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Abstract

The current study attempts to analyze the sports sections of Pakistani and American newspapers' most common hedges and boosters. The sports news stories were pulled from three prestigious newspapers, The New York Times, Al Jazeera, of America, and the Express Tribune, which is published in Pakistan. Based on Hyland's (2005) taxonomy of meta-discourse markers, the data was analyzed. From the corpus, the hedges and boosters were extracted using Meta Pak (Abbas, Shehzad, and Ghalib, 2017) software. Graphs were used to show how often certain hedges and boosters occurred. To examine the writer's point of view, the researchers dissected and analyzed these hedges and boosters. Following a manual study of these terms' collocations in the corpus, it was discovered that 'never' and 'believe' are used as boosters in national newspapers 8, and 4 percent of the time, respectively. The study's findings revealed that the most frequently occurring hedge was "about," and the most frequently occurring boosters markers were "never" and "believe." The survey also showed that 'about' and 'would' occur 18, and 9 percent of the time respectively as hedges in international newspapers' sports sections. 'Always' and 'Know' are used as boosters 12, and 13 percent of the time respectively. After the data was analyzed, it was discovered that the employment of hedge markers by both national and international writers demonstrated his position of writing with caution and care. In many circumstances, the authors are less secure in their statements and opinions because they do not want to commit themselves to the assertions. According to the research, the writer's voice is confident when using boosters. It also demonstrated how the author's voice came across as assured and assertive. The study's findings also showed that hedges and boosters can change the tone and veracity of the writers in sports sections of national and international newspapers. According to the research, hedges, and boosters in Pakistani newspapers exhibited signs of fuzziness and uncertainty, whereas, in American newspapers, they were interpreted to signify both positive and bad things. Furthermore, it usually adopts a speculative and approximate tone.

Keywords: Hedges, Boosters, Meta Discourse Markers, Hyland's Taxonomy, Meta Pak

1. Introduction

We are encouraged to share our ideas and thoughts with the world through the complex tool of language. To make these thoughts and senses understandable, we constantly must organize them; in fact, we do it right now, as we give a speech. We use language to convey what we say at the time as well as to discuss and express it. Language is the tool used by researchers to represent what is located in our minds. Language has changed from being a major activity in social contexts to becoming a regular topic of discussion in numerous linguistics endeavors with the development and unification of technology. As a result, both spoken and written discourse markers were used by diverse studies. This understanding of language is acceptable and beneficial. Different discourse markers, such as hedges and boosters, are used by authors of numerous national and international newspapers to express their opinion and stance on an issue. Hedges show the writers' reluctance to present propositional data accurately and unambiguously (Hyland, 2004). Hedge strategies might also be employed to deflect accountability for the statement. Boosters are viewed as highlights that demonstrate the author's unwavering confidence in an argument (Holmes, 1982) or the conformation and unquestionable testimony of a notion (Abdi, Rizi, & Tarakoli, 2010). Boosters are expressions that use various adverbs to elevate various words, as well as intensifiers, which improve a term. Hedge means to alter one's mind about something or to stop subjecting oneself. Boosters demonstrate the author's conviction in his position. Hedging and boosting strategies, according to Mary M. Taibot (2010), are modal features that alter the strength of the assertion by either enhancing it or weakening it. These factors change an announcement's impact, either weakening it or amplifying it. The composition's style and tone are influenced by the hedges and the boosting. For any author to effectively communicate their epistemic perspective and position towards writer-reader communication, hedges, as well as boosters, are essential aspects (Cao & Hua, 2011). Therefore, it may be claimed that hedges and boosters are important attitude indicators that reveal the author's perspective on a certain environment.

The current study uses a corpus analysis tool to look into hedges and boosters in sports sections of Pakistani and American newspapers. A corpus is a compilation of naturally occurring linguistic data, either written or spoken, that can be used to describe linguistics or to test language-related theories (Crystal, 1999). The use of corpora in language study is a fundamental principle of corpus linguistics. A huge volume of text that can be read by computers is known as a computer corpus (Crystal, 1992). Corpus linguistics is "the scientific study of language using examples of real-life language use." (McEnry and Wilson, 1996). In corpus linguistics, a computer is used to quickly look through and analyze the real-language data that has been recorded. These data are kept in collections known as corpora. The British National Corpus (BNC) and the American National Corpus are two examples of well-known corpora at the moment.

Much research has been done on the employment of hedges and boosters in various genres. However, no substantial research has been done on the usage of hedges and boosters in the sports sections of national and international newspapers. Additionally, no one in the world has yet carried out the current research. The current study looks into the employment of hedges and boosters in sports sections of Pakistani and American newspapers. It also looks at the author's use of hedges and boosters. Through this study, academic discipline discourse learners will have the chance to strengthen and widen their understanding of the usage of hedges and boosters, as well as how these markers may be utilized to accurately and fully express and portray their stance. In both disciplines, abstracts are identified, shown, and proven in chronological order. Additionally, she discovered that publications tend to use modal auxiliary words like may and could as hedges most frequently.

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1.1. Research Questions

- How do hedges and boosters affect the tone and credibility of reporting sports news in national and international newspapers?
- Which sports section in national or international newspapers uses more hedges and boosters and what do they imply?

1.2. Significance of the Study

The current study is important in several ways. By utilizing these interpersonal traits, authors will be able to write sports pieces more efficiently. It will also help the author by demonstrating their point of view. It will strengthen your decision-making skills and persuade the reader. Hedge and booster usage differs culturally and in some specific fields and genres. As a corpus-based study that will instruct scholars on using and analyzing corpora, it will be beneficial to the academic discourse discipline.

