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ATTITUDE MARKERS AS INTERACTIONAL METADISOURSE RESOURCES IN DENTISTRY CASE REPORTS

МАРКЕРИ СТАВЛЕННЯ ЯК МЕТАДИСКУРСИВНІ ЗАСОБИ ВЗАЄМОДІЇ У СТАТТЯХ-КЛІНІЧНИХ ВИПАДКАХ ЗІ СТОМАТОЛОГІЇ

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Dentistry case reports are a genre of medical professional writing that focus on and describe individual cases of oral health conditions, ranging from standard dental treatments to more intricate cases involving dento-facial surgical procedures. Currently, there is a growing global trend towards recognizing the significance of maintaining good oral health. It is strongly linked to an individual's quality of life and self-esteem. Consequently, the increased attention towards oral health, alongside advances

in bioengineering in dentistry, is driving the rise in the publication of clinical case reports. These reports describe individual cases of oral health conditions, ranging from standard dental treatments to more intricate cases involving dento-facial surgical procedures. As a result, the growing focus on oral health, supported with advancements in dentistry and bioengineering, has led to a surge in the publication of clinical case reports. Scientific literature provides a plethora of reports on the language, style, and genre characteristics of medical case reports, as evidenced by studies conducted by Nissen and Wynn (2014), Hung et al. (2010), Spafford et al. (2006), and Lysanets et al. (2017). However, there have been only a few attempts to outline the generic features of dental case reports [5].

Using language “to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group, to signal a socially meaningful “role,” or to signal that one is filling a social niche in a distinctively recognizable fashion” [2, p. 161] means performing discourse, which consists of two distinct yet connected components. The first element is the propositional content, while the second refers to the language devices that improve the communicative efficiency and effectiveness of the factual message, and known as metadiscourse. Metadiscourse falls into two large classes: interactive metadiscourse, which is mainly used to guide the reader through the text, and interactional metadiscourse, aimed at establishing a connection between the writer, reader, and the content being discussed.

The purpose of this study is to explore the use of attitude markers as a subtype of interactional (interpersonal) metadiscourse markers in dentistry case reports, and to analyze their functions within the texts.

The study material included of 60 clinical case reports sourced from high-ranked dentistry journals, such as *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Medicine, and Pathology Case Reports, Conservative Dentistry and Endodontics Journal, Journal of American Dental Association, and Journal of Endodontics* for 2017–2022. This descriptive and exploratory study is concerned with explaining phenomena as they occur naturally in the texts. Hyland's metadiscourse model [3, p. 49] was employed to identify and categorize the metadiscourse in the dentistry case reports. We scrutinized the dentistry case reports to identify interactional markers, analyzed their average frequency per text, to reveal their meaning, and determined their functions. Additionally, for the same purposes, we used Text Inspector, a professional web-based text analysis tool, which recognizes fourteen categories of metadiscourse markers based on the types identified by S. Bax et al [1, p. 83].

Attitude markers are linguistic expressions that indicate the writer's attitude or stance towards a particular object or proposition. K. Hyland [4, p. 551] describes attitude metadiscourse as the writer's textual voice or recognized personality within a community. In dentistry case reports, attitude markers can be employed to express the writer's opinion or evaluation, by indicating the writer's subjective assessment of various aspects of the case being presented, or attitude towards the reported information. The findings of the text analysis demonstrate that attitude markers are the second most commonly used interactional markers in dentistry case reports following the hedges. They account for 26 per cent of all interactional metadiscourse markers (hedges, boosters, self-mention markers, and engagement markers) per text. The attitude markers are unevenly represented over the texts of dentistry case reports: the highest rank is found in the Discussion section that is 5.18 attitude markers per 1,000 words, followed by the Introductions sections, 3.29 per 1,000 words.

Most of the attitude markers are represented by evaluative words. Adjectives (*important, excellent, successful, immense, difficult, spectacular*) have been found out as the most prevalent attitude lexemes in the dentistry case reports:

*There are **immense** controversies concerning the notion and the definition of this lesion.*

*The response to the induction therapy was **spectacular** and soon the next step in treatment was taken.*

*This was due to her **important** vascular comorbidity and because it was possible to close the defect primarily.*

Adverbs can serve as attitude markers to highlight the significance, exclusivity, or limitation of a particular finding or conclusion (*e.g. only, dramatically, essentially, unfortunately, importantly*), to indicate the writer's evaluation of the degree or intensity of a particular aspect of the case, etc. For example, the writers may use adverbs such as "*strongly*", "*clearly*", "*very*", or "*obviously*" to indicate their conviction about a particular diagnosis or treatment outcome:

*The lesion cells were **strongly** positive for S-100 (Figure 4) and negative for GFAP.*

*Gingivoplasty or alveoloplasty needs gingival flap and it may not be esthetically acceptable because of the **very** inconsistent topography created between the adjacent teeth.*

*The evolution until today was uneventful, except for <...>, which was **successfully** managed through conservative therapy of antibiotics.*

Attitudinal verbs (e.g. *expect, prefer, agree*) and attitudinal nouns (e.g. *importance, significance, lack, disadvantages*) can also be employed to convey the assessment of the research or the findings presented, and to establish the author's voice and tone in the case reports:

*It is **recommended** to adopt the multidisciplinary approach, adequate case selection, and follow-up radiographs for treatment success*

*But the use of this technique does come with a more **challenging** approach to dental rehabilitation, due to less bony support in the reconstructed area.*

*The patient was advised on the **importance** of regular follow-ups on a 6-month recall basis.*

The use of attitude markers in dentistry case reports appears to evoke agreement among readers and creates a sense of shared understanding, drawing the readers into a collaborative framework of agreement.

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