

**Metadiscourse in undergraduate students' essays**

By

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## ABSTRACT

Metadiscourse refers to linguistic resources that are used to organise a text and also connect with readers. The use of metadiscourse markers in academic writing helps students produce coherent texts. This study explored and analysed the types, frequency, and appropriate use of metadiscourse markers in the essays of undergraduate students who were second-language learners of English. To achieve these objectives, mixed-methods and corpus-analysis approaches were employed. Quantitative data from the results of a cloze test and qualitative data from two corpora (a learner corpus and a native speakers' corpus) were used. The learner corpus contained 197 essays written by undergraduate students at the University of Ghana, and the native speakers' corpus contained 207 essays written by undergraduate students at selected American and British universities. The main purpose for using the cloze test data was to ascertain the learners' receptive knowledge of metadiscourse use, and the learner corpus was analysed to determine their productive use of the markers in relation to the types, frequency, and appropriate use. The students were aged 17 years and older, came from various home-language backgrounds (Akan, Ewe, Ga-Adangbe, Northern Ghana languages, and English), and were from four academic disciplines (BA Arts, BA Education, BSc Applied Sciences, and BSc Health Sciences). The learner corpus comprised written, end-of-semester academic essays, which were classified into three performance levels: high-rated, average-rated, and low-rated. The learner corpus was compared to the native speakers' corpus to analyse similarities and differences in metadiscourse use by the learners and the native speakers. Hyland's (2005a) classification of metadiscourse markers served as the theoretical framework to identify and discuss metadiscourse markers employed in the students' essays. The software tools used for the analyses were #LancsBox and SPSS. The findings revealed that although the learners were able to select the correct and appropriate metadiscourse markers to complete the cloze test, they were not able to use some of the markers independently in their essays. It was also observed

that the learners who wrote the high-rated essays used metadiscourse markers in appropriate proportions. Regarding how the learners' use of metadiscourse compared to that of the native speakers, the findings revealed that although both groups of students employed more interactive resources than interactional resources, metadiscourse markers were denser in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus. However, the analysis revealed that the two groups of undergraduate students showed a similar pattern in their use of interactive resources. The findings of this study may be helpful in the teaching and learning of academic writing. It is also hoped that the findings may be useful to other researchers who are interested in the field of metadiscourse, especially among Ghanaian undergraduate students.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CECL	Centre for English Corpus Linguistics
CT	cloze test
ESL	English as a second language
HEP	High English proficiency
ICLE	International Corpus of Learner English
KWIC	Key Word in Context
L1	first language
L2	second language
LC	learner corpus
LEP	Low English proficiency
LL	log likelihood
LOCNESS	Louvain Corpus of Native English Student Essays
MD	Metadiscourse
NF	normalised frequency
NSC	native speakers' corpus
RF	raw frequency
UG	University of Ghana
UGCD	University of Ghana Corpus Data
UGCT	University of Ghana Cloze Test
UPSA	University of Professional Studies, Accra

# CHAPTER 1

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Academic writing is an important skill that all students need in order to succeed in their university education since it is the primary basis upon which they are assessed. Academic writing refers to any written task produced by students to fulfil a requirement of a college certificate or university degree. In academic writing, it is necessary to think about the probable readers of one's text. There is, therefore, the need to explain ideas to the readers as clearly as possible (Bailey, 2015). Thus, academic writing gives students the opportunity to explain what they have learnt by using the appropriate terminology and style to make the information understood by others, especially their lecturers. Since writing is one of the language skills used to assess students' performance in almost all courses at the tertiary level, a student who possesses good writing skills may perform better than one who writes poorly. If students learn how to write well and produce well-written essays or texts in the genre of their discipline, it is easier for them to succeed academically.

However, students face various challenges in producing well-written texts. One of these challenges is the problem of cohesion and coherence. Halliday and Hassan (1976) define cohesion as the set of possibilities that exist in the language and make a text hang together. Kafes (2012) also explains that cohesion can be found within and between sentences since it is a semantic relation, and it also enables a written passage to function as a text. Halliday and Hassan (1976) state that cohesion is the most important factor in producing a coherent text.



There are various ways of achieving coherence in a text. These include using a natural or easily recognisable order, repeating keywords, substituting pronouns for key nouns, and using parallelism. Another way of achieving coherence in a text is the use of metadiscourse (MD) markers. Metadiscourse elements consist of expressions such as *according to, namely, perhaps, surprisingly, you can see that, and as noted above*. Hyland (2005a) asserts that metadiscourse is the ‘dimension which organises the text into a coherent message’ (p. 43). Coherence is an essential quality for good academic writing, but the teaching and learning of coherence can be challenging (Lee, 2002). When a text is coherent, all the sentences and ideas in the text flow together to make a logical point about the topic discussed in the text. Thus, there should be a smooth connection or transition at the sentence level and the inter-paragraph level (Paltridge et al., 2009). A good essay shows the relationship between one sentence and another and between one paragraph and another (Ampa & Basri, 2019). Cohesion and coherence are thus very important aspects of academic writing as they can influence the comprehension of a text. Texts that are not coherent are difficult to read and understand, and this defeats the purpose of writing, which is to relay ideas in a clear and efficient manner.

The overall purpose of the study was to investigate students’ use of metadiscourse markers as cohesive devices. However, the specific purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the thesis and the main aspects of the current study. First, the background, the rationale for the study, and the problem statement are presented. Thereafter, synopses of relevant literature on learner corpus research, academic writing, coherence, metadiscourse, and metadiscourse taxonomies are presented. The third section presents the theoretical framework. In the fourth section, the research aims and objectives are presented, together with the research questions, after which I provide an overview of the methodology by briefly discussing the data used for

the study, the analytical instruments, and the analysis of data. Then, the significance of the study is explained. Finally, the chapter concludes with the organisation of the thesis.

## **1.2 Background, rationale and problem statement**

Academic writing skills, also referred to as scholarly writing or communication skills, is a required course in all tertiary institutions in Ghana. At the University of Ghana, the Language Centre provides compulsory academic writing programmes for all first- and second-year students. The centre conducts language-related research and undertakes teaching-related activities to improve students' proficiency in English. English is an official language in Ghana and is used as the language of teaching and learning at all educational levels. The English language also serves as a home language for some Ghanaians. This means that although they are not native speakers, some parents choose to communicate with their children and other relatives in English. Several of the learners who participated in this study indicated that their home language is English, although they also speak an indigenous Ghanaian language. The major indigenous languages spoken in Ghana are Akan, Nzema, Ewe, Ga/Dangme, Dagaare, and Dagbani. However, English is a dominant language and is used widely in the country. Adjaye (2005) observes that the missionary policy by the British contributed to the consolidation of the English language in Ghana, and English emerged as the language of trade and governance, as a cross-ethnic lingua franca, and most importantly, as the language of education.

At the University of Ghana and at all tertiary institutions in Ghana, all assignments and examinations are written in English. Students are thus required to enrol in an academic writing course in their first and second years to improve their academic writing proficiency. The courses provide instruction on writing academic essays, among other aspects of writing. The

section on writing academic essays includes how to achieve coherence in an academic essay by repeating keywords, substituting pronouns for key nouns, using parallelism, and using a natural or easily recognised order. In addition, students receive instruction on the use and functions of frame markers, code glosses, transitions, hedges, attitude markers, and self-mentions. At the end of each semester, students write examinations based on what was taught during the semester. The examination questions for the first-year academic writing module mainly comprise the following: correction of mistakes in sentences, construction of sentences with pairs of words (mostly homophones) to distinguish their meanings, summary of a passage, and writing of an essay on a given topic.

The study focused on the writing of an essay on a given topic and students' use of metadiscourse to achieve coherence. Metadiscourse consists of all the expressions that help to organise the content of a text and convey the writer's beliefs and attitudes towards it. Some examples are *according to*, *namely*, *perhaps*, *surprisingly*, *you can see that*, and *as noted above*. Ali (2016) notes that the principal function of metadiscourse markers in a written text is to obtain a coherent discourse (p. 24). Ali advocates that writers should, therefore, endeavour to use metadiscourse markers to produce coherent texts. By using metadiscourse markers, the writer acknowledges the reader's need for explanation, confirmation, and engagement. Metadiscourse elements play a critical role in passing the desired message to the reader (Schmied, 2016). Considering the critical role metadiscourse elements play in written texts, as observed by Schmied (2016), students should be able to use metadiscourse markers correctly in their essays to achieve coherence and provide meaning. The researcher observed that students used metadiscourse markers minimally, and those who did often used them incorrectly, which may have interfered with the meaning of the text. For example, some students used the transition *however* when the context did not show any contrast.

Metadiscourse provides a context in which to place the opinion the writer intends to address and support; it injects a human presence into a written text and so makes students more attentive and engaged with a text (Hyland, 2005a). Furthermore, metadiscourse increases the persuasiveness of a text and makes readers aware of the subjective interpretation of truth (ibid.). Hyland (2005a) further explains that metadiscourse helps present the author's position on the propositional information in a text and shows readers that the writer recognises their needs and is seeking to engage them in a dialogue. Considering the explanations given by Hyland (2005a), metadiscourse elements are crucial for achieving coherence in a text and should be used at both the sentence and inter-paragraph levels.

For many learners of English as a second language, the use of metadiscourse to achieve coherence poses fundamental challenges (Letsoela, 2013; Mohamed & Rashid, 2019; Takač & Ivezić, 2019). For example, Letsoela (2013) conducted a study on the inappropriate use of transitions by students at the National University of Lesotho and found that there were major errors that made it difficult for the reader to interpret the text. That is, learners of English as a second language seem to struggle with the writing of coherent texts in English. Unfortunately, as observed by Schmied (2016), this challenge has not been adequately addressed, either in teaching or in research. In my search for previous studies on metadiscourse in students' essays, I observed that most of the research work carried out on this topic was conducted by researchers from Asia (Alkathlan, 2019; Anwardeen et al., 2013; Davaei & Karbalaei, 2013; Ho & Li, 2018; Kashiha, 2018; Khedri, 2018; Kim, 2017; Simin & Tavangar, 2009; Taghizadeh & Tajabadi, 2013) and Southern Africa (Letsoela, 2013; Ramoroka, 2017). In West Africa, not much work has been done. In Ghana, and particularly at the University of Ghana, it seems that there has been limited focus on the use of metadiscourse markers in undergraduate students' essays. To my knowledge, with the exception of Afful and Akoto (2020), who investigated the

use of metadiscourse in dissertations for a master's degree, most of the research conducted in Ghana (for example, unpublished dissertations), and particularly in the English and Linguistics departments at the University of Ghana, has been based on error and discourse analysis, which are related to propositional content (Forson, 2006; Frimpong, 2015; Koranteng, 2006; Quarcoo, 2013; Quartey, 2014). The overall coherence of student texts has not been studied. This study, therefore, seeks to address the gap in the existing literature and attempts to provide some suggestions to improve students' writing by investigating the type, frequency, and appropriate use of metadiscourse elements in undergraduate students' essays. In addition to contributing to research, this study could also help solve a real-world problem, especially since it deals with students.

Having been involved in the teaching and examining of academic writing skills at the University of Ghana's Language Centre, I have observed that the writing difficulties that students face are both grammatical and discorsal or rhetorical. In relation to grammatical errors, concord seems to be the main challenge, whereas, on the discourse level, ineffective global coherence seems to be the most predominant. Students were not able to use metadiscourse appropriately to achieve coherence. Consistent poor performance by the students in the Academic Writing Skills course, owing to lack of coherence in their essays, as well as the paucity of research on coherence in African students' writing, led to my interest in students' use of metadiscourse markers to achieve coherence in their writing. It is against this background that this study sought to analyse the use of metadiscourse elements in a learner corpus, which consists of essays written by first-year students at the University of Ghana.

### **1.3 Synopses of relevant literature**

The following subsections briefly discuss aspects of learner corpus research, academic writing, cohesion and coherence, and metadiscourse. These aspects will be discussed in detail in the literature review in Chapter 2.

#### **1.3.1 Learner corpus research**

Learner corpus research dates back to the late 1980s (Granger, 2004). ‘A learner corpus is a collection of learner output of language produced by learners’ (ibid., p. 123). Díaz-Negrillo and Thompson (2013) explain that the learners whose essays are collected and compiled as the learner corpus are usually school or university students. An exception is the multimedia English as a Second Language (ESL) corpus, which contains data obtained from adult ESL learners (ibid). Granger (2002) also observes that learner corpora are mostly composed of written data, and they provide a reliable basis on which to describe and model learner language use.

Scholars who work within the framework of corpus linguistics suggested by J.H. Firth are collectively referred to as neo-Firthians. According to neo-Firthians, in corpus-based research, or corpus-as-method, data (that is, the corpus) are used to test or provide examples for the theories that were formulated before large corpora became available to inform the study of language (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001). Römer (2005) believes that corpus-based linguists, or those who follow the approach of corpus-as-method, ‘do not put the corpus at the centre of their research but see it as a welcome tool which provides them with frequency data, attested illustrated examples, or with answers to questions of grammaticality or acceptability’ (p. 9). In corpus-based linguistics, corpora are used together with other strategies and other data. Corpus-based studies typically use corpora to explore a theory or hypothesis, aiming to confirm, disprove, or clarify it. On the other hand, in corpus-driven linguistics, or the corpus-as-theory

approach, linguists attempt to explore the language without using any theoretical frameworks. Corpus-driven linguists claim that theoretical frameworks are usually based on ‘intuitions’ and are thus unreliable (McEnery & Gabrielatos, 2006, p. 36). For this reason, corpus-driven linguists do not use annotated corpora, whereas corpus-based linguists tend to use annotated corpora. Corpus-driven linguists reject the characterisation of corpus linguistics as a method and claim instead that the corpus itself should be the sole source of hypotheses about language. Thus, the corpus itself embodies a theory of language (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001). The present study is corpus-based, although it does include an element of the corpus-driven approach. The present study is corpus-based because I used two corpora of authentic texts and data from a cloze test together with the mixed-methods research strategy to explore Hyland’s (2005a) theory of metadiscourse markers in undergraduate students’ essays, with the aim of ascertaining the types, frequency, and appropriate use of these markers as theorised by Hyland. The present study includes an element of the corpus-driven approach because although Hyland’s framework was used to explore metadiscourse markers, the corpora were not annotated. The corpora were analysed in their raw state of plain text. That is, the corpora were not enhanced with additional linguistic information, such as sentence structures, parts of speech, and grammatical markup.

The relevance of learner corpus analysis for academic writing is widely acknowledged, and there are many applications of corpus work relating to academic writing. Qualitative data have been taken as relevant in the description and teaching of academic writing, and many researchers have engaged in the manual analysis of corpora of language to determine the frequency of the use of words, expressions, and other features (Hyland, 2002; Nesselhauf, 2004). Thus, through analysing errors, identifying differences between native and non-native language use, and applying learner corpora research to language teaching methodology and

course design, learner corpora have become very useful in supporting research on language learning (Carstens & Eiselen, 2019). A learner corpus approach, therefore, constitutes a powerful way to observe specific language features. Since the learner corpus used for this study was collected from learners' essays in an academic writing course, academic writing is discussed in the next section.

### **1.3.2 Academic writing**

Academic writing is the type of writing expected in any assessment task in an academic context (Bailey, 2015), especially at the tertiary level. Irvin (2010) defines academic writing as a form of evaluation that requires one to demonstrate knowledge and show proficiency in certain disciplinary skills in 'thinking, interpreting and presenting' (p. 8). Academic writing skills courses are designed to provide students with the necessary writing skills involving thinking, interpreting, and presenting information in various forms to enable them to succeed at the tertiary level. The most common forms of written work produced by students are essays, reports, project work, dissertations and theses, seminar papers, and notes (Bailey, 2015). Irvin (2010) explains that academic writing is characterised by evidence-based arguments, precise word choice, and logical organisation. Although each subject has certain writing conventions, vocabulary, and types of discourse, there are general characteristics of academic writing that are relevant across all disciplines. Irvin (2010) points out that since academic writing is formal in tone and style, it requires appropriate language to make the text clear, concise, and balanced. Furthermore, the written text should support opinions and argue with evidence, as well as being referenced accurately. Since academic writing answers a question and demonstrates an understanding of the subject area, it is focused and planned. Academic writing should, therefore, be approached in a way that demonstrates knowledge of the subject area and should be undertaken in a structured manner, bringing together related points and materials to make



the text coherent (Swales & Feak, 2012). Thus, successful academic writing requires cohesion and coherence.

### **1.3.3 Cohesion and coherence**

Cohesion and coherence play important roles in academic writing. Halliday and Hassan (1976), in their classic study of cohesion in English, define cohesion as ‘what occurs when the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on another...’ (p. 2). Kafes (2012) explains that cohesion and coherence are interrelated because ‘cohesion helps to produce a coherent text’ (p. 85). Taboada (2004) states that ‘coherence is the hanging together of the text with relation to its content of situation or culture’ (p. 158). Similarly, Yule (2008) states that coherence is ‘everything fitting together well’ (p. 126). The definitions and explanations of cohesion and coherence by the various authors cited above show that cohesion and coherence are achieved when ideas and sentences are connected and flow together smoothly. Therefore, an essay that lacks coherence can inhibit a reader’s ability to understand its ideas and main points since coherence allows the reader to move easily throughout the essay from one idea to the next, from one sentence to the next, and from one paragraph to the next.

A number of studies indicate that a major problem in student writing relates to the issue of coherence (Bamberg, 1984; Hubbard, 1989; McCulley, 1985; Witte & Faigley, 1981). Johns (1986) explains that there are two opposing schools of thought in the interpretation of coherence—one that sees coherence as text-based and one that sees it as reader-based. Lee (2002) explains that text-based coherence is defined primarily by the linking of sentences (cohesion) or as the relationships among propositions in the text. On the other hand, reader-based coherence requires successful interaction between the reader and the text. Reader-based coherence means that a text cannot be considered separately from the reader. Johns (1986)

points out that it has been generally acknowledged that both text-based and reader-based coherence are necessary for a detailed description of coherence. Hence, learners must consider their audience and the task throughout the writing process. The general view is that the use of metadiscourse elements plays a crucial role in interacting with one's audience during the writing process. Thus, Hyland (1999) notes that an important and effective method of achieving coherence is the use of metadiscourse elements.

Hyland (2005a) explains that the term 'metadiscourse' is derived from the Greek words for 'beyond' and 'discourse' and that it means discourse about discourse. Hyland (2005a) indicates that the term was coined by Zelling S. Harris in 1959 to explain how a writer or a speaker attempts to guide a reader's perception of a text. Metadiscourse expresses the pragmatic relationship between the writer and the reader. Effective writers use metadiscourse, as it plays an important role in constructing discourse. Metadiscourse reveals the writer's awareness of the reader and the reader's need for 'elaboration, clarification, guidance and interaction' (Hyland, 2005a, p. 17). There are various classifications or taxonomies of metadiscourse (Ädel, 2006; Crismore, 1983; Hyland, 1998, 2004, 2005a, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Vande Kopple, 1985; Williams, 1981). These classifications are discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

Some studies have been conducted to examine the effect of metadiscourse awareness on the writing performance of learners of English as a second language (Abdel Wahab, 2020; Alkathlan, 2019; Anwardeen et al., 2013; Ho & Li, 2018; Kim, 2017; Letsoela, 2013; Mohamed & Rashid, 2017; Ramoroka, 2017; Simin & Tavangar, 2009; Taghizadeh & Tajabadi, 2013; Tan & Eng, 2014). As in the previous work done on metadiscourse stated above, this study focused on the use of metadiscourse markers in students' essays. To do this,

the researcher adopted Hyland's (2005a) classification of metadiscourse markers as the theoretical framework.

#### **1.4 Theoretical framework**

Collins and Stockton (2018) define a theory as a 'big idea that organises many other ideas with a high degree of explanatory power' (p. 3). They explain that a theoretical framework is the use of a theory that 'provides a clearly articulated signpost for how the study will process new knowledge'. Thus, a theoretical framework is 'the existing knowledge and previously formed ideas about complex phenomena, the researcher's epistemological dispositions [...], a lens and a methodically analytic approach' (Collins & Stockton, 2018, p. 3).

As already stated, Hyland's (2005a) taxonomy of metadiscourse was used in the current study. The researcher's choice of Hyland's (2005a) taxonomy of metadiscourse as the theoretical framework for this study was based on the fact that in comparison with the other classification models of metadiscourse, Hyland's (2005a) interpersonal model employs interactive and interactional resources. The specific functions of these resources are also explained. In effect, the functional overlapping that occurs in the other classifications that group metadiscourse elements into textual and interpersonal is minimised. Anwardeen et al. (2013) state that the model provides a better understanding of the various categories of metadiscourse markers. Hyland (2005a) suggests that all metadiscourse is interpersonal because it considers the reader's background knowledge, textual requirements, and processing needs, as well as rhetorical tools. Hyland's model is one of the most widely used in the field of L2 academic writing research (Abdel Wahab, 2020; Alkhatlan, 2019; Ho & Li, 2018; Letsoela, 2013; Mohamed & Rashid, 2017; Tan & Eng, 2014). Hyland (2005a) establishes a taxonomy which

indicates that metadiscourse markers fall into two main categories, interactive and interactional resources.

Interactive resources perform the function of guiding the reader through the text (ibid., p. 49). Thus, they are used to organise propositional information in ways that the reader would find ‘coherent and convincing’ (ibid., p. 50). Hyland explains that using interactive resources shows that the writer is aware of the presence of a reader or an audience and thus attempts to fulfil the reader’s interest and expectation, as the reader expects the argument to follow accepted text patterns in order to regard the text as ‘appropriate and convincing’. Interactive resources are realised as frame markers, code glosses, endophoric markers, evidentials, and transitions (ibid., p. 54). Interactional resources refer to features that ‘draw the reader into the discourse and give the reader an opportunity to respond to it’ (Hyland, 2005a, p. 52). Interactional resources are realised as hedges, attitude markers, engagement markers, boosters, and self-mentions (Hyland, 2005a).

Metadiscourse markers, therefore, facilitate communication by guiding the interpretation of the text, increasing readability and building a relationship with the reader. Hyland (2005a) argues that ‘metadiscourse embodies the idea that communication is more than the exchange of information..., but also involves the personalities, attitudes, and assumptions of those communicating’ (p. 3). Thus, the effective use of metadiscourse markers can be one of the means of enhancing the quality of academic essays.

## **1.5 Research aims and objectives**

The main aim of this research was to explore and analyse the use of metadiscourse elements in undergraduate students’ essays in a learner corpus consisting of essays written by first-year

students at the University of Ghana and to compare the learner corpus to a native speakers' corpus made up of essays written by American and European undergraduate students. The learner corpus was analysed with a view to using the information to provide suggestions on how students could improve upon their essay-writing skills. The two corpora were compared to investigate how the use of metadiscourse markers by the learners compares to that of the native speakers in order to ascertain whether there were similarities or differences in the use of metadiscourse markers by the two groups of undergraduate students. The following objectives were explored:

1. To assess the appropriate and correct use of metadiscourse markers by the students in a cloze test.
2. To analyse the type and frequency of metadiscourse markers used in the learner corpus.
3. To determine any similarities and/or differences between learners' use of metadiscourse markers and that of the native speakers in the two corpora.

The following main research questions guided the study:

RQ1: To what extent were the students able to select appropriate and correct metadiscourse markers to complete a cloze test exercise?

RQ2: How were metadiscourse markers utilised in the learner corpus?

RQ3: How did the learners' use of metadiscourse markers compare to that of the native speakers?

## **1.6 Overview of the methodology**

This study explored and analysed the use of metadiscourse markers in undergraduate students' essays. A mixed-methods approach was used for the study. Three sets of data were analysed: data from a cloze test (quantitative), data from a learner corpus (qualitative), and data from a

native speakers' corpus (qualitative). The cloze test was used as a research instrument to determine students' receptive knowledge of metadiscourse markers, and the learner corpus was used to determine the learners' productive use of metadiscourse markers. The learner corpus was analysed separately and then compared with the native speakers' corpus to ascertain how the learners' use of metadiscourse markers was similar to or different from that of native speakers. The research design is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

### **1.6.1 Cloze test**

The cloze test was administered at the end of the semester when students had finished lectures and completed the Academic Writing Skills course for the semester. The test was piloted among a sample of 20 students at the University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA), a sister university of the University of Ghana, with the help of one of the lecturers at UPSA. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to observe physical distancing, the cloze test was administered via Google Forms to 197 students; 171 students submitted their responses.

### **1.6.2 Corpora**

Two corpora were used in this study: a learner corpus made up of 197 marked essay scripts of first-year students at the University of Ghana with an average length of 502 words and a native speakers' corpus comprising 267 essays with an average length of approximately 500 words selected from the Louvain Corpus of Native English Student Essays (LOCNESS). Hoffman et al. (2008) explain that the pieces of language that a corpus is made up of are specifically selected by the researcher, and the criteria on which the selection is based are 'external' to the texts themselves since they are decided by the person compiling the corpus. These criteria are designed to make the corpus 'representative' of the language or language variety which it aims to describe (p. 13). It is worth noting that although a corpus is usually a subset of what it is

supposed to represent, its function is to exemplify the whole in such a way that linguists may use it to describe the language variety that was sampled. In effect, the observations made on the basis of the corpus data are generalised to the whole from which the corpus was initially selected. The bigger the corpus, the better its correspondence to the language or language variety of which it is a sample since a larger set of data is statistically more likely to contain more examples of a given phenomenon. However, the use of a large corpus can become unmanageable if the desired data from the corpora cannot be extracted automatically with the help of a computer software program with ‘high recall and precision’ (ibid., p. 18). A computer software program was thus used to extract the desired metadiscourse markers from the two corpora used for the current study.

Collecting students’ scripts is crucial to the whole process of corpus construction (Römer, 2008). The scripts of 210 essays were collected from students who were taught by the researcher for a period of 12 weeks. The essays were already typed, as the second-semester examination was conducted online due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. After printing and marking the scripts manually, purposive sampling was used to select 197 of the marked scripts. Purposive sampling is explained in Chapter 3. The 197 scripts were selected to reflect three performance levels. In total, 70 scripts were selected with high scores, 70 with average scores, and 57 with low scores. The marking scheme for the examination served as a guide to determine which scripts were considered as having high, average, and low scores. The learner corpus thus consisted of 197 essay scripts from all three performance-level categories.

The essays contained in the native speakers’ corpus were written by British and American undergraduate students. There were 33 British essays numbered and 174 American essays.