1.3. Delimitation of study

The study is limited to only three newspapers two international and one national and the time zone for the collection of data is also delimited to November and December 2022 sports section related to FIFA World Cup 2022.

2. Literature Review

An article regarding the assessment of hedges and boosters in Pakistani articles of opinion was written in 2019 by Batool, Majeed, and Zahra. It was a corpus-based study that examined 50 opinion pieces with a combined word count of 47927. She examines the boosters and hedges from the standpoint of the meta-discourse markers. She observed a tiny difference in the frequency of the hedges and boosters during the study by using Hyland's model and the MetaPak tools. The Pakistani authors used 457 hedges and 480 boosters to express their opinions and personal attitudes toward various circumstances and concerns. According to the current study, Pakistani authors utilize hedges and boosters to express their opinions and personal convictions. They can use certain hedging markers to demonstrate their dedication and guarded demeanor. The same conclusion applies to boosters. Boosters are used for boosting, as their name suggests. Authors employ boosting indicators to convey their level of assurance in their words and assertions. However, if a booster is used properly, the author may argue and motivate the reader to his point. The employment of the modal verbs as hedges and boosters is also recognized in the study to be more significant than the use of the other hedging and boosting markers.

Aquino (2014) did research on hedges in high school students' campus journalism pieces from the Philippines that appeared in their newspaper Issues. The information was gathered from the most recent newspaper issue for 2011. The study determined the forms, purposes, and consequences of hedging employed in these articles. The study's conclusions showed that editorial articles that were regulated and mitigated were where hedges were utilized most frequently. Additionally, reliability hedges—which express a writer's level of assurance or ambiguity in a claim—were frequently utilized 37 (401.22%), whereas attribute hedges—which express a writer's intention to convey a claim with more precision—were more frequently employed 62 (7.39%).

Hidiyati (2019) opined in her article on the functions of hedges and boosters as rhetoric devices in the constructive speeches of politicians from two different cultural backgrounds. She finds that both hedges and boosters were used by the speakers, with different distributions and pragmatic functions. She suggests that the distribution of hedges and boosters in the speeches may reflect the speakers' rhetorical strategies, such as emphasizing or downplaying the importance of a proposition. Linguistic devices are commonly used in persuasive discourse to mitigate or strengthen the truth values of propositions. She finds that hedges and boosters can be used strategically to construct persuasive speeches that appeal to the audience's emotions and reasoning.

Al-Ghoweri (2019) compared the use of hedges and boosters in economic articles from Jordanian Arabic and English newspapers. He chose 60 items, 30 from an Arabic daily and 30 from an English one. An analysis of the corpus was done. By using the Mayer (1997) model for the analysis of hedges and the Hyland (2005 model) for the analysis of boosters. According to the study's findings, there are some overlaps and contrasts between the two languages' usage of boosters and hedges. According to the results, economic articles in English tended to utilize modal auxiliaries and approximations while economic articles in Arabic tended to use lexical verbs and approximations. In terms of boosting techniques, English articles tended to utilize amplifiers whereas Arabic articles tended to use emphatic. Both languages barely used universal pronouns.

Numerous studies have been done to demonstrate the benefits and uses of hedges and boosters. They can be examined and explored in various contexts. In the research paper abstracts of English and Education, Zafar (2018) looked at the meta-discursive characteristics of hedges and boosters. She discovered that the most frequent stimulants in both disciplines, abstracts are identified, shown, and proven in chronological order. Additionally, she discovered that publications tend to use modal auxiliary words like may and could as hedges most frequently.

3. Research Methodology

The data for the current study were collected from the sports section of mass-circulated Pakistani and American English newspapers. Two leading newspapers one from Pakistan and one from America were selected for the extraction of data Express Tribune, The Newyork Times, and Al Jazeera. The selected date is for FIFA Worldcup 2022 from the duration of November and December 2022. The data has been cleaned to put in META PAK software to analyze the frequencies and percentages of hedges and boosters. Hedges and boosters were then analyzed manually to see whether the selected Hedges and Boosters by the software are acting as discourse markers or not. The frequency of these hedges and boosters were then placed on an Excel sheet and a table of frequencies was made. Then these hedges and boosters were analyzed to understand what type of discourse markers are most used in the sports section of national and international newspapers. The rationale for this research is to find the different hedges and boosters in Pakistani and American newspapers' sports articles and to analyze the stance of a writer by using these hedges and boosters in writing sports articles.

3.1. Sampling Techniques and Size

The sample used for this study was obtained using practical sampling methods. The information was gathered randomly from sports articles that were published in local, national, and international publications. Quickly and effectively, the essential information was supplied. To develop the corpus and have a better representation and generalize of the results acquired, the researcher has chosen

sample sizes from Pakistani and American English newspapers. The corpus chosen for the current study includes words of various sizes.

3.2. Data Collection: Research Tool

Newspaper sports stories served as the source of the current study's qualitative data. The exploratory research approach is employed because the current study will examine the sports sections of Pakistani and American newspapers to determine what kinds of Hedges and Boosters are used and which publication employs discourse markers more frequently. The research instrument employed was MetaPak (Abbas, Shehzad, & Ghalib, 2017). As suggested by Hyland (2005), this research technique is particularly helpful in extracting and assessing the values and frequencies of textual and interpersonal aspects.

