are often written in a formal and technical style that emphasizes precision and accuracy over persuasive language.

Academic writings are often regarded as objective and impersonal kind of writing, but recent literature states that given the competitive nature of research articles, authors must effectively showcase their authorial identity using various linguistic means, including self-mentioned markers, which are represented by the personal pronouns. In the dentistry CRs, we have found out the first person pronoun *we* and personal pronoun *our* as the most frequently used, while the pronoun *I* is sporadic, and *my* or *me* have not been detected at all:

*Herein, **we** report the new rare case of CGCOT in the anterior area of maxilla in a 39-year-old female. Subsequently, **we** provide a literature review of all published cases (51 cases) of CGCOT (Mashhadiabbas et al., 2023).*

*As a result of that variant of osteotomy **we** will receive few advantages:<...>. Regarding the clinical, radiological, and aspiration examinations, odontogenic tumors including ameloblastoma and odontogenic myxoma were considered in **our** differential diagnosis list (Desai et al., 2020).*

These self-mention markers are used in stating purpose, results of the study, or elaborating arguments. They allow the authors to establish their credibility and expertise in the field by highlighting their own involvement in the case. They can also provide important contextual information about the case, such as the author's relationship with the patient:

*Asymmetric and painful expansion in **our** patient and the absence of a similar disease in his familial history due to the autosomal dominant inheritance pattern, as well as the lack of nodular lymph nodes, can be used to rule out cherubism (Mohammadi et al., 2023).*

The scholarly literature on metadiscourse emphasizes that utilizing self-mention markers contributes to creating more engaging and personalized narrative. Although not significant in the texts of dentistry case reports as well as in some genres of natural and hard sciences, which tend to be more fact-oriented and objective, self-mentioned markers can facilitate networking and self-promotion, as well as foster relationships with other professionals within the industry (Livingstone, 2019; Firdaus et al, 2021). It is noteworthy that interactional resources can also be used to modify each other. In the dentistry CRs, we revealed some hedged attitude markers:

*In complicated crown-root fractures, the tooth **might be seriously** compromised structurally and therefore, **restoration can be quite challenging** (Prescinotti et al 2022).*

*But it **can be a concern** as they grow to reach unusual dimensions and displace teeth (Mohammadi et al, 2023).*

This combination may be exploited to mitigate writer's stance, thus establishing more respectful tone with readers, but this aspect requires more refined investigation.

**Conclusions.** The analysis of interactional metadiscourse recourses, which are more overtly related to interpersonality, in the dentistry case reports enables to gain valuable insights into the social interactions that take place between professionals within a particular field and the broader socio-cultural context in which the interaction takes place. By using interactional metadiscourse, the writers present their authorial voice to the content and readers. The frequency of the five types of interactional markers (hedges, attitude markers, boosters, self-mention and engagement markers) and their functions in the dentistry case reports do not differ considerably from those in the conventional genres of natural and hard sciences.

Deliberate, cautious expressions of scientific claims mainly achieved in the dentistry case reports by using hedges can bring in establishing credibility more than authoritative stances. The prevalence of hedges can be a way for dental professionals to indicate that their statements are not absolute or definitive. This is particularly important in a field like dentistry, where there may be multiple treatment options or varying levels of certainty about diagnoses. Attitude markers are used to evoke agreement among readers and create a sense of shared understanding, drawing the readers into a collaborative framework of agreement. Boosters as signals confidence and certainty in the claims being made and engagement markers that propagate the author's view are barely present in the dentistry case reports.

The study of the lexical hedges, attitude markers and self-mention markers does not cover the full range of interpersonality in the dentistry case reports, which can also be established through syntactical means and even paralinguistic means, for examples, visuals (figures, tables, or photos). This study is an attempt to exploring the multifaceted nature of metadiscourse in the texts, which have not been previously investigated.

Further research of metadiscourse interactional markers in dentistry discourse can provide valuable insights into the communication practices of dental professionals, and can inform efforts to improve communication and patient care in the field of dentistry.

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**PECULIARITIES OF THE REPRODUCTION OF IDIOMS  
IN MULTIPLE UKRAINIAN TRANSLATIONS  
ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ВІДТВОРЕННЯ ІДИОМ  
У МНОЖИННИХ УКРАЇНСЬКИХ ПЕРЕКЛАДАХ**

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The purpose of scientific research is to investigate the appropriateness of using translation transformations for the adequate reproduction of idioms in multiple Ukrainian translations of the same literary work in order to compare and identify isomorphic and allomorphic features in the compared Ukrainian translations by M. Rudnytsky, D. Radienko and O. Andriyash. Since idioms present certain difficulties in reproducing their structure, semantics and functioning in a literary discourse, a number of Ukrainian translators used adequate translation techniques differently in order to preserve the original style of the novel under analysis. Despite numerous differences in Ukrainian translations, each of the translators tried to convey the peculiarities of the use of idioms for giving a Ukrainian reader a vivid description of literary characters, their actions, feelings, depicting events and phenomena by means of selecting accurate idiomatic expressions.