Purposive sampling was used to select the essays from LOCNESS. The native speakers' corpus thus comprised 207 essays written by undergraduate students.

### **1.6.3 Data analysis**

With regard to the analysis of the cloze test, after marking the responses submitted by the participants, the results were presented in tables showing the number of students who were able to use metadiscourse markers appropriately and correctly based on Hyland's (2005a) classification. SPSS was used for the descriptive and inferential analysis of the cloze test data. The results of the cloze test helped to answer RQ1: To what extent were students able to select appropriate and correct metadiscourse markers to complete a cloze test exercise?

According to Baker (2006), the extraction of the required data is slow and prone to error if there are no software tools to search the data quickly. Thus, a search tool that can quickly extract examples of particular words from the corpus greatly improves the accuracy of the research. The most important search tool available to the corpus linguist is a concordance. A concordance is a 'list of all occurrences of a particular search term in a corpus, presented within the context that they occur in; usually a few terms to the left and right of the search term' (ibid., p. 71).

The concordancer or software tool that was used to analyse the type and frequency of metadiscourse markers in the corpora (learner corpus and native speakers' corpus) was the #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020) software package, a corpus analysis software program developed at Lancaster University. The specific tools in the #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020) software package that were used for the analysis in this study were the Wizard tool, the Key Word in Context (KWIC) tool, and the Text tool. The Wizard tool automatically produces the research report, and the KWIC tool generates a list of all instances



of a search term in the corpus in the form of a concordance. The Text tool displays a broader context of the search item. However, Takač and Ivezić (2019) caution that while computer-assisted tools can be used in the exploration of the role of metadiscourse in establishing coherence, one must bear in mind that metadiscourse is a ‘highly context-dependent phenomenon’; therefore, computer-assisted methods must be accompanied by manual analysis (p. 67). Other software tools that were used for the descriptive and inferential analysis in this study were SPSS and log-likelihood calculator. In this study, software tools helped to analyse data quickly and with a degree of accuracy that would not have been possible with manual analysis.

In order to analyse the type and frequency of metadiscourse markers used by the undergraduate students, all the metadiscourse elements listed by Hyland (2005a) were identified in the learner corpus and uploaded into the software. For example, the word *may* is considered as one of the metadiscourse elements under the category of hedges, so the researcher analysed the frequency of this word’s usage in the corpus by using #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020). The findings of the software analysis were used to answer RQ2: How were metadiscourse markers utilised in the learner corpus?

Finally, with the aid of the #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020) software package, quantitative and qualitative analyses were done to answer RQ3: How did the learners’ use of metadiscourse markers compare to that of the native speakers? Data analysis and presentation are discussed further in Chapter 3.

## **1.7 Significance of the study**

It is hoped that this research will contribute to the study of student writing and the study of metadiscourse, particularly research in the area of learner corpora on metadiscourse. The study may also add to the learner corpora database for speakers of English as a second language. Furthermore, the research makes recommendations for the improvement of the Academic Writing Skills module in reference to the teaching of metadiscourse at the University of Ghana, as well as similar modules taught at other tertiary institutions in Ghana and the rest of West Africa. It may help students by informing them about the important role metadiscourse elements play in writing meaningful texts. The research may serve as a guideline for the teaching of academic writing to other students in Ghana and Africa, as there are similarities in terms of course content, such as paragraph writing, essay writing, and how to achieve coherence in an essay. Lecturers of academic writing skills may also benefit from the insights yielded by the research, and this may have implications for writing pedagogy.

## **1.8 Organisation of the thesis**

The thesis is organised into six chapters. Chapter 1 (General introduction) contains the general outline of the study. This includes the background, the rationale for the study, and the problem statement, as well as a summary of the relevant literature, the theoretical framework, the research aims and objectives, an overview of the methodology, the significance of the study, and the organisation of the thesis. Chapter 2 (Literature review) is made up of a review of literature relevant to the study. This includes literature on corpus linguistics, undergraduate students' academic writing, metadiscourse, and previous studies on metadiscourse. Chapter 3 (Methodology) outlines the research methodology used in the study. This includes the population, data collection procedures, and data analysis. Chapter 4 (Analysis and discussion of cloze test and learner corpus) presents both quantitative and qualitative findings of the

analysis of the cloze test data and the learner corpus data. Chapter 5 (Findings and discussion: Comparing learner corpus and native speakers' corpus) presents both qualitative and quantitative findings obtained by comparing the learner corpus with the native speakers' corpus. Chapter 6 (Discussion: Integrating qualitative and quantitative data) integrates the quantitative and qualitative data from chapters 4 and 5 and discusses the integrated findings. The final chapter, Chapter 7 (General conclusion), concludes the thesis by presenting and discussing the main findings of the study, their implications and significance, the recommendations, as well as suggestions for future research.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of relevant literature to develop operational definitions. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the issues that underpin this research, the review of literature in this chapter brings focus and clarity to the research problem, informs the research method, helps in providing a theoretical framework for the study, and establishes a link between what has already been studied and what the current study hopes to achieve. This chapter is divided into seven sections: 2.1 provides an introduction to the chapter; 2.2 focuses on corpus linguistics and corpora; 2.3 examines the use of cloze tests in corpus studies; 2.4 discusses undergraduate students' academic writing; 2.5 explains the concept of metadiscourse; 2.6 reviews studies on metadiscourse; and 2.7 concludes the chapter.

#### **2.2 Corpus linguistics and corpora**

According to Bennett (2010), corpus linguistics approaches the study of language in use through corpora. Issues concerning corpus linguistics and corpora are, therefore, presented in the following subsections.

##### **2.2.1 Corpus linguistics**

Corpus linguistics has become a major model in applied and theoretical linguistics in recent times (Gries, 2006). The main focus of corpus linguistics, according to Krieger (2003), is to discover patterns of authentic language use through analysis of actual usage. In other words, corpus linguists are concerned with how patterns of naturally occurring data are used and what these patterns reveal about language behaviour. McEnery et al. (2019) explain that corpus

linguistics uses large quantities of observational data compiled into data sets called corpora to provide evidence about language use by both first-language (L1) and second-language (L2) speakers. McEnery and Hardie (2012) define corpus linguistics as ‘dealing with some set of machine-readable texts which is deemed an appropriate basis in which to study a specific set of research questions’ (p. 12). Corpus linguistics is described by Tognini-Bonelli (2001) as a ‘pre-application methodology which possesses theoretical status’ (p. 1). Mahlberg (2006) also describes corpus linguistics as an approach to the description of English with its own theoretical framework. Emphasising its theoretical conceptualisation, Teubert (2005) describes corpus linguistics as a ‘theoretical approach to the study of language’ (p. 2). Commenting on the methodological status, McEnery et al. (2006) explain that ‘corpus linguistics is a whole system of methods and principles of how to apply corpora in language studies ...’ (pp. 7–8). Similarly, Thompson and Hunston (2006) observe that ‘corpus linguistics is a methodology that can be aligned to any theoretical approach’ (p. 8). The various definitions of corpus linguistics by the authors cited above show that corpus linguistics deals with the collection and analysis of texts which are used as sources of evidence to describe the nature of language.

The issue of whether corpus linguistics is a methodology or a theory has raised arguments among linguists. Anthony (2017) states that some linguists lean towards the view that corpus linguistics is essentially a methodology because it has resources, tools, and techniques that are used to help understand how language works. Teubert (2005) argues that corpus linguistics is not in itself a method but that various methods are used in processing and analysing corpus data. Teubert (2005) explains that corpus linguistics is rather an insistence on working only with real language data taken from the discourse in a principled way and compiled into a corpus. Bennett (2010, p.7) also argues that whether corpus linguistics is a methodology or

theory, the corpus approach to the analysis of language comprises four major characteristics, which are that it:

- (i) analyses the actual patterns of language usage in natural texts;
- (ii) utilises a large and principled collection of natural texts as the basis for analysis;
- (iii) makes extensive use of computers for analysis; and
- (iv) depends on both quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques.

With regard to Bennet's (2010, p.5) corpus approach stated above, it is noteworthy that all four characteristics have been considered in the current study. The current study is empirical because, firstly, it analyses actual patterns of language usage by ESL learners and native speakers of English in essays written by the two groups of students. Secondly, the texts used as the basis for analysis are large and principled. Thirdly, computer software was used for the analysis, and fourthly, the study employed both quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques.

Although corpus linguistics is an established field in language studies and can be used as a methodological tool (Atar & Edem, 2019), there are benefits and limitations to its use. Corpus linguistics, as a methodological tool, provides data for language studies by supplying large numbers of examples of a specific structure and allows linguists to verify the use of a structure by looking at these occurrences. Corpus linguistics is, therefore, a good tool for gathering data for language studies (ibid.), which is what the study attempts to do. Another advantage of corpus linguistics is that it depends on objective, scientific and empirical data, which is open to objective verification. In other words, the data obtained from the corpora are statistically analysed to provide concrete evidence, as was done in this study. Moreover, corpus linguistics can supply frequencies of use. Thus, corpus linguistics does not focus on single contexts but

rather gives an overall picture of a phenomenon, thereby enabling researchers to have a general understanding of the nature of that specific phenomenon (ibid), as shown in the current study.

However, corpus linguistics has some limitations. For example, corpus analysis tends to focus on what has been written rather than on what could have been written, what is implied, inferred or insinuated. The corpus is not able to explain why an issue is the way it is. To explore reasons, the researcher would have to depend on intuition (Bennett, 2010; Lynne, 2018). Nevertheless, the advantages of corpus linguistics explained above and the characteristics identified by Bennett (2010) make it the most suitable methodological tool for this study because the data provide a number of examples of the specific use of MDs and allow for the verification of MD use by undergraduate students by looking at these occurrences or examples. In the next subsections, issues relating to corpora, types of corpora, building corpora, analysing corpora, accountability, falsifiability and replicability, the size of a corpus, and the limitations of a corpus are discussed.

### **2.2.2 Corpora**

A corpus is ‘a collection of naturally occurring examples of language consisting of anything from a few sentences to a set of written texts or tape recordings, which have been collected for linguistic study’ (Hunston, 2002, p. 2). Similarly, Krieger (2003) notes that a corpus consists of a databank of natural texts compiled from writing and/or transcription of recorded speech. Hunston and Francis (2000) also define corpus data as ‘a set of actual instances that constitute the ever-changing and infinite totality of the language; it is used to describe language as it is usually used’ (p. 17). There are different types of corpora, which are discussed in the following subsection.

### 2.2.2.1 *Types of corpora*

There are approximately eight types of corpora, namely, pedagogical, generalised, specialised, learner, historical, parallel, comparable, and monitor. The type of data to be used for a specific analysis depends on the purpose of the corpus (Bennett, 2010). Only four of the eight types of corpora (pedagogical, generalised, specialised, and learner) are useful for employing the corpus approach directly in the classroom (*ibid.*). These four types are explained in the following paragraphs.

Pedagogical corpora include ‘academic textbooks, transcripts of textbooks, transcripts of classroom interactions, or any other written text or spoken transcript that learners encounter in an educational setting’ (Bennett, 2010, pp. 12–14). Pedagogical corpora involve two types of applications—indirect and direct—as stated by Römer (2008). The indirect application involves using corpus-based data to identify what is particularly difficult for a certain group of learners. Thus, the indirect application involves deriving insights about L2 acquisition from learner corpus analyses and drawing pedagogical implications from these insights. In other words, with the indirect application, the teacher decides what to teach depending on the language difficulties of the learners and gives out examples from the corpus to the learners. The direct application, on the other hand, is characterised by using corpora, or data from corpora, directly in the classroom for corpus-driven language learning. This means that with the direct application, the learners have access to the corpus and find language rules for themselves.

Generalised corpora are often very large—usually more than 10 million words—and they contain a variety of language features. Although no corpus will ever represent all possible language features, to a large extent, generalised corpora seek to give users a broad picture of



language features. Examples of generalised corpora are the British National Corpus and the American National Corpus (Bennett, 2010).

Specialised corpora contain texts of a certain type and are usually representative of the language of that particular type. Specialised corpora can be large or small and are often created to answer very specific questions. Examples of specialised corpora are the Air Traffic Control corpus, the British Academic Spoken English corpus, and the Business Letters corpus (Weisser, 2016).

Lastly, learner corpora are corpora that contain written texts and/or spoken transcripts of students who are currently acquiring the language (Bennett, 2010). An example of a learner corpus is the University of Ghana Corpus Data (UGCD) that was used in the current study.

#### *2.2.2.2 Building corpora*

Certain key factors must be considered in the creation of corpora. Bennett (2010) explains that three factors must inform the creation of corpora. He explains that the corpus must be principled and authentic. In addition, the corpus must be able to be stored electronically. According to Bennett, a principled corpus means that the language comprising the corpus must not be random but chosen according to specific characteristics. He explains that authentic texts are texts that are used for genuine communicative purposes. This means that the texts selected to be included in the corpus should be representative of a particular type of real-world language or naturally occurring language. For the third factor, he explains that the corpora must be saved in text formats that are machine-readable.

Furthermore, in building a corpus, McEnery and Hardie (2012) explain that balance, representativeness, and comparability are ideals towards which corpus builders strive. Balance

refers to the distribution of texts according to the kind of text comprising the corpus. That is, a balanced corpus usually covers a wide range of text categories which are supposed to be representative of the language feature under consideration. Representativeness refers to the selection of samples that represent the aspect of language under study, and comparability refers to the collection of similar texts in different varieties of a language. McEnery and Hardie (2012) state that measures of balance and representativeness are matters of degree, but they remain fact-finding notions, decided on the basis of the judgement of linguists when they are building a corpus. This, however, does not mean that the concepts are of no value. The authors also note that while some corpora designed to be comparable to each other can clearly make a claim of balance and representativeness, others may only do so to a degree (p. 10).

The learner corpus used for the current study was built by the researcher. It is principled and authentic because the essays which were collected to build the corpus were written by first-year undergraduate students at the University of Ghana. That is, the language used in the essays was used naturally, so it is real. In addition, the learner corpus was saved in a text format which is machine-readable. Analysing the learner corpus was thus easy as a software tool was used. The issue of balance with regard to the learner corpus used for this study is irrelevant since it contains only one text type, that is, academic writing. Furthermore, the learner corpus used for this study is representative of the academic writing of first-year ESL university students. Finally, the learner corpus is comparable to other corpora containing academic writing of first-year ESL university students.

#### *2.2.2.3 Analysing corpora*

According to Baker (2014), corpus linguistics uses specialised software to identify linguistic patterns in computerised collections of texts. McEnery and Hardie (2012, p. 2) also maintain

that these linguistic patterns are exploited in corpora using tools which allow users to search through them quickly. McEnery and Hardie explain that concordancers allow users to look at words in context. Most concordancers also allow the production of frequency data of some description. For example, a word frequency list will list all the words appearing in a corpus and specify how many times each word appears in that corpus. Concordances and frequency data exemplify the two forms of analysis—namely, qualitative and quantitative—that are equally important to corpus analysis (McEnery & Hardie, 2012).

#### *2.2.2.4 Issues of accountability, falsifiability and replicability*

McEnery and Hardie (2012) state that it can be easy to involuntarily focus on and pull out only the examples from the corpus that support a particular theory in a case where a corpus is approached with a particular theory in mind. The principle of accountability states that linguists must not select a favourable subset of the data in this way. One way of satisfying falsifiability is to use the entire corpus when approaching a corpus with a hypothesis. This principle is the reason for the quantitative nature of many corpus-based methods. In effect, there should be no motivated selection of examples to favour those examples that fit the hypothesis, and there should also not be any screening out of inconvenient examples (*ibid.*). Furthermore, apart from the principle of accountability and satisfying falsifiability, corpus linguistics often appeals to the notion of the replicable result for credibility. A result is considered replicable if a reapplication of the methods that led to it consistently produces the same result. Total accountability to the data at hand ensures that the linguist's claims meet the standard of falsifiability and are totally accountable to other data in the process of checking and rechecking to ensure that the standard of replicability is met. In addition, the combination of falsifiability and replication can make the linguist confident in the validity of corpus linguistics as an empirical scientific purpose (McEnery & Hardie, 2012, p. 14).

#### *2.2.2.5 Size of a corpus*

Flowerdew (2014, pp. 45 & 46) claims that quantitative studies, which are more broad-based, generally make use of corpora of around 500 000 to 1 000 000 words, but when qualitative methods are employed, smaller corpora ranging from 50 000 to 150 000 words may be used, with fewer items examined. Flowerdew opines that the size of a corpus may be related to the phenomenon under investigation because the size of the corpus may be small, but it may contain a high frequency of the phenomenon under investigation. On the other hand, the corpus may be large, but there may be few occurrences of the phenomenon under investigation. McEnery and Wilson (2001) state that the lower the frequency of the feature one wishes to investigate, the larger the corpus should be because content words such as nouns or adjectives usually have a much lower frequency than grammatical words in any corpus.

#### *2.2.2.6 Limitations of corpora*

According to Baker (2006), any method of research can be limited in terms of what it can achieve. Explaining the limitations of corpora, Hunston (2002, pp. 22 & 23) points out that any corpus is a limited sample of language, and it can only show its own contents, so the linguist must be careful when making generalisations from a single corpus. Hunston explains that conclusions about language drawn from a corpus have to be treated as deductions, not as facts. Moreover, as a limitation, Hunston maintains that a corpus can only provide information about whether the language item is used or frequent but not whether it is correct or impossible. On a similar note, Bennet (2010) opines that a corpus cannot tell what is possible or correct in a language, and it is also not able to explain why a phenomenon is the way it is. That is, a corpus can only tell what it is. Lastly, a corpus is not able to provide all possible language features at one time.

Having discussed corpus linguistics and corpora in the sections above, there is a need to discuss how cloze tests are used in corpus studies as they are related to corpus linguistics. As mentioned in Chapter 1, section 1.4, cloze test data were used as an instrument to determine learners' receptive knowledge of metadiscourse markers. In the next section, using cloze tests in corpus studies is briefly discussed.

### **2.3 Cloze tests**

A cloze test is a way of testing comprehension by removing words from a passage or sentence and then asking the learner to supply the missing elements. Walter (1974), cited in Ross (2017), notes that a cloze test is a learning tool that has been used in the classroom since the 1950s. Ross (2017) explains the educational basis of a cloze test from the theory of 'closure' in the Gestalt School of Psychology, which states that the brain sees things as a whole unit and will naturally and easily fill in missing elements. Thus, in language learning, the closure aspect in Gestalt theory is applied by assuming that the brain views language as a whole, complete unit, and the learner will naturally supply missing elements based on their past experiences. Ross (2017) further points out that cloze tests are thus included as critical components of many standardised proficiency tests or language placement tests.

In addition, Tremblay and Garrison (2010) explain that cloze tests are not only a good measure for assessing L2 proficiency; they are also a practical tool for research purposes. This is because cloze tests can take a relatively short time to complete—that is, between 15 and 35 minutes—and their flexible format makes it possible to target a particular range of proficiency levels. Cloze tests are easy to create and can be easy to score if clear scoring criteria are established (p. 75). In a study conducted by Chung and Ahn (2019, p. 68), the results showed that cloze test scores highly corresponded with writing scores. Therefore, they advocate that cloze tests

can potentially be used as a substitute for writing compositions. Although the cloze test was not used as a substitute for composition writing in the current study, on some metadiscourse markers, the cloze test scores corresponded with the essay-writing scores. The next section discusses undergraduate students' writing in the academic context.

## **2.4 Undergraduate students' academic writing**

According to Monippally and Pawar (2008), the aim of academic writing is to impart and document knowledge in a written form. A student's performance in almost all courses in tertiary institutions is assessed through writing, which is one of the four language skills. Hyland (2004) explains that the ability of writers to credibly represent themselves in their writing, as well as claim solidarity with their readers, is necessary for good academic writing. Thus, it is important for readers to understand and interpret what has been written. Similarly, Giridharan and Robson (n.d.) explain that writing in academic contexts requires students to advance their own ideas within a framework of domain or discipline knowledge and engage the reader in academic discourse. Referring to systematic functionalist linguistics, De Oliveira and Lan (2014) state that three main variables should be considered in order to produce well-organised academic essays: context, purpose, and audience. Glenn and Gray (2018) explain these three variables as follows: context refers to the setting, the time and place in which the interaction between the writer and the audience takes place. Purpose refers to the function of the text or the reason for producing the text, for example, whether the writer is presenting the information to interpret a phenomenon, to provide explanations, or to argue a particular point of view. Audience refers to the individuals to whom the written text is directed. Glenn and Gray emphasise that the writer can employ suitable terms, follow a logical organisation, and use appropriate language patterns.

In addition to the three variables needed to produce well-organised texts, the style of an academic essay should be considered. Bailey (2015) states that academic writing is different from the style of newspapers or novels. In order to write in a suitably academic style, the following guidelines, as proposed by Bailey (2015, pp. 110–111), must be adhered to:

- i. Idiomatic or colloquial vocabulary must be avoided.
- ii. Vocabulary must be used accurately.
- iii. Precision is needed when dealing with facts or figures.
- iii. Absolute statements must be avoided.
- iv. Adverbs that show personal attitudes must be avoided.
- v. Contracted forms must be avoided.
- vi. The passive form must not be overused.
- vii. Question forms must be avoided; statements are preferable.
- viii. Two-word verb forms must be replaced with a synonym.

Bailey (2015) thus argues that academic writing should be impersonal and objective rather than subjective because it involves documentation of the truth and depends on empirical evidence. However, some scholars have argued that academic writing is not entirely impersonal and voiceless (Hyland, 2002, 2005a; Ivanič, 1998; Sheldon, 2009). They explain that although impersonality is seen as a defining feature of academic writing, other textbooks encourage writers to make their own voices clear through the use of first-person pronouns.

Further, on the issue of students' academic writing, Hyland (2005a) explains that academic writing is viewed as a social interaction between writers and their target readers. Kumpf (2000) also explains that in academic writing, while arranging content to help readers understand and respond to the text, writers provide 'cues and indicators' in their writing (p. 401). These 'cues

and indicators' are described by Hyland (2004) as metadiscourse markers. Metadiscourse markers organise the contents of a text by using connectives and form an interaction between the writer and reader so that the text becomes more reader-friendly. Thus, metadiscourse makes the ideas in the text more organised, clear, and easy to understand (Amiryousefi & Rasekh, 2010). Metadiscourse thus plays an important role in achieving cohesion and coherence in academic writing.

Cohesion is '...what occurs when the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one presupposes the other in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it' (Halliday & Hassan, 1976, p. 4). Thus, cohesion is about the relation of meaning in a text. Cohesion also refers to the logical flow and connection in a written text. Cohesion is achieved through the use of linguistic devices to link sentences together so that there is a logical flow between ideas from one sentence to another. Coherence, on the other hand, has to do with the unity or togetherness of a text as a whole. Coherence is achieved through the effective grouping and arrangement of ideas in a logical order. Mey (2001) explains that cohesion establishes local relations between syntactic items, whereas coherence establishes the global meaning of what is expressed.

One of the ways of achieving cohesion and coherence in academic writing is the use of metadiscourse markers. Hyland (2005a) states that 'a lack of familiarity with the metadiscourse conventions central to many expository genres in English may be detrimental to learners' academic performance' (p. 136). Metadiscourse is, therefore, discussed in the next section.



## 2.5 Metadiscourse

Hyland (1999) indicates that metadiscourse is characterised as ‘discourse about discourse’ (p. 5). Vande Kopple (1985) and Crismore (1989) also indicate that writing involves two levels: the discourse level and the metadiscourse level. At the discourse level, the reader is provided with propositional content, and at the metadiscourse level, the reader is guided through the text. Hyland (2005a) defines metadiscourse as ‘the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text...’ (p. 37). He explains that metadiscourse is realised through a range of linguistic forms included in the interpersonal model of metadiscourse (*ibid.*). Hui and Na (2008) also explain that although the linguistic forms included in the interpersonal model of metadiscourse are not inherently essential to the topic under discussion, they show that the writer is aware of the needs of the audience.

Although the terms metadiscourse, metalanguage, and metapragmatics are related, there is a difference between metadiscourse and both metalanguage and metapragmatics. Metalanguage is a resource used to talk about and reflect on language. It is used in areas such as language teaching, stylistics, language attitudes, and folk linguistics to make statements about language. Thus, it concerns people’s knowledge about language and representations of language. Metalanguage allows the analysis and conveyance of ideas about what language is, and it also has an ideological dimension which enables statements to be made about what language ought to be (Hyland, 2017). Metapragmatics concerns a speaker’s judgements of their own or others’ appropriateness of communicative behaviour and allows competent language users to talk about their ongoing interactions and also their ability. Metapragmatics seems to be more closely related to metadiscourse than metalanguage, as metapragmatics concerns the appropriate use of linguistic devices by a speaker to manage self-impressions and maintain interpersonal alignment (Hyland, 2017). However, metadiscourse, which embraces discourse

monitoring and interactive functions, differs from metapragmatics since metadiscourse tends to focus on written rather than spoken texts.

Metadiscourse analysis focuses on specialised varieties of language rather than general conversational competencies, and it also expands analysis beyond the ways participant role relationships are negotiated to the persuasive structuring of discourse, examining the contribution of cohesive features to writer-reader comprehension. Thus, metadiscourse concerns how a writer uses language out of consideration for readers based on the writer's estimation of how best the reader can be helped to process and understand what the writer is communicating (Hyland, 2017).

The identification of metadiscourse in a text may sometimes be difficult. Ädel (2006) states that metadiscourse has no defined boundaries, so it may be difficult to make a distinction between linguistic forms that are metadiscourse and those that are not. Ädel thus maintains that three criteria should be considered when identifying metadiscourse markers: First, the linguistic forms which constitute metadiscourse markers should be explicit. That is, the words should supply additional meaning. Ädel argues that some scholars consider phenomena such as words in italics and boldface to be metadiscourse, but they are not because they do not supply additional meanings. Second, there is the need to consider whether the linguistic forms are relevant to the ongoing discourse. That is, the linguistic forms should not be external to the text. Third, the linguistic forms should focus on the reader of the current text but not readers of other texts. There are many taxonomies of metadiscourse markers (Ädel, 2006; Crismore, 1983; Halliday, 1994; Hyland, 1998, 2004, 2005a, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011; Vande Kopple, 1985; Williams, 1981). These taxonomies help in the identification of metadiscourse markers. Some of the most frequently mentioned taxonomies are discussed in the next section.