The current study employed corpus-based analysis, which obtained findings from a corpus of hedges and boosters in sports stories of Pakistani and American English Newspapers using a qualitative methodology. The frequencies collected from the MetaPak software were used by the researcher for quantitative analysis. Although the sample was randomly picked, the analysis was limited to newspapers that were published in November and December of 2022.

3.3. MetaPak

A corpus tool called MetaPak allows you to analyze any text's metadiscourse. The tool was created with Hyland's (2005) Taxonomy of Metadiscourse paradigm in mind. Finding frequencies, concordances, and normalized values is made easier using MetaPak. It fills the void left by earlier programs like WordSmith and AntConc.

3.4. Theoretical Framework

The current study is based on the well-known Taxonomy of Metadiscourse paradigm created by Hyland in 2005. The model is divided into two categories: interpersonal features and textual features. The model states that there are five other sorts of textual markers: logical connectives, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidential, and code glosses. The interpersonal elements are what draw the reader in and keep them reading. Hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions, and engagement markers are the five types in the interpersonal category. Only the two interpersonal traits of hedges and boosters are examined in the current study. Hedges are elements that show a writer's complete commitment to the sentence; examples include may, might, could, would, perhaps, some, and possible. Boosters are qualities that demonstrate a writer's assurance or highlight force; examples include must.

4. Data Analysis

The findings and a discussion of the data are covered in this section. Both qualitative and quantitative findings are being focused on here. In this, we explain the use of hedges and boosters separately.

4.1. Analysis of Boosters in the Sports Section of Express Tribune

The term “Boosters” are a type of Interactional Discourse Markers, coined by Linguist DEBORAH SCHIFFRIN in her book “Discourse Markers” published in 1987. In this context, boosters are words or phrases the speaker used to emphasize or strengthen the point they are making, often to indicate their commitment or confidence in what they are saying. Examples of Boosters used as Discourse Markers include “*certainly*”, “*indeed*”, “*absolutely*”, “*definitely*” and “*for sure*”.

Figure 1 below shows the occurrence of 16 boosters 38 times in the sports section of express tribune. The frequently occurring Boosters are “*never*” with a percentage of 8.22 and “*believe*” is used the most after Never with a percentage of 4.69. The remaining percentage is distributed among 14 other boosters. The least used Boosters are “*Know, Thought, and Certainly*” with a percentage of 1.17.

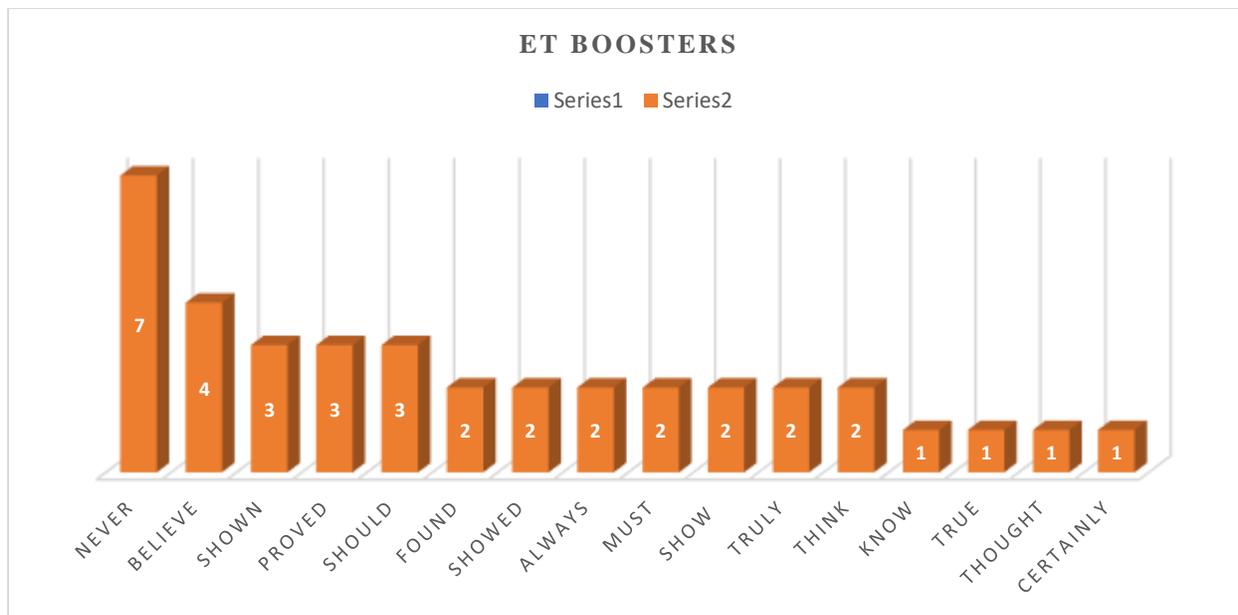


Figure 1

4.1.1. Examples of the Boosters from the National Newspaper Corpus

Analysis of the above data shows that the most frequently occurring booster is *Never* with a frequency of 7 along with that words like *Must, Should, and True* are also used. The use of *should must* type of boosters shows that the writer wants to give advice or make a suggestion. Let us analyze the most frequently used word *Never* in the sports section of Express Tribune. The word “*never*” can be considered as a discourse marker and negation marker. It is often used to express a strong negative opinion. The examples

taken from the corpus are shown below. In these examples, the word never is used by the writer to intensify the meaning of the sentence and emphasized his viewpoint.