### 2.5.1 Metadiscourse taxonomies

According to Toumi (2009), early studies of metadiscourse made use of Hallidayan distinction between textual and interpersonal macro-functions of language to recognise two levels of metadiscourse: textual and interpersonal. Textual metadiscourse contributes to the categorisation of rhetorical strategies used to express a theory of experience in a coherent way, and interpersonal metadiscourse conveys attitudes to propositional material to involve the writer in more intimacy and dialogue with the reader. The following authors' taxonomies are discussed below: Williams (1981), Crismore (1983), Vande Kopple (1985), Ädel (2006), and Hyland (2005a).

Williams (1981) classifies written metadiscourse into three broad types: (1) hedges (*possibly*) and emphatics (*certainly*), (2) sequencers (*in the next section*) and topicalisers (*with regard to*), and (3) narrators and attributors (*according to x*). Based on Williams' classification, Crismore (1983) classified written metadiscourse into two general categories: informational and attitudinal. Informational metadiscourse includes goals (the purpose of this study is...), pre-plans (*this chapter is about...*), post-plans (*in the previous section*), and topicalisers. Attitudinal metadiscourse includes saliency (*still, more important*), emphatics, hedges, and evaluatives (*unfortunately*). Ädel (2006) refers to these two taxonomies as narrow because they only comprise linguistic functions that are used to achieve textual functions. That is, there is no writer-reader interaction.

Vande Kopple (1985) divides metadiscourse into two main categories: textual and interpersonal. The textual category includes text connectives (*however*), code glosses (*this means that*), illocution markers (*to conclude*), and narrators (*according to*). The interpersonal category includes validity markers (which are hedges, emphatics, and attributors), attitude

markers (*surprisingly*), and commentaries (*you might not agree with me that...*). However, Hyland and Tse (2004) observe that the division of metadiscourse into textual and interpersonal functions fails to recognise that ‘all metadiscourse is interpersonal in that it takes account of the reader’s knowledge, textual experiences and processing needs’ (p. 161).

Ädel (2006) distinguishes narrow and broad approaches to conceptualising metadiscourse. The narrow approach (meta-text) describes metadiscourse as comprising only linguistic elements that are used to achieve textual functions. That is, it explains the writer’s discourse acts by referring to aspects of the text itself, such as its organisation or the wording, for example, *I would like to discuss the topic..., I would also give suggestions....* The broad approach (writer-reader interaction), on the other hand, defines metadiscourse as covering both linguistic resources used for textual organisation (that is, textual functions) and those used to communicate authorial attitudes (that is, interpersonal functions). Thus, it refers to linguistic expressions used to address readers directly, to engage them in a mock dialogue, for example, *Let me tell you the truth..., Your second question may be....* Ädel (2006) states that the narrow approach delimits metadiscourse as comprising only linguistic elements that are used to achieve textual functions. That is, the narrow approach restricts the concept of metadiscourse by leaving out ‘writer-reader interaction’ (p. 180). Some scholars adopt the broad approach to metadiscourse. One such scholar is Hyland (2005a), whose classification is discussed in detail in the next paragraph. Table 2.1 below shows the focus areas of each classification.

**Table 2.1: Different categorisations of metadiscourse**

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Metadiscourse categorisation</b>
Williams (1981)	Hedges, sequencers, narrators and attributors
Crismore (1983)	Informational and attitudinal
Vande Kopple (1985)	Textual and interpersonal
Ädel (2006)	Narrow approach/broad approach
Hyland (2005a)	Broad approach—interactive and interactional resources

As a broad approach to metadiscourse, Hyland (2005a) claims that there are two levels of metadiscourse: interactive and interactional resources. Interactive resources include categories such as frame markers, code glosses, endophoric markers, evidentials, and transitional markers (ibid., p. 50). Interactional resources refer to features ‘that draw the reader into the discourse and give the reader an opportunity to respond to it’. These resources comprise hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagement markers, and self-mentions (ibid., p. 52).

Contributing to the discourse on interactive and interactional resources, Thompson (2001) explains that interactive resources help to guide the reader through the text by organising discourse in accordance with the writer’s anticipation of the reader’s knowledge and assessment of what the reader can recover from the text. Interactional resources involve the reader collaboratively in the development of the text by commenting on and evaluating the content through modality and evaluation and by assigning ‘speech roles’ to the writer and reader (p. 58). Lee and Deakin (2016) also explain that interactive and interactional resources show the writer’s awareness of their target readers and the need to clarify, elaborate, and interact with readers through the use of language. Lee and Deakin further explain that the use of interactive and interactional resources helps writers to convey their stance towards the propositional content; interactive and interactional resources also build a writer-reader relationship and eventually construct a text that is persuasive and successful. The ten

subcategories of interactive and interactional resources are discussed in the following subsections.

### 2.5.2 Interactive resources

(i) **Frame markers** indicate text boundaries or elements of ‘schematic texture’ used primarily to organise texts (Hyland, 1998, p. 443; Hyland, 2005a). Frame markers are used to sequence parts of the text or order arguments. They serve four specific purposes: (a) to sequence, for example, *first, next, lastly, I begin with*; (b) to label stages, for example, *all in all, at this point, in conclusion, on the whole*; (c) to announce goals, for example, *my focus/goal/objective is to, I seek to*; and (d) to shift topic, for example, *back to, in regard to, turn to*. Aguilar (2008) states that frame markers can be used to achieve the pragmatic functions of organising a text and reducing the reader’s processing effort by explicitly marking textual structures and boundaries.

(ii) **Code glosses** are concerned with the clarification of the writer’s communicative purpose, and they are used to ‘explain, elaborate or rework propositional meanings’ (Hyland, 2007, p. 268). In other words, code glosses supply additional information by rephrasing or illustrating, and they reflect the writer’s assumptions about the reader’s cognitive environment (Hyland 2005a). In effect, Vande Kopple (1985) concludes that code glosses help readers grasp the writer’s intended meaning based on the writer’s assessment of the reader’s knowledge. Hyland (2007) states that two types of code glosses can be distinguished functionally: reformulation and exemplification. ‘Reformulation is a discourse function where the second unit is reworked for specification or elaboration, and exemplification clarifies or supports the meaning through examples by a second unit’ (pp. 269–271). Examples of code glosses are *called, defined, for example, in other words, and specifically*. Wei et al. (2016) note that the appropriate use of code glosses can elaborate on meaning and help readers understand propositional information.

(iii) **Endophoric markers** are expressions that refer to other parts of the text (Hyland, 1998; Hyland, 2005a). They are described as road signs of a text, pointing to and emphasising different parts and different times (Ädel, 2006, p. 101). There are two types of endophoric markers: cataphoric and anaphoric. Cataphoric markers announce what is to follow in the discourse, for example, *as we will see in the next chapter*. That is, ‘the text to which they are referring follows the occurrence of the referring term’ (Schiffrin, 1980, p. 208). Anaphoric markers tell the reader what the writer has already done in the discourse, for example, *as I noted earlier*. Hyland and Jiang (2018) indicate that endophoric markers are used more in texts that contain visuals, as the writer has to refer the reader back to those visuals to clarify information.

(iv) **Evidentials** are metalinguistic representations of an idea from another source, and they help to establish authorial command of the subject. Thus, ‘they present information from other texts, illustrating the source of textual information which originates outside the current text’ (Hyland, 2005a, p. 52). There are two types of evidential markers: (1) the integral type, which incorporates a cited source as part of the reporting sentence, and (2) the non-integral type, which places a cited source within parentheses or in a footnote, endnote, or bibliography via a superscript number. Evidential markers advance the writer’s proposition by demonstrating an awareness of prior research and acknowledging an ‘allegiance to the academic community’ (Hyland, 1998, p. 443; Hu & Wang, 2014) by opening up or closing down a dialogue space to alternative viewpoints. Evidentials ‘strengthen readers’ assumptions of adequate documentation’ (White, 2011, p. 3347) and indicate one’s membership of a particular disciplinary community (Hyland, 1999). Examples of evidentials are *X explains, according to...*, and *X states*. Alkathlan (2019) and Afful and Akoto (2020) note that evidentials are more frequently used in research papers, as writers need to cite related works.

(v) **Transitions** help to create textual cohesion by signalling logical links (for example, additive, causative, contrastive, and consequential) between propositions by the use of a range of devices such as conjunctions (Halliday & Hassan, 1976), discourse connectives (Blakemore, 2002), linking adverbials (Biber et al., 1999), and logical markers (Mur-Dueñas, 2009). Transitions are used to help readers recall what has previously been said or anticipate the coming thought. ‘Transitional words or phrases link the sentences, paragraphs and the whole text in the form of a continuous thought’ (Asghar, 2015, p. 320). A high frequency in the use of transitions that represent the internal connections in the discourse is an important feature of academic argument (Hyland & Tse, 2004; Hyland, 2005a). Based on their semantic functions, transitional markers can be classified into three forms, namely, ‘addition’ (*moreover, in addition*), ‘comparison’ (*similarly, in comparison*) or ‘contrast’ (*however, but*), and ‘consequential’ (*therefore, consequently*) (Hyland, 2004, p. 138). A judicious use of transitions can ease the reader’s burden of making connections between preceding and subsequent propositional information (Cao & Hu, 2014).

### **2.5.3 Interactional resources**

Interactional metadiscourse is related to how the writer manages interaction. Thus, interactional features draw the reader into the discourse and give them an opportunity to contribute and respond to it by alerting them to the writer’s perspective on propositional information and orientation and intention with respect to the reader (Hyland, 2005a). In other words, the writer involves the reader in the text through their arguments, influences and directs the attention of the reader at something, and leads the reader to interpretations (*ibid.*). Since the reader is involved in the argument, interactional metadiscourse markers are considered evaluative and engaging (*ibid.*, p. 54). Interactional markers include hedges, boosters, engagement markers, attitude markers, and self-mentions.



(i) **Hedges** show the writer's reluctance to present propositional information categorically. (Bailey, 2015; Holmes, 1988; Hyland, 2005a, 2010; Myers, 1989). Wei et al. (2016) state that hedges can be realised by 'lexico-grammatical forms such as epistemic modal verbs' (for example, *might, could, and may*), lexical verbs (for example, *suggest, appear, and claim*), 'adjectives and adverbs' (for example, *plausible, probably, and perhaps*), nouns (for example, *likelihood and possibility*), and other 'linguistic expressions for marking qualification' (for example, *in general and to some extent*) (p. 197). William (2007) observes that good writers hedge more than weak writers. In a study conducted by Thabet (2018), the findings suggest that ESL writers underused hedges, and the quality of the hedges they used was not as high as that of those used by native speakers. Bailey (2015) cautions that in many areas of academic writing, a cautious style should be used in order to avoid making statements that can be easily contradicted. Bailey explains that there is usually an exception that must be considered, so there is a need to avoid the use of absolute statements.

(ii) **Boosters** allow the writer to anticipate and preclude alternative, conflicting arguments by expressing certainty instead of doubt. Boosters, contrary to hedges, increase certainty, express commitment, and emphasise the force of propositions. Thus, they allow writers to 'close down conflicting views and express their certainty in what they say' (Hyland, 2005a, p. 52). Examples are *beyond doubt, clearly, definitely, it is an established fact, we proved, and we found....* The appropriate use of boosters in academic writing not only emphasises the writer's epistemic stance but also promotes solidarity with readers (Hyland, 2008; Peacock, 2006).

(iii) **Engagement markers** are used to address readers explicitly by including them as participants in the text (Hyland, 2001, 2004, 2005a). Engagement markers comprise five sub-types of devices for explicitly involving readers in a virtual dialogue (Hyland, 2001; Wei et al.,

2016): (i) directives, which instruct readers to act or see things in a particular way; (ii) reader references, which acknowledge the reader's presence and address them as participants in knowledge-making; (iii) questions, which refer to both rhetorical and real questions that are asked to engage readers overtly; (iv) appeals or references to shared knowledge, which position readers within a shared disciplinary understanding and bring them to an agreement with the writer's argument; and (v) personal asides, which interrupt the flow of text and are directly addressed to readers. Examples are *you can see that, consider that, and imagine*. Hyland (2005b) notes that students at higher levels use more engagement markers because they are more experienced.

(iv) **Attitude markers** indicate the writer's opinion or assessment of a proposition (Hyland 2005a). They express the writer's appraisal of propositional information 'conveying surprise, obligation, agreement...' (Hyland, 2004, p. 6). Attitude markers can help writers persuade readers by foregrounding shared attitudes (Cao & Hu, 2014). Wei et al. (2016) state that attitude markers can be realised by lexico-grammatical resources, including deontic modals (for example, *have to and should*), attitudinal adjectives (for example, *desirable and unfortunate*), affective adverbs (for example, *interestingly and surprisingly*), and other expressions conveying stance or elevation (for example, *what is important and what is necessary*). However, Bailey (2015) argues that in academic writing, adverbs such as *surprisingly, luckily*, and *remarkably* that show personal attitude should be avoided because they render the text subjective (Bailey, 2015).

(v) **Self-mentions** explicitly address readers in order to draw them into the discourse. They suggest the extent of the author's presence in terms of first-person pronouns and possessives, representing the writer's decision to stand behind assertions or avoid such commitments

(Hyland, 2004, p. 6). By the use of first-person pronouns (*I, we*), possessive determiners (*our, my*) and third-person nominal phrases (*the present author*), writers can fulfil different interpersonal functions in their writing, ranging from discourse organisation to marking the writer's role in the research to negotiating knowledge claims (Harwood, 2005; Hyland, 2002; Lafuente-Millán et al., 2010). Although self-mention has a place in academic writing, Bailey (2015) points out that self-mentions should not be overused in academic writing because they render the text too personal.

Hyland's (2005a) classification of metadiscourse as interactive and interactional resources, which are presented above, formed the theoretical framework for the identification of metadiscourse markers in the current study. Although Hyland (2005a) observes that interactive and interactional resources help organise and involve the reader in the text, Hyland and Jiang (2018) note that endophoric markers under the subcategory of interactive resources are frequently used in texts that have visuals in them because the writers have to refer the reader to those visuals in order to clarify information. Alkathlan (2019) and Afful and Akoto (2020) also observe that evidentials under the subcategory of interactive resources are more frequently used in research papers, as writers need to cite related works. Bailey, however, cautions that self-mentions and attitude markers should not be overused in academic writing because they render the text too personal and subjective. In the next section, previous studies on metadiscourse that are relevant to the current study are presented.

## **2.6 Studies on metadiscourse**

Several studies have been conducted to examine the effect of metadiscourse awareness on the writing performance of ESL learners. Some of these studies are by Abdel Wahab (2020), Afful and Akoto (2020), Akoto (2020), Alkathlan (2019), Anwardeen et al. (2013), Davaei and

Karbalaei (2013), Ho and Li (2018), Kashiha (2018), Letsoela (2013), Liao (2020), Livingstone (2019), Mohamed and Rashid (2017, 2019), Ramoroka (2017), Simin and Tavangar (2009), Taghizadeh and Tajabadi (2013), Takač and Ivezić (2019), and Tan and Eng (2014). Nine of these studies are presented and discussed in this section.

Previous studies on metadiscourse show that some of the researchers found that interactive resources were employed more than interactional resources (Afful & Akoto, 2020; Alkathlan, 2019; Kashiha, 2018; Livingstone, 2019). Afful and Akoto's (2020) study investigated the use of metadiscourse markers in the introduction and literature review chapters of dissertations. Hyland's (2005a) theoretical framework was used to code all metadiscourse markers in the corpora manually. To ascertain whether the observed differences in the use of interactive and interactional resources were significant, the researchers used the log-likelihood calculator. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the use of interactive and interactional resources, with interactive resources being used more frequently. Thus, the frequency of interactive resources was higher than that of interactional resources. The study also found a new subcategory of the metadiscoursal category labelled continuants. Afful and Akoto (2020) observed that their study had implications for the supervision of postgraduate dissertations and the teaching of metadiscourse. Their study is relevant to the current study because they also used Hyland's (2005a) theoretical framework to identify the metadiscourse markers in their study.

Alkathlan (2019) also found that interactive resources were employed more than interactional resources. Using Hyland's (2005a) taxonomy of metadiscourse, Alkathlan (2019) investigated the types and frequency of metadiscourse markers employed in 50 research articles written by Saudi ESL college students who were majoring in English-Arabic translation at

King Saud University. The research articles were randomly selected from an online magazine and compiled by an instructor at King Saud University as part of a research methodology course which required that each student write a research article. Each research article was approximately 520 words long. The findings indicated that the students employed more interactive metadiscourse markers (endophoric, evidentials, code glosses, frame markers, and transitions) than interactional markers (attitude markers, boosters, self-mentions, engagement markers, and hedges). Alkathlan (2019) observed that although the use of interactional metadiscourse markers helps engage readers with the message of the text, the ESL students used more interactive metadiscourse markers than interactional metadiscourse markers. In the case of interactive markers, transitions were the most used. The most frequently used transition was *and*. Alkathlan (2019) explained that the students used more transitions because they are the typical way of representing internal connections in the text. The second most used interactive markers were evidentials. Alkathlan explained that writing a research paper requires citing related works in the literature to strengthen and support the arguments in the paper. Alkathlan also noted that the frequent use of code glosses suggests that the students were able to provide additional information by explaining, rephrasing, or elaborating on what had been stated to ensure that the reader would understand their intended meaning. Furthermore, the frequency of frame markers was low in the corpus, a finding the researcher attributed to the fact that the students were not able to sequence, label parts of the text, predict, and shift topics or arguments to make the text clear to its readers. Finally, endophoric markers were the most infrequent interactive marker, and this may be due to the fact that the word count of the research article was low. With regard to the interactional metadiscourse markers, students used hedges, followed by engagement markers, boosters, and self-mentions. The most frequent self-mention used in the corpus was *we*. Alkathlan thus suggested that the King Saud University students needed more training in using interactional metadiscourse markers in order

to be able to persuade their readers of their ideas and arguments in written texts. He concluded that the students should be made aware of the importance of using metadiscourse markers in improving their writing skills in general. Alkhathlan's study is relevant to the current study because, similar to the current study, Alkhathlan investigated the use of metadiscourse markers by ESL learners.

Furthermore, Kashiha (2018) found that interactive resources were employed more than interactional resources. Kashiha investigated the use of metadiscourse markers and highlighted the problems Malaysian ESL learners face in writing essays. The participants involved in the study were diploma students who had enrolled in an English for Academic Purposes course at a private college in Malaysia. The corpus consisted of 143 essays with a total of 41 327 words. The researcher used Hyland's (2005a) classification of metadiscourse markers as the theoretical framework to identify the metadiscourse markers in the corpus. The corpus was then analysed manually, both qualitatively and quantitatively. The findings revealed that the students used more interactive metadiscourse markers (60.6%) than interactional markers (39.4%). With regard to the interactive resources, all types of transitions—namely, additive (in addition), contrastive (however), and consequential (as a result)—were the most frequently used. Kashiha explained that the students used transitions to create a clear link between sentences, enabling a smooth flow to be formed throughout the essay in order to facilitate readers' understanding of the content. Examples of the transitions which were mostly used in the corpus were *and*, *or*, *in addition*, *furthermore*, *hence*, *thus*, *therefore*, *but*, and *also*. The second most used marker was the endophoric marker, and the third was the frame marker. Kashiha explained that the students used frame markers to indicate the sequence in presenting ideas, to establish a setting or time frame relating to the topic of the essay, to frame the thesis statement, and to introduce the overall structure of the essay. The next most used marker was

code glosses. Code glosses were generally used to elaborate on the topic, either by providing examples or giving additional information. Kashiha observed that giving further explanations and examples is considered an interactive strategy to guide potential readers through the text and facilitate their understanding of the text. Evidentials were the least used interactive resources in this study, and Kashiha explained that this might be attributed to the fact that students were required to write the essay in an examination setting where they were unable to refer to external sources of information to include in the essay. With regard to interactional resources used in the essays, Kashiha found that engagement markers were the most used, followed by self-mentions. Kashiha explained that the students used more self-mentions because of the nature of the topic. Hedges and boosters were the next most used, and attitude markers were the least used interactional resources, and Kashiha explained that the topic required more factual information, so attitude markers were not greatly needed. Kashiha observed that the study demonstrated the significance of using metadiscourse markers in essay writing as a way of achieving coherence and producing essays of a high standard and quality. Kashiha's study is relevant to the current study, as it also used Hyland's (2005a) classification of metadiscourse markers to investigate ESL learners' academic essays.

In addition to the researchers who found that interactive resources were employed more than interactional resources, Livingstone (2019) examined the use of metadiscourse markers in academic writing, paying attention to the use of hedges and boosters. In this study, case-study and mixed-methods approaches were used, and the theoretical framework used to identify the metadiscourse markers was Hyland's (1999) taxonomy. The corpus used for the study was an empirical research article with approximately 7 685 words. The corpus was analysed manually, and the results revealed that interactive metadiscourse markers were used more than interactional markers. With regard to interactive resources, transitions such as *and* and *but* were

the most frequently used. Livingstone explains that these transitions help to connect one part of a statement to another. The second most used interactive resource was the endophoric marker, followed by evidentials and code glosses. In relation to interactional markers, hedges and boosters were the most frequently used, but hedges were used more than boosters. Livingstone's study is relevant to the current study, which also used a mixed-methods approach to examine the use of metadiscourse markers in academic writing.

Contrary to the findings that interactive resources outweighed interactional resources, Tan and Eng (2014) and Davaei and Karbalaei (2013) found that interactional resources outweighed interactive resources. Tan and Eng (2014) examined the occurrences and forms of metadiscourse use in the writing of both high and low English proficiency (HEP and LEP) Malaysian undergraduate writers. The theoretical framework for this study was Hyland's (2005a) classification of metadiscourse markers. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings were obtained using a concordance software package, MP2.2. The results indicated that both groups exhibited a greater preference for the use of interactional than interactive metadiscourse. Although both groups attempted to use metadiscourse markers in their writing, there were variations in their writing. The HEP writers used more of both types of metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional). Both groups used more transitions that signify additional ideas, cause and effect, and contrastive ideas. The researchers explained that the high frequency of the use of transitions could be due to the fact that transitions are fundamental linguistic elements that have been taught to students in grammar and writing classes, so students were aware that the use of transition markers to link clauses and sentences would make their ideas more coherent to their readers. In addition, the HEP writers balanced their use of boosters and hedges, while the LEP writers used hedges minimally compared to their use of boosters. Thus, the HEP writers seem to have been more aware of the need to persuade their readers in a more



cautious manner. The researchers observed that based on their findings, it can be concluded that the HEP writers had a greater awareness of academic writing conventions, while the LEP writers still lacked this awareness. The findings imply that more instructional help may be needed to raise the LEP writers' awareness of the importance of metadiscourse use in persuasive discourse. Tan and Eng thus suggested that the learning of metadiscourse use be incorporated into the existing writing programme since it would provide opportunities for students to become more conscious of academic writing conventions involving metadiscourse use. Tan and Eng's study is relevant to the current study, which also used qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the use of metadiscourse markers in academic essays by high-rated, average-rated, and low-rated essay writers.

Davaei and Karbalaei (2013) also found that interactional resources outweighed interactive resources. The study investigated Hyland's (2005a) classification of metadiscourse markers in compositions written by male and female students studying chemistry engineering at Islamic Azad University, Shahreza Branch. The study comprised 12 participants—five males and seven females between the ages of 26 and 33. Without any instruction, they were given a topic on which to write an 80-word essay in ten minutes. The data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively, and the findings showed that the students employed all types of metadiscourse markers except endophoric markers and evidentials. The researchers explained that the students did not use endophoric and evidential markers because they were not writing a scientific topic article, so there was no need to use endophoric markers that referred to other parts of the text and evidential markers that referred to information from another text. Also, using endophoric markers and evidentials is not useful when writing essays that ask for the writer's personal views. Self-mentions were the most frequently used, but the males used more self-mentions than the females. Hedges and boosters were the least used by both males and females. Davaei

and Karbalaei also found that the students used more interactional markers than interactive markers. Davaei and Karbalaei's study is relevant to the current study, which also used qualitative and quantitative methods to analyse metadiscourse markers in ESL learners' academic writing essays.

In other previous studies on metadiscourse, the researchers investigated the use of metadiscourse markers by ESL learners and native speakers of English (Alipour et al., 2015; Takač & Ivezič, 2019). Alipour et al. (2015) compared the use and variations of metadiscourse markers in the writing of Iranian university students and their native English-speaker peers. In their study, the researchers analysed three corpora of university students' argumentative writing samples: corpora of native English speakers, Persian argumentative essays written by Iranian students, and English argumentative essays written by Iranian students. The metadiscourse markers were identified in the corpora based on Hyland's (2005a) metadiscourse classification and analysed using the chi-square statistical test. The corpora were also analysed qualitatively for a deeper analysis of the differences. The results indicated that the frequency of hedges was low in the essays written in the Persian language, but the frequency of boosters was high. They noted that the high frequency of boosters in the Persian essays gave the essays a mood of certainty. On the other hand, the researchers observed that in the use of interactive resources, Iranian students' English essays were nearly identical to those of the English natives, though the frequency was not as high as that of the native speakers. The researchers explained that, in writing the essays in English, the Persian writers copied the routines and rhetoric of the target language rather than their own language. Alipour et al. (2015) concluded that the role of education accounted for why the Persian writers were aware of the use of the markers when writing their English essays. Similar to the study conducted by Alipour et al., the current study

compared the use of metadiscourse markers in essays written by ESL learners and native speakers of English.

Takač and Ivezić (2019) also analysed patterns of L2 learners' use of frame markers, compared them to native English speakers, and explored the relationship between frame markers and coherence. The corpus included 80 argumentative essays written by early undergraduate Croatian L2 learners of English at B2 level. The corpus was analysed using Sketch Engine and also analysed manually in order to double-check both the quantitative and qualitative results. The findings showed that the L2 learners overused a particular set of frame markers, especially those for sequencing (*firstly, to conclude*), and the native speakers used other, less overt means such as anaphoric/cataphoric reference or tenses to frame their arguments. The researchers observed that their findings point to L2 learners' deficient knowledge of ways to achieve coherence, leading to their over-reliance on explicit markers or resorting to a strategy of avoidance. Takač and Ivezić (2019) suggested that explicit teaching of metadiscourse markers should include the explication of the concept of metadiscourse, its categories, functions, and multi-functionality.