*Perhaps the greatest ever group stage in the history of the tournament delivered a world cup first: Brazil had **never** lost to an African side before. It was a second-string side but Cameroon did not care.*

*The only country in the world to send soldiers to help provide security at the Qatar world cup. Assistance is **Never** free, especially from the Gulf. Pakistani policymakers have voiced feelings of pride in providing migrant labor and soldiers to Qatar*

After *Never*, *Believe* is the second most occurred word with a frequency of 4, used in the National corpus. *Believe* is a model verb that can also be used as a discourse booster to show confidence in what is being said. It shows that the writer is very sure about the accuracy of the statement he is writing and he is willing to defend it. This booster helps to structure a conversation and convey the speaker’s intention.

*And truly floored. They heaped pressure on the Japanese goal but the defense and goalkeeper Shuichi Gonda held on. “I **believe** it’s a historical moment, a historical victory to say the least”, said Japan coach Hajime Moriyasu, when asked about the Sang at the top of their voices and even took a jibe at the journalists from their country who did not **Believe** they would win the world cup.” Support the national team, support them to the death because I love Argentina, because*

Must is also a model verb that is used as a booster in the example given below. *Must* is used to convey a strong sense of obligation or necessity, emphasizing the importance of the point being made. By using “must” as a booster, writers can motivate readers to take action or recognize the urgency of a particular issue. “Must” is a word that can be used as a booster in writing to convey a strong sense of obligation or necessity. It can be used to emphasize the importance or urgency of a particular point or argument.

*South American champions would bounce back from the defeat.” it is a very heavy blow, a defeat that hurts but we **must** continue to have confidence in ourselves*

4.2. Analysis of Hedges in Express Tribune

Hedges are words or phrases that show uncertainty or qualification in a speech or writing. In their study of spoken discourse, Schiffrin et al.(2001) found that hedges are mostly used to mitigate the force of a statement, particularly in contexts where there is potential for disagreement or conflict.

According to Lakoff(1975), language can sometimes be used to “signal degrees of commitment” rather than to convey straightforward information.

Figure 2 shows the occurrence of 18 Hedges in the sports section of the National newspaper of a selected corpus of 16,763 words. These 18 hedges have a frequency of 62. The word “About” is used the most with a percentage of 12.92. After that “Would” is the second most occurred word with a percentage of 9.39. *Seems, unlikely, sometimes* are used the least with the same percentage of 1.17.

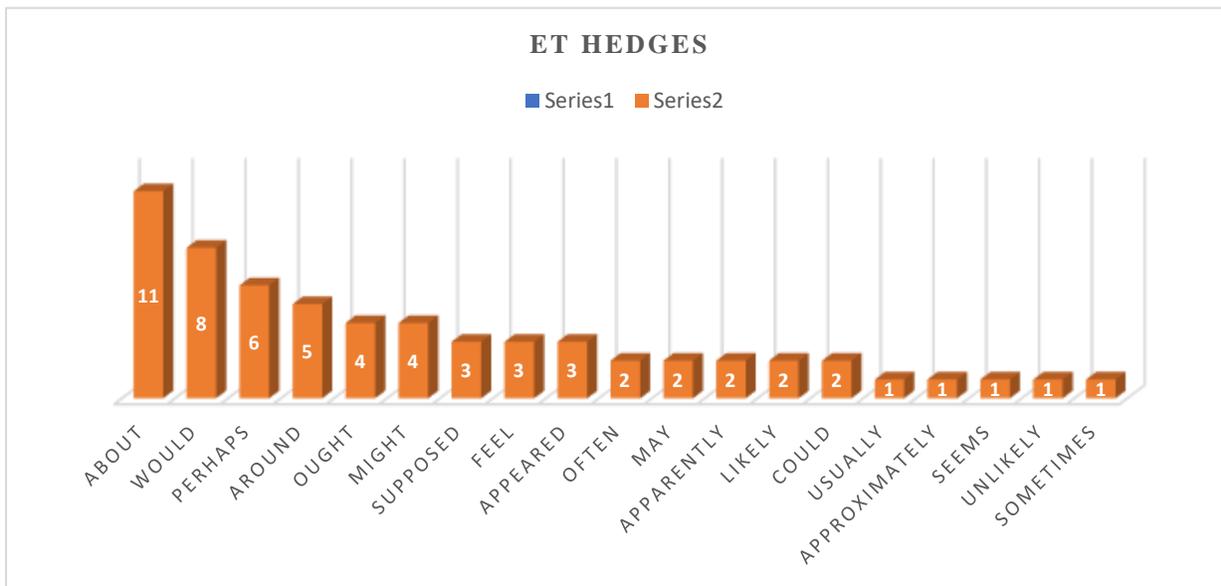


Figure 2

4.2.1. Examples of Hedges in National Corpus

Let us analyze the most frequent word About in the sports section of Express Tribune with a frequency of 11. “About” is a versatile word that can be used in many ways in writing, including as a hedge. As a hedge, “about” can be used to indicate that the writer is not making a strong or definitive statement, but rather is giving an approximation or estimate. It is used to convey a sense of approximation or estimation, indicating that the writer is not making a strong assertion about the exact number or cost. By using “about” as a hedge, writers can communicate a sense of flexibility or uncertainty while still conveying important information. When About is used as a hedge it softens or weakens the force of statement. It shows that the writer is not entirely confident about his claim and indicates a degree of uncertainty or lack of precision. It is a useful strategy against potential criticism. *Time, they had no answer. In his news conference afterward, coach Felix Sanchez said he had other things to worry **about** than fans leaving the stadium. Qataris make just over 300,000 of the three million in the gas-rich country. So bad that the stadium started emptying even before the hour mark. It gives rise to new questions being asked **about** whether fans had only assembled at the stadium to watch the glittering opening show*