Finally, previous work on metadiscourse shows that some researchers examined the use of metadiscourse markers according to students' performance levels in their academic essays (Liao, 2020; Tan & Eng, 2014). Liao (2020) examined how L2 Chinese writers at different levels of proficiency employed metadiscourse markers to write descriptive essays and also whether the usage of these metadiscourse markers distinguished levels of writing proficiency. The dataset comprised 62 descriptive essays produced by English college-level Chinese learners who were in China on a study programme. There were 27 females and 35 males ranging in age from 19 to 22 years. The students wrote the essays within 30 minutes based on

the topic of introducing one's home university to one's Chinese friends. The essays were scored on a six-point holistic scale. Scores 1–2, 3–4, and 5–6 correspond roughly to the novice, intermediate, and advanced levels of the proficiency scale of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. The scale focused on overall writing quality. The 62 essays had three scores: 19, low score (1.0–2.5); 20, middle score (3.0–4.0); and 23, high score (4.5–6.0). The low-score, middle-score, and high-score essays had mean lengths of 152, 230, and 298 characters, respectively, and they contained a total of 2 895, 4 603, and 6 864 Chinese characters, respectively. The findings showed that in comparison with the low-score group, the middle-score and high-score groups produced higher percentages of frame markers and engagement markers, as well as lower percentages of misuses and self-mention markers. Thus, the writers who used more frame markers reduced their use of first-person accounts in their writing. Liao (2020) also found that the middle-score and high-score writers demonstrated a stronger ability to use engagement markers to involve the reader, but in all, there were no significant statistical differences across the groups in several interactive and interactional organisational patterns. He also observed that although the low-score group used more self-mentions, there were no significant statistical differences across the three groups with regard to the use of self-mentions. Liao (2020), therefore, observed that writing in an L2 does not only involve an effort to monitor linguistic accuracy or complexity but also an effort to make metadiscourse choices that will result in cohesive written discourse. Liao's study is relevant to the current study, which also examined the use of metadiscourse markers according to learners' performance levels in their written essays.

In summary, the previous studies on metadiscourse presented above show that some of the researchers observed that interactive resources were employed more than interactional resources (Alkathlan, 2019; Afful & Akoto, 2020; Kashiha, 2018; Livingstone, 2019). They

indicated that among the interactive resources, transitions were the most used. The reasons provided by the researchers mentioned above for the frequent use of transitions in their studies hinged on the fact that transitions help to create textual cohesion. Contrary to the findings that interactive resources outweighed interactional resources, Tan and Eng (2014) and Davaei and Karbalaei (2013) found that interactional resources outweighed interactive resources. Furthermore, Alipour et al. (2015) and Takač and Ivezić (2019) investigated the use of metadiscourse markers by ESL learners and native speakers of English. Alipour et al. found that the learners' use of interactive resources was identical to that of native speakers. Takač and Ivezić (2019) also found that the learners overused a particular set of frame markers. Liao (2020) and Tan and Eng (2014) investigated the use of metadiscourse markers according to their performance levels in their academic essays. They found that the high-rated essay writers employed more metadiscourse markers than the low-rated essay writers.

Despite the contribution of these studies to the area of metadiscourse, it is evident that although a mixed methods approach and corpus analysis were used, none of these studies employed the use of cloze tests to investigate students' receptive knowledge of metadiscourse. The current study, therefore, attempted to fill in the gap by using a cloze test to explore students' receptive knowledge of metadiscourse and comparing this knowledge with their productive use in order to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of metadiscourse. As already stated in Chapter 1, studies on metadiscourse in undergraduate studies in Ghana are limited, so the current study contributes to metadiscourse research in the Ghanaian context by providing new insights into the use of metadiscourse in undergraduate students' essays using corpus linguistics methods and a cloze test. In order to contribute to the body of research on metadiscourse, this study focused on investigating the use of metadiscourse markers in undergraduate students' essays within the Ghanaian context among L2 speakers of English. As the current study dealt with the

investigation of metadiscourse markers in corpora, corpus linguistics was, therefore, the most appropriate method to use for the study.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have provided the knowledge base upon which the present study was conducted. Since it is a corpus study and corpus linguistics uses corpora, I have discussed the different types of corpora, including the ones used for this study. I have also described how corpus data can be compiled, what size of corpus is appropriate, as well as how to extract information from corpora. Issues of accountability, falsifiability, and replicability, which are vital in corpus linguistics, have also been discussed. Furthermore, in this chapter, I have acknowledged the importance of using cloze tests. The concept of metadiscourse, which is the phenomenon under investigation in this study, and the theoretical framework that guided this study have also been examined. Lastly, I have also reviewed literature on some studies on metadiscourse that informed the current study. In the next chapter, the methodology that underpinned the study is discussed.

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, a detailed description of the methodological processes of the study is presented. Firstly, the research questions are presented in relation to the three phases of the study. Secondly, the research design is explained, and this is followed by a detailed description of the three phases. Thereafter, the justification of the methods used in the study, the methodological rigour, and the pilot study are presented. Finally, issues of ethics are discussed before a conclusion to the chapter is presented.

### **3.2 Research questions**

This study was designed to answer three main research questions. Each research question is associated with a research phase. The first research question, corresponding to the first research phase, relates to the cloze test.

RQ1 (Phase 1—cloze test)

To what extent were students able to select appropriate and correct metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional resources) to complete a cloze test exercise?

RQ1 was broken down into two sub-questions in which the relationship between the appropriate and correct use of metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional resources) and the variables of gender, age, home language, and course of study were measured (see §4.2.1).

i. What type(s) of metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional resources) were the students able to select appropriately and correctly?

ii. Were there significant differences between the students' appropriate and correct selection of interactive and interactional resources in relation to gender, age, home language, and course of study?

The second research question corresponds to the second phase of the study, which is the analysis of the learner corpus (LC). The learner corpus was made up of essays written by undergraduate students.

RQ2 (Phase 2—learner corpus)

How were metadiscourse markers utilised in the learner corpus?

RQ2 was broken down into five sub-questions in which the relationship between the use of metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional resources) and the variables of learners' home language, course of study, and performance levels in essays were measured (see §4.3.)

i. What type of metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional) did the students use in their essays?

ii. Which interactive resources were used most frequently by the students?

iii. Which interactional resources were used most frequently by the students?

iv. Were there significant differences in the use of metadiscourse markers in relation to the students' home language and course of study?

v. Was there a relationship between the students' performance in the essays and their use of metadiscourse markers?

Research question 3 relates to phase 3, which compared the LC to the NSC.

RQ3 (Phase 3—learner and native speakers' corpora)

How did the learners' use of metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional resources) compare to that of the native speakers?



The three phases are discussed later in the chapter.

### **3.3 Research design**

The aim of this study was to investigate the use of MD markers by undergraduate students, and to do this, data from a cloze test, a learner corpus, and a reference corpus were used. Creswell (2013) explains that the choice of a research approach is based on factors such as the ‘research questions, personal experiences, and the audience for whom the researcher writes’ (p. 20). Research can be solely quantitative or qualitative, or a combination of the two. As explained by Dörnyei (2007), the third approach is mixed and employs both quantitative and qualitative methods. Referred to as mixed methods, the third approach combines aspects of quantitative and qualitative research in different degrees and at various stages of the research, such as during the data collection process or in the analysis of the data.

In quantitative research, data collection results in mostly numerical data, which are analysed using statistical methods. However, in qualitative research, the data are usually non-numerical and are analysed by non-numerical methods (Dörnyei, 2007). The aim of a qualitative research approach is to attain understanding and gain profound knowledge of a social setting or phenomenon. Qualitative research is thus more ‘inductive’ in style (Creswell, 2013, p. 4). Quantitative research, on the other hand, is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationships among variables that can be measured, typically with instruments, so that the numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures. Thus, quantitative research is deductive (*ibid.*). A mixed-methods approach collects and integrates both qualitative and quantitative data and uses distinct designs that may involve ‘philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks’ (Creswell, 2013, p. 4). Some mixed methods designs include the convergent parallel design (the researcher provides a deeper understanding of the

research problem by integrating quantitative and qualitative data), the explanatory sequential design (the researcher first conducts quantitative research and builds on the results of the quantitative research with qualitative research), and the exploratory sequential design, which is the reverse of explanatory sequential (the researcher first conducts qualitative research and builds on the results of the qualitative research with quantitative research) (ibid., p. 12).

This study employed the convergent parallel mixed methods design, which involves the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell, 2013, p. 12). According to Creswell (2015), the aim of using this method is to combine the results of the qualitative and quantitative data. Thus, the qualitative and quantitative data are analysed separately, and the results are compared to ascertain whether the findings confirm each other. Creswell (2013) explains that in the interpretation of the data, the researcher reports on the comparison of the databases and notes whether there is ‘convergence or divergence’ between the sources of information (p. 15). In this study, data from a cloze test (quantitative), a learner corpus (qualitative), and a native speakers’ corpus (qualitative) were used in the mixed-methods approach. The cloze test data were used to provide a benchmark to measure students’ ability to identify metadiscourse markers. Their receptive knowledge of these metadiscourse markers was assessed in a test condition. The investigation of the corpus, on the other hand, revealed how the students used the markers in an unrestricted situation where they had to think of the words and use them of their own free will—their active or productive knowledge of MD markers. The results of the analyses of the cloze test (quantitative data) and the learner corpus (qualitative data) were compared to determine any relationships between the two data sets.

The native speakers’ corpus, comprising essays from native speakers, was compared to the learner corpus, compiled from essays of second-language speakers to ascertain whether there

were similarities or differences in the use of metadiscourse markers by native and non-native speakers of English. As the study involved the analysis of metadiscourse markers in undergraduate students' essays, both quantitative and qualitative approaches to corpus analysis were used, and thus, a mixed-methods design was appropriate. Bennett (2010) notes that one of the characteristics of the corpus approach to the analysis of language is that it depends on both quantitative and qualitative analytical approaches. Sankaravelayuthan (2021) also notes that in qualitative analysis, data are only used to identify and describe features of language usage and to provide real occurrences or examples of particular phenomena. Therefore, frequencies or percentages are not assigned to the linguistic features identified in the data, but in quantitative analysis, linguistic features are classified and counted, and in addition, statistical models are constructed in order to explain the observed facts. He further observed that most of the research done in the fields of language and linguistics uses a qualitative approach. However, he observed that the main disadvantage of using only the qualitative approach to corpus analysis is that the findings cannot be extended to wider populations with the degree of certainty that quantitative analysis yields because findings of qualitative analysis are not tested to discover whether they are statistically significant or due to chance. Sankaravelayuthan (2021) thus concludes that quantitative methods and statistical techniques can 'supplement' qualitative analyses or vice versa in language research (p. 4).

Similar to previous studies which adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches to identify and analyse the frequency and functions of metadiscourse in students' essay writing (Alkathlan, 2019; Kashiha, 2018; Takač & Ivezič, 2019), this study adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate metadiscourse usage in the essays of University of Ghana undergraduate students. In Phase 1, a quantitative approach was used to answer RQ1. In the second phase of the analysis, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to

answer RQ2. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to answer RQ3. The next section discusses the methodology of the three phases of the main study.

### **3.4 Main study (three phases)**

The main study consists of three phases: Phase 1 comprises the cloze test. Phase 2 comprises the learner corpus data, and Phase 3 comprises the learner corpus in comparison to the native speakers' corpus.

#### **3.4.1 Phase 1—Cloze test: Metadiscourse usage in a given passage**

Phase 1 was driven by RQ1: To what extent were students able to select appropriate and correct metadiscourse markers to complete a cloze test exercise?

Students were required to choose ten metadiscourse markers from 16 options to complete a given passage. The methodological aspects involved in Phase 1 are presented below.

##### *3.4.1.1 Population and sampling*

Out of a population of 250 first-year University of Ghana students who registered for the Academic Writing course and were taught by the researcher, 197 students were selected to participate in the cloze test because the marked scripts of these 197 students had already been selected through purposive (judgmental) sampling and used as the learner corpus for this study (see section 3.4.2.1). Purposive (judgmental) sampling, as explained by Babbie (2014), is a type of 'non-probability sampling' in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher's judgement about which ones will be the most useful or representative (p. 530). Tongco (2007) observes that purposive sampling may be used with both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. However, Tongco (2007) cautions that since purposive

sampling is inherently a biased method, the reliability and competence of the informants must be ensured in the process of data gathering. The reliability and competence of the participants used for this study were ensured as the essays were written under examination conditions. The essays were marked by the researcher, and the scores were classified into three categories: high-rated, average-rated, and low-rated. The essays selected for the study were from all three categories. Thus, the 197 students selected from the population of 250 first-year University of Ghana students to participate in the cloze test were from all three categories.

#### *3.4.1.2 Description of participants*

As stated above, 197 participants were selected from a population of 250 first-year University of Ghana students who were registered for the Academic Writing course. Due to the online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, Google Forms were sent to all 197 students whose essays were selected for analysis. However, only 171 completed and submitted their responses online. The other 19 students sent me messages explaining their inability to take part in the test due to poor network coverage in their various towns and villages, which made it very difficult for them to access their emails.

Of the 171 participants who submitted their responses to the cloze test, 81 (47.36%) were females and 90 (52.36%) were males. In terms of courses, there were 80 (46.78%) students registered for BA Arts, three (5.70%) registered for BA Education, 12 (7.02%) registered for BSc Health Sciences, and 76 (44.44%) registered for BSc (grouped courses). In terms of ages, 129 (75.44%) students were between the ages of 15 and 20, while 42 (24.56%) were 21 years and above. All the participants in this study were non-native or second-language speakers of English. The first or home languages spoken by the participants are as follows: 95 (55.55%) of the 171 students spoke Akan, 23 (13.45%) spoke Ewe, 24 (14.04%) spoke Ga-Adangbe, 13

(7.6%) spoke Northern Ghanaian languages (Gurene, Gonja, Fulani, Dagaare, Dagbani, Hausa, Bimoba, and Kasem), and 16 (9.36%) stated that they spoke English at home, although they were Ghanaians. Research and observations show a gradual shift from the use of indigenous languages in some informal domains to the use of the English language, especially in urban centres in Ghana (Agyekum, 2009; Akpanglo-Nartey & Akpanglo-Nartey, 2012; Anderson et al., 2009; Afrifa et al., 2019). Economic status, age, inter-ethnic marriages, and educational background are the main factors influencing the choice of English as a home language in urban Ghana. Other factors, such as the media, the language in education policies, and the use of the Internet, also play a role in the use of English in Ghanaian homes (Afrifa et al., 2019). Some Ghanaian children, therefore, consider English as their first or home language since that is the only language they have spoken since infancy. Table 3.1 below gives a summary of the description of the participants.

**Table 3.1: Description of participants**

<b>Participants categories</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Males	90	53
Females	81	47
<b>Age</b>		
15–20 years	129	75
21 years and above	42	25
<b>Courses</b>		
BA Education	3	2
BSc Health Sciences	12	7
BSc (grouped courses)	76	44
BA Arts	80	47

Participants categories	Number	Percentage %
<b>Home language</b>		
Northern Ghanaian languages	13	8
English	16	9
Ewe	23	13
Ga-Adangme	24	14
Akan	95	56

### 3.4.1.3 Research instrument

The research instrument used in Phase 1 was a cloze test. The cloze test was used to ascertain the students' receptive knowledge of MD markers. Students' biographical data—such as age, gender, first language or home language, and course of study—were elicited in a short questionnaire at the beginning of the cloze test. The cloze test comprised a short passage of three paragraphs with blanks. Students were required to choose words or phrases from a list of metadiscourse markers to fill in the gaps in the passage. A list of 16 metadiscourse markers was provided. The metadiscourse markers were selected from Hyland's (2005a) classification of metadiscourse markers comprising five interactive resources and five interactional resources. The ten metadiscourse markers that were deleted from the passage were (1) **X explains** (interactive evidential), (2) **such as** (interactive code gloss), (3) **in addition** (interactive transition), (4) **may** (interactional hedge), (5) **it is clear that** (interactional booster), (6) **note that** (interactional engagement marker), (7) **unfortunately** (interactional attitude marker), (8) **noted above** (interactive endophoric marker), (9) **finally** (interactive frame marker), and (10) **I** (interactional self-mention).

In addition to the ten markers deleted from the passage, six markers were provided as distractors. Thus, students were given 16 words/phrases (which were metadiscourse markers) and were expected to choose ten of them to fill in the ten gaps in the passage. The distractors

were *in fact* (interactional booster), *surprisingly* (interactional attitude marker), *as discussed above* (interactive endophoric marker), *namely* (interactive code gloss), *seem* (interactional hedge), and *my* (interactional self-mention). The passage was selected from Bailey (2015) (see appendix X), one of the textbooks used for the Academic Writing course. In order to create the gaps in the passage for the cloze test, I deleted ten words/phrases in the original text, five interactive and five interactional, which belonged to the ten sub-categories of metadiscourse markers proposed by Hyland (2005a). The list of options provided to fill in the gaps were all MD markers. The following passage was used for the cloze test.

Possession of a degree should assist a graduate in finding a satisfying job more quickly and give greater prospects for promotion inside the chosen career. (1) ----- that a university course will not only provide students with up-to-date knowledge in their subject area, but also provide practice with the essential skills required by many employees today, (2) ----- the ability to communicate effectively using ICT or the skills of team working and problem building. (3) -----, living away from home gives the opportunity to make new friends from all over the world, and build networks of contacts that (4) ----- be invaluable in a future career (Bailey, 2015, p. 25).

Although (5) ----- a university degree is the key to a better future for any student, most post-secondary school leavers do not gain admission to the universities of their choice. It is important to (6) ----- the requirements for admissions differ from one university to the other. (7) ----- most students who do not gain admission to any university may end up hawking in the streets.

On the other hand, students who gain admission to the university are faced with many challenges; one of which is essay writing. Writing is a skill as well as a process of discovery involving a series of steps. As (8) ----- writing is a skill, and as a skill such as cooking, typing or driving, writing can be learned. Learning to write an essay will help one express one's ideas in a logical manner. Learning to write will also help the student to succeed in an academic discourse community.

(9) -----, (10) ----- believe that writing will train your mind to think clearly, and that ability will prove to be of value in every phase of your life.



The cloze test focused on only one learning outcome, which in this case was the identification of appropriate MD markers. The ability to use metadiscourse to provide cohesion and coherence is important in essay writing, and thus, this ability was assessed through the selection of appropriate metadiscourse markers in a cloze test. According to Maroko (2016, p. 129), in order to provide correct missing words to complete a passage, one should possess ‘adequate knowledge or vocabulary’ (in this case, metadiscourse markers), as some omissions would require specific vocabulary items that the test-taker should know. Thus, using a cloze test for missing metadiscourse markers is appropriate in determining the students’ knowledge of these markers.

#### *3.4.1.4 Procedure*

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic and its attendant restrictions, the test was administered via Google Forms. I administered the test to the participants myself by sending them the link to the test via Google Forms via text messages. Students were asked to attempt the test only once. A completion time of 20 minutes was allocated. After 20 minutes, the system closed, and the form became unavailable. Students were required to fill in a participant consent form before taking part in the test. Some of the students complained that they skimmed the test and realised that they would not be able to get all the words right, so they were reluctant to submit their responses, but I assured them that the outcome of the test would not affect them since it was not part of the university’s assessment. I also explained to them that their ability or inability to get all the answers right was part of the study since I expected various categories of competence, that is, low, average, and high marks. I also encouraged them to do the work independently without seeking help because doing that would not show a true reflection of their actual performance, which would mar the credibility of the study. Thus, I had to appeal to their consciences since there was no proper supervision, and they could easily seek help in choosing

the appropriate/correct answers. Although they assured me of their honesty and sincerity, it should be noted that they did not write the test in a supervised and controlled environment. However, the variety in their performance leads me to believe that they followed my directions and attempted the test on their own.

#### *3.4.1.5 Scoring and analysis*

I printed out all 171 responses and named them as the main study, University of Ghana Cloze Test (UGCT) 1 to 171. The main study cloze test was scored using the exact-word scoring method. This method does not allow any other word than the word deleted from the original text (Maroko, 2016). I marked and graded the students' answers. The results of the main study cloze test were then analysed electronically using IBM's SPSS Statistics version 27. The students' performance in the cloze test is presented in section 4.2. In addition to the students' performance in the cloze test, in order to answer the sub-questions as to whether there were differences in performance in terms of the students' gender, age, first languages, and course of study, and whether the differences (if any) were statistically significant, non-parametric tests (namely, Mann Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests) were done. The reason for using non-parametric tests rather than parametric tests was that some of the categories were low—for example, the first language of the students and the course of study had few participants, ranging from 3 to 16. To assume the central limit theorem to use parametric tests, the number should be greater than or equal to 30. Another reason for using non-parametric tests was that the scores were not normally distributed. The findings of the descriptive and inferential analysis of the main study cloze test are presented in section 4.2.

### 3.4.2 Phase 2: Learner corpus data

Phase 2 focused on the learner corpus data (the students' essays), which were used to answer RQ2: How did students utilise metadiscourse markers in the learner corpus?

#### 3.4.2.1 Building the learner corpus

The essays that made up the corpus were written by 250 first-year students at the University of Ghana who were allocated to me to teach Academic Writing Skills for the 2019/2020 academic year. The students were taken through 12 weeks of teaching on how to write a short academic essay as part of the academic writing course at the University of Ghana. The course included how to achieve unity, completeness, and coherence in a short essay, among other topics. As stated in chapters 1 and 2, students were taught to achieve cohesion and coherence through the following means: (a) a natural or easily recognised order, (b) transitional words or phrases, (c) repetition of keywords, (d) substitution of key words for key pronouns, and (e) parallelism. Students were also advised to avoid overusing self-mentions and attitude markers, as such markers render the text too personal and less objective. In addition to the five ways of achieving coherence listed above, students received instruction on the need to use hedges in their essays in order to avoid making statements that could be contradicted because there is always an exception that must be considered (Bailey, 2015). Furthermore, students were advised to signal that they were concluding their essays. Finally, students were advised to use appropriate academic vocabulary in their essays. For example, they were advised to avoid the use of *like* to introduce examples but rather to use *such as*, which is more academic. Five weeks of the teaching was done face-to-face in the lecture hall, but the remaining six weeks of teaching was done on the Sakai learning management system, an online 'learning platform with numerous tools and processes used essentially to manage teaching and learning' (Biney, 2019, p. 3), as well as on Zoom, 'a cloud-based video communications app that allows the set-up of video and

audio conferencing, webinars, live chats, screen-sharing, and other collaborative capabilities’ (Antonelli, 2020, p. 1). At the end of the semester, students had to write an online end-of-semester examination based on what they had been taught. One of the assessments required students to write an argumentative essay of 400 to 500 words on one of the following topics:

(a) Plastic bags should be banned. Discuss.

(b) To prevent cruelty to animals, all humans should be vegetarians. Do you agree?

(c) Rather than improving human communication, social media has become a channel for misinformation.

The second part of the question required the students to use examples from their essays to show how they achieved coherence. The students were asked to type and upload their essays on their Sakai course site between Monday, 8 June, and Wednesday, 10 June 2020. Most of the students wrote on the first topic: ‘Plastic bags should be banned. Discuss.’ As a result, the selected essays were all on this topic. These essays formed the learner corpus.

Since the essays were already typed, I printed the essays of all 250 students and marked them using the marking scheme provided by the Language Centre as a guide. The marking scheme stipulated that as first-year students, the candidates should be able to generate ideas and provide a sustained argument, so the emphasis should be on the development of content on a topic under interrogation. The maximum grade for each essay was 25 marks, and according to the marking scheme, between 23 and 25 marks should be awarded to a candidate who has been able to write a good introduction with four developed paragraphs, including a concluding paragraph, and the essay should be devoid of errors in spelling and punctuation; between 20 and 22 marks should be awarded to a candidate who writes a good introduction with fully developed paragraphs, including a concluding paragraph, and the essay may have errors but

the errors generally do not affect meaning; between 17 and 19 marks should be awarded to a candidate who writes an introduction with three fully developed paragraphs, including a conclusion, and the errors which may be found in the essay may affect meaning; between 14 and 16 marks should be awarded to a candidate who writes three fully developed paragraphs, including a form of conclusion, and may contain several errors that affect meaning; between 11 and 13 marks should be awarded to a candidate who attempts an introduction with three body paragraphs, including a form of conclusion, and may contain several errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling; and finally, 10 marks and below should be awarded to a candidate who attempts to write an essay but does not finish, but there is an attempt to get the rudiments of the essay written. The above information is summarised in Table 3.2:

**Table 3.2: Essay content and marks awarded**

<b>Marks</b>	<b>Essay content</b>
23–25	Good introduction; 4 developed body paragraphs and a concluding paragraph; devoid of errors
20–22	Good introduction; 4 developed paragraphs, including a conclusion; errors do not generally affect meaning
17–19	Introduction; 3 fully developed paragraphs and a conclusion; errors may affect meaning
14–16	3 developed paragraphs, including a conclusion; may contain several errors that affect meaning
11–13	3 paragraphs, including a conclusion; may contain several errors
0–10	Attempts to write an essay but does not finish

After marking all the scripts, I submitted the marks to the examination board for moderation and approval. The results were later approved and released to the students. The essays were selected based on scores awarded to each essay and also reflected three competence levels, namely, high (20–25), average (15–19), and low (0–14).

To ensure a good representation of the students' actual performance, I grouped the final marks according to the three competence levels: high, average, and low. The criterion for determining the students' competence levels was the marking scheme provided by the Language Centre. The essays labelled as high obtained marks between 20 and 25; the average essays obtained marks between 15 and 19; and the low essays attained 14 marks and below. The initial proposal was to select 70 scripts from each category, namely, high, average, and low essays, but in the course of the selection, I realised that essays labelled as high (20–25 marks) and average (15–19 marks) numbered more than 70 for each category, and essays labelled as low (0–14 marks) totalled only 57. Through a simple random sampling technique, where any of the scripts has an equal chance of being selected, I selected the first 70 each for the high-rated and average-rated essays on the first topic, 'Plastic bags should be abolished. Discuss.' Random sampling is a technique in which each sample has an equal probability of being chosen (Shin, 2020). For the low-rated essays, I used all 57. Thus, there were 140 randomly selected essays from the average and high categories and 57 scripts from the low-rated essays. The 197 essays, with a total of 98 069 words, were written on the topic 'Plastic bags should be abolished. Discuss.' All 197 essays were coded manually by assigning codes such as 'University of Ghana Corpus Data (UGCD) 1, UGCD 2, UGCD3...' to each essay, and the essays were saved as plain texts in separate files. These files were used to build the learner corpus, which comprised 98 069 running words and 197 texts.

#### *3.4.2.2 Analysis of learner corpus*

The analysis of the learner corpus was based on Hyland's (2005a) model of metadiscourse markers. Ädel (2006) observes that compiling a list of metadiscourse markers is extremely challenging because their surface linguistic realisations may be different. Hyland (2005a) thus notes that metadiscourse should be taken as an 'open category' to which writers are able to add

new items according to the needs of the context (p. 27). Hyland's (2005a) classification was therefore used as a starting point for the identification and classification of the metadiscourse items in the learner corpus. The analysis was done in the following stages:

Step 1: With the help of two other lecturers on the academic writing course, all the metadiscourse markers based on Hyland's (2005a) taxonomy were first identified manually in the essays. Hyland's (2005a) classification of metadiscourse markers, which was used as the theoretical framework for the study, is presented in Table 3.3:

**Table 3.3: Hyland's (2005a, p. 49) classification of MD**

Category	Function	Example
<b><i>Interactive resources</i></b> <b>(5 sub-categories)</b>	<b>Help to guide the reader through the text</b>	
i. Transitions	Express semantic relation between clauses	In addition/but/thus/and
ii. Frame markers	Refer to source discourse acts, sequence or text stages	In conclusion/finally
iii. Endophoric markers	Refer to information in other parts of the text	Noted above/see fig./in section 2...
iv. Evidentials	Refer to source information from other texts	According to X/Z states that
v. Code glosses	Help readers grasp functions of ideational material	Namely/e.g./such as/in other words
<b><i>Interactional resources</i></b> <b>(5 sub-categories)</b>	<b>Involve the reader in the argument</b>	
i. Attitude markers	Express writer's attitude to proposition	Unfortunately/I agree/surprisingly

Category	Function	Example
ii. Engagement markers	Explicitly refer to or build relationship with reader	Consider/note that/you can see that
iii. Self-mentions	Explicit reference to authors	I/we/your/our
iv. Hedges	Withhold writer's full commitment to proposition	Might/perhaps/possible
v. Boosters	Express certainty	We proved/definitely/beyond doubt/clearly

Step 2: Using Hyland's (2005a) taxonomy, provided above as a guide, I made a list of the MD markers found in the learner corpus. The list is presented in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4: List of MD markers manually identified in the learner corpus**

Category	Example
<b>Interactive resources (5 sub-categories)</b>	
i. Frame markers	in a nutshell, this essay seeks, the third, next, in conclusion, discussed below, thirdly, to begin, first, finally, to end, last but not least, to conclude, to commence, in short, to continue, above all, a second, a fourth, my purpose here is to, third, in summary, second, fourth, firstly, overall, secondly, last but not least, to start, in the following, to sum up, lastly, on the whole
ii. Code glosses	in other words, for example, such as, for instance, namely, an example is



<b>Category</b>	<b>Example</b>
iii. Endophoric markers	from the above discussion, in section..., as mentioned above, as mentioned before, see fig..., as mentioned earlier, noted above
iv. Evidentials	according to, argue that, reveal, reveals, explains, defines, states that, suggest that, suggests that, claim that
v. Transitions	among other, among others, also, and, again, additionally, although, but, therefore, in addition, though, thus, in a similar, similar, similarly, on the other hand, nonetheless, as a result, contrary, even though, likewise, another, moreover, in contrast, hence, consequently, however, unlike, and furthermore
<b>Interactional resources (5 sub-categories)</b>	
vi. Hedges	broadly, generally, may, around, fairly, relatively, tend, largely, mostly, sometimes, somewhat, nearly, many, about, apparently, appear, appears, perhaps, almost, seem, seems, might, approximately, likely, possible, possibly, presumably, probably, quite, some, typically, tends, usually, most, often
vii. Attitude markers	hopefully, remarkable, there is no doubt, fortunately, surprisingly, undoubtedly, no wonder that, unfortunately, understandably, ideally, I agree

Category	Example
viii. Engagement markers	consider, note that, imagine, you can see that
ix. Boosters	of course, definitely, in fact, it is proved that, indeed, it is clear, it is confirmed that, as a matter of fact
x. Self-mentions	my, our, I, we

Step 3: At this stage, #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020), a corpus analysis tool developed by Lancaster University, was used to analyse the learner corpus. First, the KWIC tool and the Wizard tool were used to search for the words using the search terms in Table 3.4. The words or phrases under interactive resources were searched first, followed by the words under interactional resources. The KWIC tool searches for words, phrases, or grammatical structures in the structure, and the Wizard tool automatically produces a report showing the context in which the word or phrase was used, as well as the number of times the word or phrase occurs in the corpus. Below is an example of the report produced after the KWIC and the Wizard tools were used to search for the word ‘also’ in the learner corpus:

The search term ‘also’ occurs 554 times (56.491 per 10k) in the UGCD—in 181 out of 197 texts. Table 3.5 displays a random sample of 10 concordance lines, showing the most immediate contexts in which the search term is used.

**Table 3.5: A random set of concordance lines for ‘also’ in the UGCD**

Filename	Left	Node	Right
UGCD 2.txt	health of these youth, but	also	the economy of the country
UGCD 158.txt	not easily recycled. This is	also	one major global challenge when
UGCD 16.txt	dealing with their plastic bags.	Also	recycling of these plastic bags
UGCD 130.txt	throwing them away, we can	also	use jute, cloth or paper
UGCD 107.txt	the production of paper bags	also	led to an alarming increase
UGCD 59.txt	in this world. We are	also	aware that when man returns
UGCD 78.txt	Reduce, Re-use and Re-cycle; and	also	remember that, change begins from
UGCD 136.txt	by the toxicity in plastics.	Also,	plastic bags tend to disrupt
UGCD 95.txt	not only acutely damaging but	also	seriously harmful agriculture. It may
UGCD 175.txt	food source for marine creatures.	Also,	creatures could be entangled- restricting

The number of times a word was used is presented in Chapter 4 as the frequency. The findings of the learner corpus analysis are presented in tables in section 4.3, and they were used to answer RQ2 (i) What type of metadiscourse markers (interactive or interactional) did the students use in their essays? (ii) Which interactive metadiscourse markers were most frequently used by the students? and (iii) Which interactional metadiscourse markers were most frequently used by the students?

In addition, a Z-test was conducted to determine the statistical significance levels of the differences in the proportions of the frequencies of interactive and interactional resources. That is, the Z-test showed whether the differences in the occurrences of interactive and interactional resources were significant. Besides the above tests, further tests were conducted, as indicated in step 4.

Step 4: In order to answer sub-questions (iv) and (v) of RQ2, SPSS was used to carry out a non-parametric test, namely, the Kruskal-Wallis test.

RQ2 (iv): Were there significant differences among the high-, average-, and low-rated essays with regard to the use of metadiscourse markers?

RQ2 (v): Were there significant differences in the use of the metadiscourse markers in relation to the students' home language and course of study?

It was difficult to get the variables of age and gender for the learner corpus analysis because students were not required to provide such information on their essay scripts, and the researcher did not use a questionnaire to elicit this information. The variables of age and gender were thus left out. Both the descriptive and inferential analyses from the SPSS data, showing the relationship between metadiscourse markers, on the one hand, and the variables of rated levels of essays, the home languages of the students, and their course of study, on the other hand, are presented in section 4.3. In the next section, the procedure involved in comparing the LC and the NSC used in the study is discussed.

### **Phase 3: Comparing LC and NSC**

In phase 3, the learner corpus was compared to the native speakers' corpus.

In relation to the issue of how representative a reference corpus should be, Leech (2017) argues that although it is actually impossible to define a representative corpus in our present state of knowledge, it is important that the researcher tries to make it as representative as possible so that it will be accepted by the community of speakers of the language as some kind of standard reference point. The native speakers' corpus used in this study was extracted purposely from the LOCNESS because the essays were written by undergraduate students.

### *3.4.2.3 Selection, description, and justification of essays for the native speakers' corpus*

The essays extracted from LOCNESS comprise 207 essays written by British and American University students. The students were aged between 17 and 48 years. I selected these essays out of all the essays contained in LOCNESS because, firstly, they were written by undergraduate university students, and secondly, the essays were written on social issues, as was the topic presented in the learner corpus. There were other essays in LOCNESS, but these were not selected because they were written by advanced-level students. Since the study is based on undergraduate students' essays, it was more appropriate to use a corpus generated from native speakers who were undergraduate students. Other essays in LOCNESS were not selected because the content was mainly literary and very different from the learner corpus used in this study. The topics from the native speakers' corpus pertain to a social concern, a political matter, or a general life issue and were, therefore, comparable with the learner corpus topics.

The native speakers' corpus consisted of essays written by British and American undergraduate students. The essays from Britain were written by students from a selection of British universities, and those from America were written by American undergraduate students from four institutions: Marquette University, Indiana University of Indianapolis, the University of South Carolina, and the University of Michigan. Details of the essays from the different institutions are provided according to the individual institutions. The details are provided to show how they compare to those in the learner corpus.

#### *3.4.2.3.1 British argumentative essays: British university students*

A total of 33 essays on the topic 'A single Europe: A loss of Sovereignty for Britain' were selected. The essays were written in March 1991. The ages of the students were not stated in

the description of the corpus. Each essay consisted of 500 words; the essays were not written under examination conditions; they were not timed; and no reference tools were used. The codes for the essays are ICLE-BR-SUR-001.3–33.

#### *3.4.2.3.2 American argumentative essays: Marquette University*

The essays were 46 in number, and they were written on topics such as ‘euthanasia’, ‘capital punishment’, and ‘homosexuality’. A list of the specific argumentative essay topics is included as Appendix 7. The essays were written in March 1991. The majority of the students were between 18 and 21 years of age. However, there were three students who were over 21 years old: they were 30, 31, and 40 years old. Each essay consisted of between 500 and 600 words; it was not stated in the description of the corpus whether the essays were written under examination conditions or not; they were not timed; and no reference tools were used. The codes for the essays are ICLE-US-MRQ-0001.1–46.1.

#### *3.4.2.3.3 American argumentative essays: Indiana University of Indianapolis*

There were 28 essays from the above institution, and they were written on topics such as ‘money is the root of all evil’, ‘crime does not pay’, and ‘feminists have done more harm to the cause of women than good’. A list of the specific essay topics is included as Appendix 8. The essays were written in March 1995. The students were aged between 22 and 48 years. Each essay consisted of between 400 and 500 words; it was not stated whether the essays were written under examination conditions or timed; no reference tools were used. The codes of the essays are ICLE-US-IND-001.1–28.1.

#### *3.4.2.3.4 American argumentative essays: University of South Carolina*

There were four sets of essays (53 in total) written by students at the University of South Carolina on various topics. A list of the specific essay topics is included as Appendix 9. The

first set of 17 essays contained writing on topics such as ‘the death penalty’, ‘legalisation of marijuana’, and ‘gender roles’. The essays were written in November/December 1995. Most of the students were aged between 18 and 19 years; one of them was 28 years old. Each essay consisted of between 500 and 600 words; there was no information on whether the essays were written under examination conditions or timed; no reference tools were used. The essays had the codes ICLE-US-PRB-0034.2–39.2. The second set of 13 essays contained writing on topics such as ‘premarital sex’, ‘football’, and ‘gun control’. These essays were also written in November/December 1995, and the students were aged between 17 and 19 years. Each essay consisted of between 500 and 600 words; there was no information on whether the essays were written under examination conditions or timed; no reference tools were used. The third set of 17 essays contained writing on topics such as ‘women in combat’, ‘curfew’, and ‘abortion’. They were written in November 1995 by students aged between 17 and 21. Each essay consisted of more than 500 words; the essays were not written under examination conditions; they were not timed; and no reference tools were used. The fourth set of six essays from the University of South Carolina contained writing on the topic ‘gender roles in our society’ from April 1995. Four of the students were between 17 and 20 years of age, one was 34, and another was 60 years old. Each essay consisted of more than 500 words; it was not stated whether the essays were written under examination conditions or timed; no reference tools were used.

#### *3.4.2.3.5 American argumentative essays: Presbyterian College, South Carolina*

The six essays were written on topics such as ‘adolescent suicide’, ‘water pollution’, and ‘homelessness’. A list of the specific essay topics is included as Appendix 10. The essays were written in April 1995. The students were aged between 20 and 22. Each essay consisted of more than 500 words; the essays were not written under examination conditions; they were not timed; reference tools were used. The codes of the essays are ICLE-US-PRB-0034.2–39.2.

#### 3.4.2.3.6 American argumentative essays: University of Michigan

A total number of 41 essays were written on the topic ‘great inventions and discoveries of the 20th century and their impact on people’s lives’ by students aged between 19 and 23. The essays were timed; no reference tools were used; each essay consisted of 500 words. The codes were ICLE-US-MICH-0001.1–45.1.

In summary, the native speakers’ corpus consisted of 207 essays with a total of 167 404 words, as presented in Table 3.6.

**Table 3.6: Description of the native speakers’ corpus**

Name	Language	Texts	Tokens (running words)
Native speakers’ corpus	English	207	167 404

Having presented information on the three phases comprising the cloze test, the learner corpus, and the native speakers’ corpus, the next section presents information on the analysis of the learner and reference corpora.

#### 3.4.2.4 Analysis of LC and NSC

As indicated under phase 3, the learner corpus and NSC corpus were analysed for similarities and differences. In the analysis of data for phase 3, context analysis was used, as metadiscourse is a context-dependent phenomenon (Takač & Ivezić, 2019). The native speakers’ corpus and the learner corpus were thus searched for metadiscourse markers according to Hyland’s (2005a) taxonomy. #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020) was used to analyse both corpora. Table 3.7 below presents the names of the corpora used in this analysis, the language



used in the texts, the number of texts used in each corpus, and the number of running words (tokens) in each corpus.

**Table 3.7: LC and NSC**

Name	Language	Texts	Tokens/running words
Learner corpus	English	197	98 069
Native Speakers' corpus	English	207	167 404

The qualitative context analysis of Phase 3 was done in four steps as follows:

Step 1: Both the learner corpus and the native speakers' corpus were uploaded into #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020). The search terms for interactive resources from Hyland's taxonomy—which were also used for the analysis of the learner corpus (see Table 3.4), namely, frame markers, code glosses, endophoric markers, evidentials and transitions—are listed below.

### **Frame markers**

*in a nutshell, this essay seeks, the third, next, in conclusion, discussed below, thirdly, to begin, first, finally, to end, last but not least, to conclude, to commence, in short, to continue, above all, a second, a fourth, my purpose here is to, third, in summary, second, fourth, firstly, overall, secondly, last but not least, to start, in the following, to sum up, lastly, and on the whole*

### **Code glosses**

*in other words, for example, such as, for instance, namely, and an example is*

### **Endophoric markers**

*from the above discussion, in section..., as mentioned above, as mentioned before, see fig..., as mentioned earlier, and noted above*

### **Evidentials**

*according to, argue that, reveal, reveals, explains, defines, states that, suggest that, suggests that, and claim that*

### **Transitions**

*among other, among others, also, and, again, additionally, although, but, therefore, in addition, though, thus, in a similar, similar, similarly, on the other hand, nonetheless, as a result, contrary, even though, likewise, another, moreover, in contrast, hence, consequently, however, unlike, and furthermore*

**Step 2:** The KWIC and Wizard tools generated a list of all instances of the interactional metadiscourse markers in both the learner corpus and the native speakers' corpus and the number of times they occurred in each context. #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020) then automatically produced reports. The following search terms for interactional resources—namely, hedges, attitude markers, engagement markers, boosters, and self-mentions—were used for the analysis.

### **Hedges**

*broadly, generally, may, around, fairly, relatively, tend, largely, mostly, sometimes, somewhat, nearly, many, about, apparently, appear, appears, perhaps, almost, seem, seems, might, approximately, likely, possible, possibly, presumably, probably, quite, some, typically, tends, usually, most, and often*

### **Attitude markers**

*hopefully, remarkable, there is no doubt, fortunately, surprisingly, undoubtedly, no wonder that, unfortunately, understandably, ideally, and I agree*

### **Engagement markers**

*consider, note that, imagine, and you can see that*

### **Boosters**

*of course, definitely, in fact, it is proved that, indeed, it is clear, it is confirmed that, and as a matter of fact*

### **Self-mentions**

*my, our, I, and we*

**Step 3:** The native speakers' corpus had more tokens (running words) and a higher number of metadiscourse markers, so in order to accurately compare frequency distributions of metadiscourse use in the two learner corpora, the frequency counts in both corpora were normalised. That is, frequencies of the two corpora were brought to the same basis. A per-basis frequency per 1 000 000 words was calculated. One million words as normalisation basis was chosen over 10 000 words because some of the frequencies were as low as one (1), so using 10 000 would give fractions, which would make it difficult for the reader to compare the differences in the frequencies. The mathematical equation used for the normalisation was:

Raw Frequency x 1 000 000 = Frequency per 1 000 000 words

N of words

N represents the number of running words or tokens in the corpus, and raw frequency refers to the observed frequency of MD markers in the corpus. After normalising the frequency counts

in the two corpora, the normed or normalised frequency (NF) was obtained. A log-likelihood test was then conducted to ascertain the differences in the normalised/normed frequencies. In addition, metadiscourse density was calculated to determine how dense the two corpora were in terms of metadiscourse use. Metadiscourse density describes the percentage of metadiscourse markers in the overall word count of a given text. The formula used to compute the metadiscourse density was:

$$\frac{\text{Total N of MD} \times 100}{\text{Total N of words}}$$

Total N of words

The findings are presented in tables in section 5.2.

**Step 4:** The text tool was then used to view a broader context of the use of the MD markers. #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020) then automatically produced reports showing the contexts in which they were found. The metadiscourse markers were subsequently analysed manually to determine whether they were used appropriately according to Hyland's (2005a) functions of MD markers. The abbreviation [sic] was used to indicate that there was a language or grammatical error in a specific sentence. The findings are presented in tables in Chapter 5. The results of the context analysis, which compared the types, frequencies, and appropriate use of MD in the learner corpus and the reference corpus, were used to answer RQ3: How did students' use of metadiscourse markers compare to that of native speakers? The findings for this question are presented in Chapter 5.

### **3.5 Justification of the methods used**

As already discussed in this chapter, each of the three phases employed methods which have been used successfully in various studies and yielded positive results (Alkhathlan, 2019; Ho & Li, 2018; Kashiha, 2018; Letsoela, 2013; Mohamed & Rashid, 2017; Takač & Ivezič, 2019;

Tan & Eng, 2014). The current study employed quantitative analysis for the cloze test in the first phase so as to quantify the number of metadiscourse items that were used correctly and those that were used incorrectly to determine the students' ability to select correct and appropriate MD markers. The second phase required both quantitative and qualitative analyses: The generation of wordlists for a corpus shows how many times a word was used, so a quantitative analysis was required, but the analysis of the concordance for a particular metadiscourse item showed the type of metadiscourse used in the corpus, and the correct and appropriate use of metadiscourse in the text and therefore, a qualitative context analysis was necessary. The third phase also required both quantitative and qualitative approaches to find similarities and differences in the types and frequencies of metadiscourse markers, as well as the appropriate use of these markers in the two corpora. Takač and Ivezić (2019) observe that metadiscourse is a 'context-dependent phenomenon' (p. 6) and requires an analysis of the words concerned in context. Thus, a qualitative context analysis was used in the third phase to compare the learner and native speakers' corpora. The following section discusses methodological rigour and the means adopted to ensure that this was achieved.

### **3.6 Methodological rigour**

Judgements on research quality are usually based on a reader's confidence in the findings of a research study (Hays et al., 2016). Establishing rigour or quality in research is thus the priority and responsibility of the researcher. Research rigour entails a systematic approach to research design and data analysis, interpretation, and presentation. Thus, the characterisation of the methods employed needs to be so precise that someone who wants to explore the same study and has access to the raw data would be able to follow the description in the methods section and obtain the same results (Berez-Kroeker et al., 2017; Branco et al., 2017; Hays et al., 2016). In order to judge the degree to which research outcomes seem accurate based on the

researcher's report on the research process, Hays et al. (2016) note that some commonly used criteria for trustworthiness that may be applied to qualitative research design are (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability. In this study, these four criteria were used to assess the quality or trustworthiness of the data used at each stage of the study. The four criteria are discussed and related to the study in the following subsections.

### **3.6.1 Credibility**

Credibility in qualitative research is similar to internal validity in quantitative research. Internal validity indicates the extent to which 'the study measures or tests what is actually intended' (Shenton 2004, p. 64). In qualitative research, credibility is the accuracy of research findings, where investigators attempt to demonstrate that a true picture of the phenomenon under study has been presented (Shenton, 2004). In effect, credibility refers to the overall believability of the study or the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration. Thus, it is the ability of the research instrument to measure what the researcher intended to measure. Credibility is, therefore, an evaluation of the truth value or internal validity of the research (Hays et al., 2016).

Some strategies to strengthen credibility in qualitative research are external auditing, peer debriefing, and thick description. External auditing involves the use of an auditor to review physical evidence of the research process and ensure that the study was properly carried out and the findings are authentic representations of the data. Peer debriefing is the involvement of a disinterested peer outside the research study to challenge the methodology and findings. Thick description involves a detailed description of the research process and the outcome to allow the reader to apply findings or replicate the study (Creswell, 2012; Denzin, 2009; Hays et al., 2016; Morrow, 2005; Patton, 2014). In this study, all three strategies were applied.

External auditing was applied in the study as I had two supervisors who monitored every stage and provided constructive comments. A critical reader from the University of Pretoria also read through the thesis and provided necessary feedback. Peer debriefing was also applied in the study as the statistician at the University of Pretoria who assisted with data analysis continuously probed the justification of the research questions, the research methodology, and the findings, which made me think through the processes more rigorously and make changes where necessary. He also drew my attention to inconsistencies in the data whenever they showed up, which made me pay particular attention to accuracy. Thick description can be observed in this study, as I have provided a detailed description of the research process from data collection to data analysis.

### **3.6.2 Transferability**

Transferability is synonymous with external validity in quantitative research, and it is defined as the provision of ‘sufficient detail of the context of the fieldwork for a reader to be able to decide whether the prevailing environment is similar to another situation with which he or she is familiar and whether the findings can justifiably be applied to the other setting’ (Shenton, 2004, p. 63). Hays et al. (2016) explain that transferability relates to the localised generalisability to participants, settings, and time frames similar to those in the study or the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other settings or groups. Some strategies to establish transferability in research are peer debriefing and thick description. Transferability has been achieved in the current study, as I involved the university statistician, who drew my attention to inconsistencies in the data. Furthermore, transferability has been achieved in this study because I have given a detailed description of the research process, from data collection to data analysis.

### **3.6.3 Dependability**

Dependability has to do with the consistency of findings across time and researchers or the ability of the instrument used in the study to reproduce a similar result over time without bias or error, irrespective of the researcher or where it is applied. Dependability in qualitative research is equivalent to reliability in quantitative research. Reliability relates to the fact that, given the same data, other researchers would find similar results. A strategy to strengthen dependability is thick description (Hays et al., 2016; Kumar, 2005). Dependability has been achieved in this study because I have provided a detailed description of the research process, from data collection to data analysis.

### **3.6.4 Confirmability**

Confirmability implies that researchers must take steps to demonstrate that the findings emerge from the data and not from their 'predisposition' (Shenton, 2004, p. 6). Thus, confirmability relates to the accuracy or genuine reflections of participants' perspectives without the researchers' views interfering with findings. Thick description and peer debriefing can be used to establish confirmability. Confirmability has been achieved in the present study because a detailed description of the research process, from data collection to data analysis, has been provided. In addition, a disinterested peer outside the research was included to scrutinise the methodology and the findings and raise questions where necessary.

In addition to the use of strategies for strengthening research quality, Hays et al. (2016) explain that in order to ensure qualitative rigour, it is necessary to show gaps in research in the area of study. In the current study, to ensure qualitative rigour, the gaps in research that has to do with the Ghanaian context in relation to metadiscourse use in undergraduate students' essays have been discussed in Chapter 1. Hays et al. (2016) also explain that it is necessary to show how



the research questions are relevant to the study. They further explain that the problem statement of the research should also be clearly explained. In the present study, the relevance of the research questions and the purpose statement of the research have been explained in Chapter 1.

Furthermore, Hays et al. (2016) point out that in order to strengthen research quality, there is a need to refer to authoritative sources when discussing methodological decisions, and it is also crucial to compare and contrast the findings of the study to previous studies. Finally, the authors point out that it is necessary to discuss the limitations and future directions for practice and research. In order to strengthen research quality in the present study, authoritative sources have been referred to when discussing methodological decisions, as evidenced in this chapter. The findings of the present study, which are presented in chapters 4 and 5, are compared and contrasted with previous literature. The limitations and future directions for practice and research are presented in Chapter 7 of the thesis.

In summary, every step and process involved in this study—before, during, and after the data collection and analysis—have been reported at various stages of the study to enhance its quality. The next section presents the methodological aspects and findings of the pilot study, as well as its implications for the main study.

### **3.7 Pilot study**

A pilot study is an important stage of a research project as it is conducted to identify potential problem areas and deficiencies in the research instrument and also help the researcher become familiar with the procedures in the protocol (Bell et al., 2018; Hassan et al., 2006). It is, therefore, a useful step in the assessment of an intervention as it provides information on how

to design the future definitive trial (ibid.). The cloze test that was used in the main study was thus piloted as a definitive trial for the main study. Hassan et al. (2006) explain that when a cloze test is used as a proficiency test, a small pilot study should be conducted to obtain information as to the difficulty of the text. This will help the researcher decide if the text should be revised and how it should be done. The report on the pilot cloze test is provided in the next section.

### **3.7.1 Procedure**

The pilot study was conducted in August 2020 after I had received ethical approval from the University of Pretoria's ethics committee. The students had already finished writing their end-of-semester examination and left for their various homes. The data collection procedure was thus challenging since it was not easy to get into direct, physical contact with the participants, especially in light of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The initial proposal was to assemble all participants in one big hall and administer the test, but because of the pandemic, I had to resort to the use of Google Forms to administer the pilot cloze test.