After About, Would is the second most occurred word with a frequency of 8 as a hedge in national newspapers. As a discourse marker, “would” can be used to express a hypothetical or tentative idea or suggestion. It can be used as a hedge to soften the impact of a statement or to indicate uncertainty. Both of the examples given below show that would is used as a hedge and the writer is conveying the information as a caution, which shows that he is not making a strong assertion or claim.

*Salman is reported to have privately threatened former prime minister Imran Khan that Saudia Arabia and the United Arab Emirates **would** deport over 4m Pakistanis if Pakistan did not pull out of its commitment to participate in an OIC alternative summit*
*In an enthralling climax to the World Cup, the first-ever in the Arab world, the night before. This morning, he **would** wake up as world champion; a title that’s eluded him so many times in the past but became his destiny.*

Perhaps” is another word that can be used as a hedge in writing with a frequency of 6 in the national corpus. It is often used to express uncertainty or to suggest that a statement is tentative or speculative.

For example, a writer might use “perhaps” as a hedge in the following sentence: “Perhaps the most likely explanation for this phenomenon is that it is caused by a combination of factors.” In this case, the writer is acknowledging that there may be other possible explanations and is not making a definitive statement. *Perhaps*” is used to convey a sense of uncertainty or to suggest that there may be other possibilities to consider. It can be a useful tool for writers who want to indicate that they are considering different viewpoints or possibilities without making a strong assertion.

*From its reliance on remittances --- often earned in the Gulf through sweat, tears, and occasionally blood. Or better yet, **perhaps** pride ought to be shelved for a time when Pakistanis don’t feel it necessary to toil away as second-class citizens*

4.3. Analysis of Boosters in the Sports Section of Al Jazeera and the New York Times

The figure below shows the occurrence of 21 boosters 42 times in the sports section of Al Jazeera and the New York Times. The most frequently occurred booster is “always” with a maximum percentage of 11.93. The other boosters which are frequent in the corpus are “know”, “proved” and “believe” with a percentage of 3.58 each. The remaining percentage is distributed among 17 other boosters. The least used boosters are “undoubtedly”, “of course”, “demonstrate” etc with a percentage of 1.19 each.

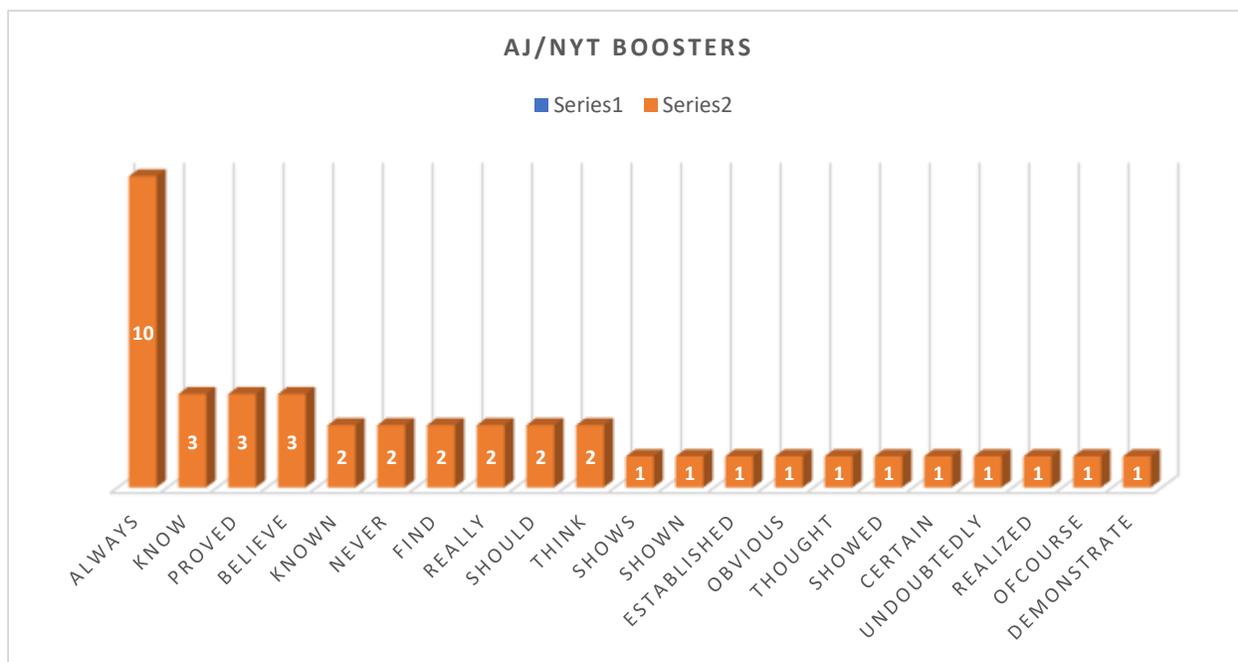


Figure 3

4.3.1. Examples of Boosters and their explanation

The word “always” can be used to emphasize a positive message. You may say “I always go to the gym” in place of “I often go to the gym,” for instance. It also highlights how frequently the action being described occurs, intensifying the statement’s optimism.