### **3.7.2 Participants**

In conducting a pilot study, it is ideal for the researcher to use participants who closely resemble the targeted study population (Salkind, 2010). The participants I used for the pilot study were first-year (or level-100) students at the University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA), a sister university of the University of Ghana (UG), Legon. The demographics of the students from UPSA were similar to the UG students used for the main study. Twenty UPSA students participated in the pilot study, and they were selected using purposive sampling. The purposive sampling technique is also known as judgement sampling because it involves the deliberate choice of an informant based on the qualities the informant possesses (Tongco, 2007). In

purposive sampling, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge and experience (ibid.). Since the UPSA students also take a course in academic writing in their first year at university and were, therefore, conversant with the use of metadiscourse markers in their writing, I contacted one of their lecturers, who also purposely selected students to participate in the cloze test. That is, the lecturer selected the participants for the pilot study on the basis that they were all first-year students who had enrolled in the academic writing course at their university. The lecturer randomly selected 16 males and four females who volunteered to participate in the study. Their ages ranged between 17 and 25 years, their languages varied among four Ghanaian languages, and their courses of study were accounting, finance, business administration, and law. Table 3.8 below presents the biographical details of the students who participated in the pilot cloze test.

**Table 3.8: Summary of participants' information**

Categories	Variables	Number of students
Gender	Male	16
	Female	4
Age	17–20	16
	21–25	4
Home language	Ga/Dangme	6
	Akan	10
	Ewe	2
	Gurene (Northern Ghanaian language)	2
Course of study	Accounting finance	14
	Business administration	4
	Law	2

### **3.7.3 Instrument**

The cloze test used for the pilot study was the same one used in the main study. As indicated in section 3.4.1.3, the cloze test was used to determine the students' ability to select correct and appropriate metadiscourse markers or phrases in a given passage. In other words, the students were expected to know and understand the meaning of each marker well enough to be able to select them for use in a particular context.

### **3.7.4 Procedure**

As Google Forms were used, one of the lecturers of the academic writing course at UPSA assisted me by sending the link to the test to her students by email. All 20 students she contacted took the test online and submitted their responses. A completion time of 20 minutes was allocated. In accordance with ethical procedures, students were required to read and sign a participant consent form before proceeding with the test.

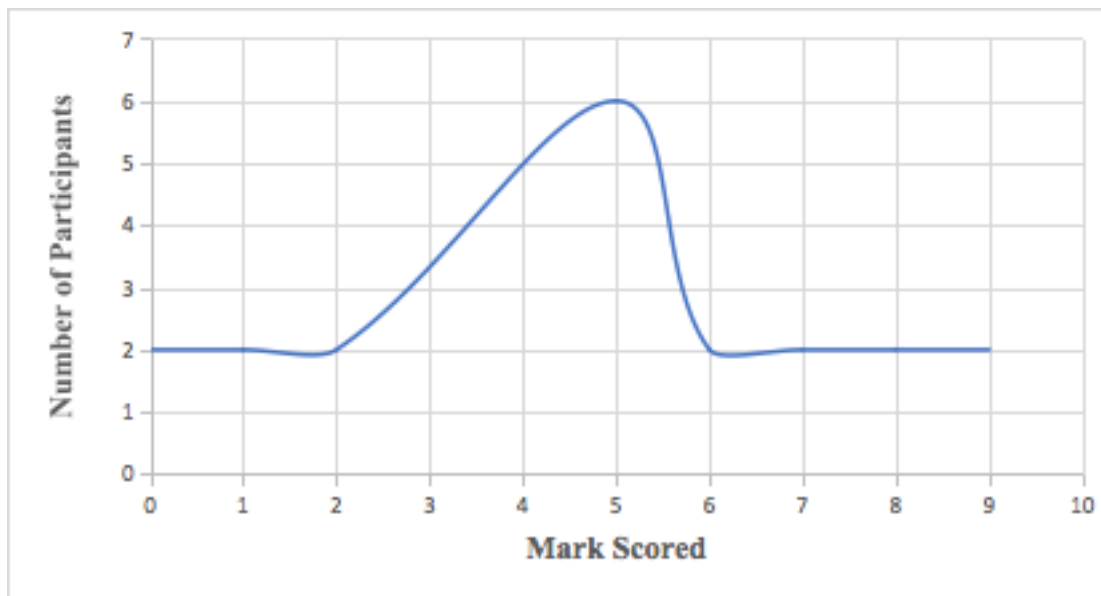
### **3.7.5 Coding and analysis of data**

The scripts were named 'PS', meaning 'pilot study', and numbered from PS-1 to PS-20. I printed the responses and marked them, using the original words used in the passage as the correct answers. I had removed ten words to create the gaps in the passage. I provided a list of 16 metadiscourse markers as options for students. Some participants did not fill in all the blanks, so all unfilled spaces were considered wrong answers. After marking the scripts, I grouped them according to the overall score obtained from the ten marks awarded and calculated the percentages. This calculation was done in order to ascertain whether the test was too difficult or otherwise. I also grouped the marked scripts according to how many students were able to select a particular metadiscourse marker correctly. For example, the participants who were able to pick the correct evidential to fill in the gap were put in one group. I did that

for all ten sub-categories of the metadiscourse markers that the participants were supposed to correctly select to fill in the gaps provided and calculated the percentages of the participants who were able to use the correct markers.

### 3.7.6 Results of the pilot cloze test

The results of the pilot cloze test showed that of the 20 participants, two scored 9 out of 10 (10%), two scored 8 (10%), two scored 7 (10%), two scored 6 (10%), six scored five (30%), two scored 2 (10%), two scored 1 (10%), and two scored 0 (10%). Thus, 70% of the students scored 50% and above, while the remaining 30% scored between 0% and 10%. The scores were thus distributed proportionally. Also, the results showed a bell shape, which denotes an effective test (Bloomenthal, 2022), as shown in Figure 3.1.



**Figure 3.1: Results of metadiscourse markers in the pilot cloze test showing bell shape**

The results of the participants' selection of the correct markers to fill in all ten gaps in the cloze test are summarised under interactional and interactive resources in Table 3.9.

**Table 3.9: Interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in the pilot cloze test**

	Number of correct selections of metadiscourse markers in categories	Percentage of correct selections of metadiscourse markers in categories
<b>Interactive markers</b>		<b>52%</b>
Evidentials	8	40%
Transitions	10	50%
Code glosses	12	60%
Endophoric markers	12	60%
Frame markers	10	50%
<b>Interactional markers</b>		<b>58%</b>
Hedges	8	40%
Boosters	12	60%
Engagement markers	8	40%
Attitude markers	12	60%
Self-mentions	18	90%

With regard to the correct and appropriate selection of interactive and interactional resources, the results of the pilot cloze test indicated that the students scored higher for interactional than interactive resources, as a higher number of students selected correct interactional markers, although the difference was not significant. The average percentage of correct interactional markers was 58% compared to the average percentage of correct interactive markers, which was 52%.

A detailed analysis of the results of the pilot cloze test showed that the students scored higher with the use of self-mentions, as 90% of them were able to select the correct and appropriate self-mention to fill in the gap in the given passage. However, from the results, only 40% of the students were able to choose the correct and appropriate evidentials, hedges, and engagement

markers. The results seem to suggest that evidentials, hedges, and engagement markers may pose challenges for students, as few students were able to select the correct types to fill in the blanks. The merely average percentage (50%) of correct selection of transitions was unexpected as transitions are commonly used metadiscourse markers, and students were expected to be familiar with them.

### **3.7.7 Implications of the pilot cloze test**

The main purpose of the pilot study was to demonstrate the cloze test's feasibility for use as the main study's cloze test. In addition, the pilot study was administered successfully, which demonstrated that the methods and procedures could be successfully used for the main study. Therefore, I did not change any part of the passage for the main study's cloze test. The success of the pilot test implied that the main study's cloze test could be successfully conducted. Thus, the pilot cloze test provided the basis for the main study's cloze test. Following the successful administration and participation of the students in the pilot study, the same test was administered to the main participants of the study.

## **3.8 Ethical considerations**

According to researchers, studies in education tend to involve large numbers of participants, and the findings of the research may also impact a large number of users (Cohen et al., 2007; Strike, 2006). It is, therefore, necessary that research is conducted ethically, such that participants are wholly and truthfully informed of the research design and methodological aspects. The privacy and confidentiality of their data must also be protected (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Bryman, 2012; Lodico et al., 2006). In light of the above recommendations provided by Bhattacharjee (2012), Bryman (2012), Lodico et al. (2006), and other researchers, ethical issues

such as gaining access to the learner corpus and the reference corpus, as well as participants' confidentiality and anonymity, were considered in this study as explained below.

### **3.8.1 Gaining access to the learner corpus data and the native speakers' corpus**

Prior to collecting data for the learner corpus used in this study, I submitted a protocol of 11 pages in May 2020 to the ethics committee of the University of Ghana for approval and permission to use the students' essays for my research thesis. The approval was received in June 2020. I started the data collection after 4 August 2020 upon receiving the final approval from the Faculty of Humanities ethics committee at the University of Pretoria.

I had access to LOCNESS, the native speakers' corpus, after I completed an online agreement form from the Learner Corpus Association requiring that I use the corpus for non-commercial purposes only; give credit to the Centre for English Corpus Linguistics (CECL) for all publications on research partly or wholly based on the corpus; and use the corpus only for my project without distributing it to a third party without specific authorisation from CECL.

### **3.8.2 Participants' confidentiality and anonymity**

The guidelines for doing research as prescribed by the institution where data was collected were adhered to at all times. The informed consent letter outlined the nature of the research, the conditions of participating in the study, and the data collection process. All participants were assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their information. They were also assured that they would experience no harm by participating, that participation was voluntary, and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. The informed consent letter, with all the information, is attached as Appendix 5.



### **3.9 Conclusion**

This chapter provides an explanation of and justification for the mixed methods approach used in the study, as well as Hyland's (2005a) taxonomy for classifying metadiscourse methods used to investigate the use of metadiscourse markers in undergraduate students' essays. The three main research questions have been presented, and the mixed-methods research design has been described and justified. The three phases of the research (P1, the administration and analysis of the cloze test; P2, the description and analysis of the learner corpus; and P3, the comparison of the learner and native speakers' corpora) have been described, and the four criteria for assessing trustworthiness in qualitative research have been discussed together with the procedure for analysing corpus linguistics data. The procedure for the pilot study, its results, and its implications have been presented and discussed in this chapter. Finally, issues of ethics and how they were adhered to in the study have been discussed. The methodological aspects of the study are summarised in Table 3.10 below.

**Table 3.10: Research questions, data collected, and the corresponding analysis**

Research question	Data	Analysis	Objectives
RQ1: To what extent were students able to select appropriate and correct metadiscourse markers to complete a cloze exercise?	Cloze test	Quantitative (SPSS)	To determine students' correct selection of metadiscourse markers in a passage
RQ2: How were metadiscourse markers utilised in the learner corpus?	Learner corpus	Quantitative (#LancsBox analysis)	Frequencies of metadiscourse markers used in essays
		Qualitative (context analysis)	Types of metadiscourse markers used in essays
RQ3: How did students' use of metadiscourse markers compare to that of native speakers?	Learner corpus and native speakers' corpus	Quantitative (#LancsBox analysis)	Types and frequencies of MD markers in learner corpus and native speakers' corpus
		Qualitative (manual analysis)	Appropriate use of MD markers in learner corpus and native speakers' corpus

## **CHAPTER 4**

# **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE CLOZE TEST AND THE LEARNER CORPUS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Having presented the methodological aspects of the study in Chapter 3, this chapter presents the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data sets to address research questions 1 and 2. Research question 1 dealt with the correct selection of metadiscourse markers to complete a cloze test exercise, and research question 2 dealt with how metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional) were utilised in the learner corpus. The chapter begins with the presentation and discussion of the main study's cloze test (CT) results (Phase 1). It then proceeds with the presentation and discussion of the types and frequencies of metadiscourse markers used in the LC (students' essays), as well as their relationship with the variables of students' home language and course of study (Phase 2). Thereafter, a combined analysis and discussion of the cloze test and the learner corpus is undertaken to determine the students' active and passive knowledge of metadiscourse markers in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of their metadiscourse usage.

Results of the main study cloze test (Phase 1)

The results of the cloze test were used to answer RQ1: To what extent were students able to select appropriate and correct metadiscourse markers to complete a cloze test exercise? RQ1 was broken down into two sub-questions:

i. What type(s) of metadiscourse markers (interactive or interactional) were the students able to select appropriately and correctly?

ii. Were there significant differences between the students' appropriate and correct selection of interactive and interactional resources in relation to gender, age, home language, and course of study?

Ten metadiscourse markers were omitted from the passage (see §3.4.1), and students were required to fill in the blanks with the most suitable markers.

After marking the students' answers, the scores were converted to percentages. Of the 171 students, 111 (65%) scored over 50%, while the remaining 60 (35%) scored below 50%. For gaps 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10, more than 50% of the students selected the appropriate and correct responses. They fared best on Gap 9 (finally) (73%) but scored lowest on Gap 1 (X explains) (25%). The results are presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Results of the cloze test**

Gap number	Total number of students	Number of students who responded correctly	Percentage	Word (category)
1	171	42	25%	X explains (evidential)
2	171	121	71%	Such as (code gloss)
3	171	68	40%	In addition (transition)
4	171	99	58%	May (hedge)
5	171	95	55%	It is clear that (booster)
6	171	105	62%	Note that (engagement marker)
7	171	112	66%	Unfortunately (attitude marker)
8	171	55	33%	Noted above (endophoric marker)
9	171	124	73%	Finally (frame marker)
10	171	113	67%	I (self-mention)

As shown in Table 4.1, the highest percentage was recorded for the frame marker, *finally*. Students were instructed in the use of frame markers in their academic writing lessons. They were told to use a signal when concluding their essays. This may explain why the highest percentage was recorded for this frame marker. Similarly, as shown in Table 4.1, a high percentage (71%) was recorded for the code gloss, *such as*. This is also not surprising, as students were explicitly taught how to use code glosses in their academic writing lessons. The

lowest percentage was recorded for the evidential *x explains*. The academic writing course did not include the teaching of reporting verbs or verbs of reference, which are classified as evidentials by Hyland (2005a), and this may have contributed to the students' limited selection of the evidential marker.

The variables of gender, age, home language, and course of study of the students who participated in the cloze test were analysed to determine whether these variables had a relationship with the students' ability to choose the correct and appropriate MD marker to fill in a gap in the cloze test exercise. The scores were further analysed using IBM SPSS descriptive analysis, as well as Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis inferential analyses. The descriptive and inferential analysis of the variables of gender, age, home language, and course of study are presented with tables in the following subsections.

#### **4.1.1 Cloze test: descriptive and inferential analyses**

This section presents and discusses the descriptive and inferential analyses of the effects of the variables of gender, age, home language, and course of study on the cloze test results. The results of the descriptive analysis for each variable are presented first, followed by the inferential statistics.

##### *4.1.1.1 Descriptive and inferential analysis of gender*

The results of the IBM SPSS descriptive analysis of correct answers in the cloze test showed a higher mean score for males than for females. The mean score for the females was 50.48, and the mean for males was 57.84. The results are presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Presentation of correct answers for gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>
Female	83	50.48	25.514
Male	88	57.84	22.866
<b>Total</b>	171	54.27	24.397

In order to determine whether the difference in the mean scores for the males and females was significant, a Whitney test was conducted. The results revealed that although the mean for males was higher than for females, as presented in Table 4.2, the p-value was 0.063, so the difference was not statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level. This finding suggests that gender did not have any significant influence on the students' ability to choose the correct and appropriate metadiscourse marker to fill in a gap in a given passage, although based on anecdotal evidence and my own experience, female students in Ghana mostly perform better than their male counterparts in English-related courses such as communication, English, and writing.

#### *4.1.1.2 Descriptive and inferential analysis for age*

The results of the descriptive analysis showed that the students who were over 20 years old had a slightly higher mean score in terms of selecting the correct metadiscourse markers than students who were between the ages of 17 and 20. The latter had a mean score of 54.11, while the former had a mean score of 54.76. The total mean for both age groups was 54.27, while the standard deviation was 24.397. The results are presented in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Presentation of correct answers for age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>
<b>17–20</b>	129	54.11	25.667
<b>21+</b>	42	54.76	20.271
<b>Total</b>	171	54.27	24.397

More than half of the students were between 18 and 20 years old, as shown in Table 4.3. In Ghana, students admitted to the first year of university are generally between the ages of 17 and 20, so it is to be expected that there would be more students in that age group than in the group over 21 years of age. Students over the age of 21 are mature students and do not make up a large proportion of students at this institution. The Whitney test showed that although the students over 21 years of age scored slightly higher than students aged between 17 and 20, as shown in Table 4.3, the p-value was 0.996, and therefore, the difference in age was not statistically significant. In other words, age did not appear to exert an influence on the correct selection of metadiscourse markers.

#### *4.1.1.3 Descriptive and inferential analysis for home language*

The descriptive analysis results of the effect of the home language variable showed that the students who spoke Ewe as their home language performed better in the cloze test, whereas the Ga-Adangbe speakers had the lowest score. However, the mean scores for all the language groups were quite close, ranging from 52.92 to 55.22. The total mean was 54.27, and the total for the standard deviation was 24.397. The results are presented in Table 4.4.



**Table 4.4: Presentation of correct answers for home language**

<b>Home language</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>
<b>Northern languages</b>	13	53.03	27.804
<b>English</b>	16	54.38	27.072
<b>Ewe</b>	23	55.22	25.382
<b>Ga-Adangme</b>	24	52.92	26.943
<b>Akan</b>	95	54.53	23.053
<b>Total</b>	171	54.27	24.397

A number of students (16) indicated that their home language was English, as shown in Table 4.4. This may be because their parents speak English at home with them instead of a local language. Research indicates that English is used as a home language in many homes in Ghana (Afrifa et al., 2019; Agyekum, 2009; Akpanglo-Nartey & Akpanglo-Nartey, 2012; Anderson & Ansah, 2015; Anderson et al., 2009).

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test conducted to determine the significance level of observed differences in the scores of the cloze test by the five home language groups revealed that at a p-value of 0.996, the differences were not statistically significant.

#### *4.1.1.4 Descriptive and inferential analysis for course of study*

The students' courses of study were categorised into four areas: Education, Arts, Applied Sciences and Health Sciences. The descriptive analysis showed that students who were registered for BA Education scored the highest, with a mean of 66.67 and a standard deviation of 5.77, whereas students who were registered for BA Arts had the lowest mean of 52.70, with a standard deviation of 23.06. The fact that the BA Education group had a standard deviation of 5.77 suggests that their scores in the cloze test were more consistent than those of the BA Arts group and the other two groups. The results are presented in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Presentation of correct answers for course of study**

<b>Grouped courses</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>
<b>BA Arts</b>	80	52.7	23.06
<b>BA Education</b>	3	66.67	5.77
<b>BSc Applied Sciences</b>	7	54.87	26.00
<b>BSc Health Sciences</b>	12	57.50	26.33
<b>Total</b>	171	54.27	24.40

The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed that although students who were registered for BA Education had the highest scores with a mean of 66.67, as shown in Table 4.5, the differences in the scores were not statistically significant at a p-value of 0.645. This suggests that the learners' ability to choose the correct marker to fill in a gap in a given context did not have a statistically significant relationship with their course of study. However, one cannot ignore the fact that there was a noticeable difference in mean scores between the Education students and those registered for the other courses of study. The BA Education students have electives such as Information Studies and Psychology. These are not English-related subjects that should give them an advantage over the other students. The reason for this noticeable difference in mean scores between the Education students and students in other courses, and the very low standard deviation of the students in other courses compared to the Education students, can, therefore, not be easily explained.

In summary, for the cloze test, the analysis of the effect of the variables of gender, age, home language, and course of study has shown that none of these variables played a statistically significant role in the students' ability to select an appropriate and correct metadiscourse marker to fill in a gap in the given passage. The next section presents the analysis and discussion of the learner corpus, Phase 2.

## 4.2 Learner corpus analysis (Phase 2)

The learner corpus data were analysed to answer research question 2: How were metadiscourse markers utilised in the learner corpus? RQ2 was broken down into five sub-questions:

- i. What type of metadiscourse markers (interactive or interactional) did the students use in their essays, and how frequently were they used?
- ii. Which interactive metadiscourse markers were used most frequently by the students?
- iii. Which interactional metadiscourse markers were used most frequently by the students?
- iv. Were there significant differences in the use of the metadiscourse markers in relation to the students' home language and course of study?
- v. Was there a relationship between the students' performance in the essays and their use of metadiscourse markers?

The corpus was analysed to determine the type and frequency of metadiscourse markers (the interactive and interactional resources) used in the students' essays. The size of the learner corpus was 98 069 running words (tokens), and the counts revealed a total of 8 541 metadiscourse markers. Of these markers, 6 075 (71.14%) were interactive resources and 2 466 (28.86%) were interactional resources. The results of the Z-test conducted to compare the proportions of the interactive and interactional resources showed that at a p-value of 0.01, the difference in the proportions was statistically significant, showing the use of more interactive resources than interactional. The reason for the significant difference in the proportions of the interactive and interactional resources may be that the learners concentrated more on using interactive resources to organise their essays than on using interactional resources to involve the reader in the text. Other researchers who had a similar finding observed that learners were more inclined to use interactive resources to organise their texts (Alkhathlan, 2019; Kashiha,

2018; Livingstone, 2019; Mohamed & Rashid, 2017). The types and frequencies of metadiscourse markers used in the essays are presented in the next section.

#### **4.2.1 Types and frequencies of metadiscourse markers in the learner corpus**

The findings of the corpus analysis showed that the student essays contained metadiscourse markers from all ten subcategories of interactive and interactional resources listed by Hyland (2005a). However, it was observed that some specific metadiscourse markers in Hyland's classification did not occur in the learner corpus (e.g., *noted above, see Fig., in Section, from the above discussion*). The findings also showed that only two markers from the subcategory of endophoric markers (*as mentioned earlier, as mentioned before*) were identified in the learner corpus, possibly because students were not aware of how to use these markers or had not come across them in their limited reading. As explained in section 4.2, the participants for this study were first-year University of Ghana students who had registered for the Academic Writing Skills course and were taught by the researcher. Metadiscourse markers such as frame markers, code glosses, transitions, hedges, attitude markers, and self-mentions were taught, but metadiscourse markers such as evidentials, endophoric markers, boosters, and engagement markers were not taught explicitly as they were not included in the course content. The teaching or non-teaching of some of the metadiscourse markers may have thus accounted for their high or low frequency in the learner corpus.

The next section presents a list of all the interactive and interactional resources found in the learner corpus, with examples of their use in context in the learner corpus.

#### 4.2.1.1 Interactive resources

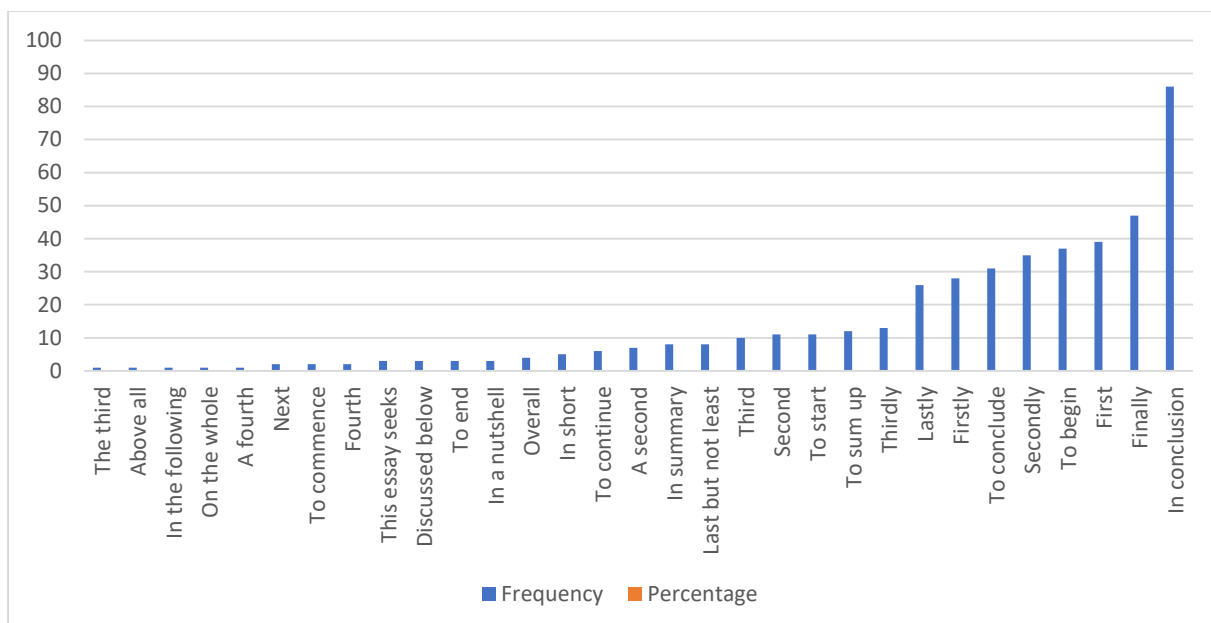
The five interactive resources, as listed by Hyland (2005a), are frame markers, code glosses, endophoric markers, evidentials, and transitions. The frequencies and percentages of each category of interactive resources in the learner corpus are presented in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Frequencies and percentages of interactive resources in the LC**

<b>Interactive resources</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Frame markers	447	7.35%
Code glosses	334	5.49%
Endophoric markers	3	0.04%
Evidentials	70	1.15%
Transitions	5 221	86.94%
Total	6 075	100%

##### 4.2.1.1.1 Frame markers

Of the 6 075 interactive resources identified in the corpus, a total of 447 frame markers of 28 types were counted. This represents 7.35% of all interactive resources. Figure 4.1 shows all the types of frame markers in the learner corpus and their frequencies. The percentages are not legible in Figure 4.1 as they are all in the 0–1 range.



**Figure 4.1: Types and frequencies of frame markers in the LC**

The most used frame marker in the corpus was *in conclusion* (86 occurrences), followed by *finally* (47 occurrences). This finding suggests that the learners used these markers to arrange various stages of their essays in a logical order (Hyland, 1998, p.443). The following are excerpts from the corpus data to illustrate the use of the frame markers *in conclusion* and *finally* in context in the learner corpus:

- (i) **In conclusion**, I believe that the reasons stated above tells [sic] us how dangerous plastic bags can be, especially when they are not handled properly  
(UGCD 191.txt).
- (ii) ...**Finally**, the cost of recycling and cleaning up plastic waste is high  
(UGCD 29.txt).

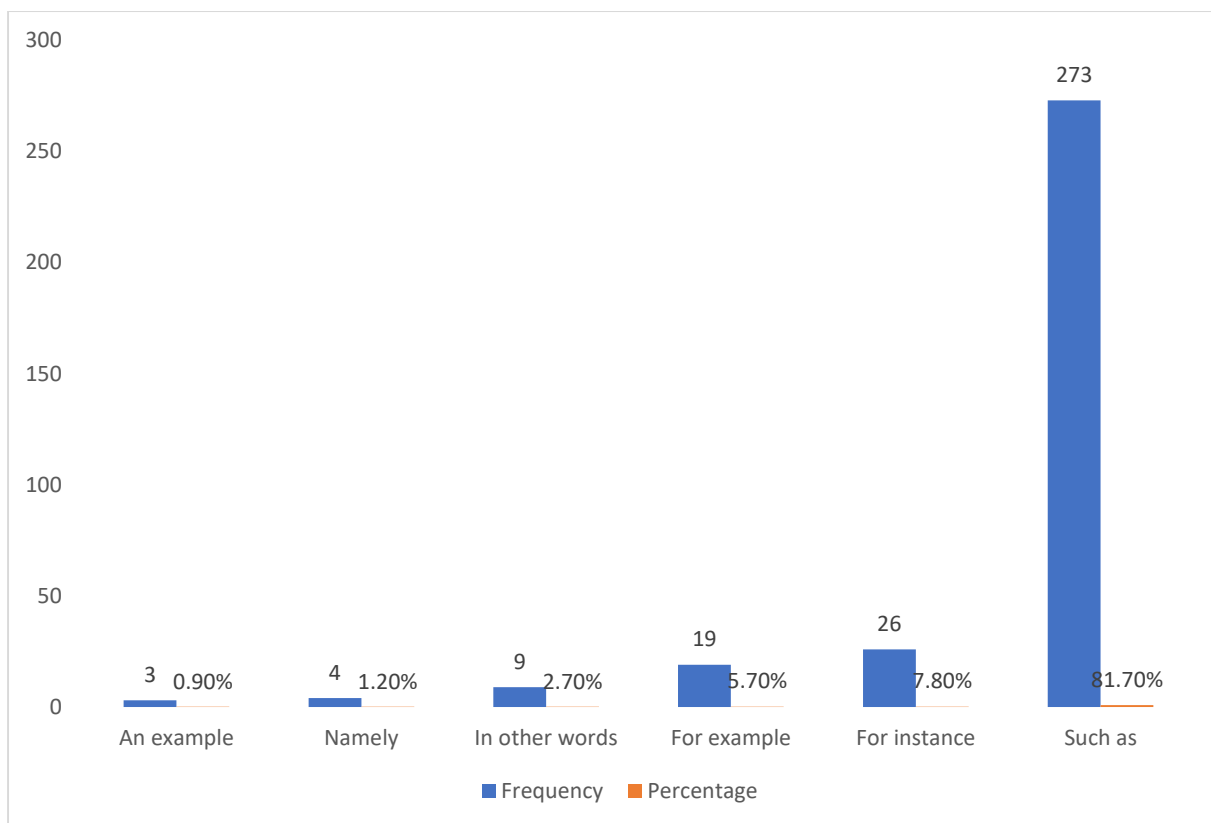
The learners used these two types of frame markers to label the ending in their academic writing because they were explicitly taught how to write the various paragraphs in an academic essay.

They were specifically taught to signal that they were writing the concluding paragraph in their essays. This may explain why the most used frame marker in the corpus was *in conclusion*.

The corpus was also analysed to determine the use of frame markers by the three performance groups, namely high-rated, average-rated and low-rated essays. The analysis indicated that there were 178 frame markers in the high-rated essays, 164 in the average-rated essays, and 105 in the low-rated essays. When a manual investigation was conducted into these occurrences, it was clear that the learners had made efforts to label the various parts of their essays to structure their essays. Contrary to this finding, Alkhatlan (2019) explains that the frequency of frame markers in the corpus of ESL learners he used for his study was low because the students were not able to sequence, label parts of the text, or predict and shift topics or arguments to make the text clear to the readers.

#### *4.2.1.1.2 Code glosses*

Code glosses represent 5.49% of interactive resources in the corpus. A total of 334 code glosses of six types occurred in the learner corpus. The types and frequencies of code glosses identified in the learner corpus are presented in Figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2: Types and frequencies of code glosses in the LC**

Figure 4.2 shows that the most used code gloss was *such as* (273 counts). The learners were taught to use *such as* instead of *like* to introduce examples. This may have accounted for the high frequency of *such as* in the corpus. The following are examples of the use of code glosses in context in the learner corpus:

- (i) Plastic bags are one of the cheapest and most convenient ways to package, carry and transport goods **such as** food and clothing (UGCD 1.txt).
- (ii) Plastic bags have non-biodegradable properties, **in other words**, they cannot be broken down by natural acts and organisms (UGCD 2.txt).

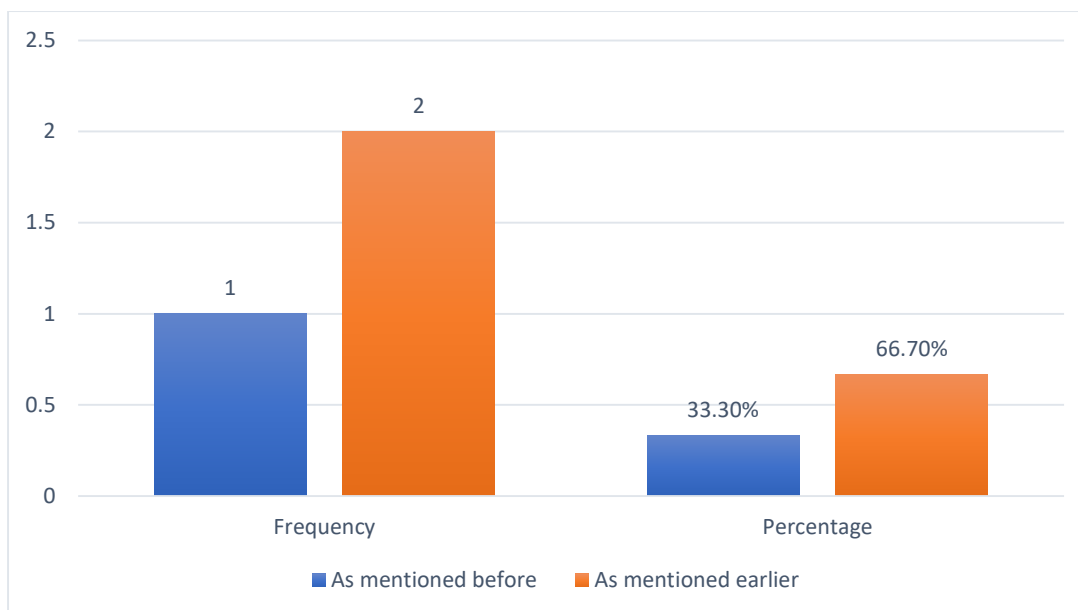
The analysis of the frequency of MD markers according to performance levels in students' written essays indicated that there were more code glosses identified in the high-rated essays (136 counts) than in the average-rated essays (118 counts). This finding suggests that the high-



rated essay writers may have been more aware of the need to help readers understand their essays. Hyland (2005a) observes that code glosses give more information and examples in order to guide potential readers through the text. Wei et al. (2016) also explain that code glosses are very useful in academic writing because they help readers understand propositional information. Despite their importance, code glosses were minimally used in the low-rated essays (80 counts) but were frequently used in the high- and average-rated essays. The frequent use of code glosses in the high- and average-rated essays suggests that better writers use more code glosses to explain their propositional content. The findings of the present study in relation to the use of more code glosses are contrary to the findings of Anwardeen et al. (2013), who observed that the learners employed a limited variety of code glosses, which are *namely* and *in other words*, because the learners did not receive instruction on the use and functions of code glosses.

#### 4.2.1.1.3 Endophoric markers

The analysis of metadiscourse resources/markers showed that, of the 6 075 interactive markers used in the learner corpus, only three endophoric markers of two types were identified, representing 0.04% of all interactive resources. The results of the analysis are presented in Figure 4.3.



**Figure 4.3: Types and frequencies of endophoric markers in the LC**

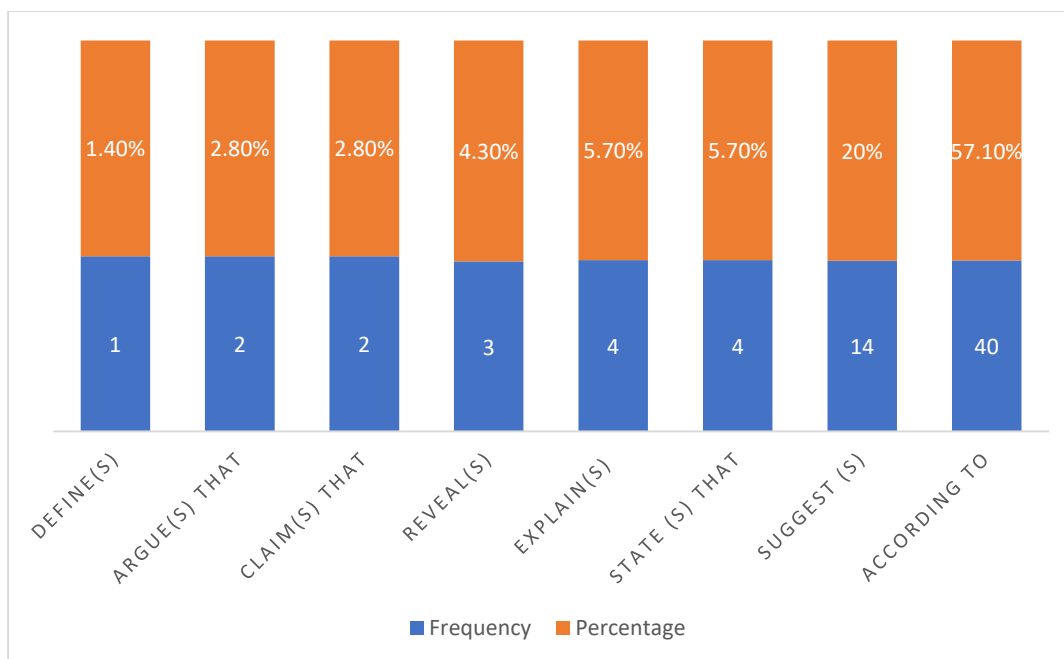
As shown in Figure 4.3, endophoric markers were identified three times in the corpus: *as mentioned earlier* (2 counts) and *as mentioned before* (1 count). These two types of endophoric markers inform the reader of what has already been mentioned in the essay. Hyland (2005a) and Schiffrin (1980) explain that *as mentioned before* and *as mentioned earlier* tell the reader what the writer has already done in the discourse. The following examples of the use of endophoric markers in context were taken from the learner corpus:

- (i) **As mentioned earlier** on [sic] plastic bags are light and buoyant in nature and as such easily find their way into waterways where they collect and eventually clog water paths (UGCD 10.txt).
- (ii) **As mentioned before**, plastic bags are made from petroleum and natural gas. The process of extracting these materials from crude oil releases toxic substances such as carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide and xylene into the atmosphere (UGCD 50.txt).

The analysis of the frequency of MD markers according to the performance levels of students' essays revealed that of the three endophoric markers identified in the corpus, one was found in the high-rated essays and two were found in the average-rated essays. No endophoric markers were found in the low-rated essays. Although the learners were not explicitly taught how to use endophoric markers at this level of their academic writing course, the limited use, as shown in Figure 4.3, could be explained in relation to the total number of words. The word count of the essays written by the learners was low (an average of 502 words). Endophoric markers are usually used frequently when the word count of the essay is high, such that the writer can refer to what has already been said in the discourse and also when visuals are used in the essay. In a similar study, Alkhathlan (2019) observed that the infrequent use of the endophoric marker in the corpus used for his study might have been due to the fact that the word count of the research article was low. Hyland and Jiang (2018) explained that more endophoric markers are used in texts that have visuals in them because the writers have to refer the reader to those visuals to clarify information.

#### *4.2.1.1.4 Evidentials*

Evidential markers (for example, *X claims...*) constitute 1.15% of all interactive resources counted in the corpus. A total of 70 evidentials of eight types were identified. The frequencies of these markers are presented graphically in Figure 4.4.



**Figure 4.4: Types and frequencies of evidential markers in the LC**

Of the 70 evidential markers identified in the learner corpus, the highest frequency was recorded for the type *according to*. This type of evidential is neutral and does not indicate an author's attitude towards the propositions being referenced. The learners may not have learnt the nuanced use of reporting verbs to indicate an author's stance. In addition, the learners may have preferred *according to* because they had not done any research, and so they may have generally referred to sources of information they knew from memory and could not be specific. Hyland (1998) explains that evidentials are used to 'demonstrate awareness of prior research' (p. 443).

The analysis of the frequency of evidential markers according to the three performance levels in the students' essays indicated that 29 occurred in the low-rated essays, 26 were counted in the average-rated essays, and 15 were found in the high-rated essays. The fact that the frequency of evidentials was low in the high-rated essays might have been because the good writers were more aware of the fact that they were not writing a research essay, so there was

no need to overuse evidentials as referencing is done in two stages: in-text citation and end-of-text references, and since they did not provide a reference list, they may have been careful with the use of more evidentials. The following are examples of evidentials in context in the learner corpus:

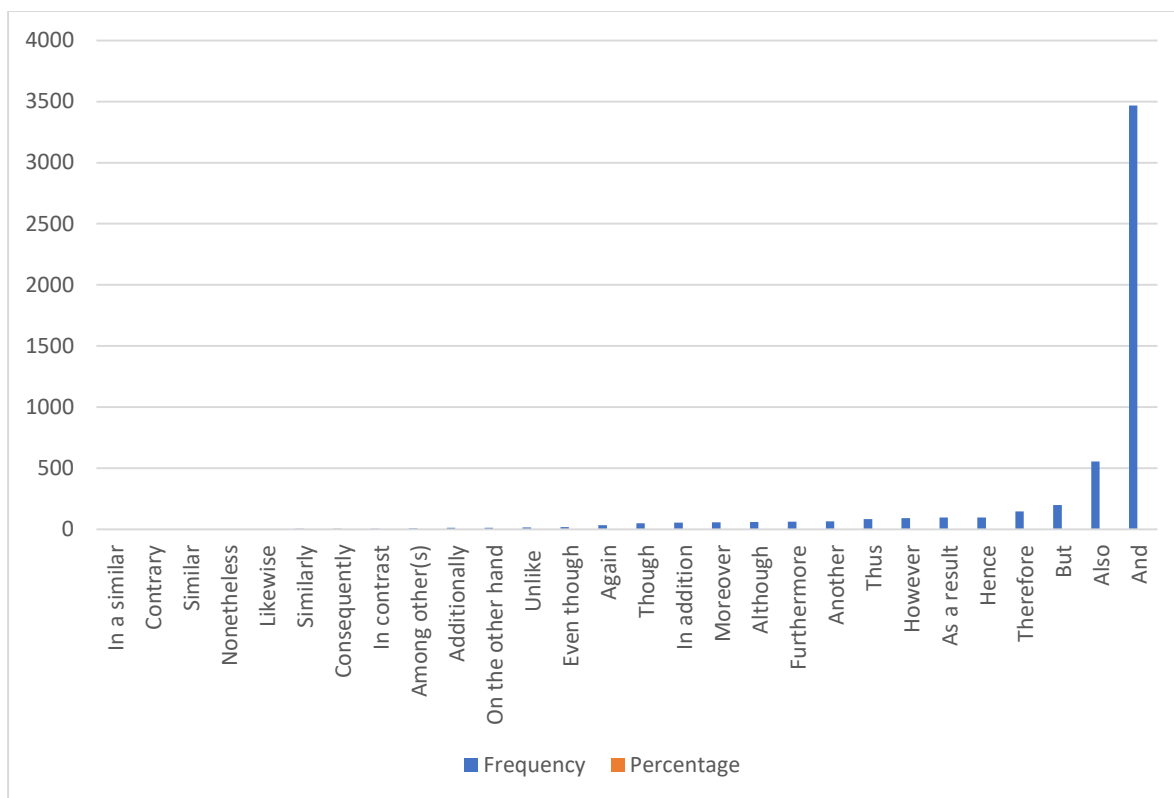
- (i) **According to** a research study by the United Nations (UN), plastic is killing more than 1.1million seabirds and animals such as whales, dolphins, turtles, penguins etc. (UGCD 3.txt).
- (ii) Section 296 clearly **states that** whosoever goes against this should be asked to pay a fine not exceeding two hundred thousand cedis irrespective of the place or town it happened (UGCD 8.txt).

Another reason for the low frequency of evidential markers in the learner corpus, as shown in Figure 4.4, could be that the learners were not given any sources of information to incorporate into their essays, as is usually the case in the second-year academic writing essay. There was thus no need to refer to information from other sources, especially as they wrote the paper under examination conditions. Students were also not explicitly taught at this level of the academic writing course how to use reporting verbs or other citation expressions (such as *according to*), classified as evidentials by Hyland (2005a). This finding in relation to the low frequency of evidential markers in the learner corpus used for this study corroborates that of Davaei and Karbalaei (2013), who observed that the students in their study made minimal use of evidential markers. They attributed this finding to the fact that the students were not writing a scientific article and may, therefore, not have seen the need to refer to information from other texts. Kashiha (2018) also attributed this low frequency to the fact that students were required to write the essay in an examination setting where they were unable to refer to external sources of information to include in the essay. Kashiha's (2018) finding suggests that evidential

markers are mostly used when writing a research paper. In a similar study, Alkhathlan (2019) found that the second most used interactive resource in the research essay written by students was the evidential marker. He explained that writing a research paper requires citing related works in the literature to strengthen and support the arguments in the paper, so the use of evidentials is crucial. Confirming the assertion that evidentials are more needed when writing a research paper, Afful and Akoto (2020), who examined metadiscourse use in the introduction and literature review chapters of master's theses from a non-native context, observed that the thesis writers used more evidentials in the introduction chapter because they had to critique other works to show their study was unique.

#### *4.2.1.1.5 Transitions*

Transitions were the most used interactive resources, representing 86.94% of all the interactive resources used. Several types of transitions were found in the learner corpus; in total, 5 221 transitions of 28 types were identified. The types and frequencies of these transitions identified in the learner corpus are presented in Figure 4.5.



**Figure 4.5: Types and frequencies of transitions in the LC**

As presented in Figure 4.5, the transition used the most in the learner corpus was *and* (3 467 counts). This is followed by *also* (554) and then *but* (198 counts). These transitions are basic words that are used in everyday communication and are also taught at the primary school level, so students already had them in their vocabulary and could readily use them. In addition, the transitions *and*, *also*, and *but* are not considered academic vocabulary as they do not occur in Coxhead’s academic vocabulary list. The analysis showed that the frequencies of transitions such as *similarly*, *likewise*, *nonetheless*, and *consequently*, which are found in Coxhead’s academic vocabulary list, were rather low (Figure 4.5).

In relation to the analysis of the frequency of transitions according to the three performance levels in the essays, the results showed that 1 920 transitions were counted in the high-rated essays, 1 909 were counted in the average-rated essays, and 1 392 were counted in the low-

rated essays. The high frequency of transitions in the high-rated essays may be attributed to the fact that good writers use more transitions to achieve cohesion and coherence in their essays. In a similar study, Mohamed and Rashid (2019) investigated the use of metadiscourse markers in good and weak essays. Their findings revealed that transitions were used more frequently in the good essays than in the weak essays. Mohamed and Rashid (2019) explained that the good writers used more transitions to achieve coherence in their essays. On the whole, the frequency of transitions was high in the learner corpus, and this may be attributed to the fact that the learners received instruction on the use of transitions. The explicit teaching of transitions seems to encourage their use by students. Abdel Wahab (2020) recommended the explicit teaching of the various metadiscourse markers and explained that the students who participated in his study used more metadiscourse markers because they were explicitly taught how to use them in their essays.

Transitions are used to create textual cohesion in texts (Halliday & Hassan, 1976; Hyland, 2005a). The following are examples of the use of transitions in context in the learner corpus:

- (i) Plastics have proven useful and convenient in our daily lives, **however**, in recent times there has been public support for the need to ban them because they have been a nuisance to the human environment and human life (UGCD 81.txt).
- (ii) Since plastics are not recycled to produce new materials, they should be banned. **Furthermore**, plastic bags should be banned because they cause air pollution when burnt (UGCD 185.txt).

Hyland and Tse (2004) explain that a high frequency in the use of transitions, which represent the internal connections in the discourse, is an important feature of academic argument. Similar to the findings of the current study on the high frequency of the use of transitions, Alkhatlan



(2019) confirmed that the most frequent subcategory of interactive metadiscourse markers employed by the students in his study was transitions, which accounted for 62.27% of all interactive metadiscourse markers, occurring 761 times in the research articles. Kashiha (2018) found that among the interactive resources identified in his corpus, transitions were the most used marker. Mohamed and Rashid (2017) also observed that under the interactive resources, transitions such as *and*, *but*, and *also* had the highest frequency. Livingstone (2019) also found that the transitional markers *and* and *but* were most frequently used in the learner corpus. The high frequency of the use of transitions, as observed in the current study, is thus to be expected because transitions can be easily used to create cohesion in texts and are among the most common words in the language. In the next section, a list of interactional resources found in the learner corpus is presented. Some examples of how the types of markers were used in context are also presented.

#### 4.2.1.2 Interactional resources

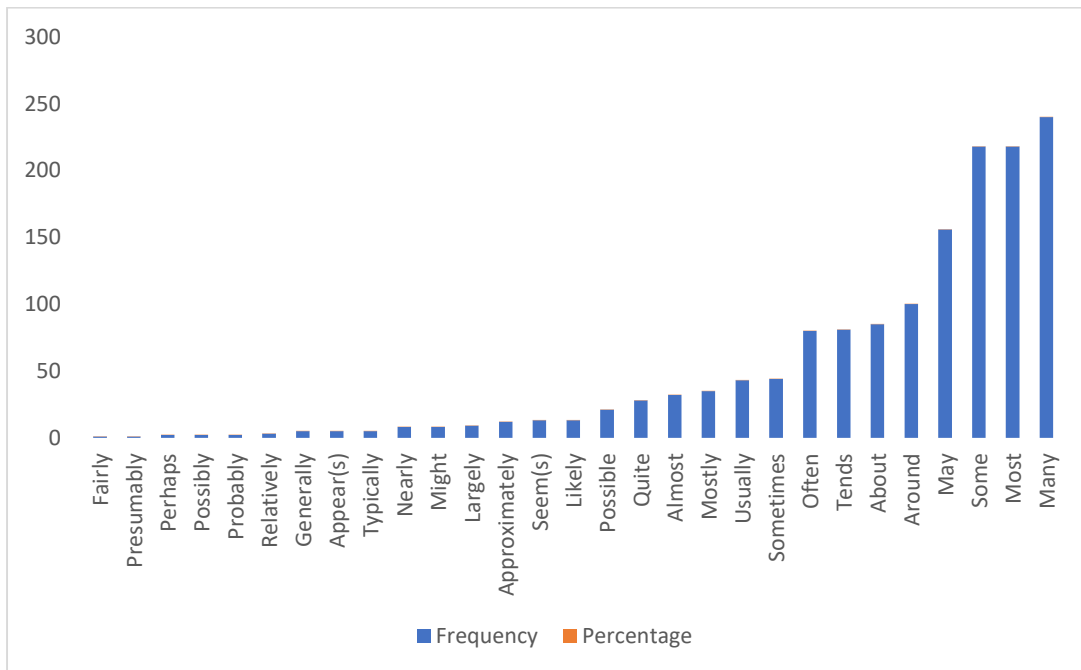
The five interactional resources listed by Hyland (2005a) are hedges, attitude markers, engagement markers, boosters, and self-mentions. Frequencies and percentages of these five categories of interactional resources are presented in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Frequencies and percentages of interactional resources in the LC**

Interactional resources	Frequency	Percentage
Hedges	1 470	59.1%
Attitude markers	34	1.5%
Engagement markers	8	0.32%
Boosters	33	1.33%
Self-mentions	921	37.34%
Total	2 466	100%

#### 4.2.1.2.1 Hedges

Hedges were the most used, constituting 59.1% of the interactional resources identified in the corpus. A total of 1 470 hedges of 29 types were found. The types and frequencies of hedges are presented in Figure 4.6.



**Figure 4.6: Types and frequencies of hedges in the LC**

The most used type of hedge in the corpus was *many* (240 counts). This is followed by *some* (218 counts) and *most* (218 counts). These are basic oral communication words that are not found in Coxhead’s academic vocabulary list. Other hedges that are usually used in written texts (for example, *fairly*, *presumably*, *perhaps*, *possibly*, *probably*, and *relatively*) were infrequently used, with their frequencies ranging between 1 and 3. The following are examples of the use of hedges in context in the learner corpus.

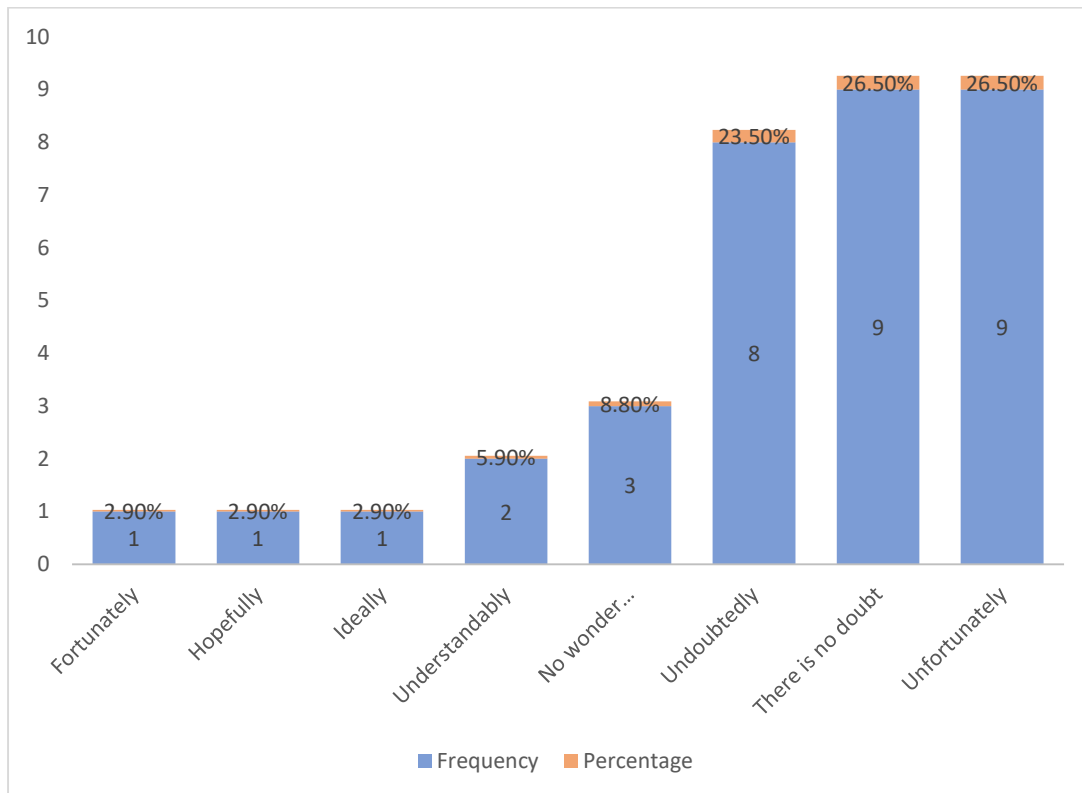
- (i) If this continues, the consequences may be devastating and will affect the wellbeing of humans, animals and the environment. Plastic bags should also be banned because they endanger wildlife and marine life (UGCD 1.txt).