“Always” can be used as a discourse marker to introduce a point of agreement or to denote a consistent behavior or activity. If someone says, “I think it’s important, to be honest,” another person can respond, “I always try to be honest too.” When the word “always” is used, it establishes a sense of agreement and a foundation for communication between the speakers. As in the sentence “You always do this,” which implies that the speaker is irritated by a recurring behavior or pattern, “always” can also be used to convey frustration or aggravation.

The examples taken from the corpus are given below.

*The Samurai Blue sees these quick conversions that result from momentum and the persistent belief that a comeback is **always** possible.*

*Scorers at English club Tottenham. China’s abysmal record is startling, particularly compared to the summer and Winter Olympics, where it’s **always** near, or atop, the medal table.*

With slightly different connotations depending on the context, the word “believe” can be employed as a discourse marker and booster in several different situations. When expressing support or encouragement for someone or something, the word “believe” is frequently used as a booster. Saying “I believe in you” to a friend going through a difficult situation is one example, as is saying “I believe we can do this” to encourage a team of people working on a project. In these situations, the word “believe” conveys certainty, optimism, and enthusiasm.

When introducing a personal opinion or viewpoint in a discussion or debate, the discourse marker "believe" is frequently employed. To communicate their personal belief on the subject, someone can say, "I believe that climate change is real," for instance. The word "believe" is used to indicate that the information that follows is a personal belief or opinion rather than a fact or objective reality in this situation. Overall, the use of the word "believe" can be an effective way to convey encouragement, drive, and personal conviction. It can also serve to deepen bonds and establish trust in both personal and professional contexts.

An example from the corpus is given below

*Round of 16 since 2002. We watch because we want to see evidence of progress and development. We want to **believe** that hosting or playing in a world cup can inspire a generation and push a country's abilities forward.*

With slightly varying connotations depending on the context, the term "undoubtedly" can be employed as a discourse marker as well as a booster. "Undoubtedly" is frequently used as a motivator to indicate assurance or certainty about something. Saying, "Undoubtedly, this is the best pizza I've ever had" is one way to communicate the importance you feel about the pizza. "Undoubtedly" is used in this context to highlight how strongly the speaker feels about something and to increase their zeal and confidence in their argument.⁹

"Undoubtedly" is frequently used as a discourse marker to introduce a topic that is widely agreed upon or unchallengeable. Saying "Undoubtedly, climate change is a major threat to our planet" is one way to indicate that the claim that follows is universally accepted by most people. "Undoubtedly" is used in this context to acknowledge agreement on a specific topic and to help create a common understanding in a conversation or argument. Overall, the phrase "undoubtedly" can be used to convey assurance, certainty, and agreement in both informal and formal settings.

An example from the corpus is given below

*The success of their national team is evidence of the cultural importance of football in their country. Even if multiple controversies **undoubtedly***

Depending on the context, the word "know" can be employed as a discourse marker or a booster, with slightly different meanings. The discourse marker "know" is frequently used to suggest that the speaker will provide some new facts or ideas that the audience might not be familiar with. Before offering some proof or reasons in favor of meditation, someone can add, "You know, there's a lot of research that shows the benefits of meditation." The word "know" is being used in this context to call attention to the remark that will follow and help the listener be ready for some fresh facts or viewpoints. "Know" is frequently used as a booster to indicate certainty or conviction about something. As an illustration, one can use the statement "I know we can win this game" to demonstrate confidence in the team's chances of success. "Know" is being used in this situation to highlight how strongly the speaker feels about something and to increase their zeal and assurance in what they are saying.

Overall, using the word "know" can be a helpful way to introduce a new idea or point of view in a discussion or disagreement, as well as to demonstrate confidence and conviction in one's views and opinions.

An example of knowing from the corpus is

*Argentina is going to win", said a confident Iglesias, 46, holding her infant daughter, also dressed in Messi gear. "We **know** that it's going to be a huge party". Argentina has been vibrating with this kind of energy ever since it*

4.4. Analysis of Hedges in the Sports Section of Al Jazeera and the New York Times

The figure below shows the occurrence of 20 hedges 64 times in the sports section of Al Jazeera and the New York Times. The most frequently occurring hedge is "about" with a maximum percentage of 17.9. the other hedges that follow after "about" are "would", "around", "almost" and "may".

"Would" and "around" with a percentage of 9.54. "Could" with a percentage of 5.96. "Almost" with a percentage of 4.77. "May" and "likely" with a percentage of 3.58. The least frequent words are "perhaps", "appeared", "somewhat" and "sometimes" with a percentage of 1.19 each.

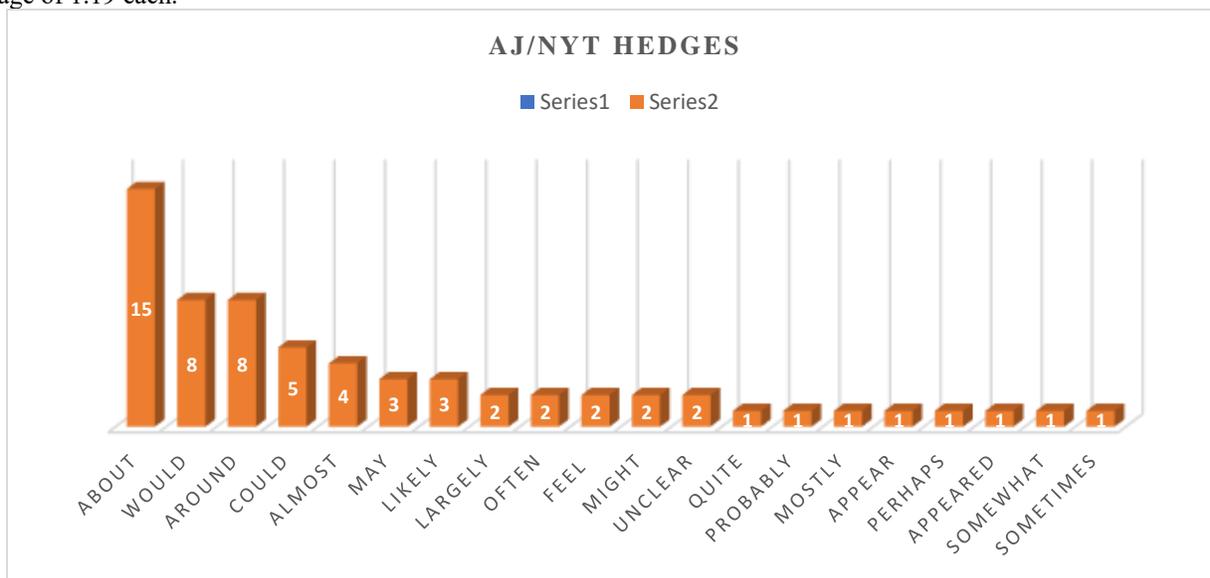


Figure 4

4.4.1. Examples of Hedges and their explanation

The term "about" is frequently used as a hedge to denote ambiguity or imprecision in a statement. The word "about" is used to denote a degree of precision or assurance in this context, indicating that the speaker is not convinced or confident in what they are

stating.

As an illustration, someone might use the phrase "I'm about 90% sure that's the right answer" to convey that they are not completely certain of their claim. In a similar vein, if someone is unsure of their exact height, they may say, "I'm about 5 feet tall." Using "about" as a hedge can also be used to lessen the impact of a statement or make it seem less certain. This can be helpful when the speaker wants to express their views without being excessively rigid or dogmatic but still wants to be heard. In general, using the word "about" can be a helpful way to indicate ambiguity or imprecision in a statement, as well as to lessen its significance or make it less absolute.

Examples from the corpus are as follows

*The technical football side of things but was surprisingly curious and meticulously erudite **about** the stadium where the match was taking place, Stadium 974. He was taking delight in talking about the stadium and*

*And it's failing the domestic league, the Chinese Super League. "In short --- Chinese football is simply not **about** football. It's about politics, business, and self-interest", Wilson wrote. "These things are of course far from absent elsewhere.*

The word "would" can be used as a hedge to convey ambiguity or to soften a statement. The word "would" is frequently used in this context to imply that something is hypothetical or conditional rather than unambiguous or absolute. Using the statement "I would think that he's probably busy" as an example, someone can suggest a possible explanation for someone else's lack of response to a message. By using the word "would" in this sentence, the speaker is implying that they are not certain of their claim and that there may be other factors contributing to the individual's actions.

Comparably, a person would state, "I would imagine that the meeting will be postponed," to predict a future occurrence. The word "would" in this sentence implies that the speaker is not certain of their forecast and that there may be other factors at play. The word "would" can be used as a hedge to soften an aggressive or confrontational statement. To express their views without being excessively forceful or demanding, a person can say, "I would suggest that we consider other options." Overall, the usage of the word "would" can help convey uncertainty, softening the impact of a sentence, and expressing thoughts or beliefs tentatively or hypothetically.

An example from the corpus is as follows

*Korean national teams. Before arriving in Doha, both Japan and South Korea had landed themselves in noticeably difficult groups. Japan **would** be battling in the "group of death" against previous winners Spain and Germany, alongside the not-to-be-underestimated Costa Rica.*

The term "almost" is frequently used as a hedging device to convey the idea that something is almost certain or precise. The word "almost" in this sentence denotes a degree of doubt but also the speaker's conviction that the assertion is generally accurate. As an illustration, someone might use the phrase "I almost finished the project last night" to convey that they came extremely close to finishing it but fell short. The word "almost" is used in this context to acknowledge that the project is not yet finished but to express a sense of accomplishment.

The sentence "The answer is almost always yes" can also be used to suggest that there may be some exceptions to the rule but that, overall, the speaker considers the statement to be true. The word "almost" is used in this sentence to give the impression that there may be some degree of fluctuation or ambiguity. The word "almost" can be used as a hedge to lessen the effect of a statement or to make it seem less absolute. When a speaker wants to present their viewpoint without being unduly rigid or dogmatic yet still wants to be heard, this might be helpful.

Overall, using the word "almost" can be a helpful way to show confidence or success while also indicating doubt or imprecision in a statement.

An example from the corpus is as follows

*Used to doing things on its terms", said Cameron Wilson, a British journalist who has lived in China for **almost** two decades and is the founding editor of the website "Wild East Football"*

The word "perhaps" is more frequently employed as a hedging device to convey ambiguity or soften the impact of a statement. "Perhaps" is frequently used in this context to imply that something is hypothetical or conditional rather than certain or unambiguous. Saying "Perhaps we could meet next week" is one way to offer a potential meeting time without committing to a particular date or time, for instance. The word "perhaps" in this sentence indicates that the speaker is open to discussing alternative possibilities and that there are other circumstances that could affect the meeting's schedule. The expression "Perhaps I'm not the best person to ask" can also be used to express uncertainty or a lack of thorough information. The word "perhaps" is being used to qualify the statement in this context and imply that there might be other people who are more qualified to respond. The word "perhaps" can be used as a hedge to soften the impact of a remark or to avoid appearing hostile. Saying "Perhaps we should consider other options" is one way to voice one's views without sounding unduly confrontational or demanding. Overall, using the word "perhaps" can be a helpful way to convey doubt, soften the impact of a statement, and portray ideas or beliefs tentatively or hypothetically.

An example from the corpus is as follows

*Much funfare on November 20, have been developed by Chinese firms, ranging from stadiums and souvenirs to renewable energy vehicles **perhaps**.*

5. Discussion and findings

The main objective of this study is to analyze the use of hedges and boosters in the sports section of mass-circulated national and international newspapers and what effect they have on the credibility and tone of the news reporting. The exploration of data shows that the use of Hedges and boosters affect the tone and credibility of news reporting in several ways. The answer to the first research question is quite quantitative and the data is analyzed by Meta Pak software by random sampling technique. In Express Tribune Boosters like "never", "believe", "shown" and "should" are most frequently used with a total percentage of 19.95 which shows that the tone of the writer is very assertive and persuasive. These type of boosters are used to emphasize the statement and shows a sense of conviction in their tone which portrays the confidence of the writer in reporting the news, but this does not necessarily reflects on the credibility of the news being reported.

In the sports section of the New York Times and Al Jazeera “always”, “know”, “proved” and “believe” are most frequently used with a total percentage of 22.67 showing a tone of certainty and confidence in the writer’s voice. The frequent occurrence of these words shows that the writer is making a strong claim and is confident in the validity and accuracy of the statement. Boosters can affect the tone of reporting by making it more forceful or assertive but they can also potentially detract from the credibility of the report if the claims made by the writer are not fully supported by the facts.

After analyzing the frequency of Hedges in Express Tribune the most occurred words are “about”, “would”, “perhaps” and “around” which makes a total percentage of 35.22. The same is the case with Newyork Times and Al Jazeera where the most frequent words are “about”, “would”, “around” and “could” with a total percentage of 42.94. These words are often used to convey uncertainty, caution, or approximation in language. For example, sometimes writers do not want to make definitive statements so to avoid that use words like perhaps or around to show that they are not entirely certain about their claims. Words like Would are used to convey a diplomatic tone sometimes. Hedges can affect the tone of reporting by making it seem more tentative or cautious, but they can also enhance the credibility of a report by indicating that the reporter is not making claims that are not fully substantiated. Overall, the use of hedges and boosters in sports news reporting can have an impact on the tone and credibility of the report. The appropriate use of these devices can help to convey the level of certainty and accuracy of the information presented and can enhance the credibility of the reporter. However, overuse of boosters can potentially make a report seem overly biased or unbalanced, while overuse of hedges can make a report seem indecisive or uncertain.

The answer to our second research question is quantitative as it analyzes the time different boosters and hedges that come in the sports section of the newspapers. Firstly, we will analyze boosters in the National newspapers. “Never” comes most frequently and it shows that negative statements occur more frequently than positive statements with a frequency of 7. Other boosters that occur show positive attitudes such as “believe”, “shown”, “proved” and “should”. Although positive boosters are more in number they have low frequency than “never”. “Never” shows that the writer is disapproving or negating the information he is provided with. His opinions are in contrast with others. While on the other hand, international newspaper articles that were studied in writing this article show that the statements showed mixed connotations. “Always” was the most used word with a frequency of 10. It highlights recurring and consistent behavior with a positive or negative attitude.

In the national newspaper, the most frequently used hedge is “about” which shows uncertainty and lack of specificity in a statement. Along with “about”, other words which have low frequency such as “would”, “perhaps”, and “around” also indicate impreciseness and uncertainty. This means most hedges that are used in the sports section of national newspapers show a lack of commitment or exactitude in a statement.

In international newspapers, the most used hedge is about which shows the degree of approximation or uncertainty. The second most used hedges are would and around which also show hypothetical tone and approximation respectively. Could is used for the possibility. In conclusion, the hedges used by national or international newspapers are almost the same and they imply the same meaning.

6. Conclusion

The usage of hedges and boosters in sports sections of national and international newspapers was examined using a corpus-based approach. The study’s findings demonstrate how different national and international writers use hedges and boosters. During the investigation, it was found that there was a modest variation in the frequency of both hedges and boosters in national and international newspapers. Pakistani writers employed 38 boosters and 62 hedges in their writing, compared to American writers who used 42 boosters and 64 hedges. The study concluded that international writers use more hedges than national writers. The most common way they employed hedges was to make the reporting tone hesitant or cautious.

International authors use boosters more frequently than national authors by speaking with a tone of assurance and assurance. The study came to the further conclusion that hedges and boosters can alter the voice and believability of the writers in Pakistani media. It may be a sign of the writing’s fuzziness and uncertainty. Regarding hedges and boosters, they might have a mixed meanings of positive and negative statements in American publications. Additionally, it frequently displays a speculative and approximative tone. In conclusion, the hedging techniques employed by national and international publications are nearly identical and convey the same signal.

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