- (ii) This does not only happen to fishes, other aquatic life like turtles and octopuses also suffer a similar fate, they **mostly** end up getting entangled (UGCD 12.txt).

The frequency analysis of hedges according to the three performance levels in the students' essays showed that the difference between the number of hedges in the average-rated essays (537 counts) and the high-rated essays (527 counts) was not great. In the low-rated essays, 406 hedges were found. William (2007) opines that good writers hedge more than weak writers. The findings also revealed that the majority of the students used basic hedges. The more academically classified hedges, such as *relatively*, *probably*, and *perhaps*, were used minimally. On the whole, the frequency of hedges was high. The high frequency of hedges, as shown in Figure 4.6, may be attributed to the explicit teaching of hedges. Learners received instruction on the use of hedges in their academic writing lessons. Students were cautioned to avoid using absolute statements and rather use tentative phrases, as a cautious style is necessary in many areas of academic writing in order to avoid statements that can be contradicted (Bailey, 2015, p. 112). Holmes (1988) and Hyland (2010) explain that in academic writing, propositional information should not be presented categorically. Hedging is thus very useful in academic discourse as hedges emphasise the 'subjectivity of a position by allowing information to be presented as an opinion rather than a fact' (Hyland, 2005a, p.52). This finding on the high frequency of hedges in students' essays is consistent with Alkhatlan's (2019) study, as he also found that the students used hedges more frequently than all the other interactional resources. However, Davaei and Karbalaei (2013) had a different observation from the findings of this study, as they found that the frequency of hedges was low in the corpus they investigated. Davaei and Kabalaei did not state any reason why the frequency of hedges was low in the corpus. The participants in Davaei and Kabalaei's study were also ESL undergraduate students.

#### 4.2.1.2.2 Attitude markers

From the analysis, only 34 attitude markers of eight types were counted in the learner corpus. This represents 1.59% of the interactional resources in the corpus. The types and frequencies of attitude markers identified in the learner corpus are presented in Figure 4.7.



**Figure 4.7: Types and frequencies of attitude markers in the LC**

The analysis of the frequencies of attitude markers according to the three performance levels revealed that of the 34 attitude markers, 16 were found in the low-rated essays, 14 were found in the high-rated essays, and four were identified in the average-rated essays. This shows that most of the average-rated essay writers did not use attitude markers in their essays. As regards the low-rated essay writers, the results of the frequency analysis suggested that they did not seem to be very aware of the difference between presenting factual information to present a point academically and simply presenting an opinion on an issue in normal communication.

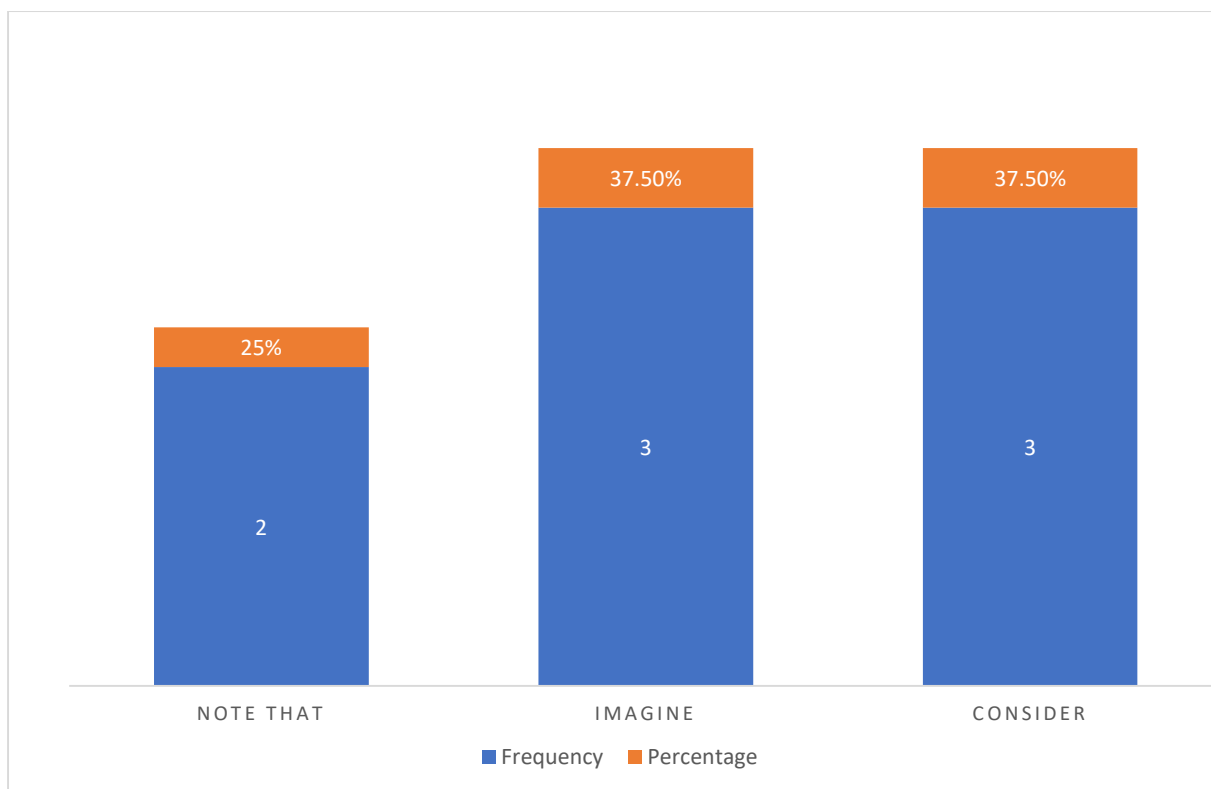
Hyland (2005a) notes that attitude markers are used to express the writer's attitude towards their propositions. The following are examples of the use of attitude markers in context in the learner corpus.

- (i) **Undoubtedly**, in the lights [sic] of the above-mentioned points, it is strongly agreed that plastic bags should be banned at all cost (UGCD 5.txt).
- (ii) **Unfortunately**, when there is a heavy downpour, we mostly end up experiencing flooding. These floods have led to the loss of property and sometimes life (UGCD 82.txt).

The low frequency of the use of attitude markers may be attributed to the fact that they were advised in their academic writing lessons to avoid the use of adverbs such as *surprisingly*, *luckily*, and *remarkably* that show personal attitude because they render the essay subjective (Bailey, 2015). Similar to the finding of the present study in relation to the low frequency of attitude markers, Kashiha (2018) found in his study that attitude markers were the least used interactional resources in the corpus. He attributed this to the topic of the essay, which required students to provide factual information rather than opinions.

#### 4.2.1.2.3 *Engagement markers*

The analysis showed that of the 2 466 interactional resources identified in the learner corpus, engagement markers constituted only eight instances of three types. This represents 0.32% of the interactional resources. The types and frequencies of engagement markers used in the learner corpus are presented in Figure 4.8.



**Figure 4.8: Types and frequencies of engagement markers in the LC**

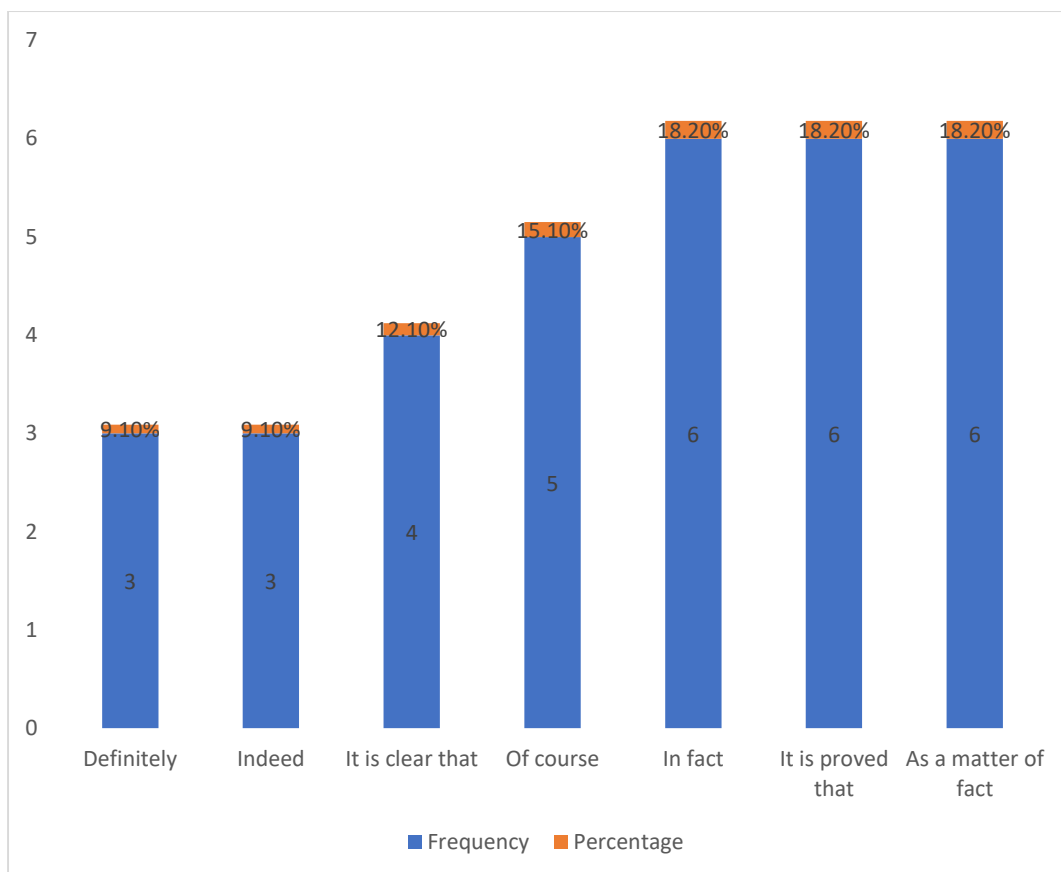
On the whole, the frequency of engagement markers was very low in the learner corpus, as shown in Figure 4.8. The analysis of the frequency of engagement markers according to the three performance levels indicated that one engagement marker was found in the high-rated essays, three were found in the average-rated essays, and four were found in the low-rated essays. It may be that the frequency of engagement markers was low in the corpus because students were more focused on organising their essays than involving the reader because the second part of the examination paper required the students to explain how coherence was achieved in their essays, using examples from their essays (§3.4.2.1). Hyland (2005a) explains that engagement markers help build relationships with readers by involving the reader in the text. The following are examples of the use of engagement markers in context in the learner corpus.

- (i) **Imagine** this current world without plastic bags, packaging items would have been very difficult (UGCD 55.txt).
- (ii) As we are moving for the ban on plastic bags we must **note that** the ban is not sufficient for the safety of our environment (UGCD 110.txt).

The low frequency of engagement markers, as shown in Figure 4.8, suggests that students may not have acquired the skill of engaging or building a relationship with their readers in their writing, or they were more concerned with organising their essays than involving the reader, as already explained. Engagement markers may also connote informality. Perhaps that is why they were avoided, considering that this was an academic essay and had to be formal. This finding in relation to the low frequency of engagement markers in the learner corpus is contrary to the findings of Kashiha (2018). Kashiha found in his corpus that the highest frequency was recorded for engagement markers and explains that this could be attributed to the function of engagement markers, as they help writers form a relationship with the reader by involving them in the text.

#### *4.2.1.2.4 Boosters*

Boosters represented 1.33% of the interactional resources. A total of 33 boosters of seven types were counted. The types and frequencies of boosters in the learner corpus are presented in Figure 4.9.



**Figure 4.9: Types and frequencies of boosters in the LC**

Of the 33 boosters identified in the corpus, 12 occurred in the high-rated essays, 11 occurred in the average-rated essays, and ten were found in the low-rated essays. Hyland (2005a, 2008) and Peacock (2006) explain that boosters are used to express certainty in academic essays.

The following are examples of the use of boosters in the learner corpus.

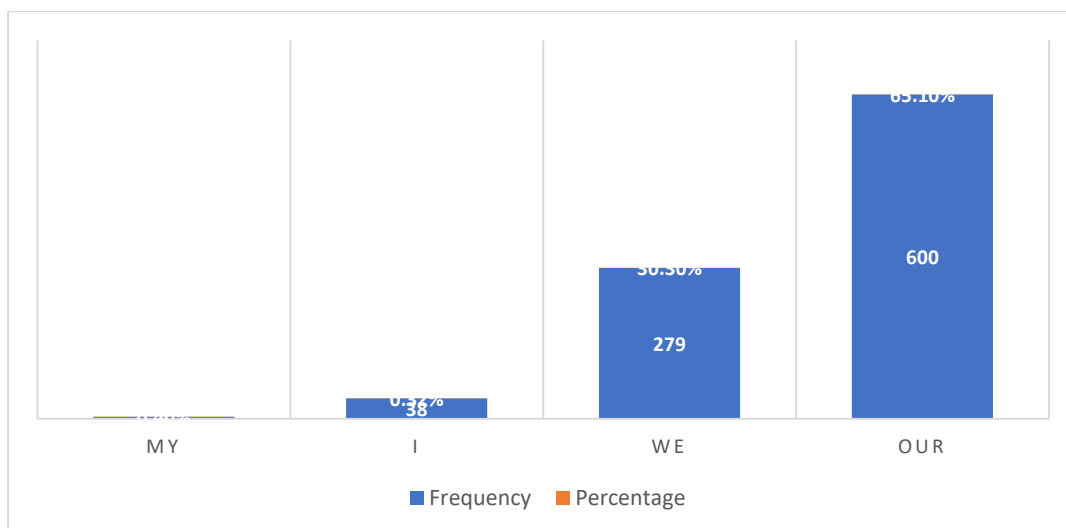
- (i) It is proved that plastics are making the lifecycle of plants, animals and **of course** the users of the plastic bags, the humans tougher. So, let us go green and avoid plastics for a safer environment and a healthier life (UGCD 52.txt).
- (ii) Since plastic bags cannot be burnt totally because, it [sic] will **definitely** leave behind some remains in the soil, they are accumulated in heaps and cause land pollution (UGCD 91.txt).



Although the learners did not receive instruction on the use of boosters, some of them were able to use them in their essays. The fact that some of them used boosters appropriately and others did not may point to the students' varying degrees of language proficiency, which may have resulted from their different levels of exposure to texts through reading. This is purely an assumption, as there was no plausible reason for some of the students' ability to use boosters and the inability of others. However, this finding of a low frequency of boosters in the learner corpus is contrary to that of Livingstone (2019), who found that the students used a high frequency of boosters in their essays and concluded that they may have been aware of the need to express certainty in their essays.

#### 4.2.1.2.5 *Self-mentions*

A total of 921 self-mentions of four types were identified, representing 37.34% of the interactional resources. The types and frequencies of self-mentions identified in the learner corpus are presented in Figure 4.10.



**Figure 4.10: Types and frequencies of self-mentions in the LC**

The most used self-mention, as shown in Figure 4.10, was *our*. It was observed from the findings that most of the students avoided the use of the self-mentions *I* and *we*. Students were, in fact, advised to avoid overusing personal pronouns because they render the essay personal and subjective (Bailey, 2015). The analysis of the frequency of self-mentions according to the three performance levels of students in their essays indicated that of the 921 self-mentions, 281 were counted in the high-rated essays, 305 were found in the average-rated essays, and 335 were identified in the low-rated essays. The following are examples of the use of self-mentions in context in the learner corpus.

- (i) They are part of **our** modern lives. However, people are unaware of the numerous problems they present to world [sic] (UGCD 1.txt).
- (ii) The main reason why [sic] **we** use plastics for bottles that contain water and other beverages is that it keeps the product safe... (UGCD 4.txt).

In summary, the analysis of the learner corpus to determine the types and frequencies of interactive and interactional resources used revealed that markers from all ten subcategories of interactive and interactional resources occurred in the corpus. It was also observed that students used more interactive than interactional metadiscourse markers. Of the 8 451 metadiscourse markers identified in the corpus, 6 075 were interactive resources and 2 466 were interactional resources, and the differences in the use of the interactive and interactional resources were statistically significant. Under interactive metadiscourse, the most used markers were transitions, while the least used markers were endophoric. Under interactional metadiscourse, the most used markers were hedges, and the least used markers were engagement. The analysis also revealed that the high-rated writers employed more interactive resources to organise their essays.

In addition to the types and frequency of metadiscourse use in the essays, descriptive and inferential analyses were also performed on metadiscourse use in relation to home language, course of study, and the performance levels of students whose essays were selected to build the learner corpus. The results are presented in the following section.

### **4.3 Descriptive and inferential analysis of the learner corpus**

In this section, the results of the descriptive and inferential analyses of home language, course of study, and performance level in relation to the use of metadiscourse in the learner corpus (student essays) are discussed. The results of the descriptive analysis for each variable are presented first, followed by the inferential statistics.

#### **4.3.1 Results for home language**

The results of the descriptive analysis for home language show the total number of metadiscourse markers used by each home language group in the learner corpus. In order to compare the use of metadiscourse by each home language group from the descriptive analysis, the mean scores of the home language groups were compared. The results are presented in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8: Results of descriptive analysis of metadiscourse use by home language**

Home language	MD markers	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Total MD markers
<b>Akan</b>	Interactive	121	29.34	6.275	3 545
	Interactional	121	12.10	6.160	1 490
<b>English</b>	Interactive	16	32.8	9.831	524
	Interactional	16	12.56	7.202	227
<b>Ewe</b>	Interactive	23	31.87	8.165	740
	Interactional	23	11.22	4.451	275
<b>Ga-Adangme</b>	Interactive	24	33.04	5.599	800
	Interactional	24	9.17	6.391	237
<b>Northern Langs.</b>	Interactive	13	35.46	7.125	467
	Interactional	13	17.00	9.055	236

As shown in Table 4.8, the mean scores for both the interactive and interactional resources for all the language groups ranged between 9 and 35, and their standard deviations were between 6 and 9.

Students who stated that their home language was a northern language numbered only 13, and their mean score was 35.46 for interactive resources and 17.00 for interactional resources. The means for both interactive and interactional resources for the Northern language group were the highest among the means of the home language groups.

A non-parametric test, namely the Kruskal-Wallis test, was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences in the use of interactive and interactional resources in relation to the home language spoken. The hypothesis was that the distribution of interactive and interactional resources would not be the same across categories of home language, and the null

hypothesis was that the distribution of interactive and interactional resources would be the same across categories of home language. The results are presented in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9: Hypothesis test summary for home language**

Null hypothesis	Test	p-value	Decision
1. The distribution of interactive resources is the same across categories of home language.	Independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test	.008	Reject the null hypothesis
2. The distribution of interactional markers is the same across categories of home language.	Independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis test	.017	Reject the null hypothesis

As shown in Table 4.9, the p-values for the hypotheses for the distribution of both interactive and interactional resources across the category of home language are less than 0.05. This means that the home languages of the participants played a significant role in their usage of metadiscourse markers. Specifically, the northern language group used more metadiscourse markers than the other home language groups, and this difference was statistically significant at a p-value of .008 for interactive resources and .017 for interactional resources. One wonders whether it is related to MD usage in their home language or if there is a different reason. It is also possible that the students who had northern languages as their home language may have learnt and used MD markers the way the markers are used in English or were simply following formulaic expressions. Further research is needed in this area as there is no clear reason for this occurrence. Alipour et al. (2015) analysed MD markers across two varieties of English (a native variety and a non-native variety) and writing samples of L1 Persian speakers to determine whether there were differences in the frequency and distribution of different categories of MD across these three varieties of students' written language. The results showed that the Persian

students did not borrow from their own language but used the MD markers appropriately in their English essays, pointing to a possible formulaic application of the markers.

### 4.3.2 Results for course of study

The analysis to determine the use of interactive and interactional markers in relation to course of study showed that for interactive markers, the students who were registered for BSc Health Sciences had the highest mean score, and for interactional markers, students who were registered for BA Arts had the highest mean score. The results are presented in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10: Results of descriptive analysis of metadiscourse use by course of study**

Course of study	MD markers	N	Means	Std. deviation	Total
<b>BSc Applied Sciences</b>	Interactive	104	30.94	6.366	3 218
	Interactional	104	12.04	7.075	1 253
<b>BA Education</b>	Interactive	3	26.00	3.000	78
	Interactional	3	11.00	8.185	33
<b>BSc Health Sciences</b>	Interactive	12	32.67	8.026	392
	Interactional	12	9.67	5.193	116
<b>BA Arts</b>	Interactive	78	30.33	8.352	2 387
	Interactional	78	12.35	6.479	1 064

As presented in Table 4.10, the mean scores for MD use for all the courses of study were between 12 and 30, with standard deviations between 5 and 8. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test to determine whether there were significant differences in the use of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in relation to course of study showed that the p-values for the distribution of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers across courses of study were above 0.05. This means that the use of metadiscourse markers in the essays was not

influenced by the course of study, as there were no significant differences in the use of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers. The results are presented in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11: Hypothesis test summary for course of study**

Null hypothesis	Test	p-value	Decision
1. The distribution of interactional resources was the same across courses of study.	Independent Kruskal-Wallis test	.523	Reject the null hypothesis
2. The distribution of interactive resources was the same across courses of study.	Independent Kruskal-Wallis test	.299	Reject the null hypothesis

The null hypothesis stating that the distribution of interactional and interactive resources was the same across courses of study was rejected, as presented in Table 4.11, because at p-values of .523 for interactional resources and .299 for interactive resources, the differences in the use of MD markers by the various courses of study were not statistically significant.

### 4.3.3 Results for performance levels in student essays

The descriptive analysis to determine the differences among the three performance levels of the students' written essays showed that of the 8 541 metadiscourse markers found in the learner corpus, the high-rated essays used 3 085 metadiscourse markers (2 250 interactive and 835 interactional), the average-rated essays used 3 078 metadiscourse markers (2 219 interactive and 859 interactional), and the low rated essays used 2 377 metadiscourse markers (1 606 interactive and 771 interactional). The results are presented in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12: Performance levels and use of MD markers in the LC**

<b>MD markers</b>	<b>Performance levels</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>	<b>Total MD markers</b>
<b>Interactive resources</b>	<b>High</b>	70	31.97	6.646	2 250
	<b>Average</b>	70	31.57	7.496	2 219
	<b>Low</b>	57	28.19	7.259	1 606
	<b>Total N</b>	197	30.74	7.284	6 075
<b>Interactional resources</b>	<b>High</b>	70	11.46	5.999	836
	<b>Average</b>	70	11.79	6.799	859
	<b>Low</b>	57	12.93	6.668	771
	<b>Total N</b>	197	12.00	6.479	2 465
<b>Interactive and interactional</b>					<b>8 541</b>

As presented in Table 4.12, the total mean for the interactive metadiscourse markers for all three performance levels was 30.74, and the mean for the high-rated essays was (31.97). The mean for the low-rated essays was the lowest (28.19). However, the standard deviations for all three levels of performance were between 6 and 7, meaning that their scores were somehow consistent. The total mean for the interactional metadiscourse markers was 12, and the mean for the low-rated essays was the highest (12.93). The lowest mean for the interactional metadiscourse markers was that of the high-rated essays, and the standard deviations for all three levels were between 5 and 6.

For the inferential analysis, a non-parametric test to determine whether the differences observed in the students' use of metadiscourse markers across their performance levels were statistically significant showed that there were significant differences in the use of interactive



metadiscourse markers across the high-, average- and low-rated essays. However, there were no significant differences in the use of interactional metadiscourse markers across the three levels of performance. The results are presented in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.13: Hypothesis test summary for performance levels**

<b>Null hypothesis</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1. The distribution of interactive resources was the same across the three performance levels.	Independent Kruskal-Wallis test	.003	Reject the null analysis
2. The distribution of interactional resources was the same across the three performance levels.	Independent Kruskal-Wallis test	.387	Accept the null analysis

The null hypothesis that the distribution of interactive resources was the same across the three performance levels was rejected, as shown in Table 4.13, because at a p-value of .003, the observed differences were statistically significant. On the other hand, the null hypothesis that the distribution of interactional resources was the same across the three performance levels was accepted because at a p-value of .387, the observed differences were not statistically significant. At a 95% confidence level, the significant level should be less or equal to 0.05.

Furthermore, the three groups of performance levels were analysed by pairing the low–average group, the low–high group, and the average–high group in order to determine whether the differences in their use of metadiscourse markers were statistically significant. The results showed that there were significant differences in the low–average groups comparison and the low–high groups comparison, but the difference in the average–high groups comparison was not statistically significant. The results are presented in Table 4.14.

**Table 4.14: Pairwise comparisons of performance levels**

Sample 1–Sample 2	p-value
Low–average	.006
Low–high	.001
Average–high	.563

The findings, as observed in Table 4.14, show that the average- and high-rated essay writers used more metadiscourse markers than the low-rated essay writers. These findings from pairwise comparisons of performance levels are consistent with the findings of some previous studies of some researchers. (Ho & Li, 2018; Liao, 2020; Mohamed & Rashid, 2019; Simin & Tavangar, 2009). Ho and Li (2018) explained that the high-rated essay writers used more metadiscourse markers than the low-rated essay writers. Mohamed and Rashid (2019) noted that the good undergraduate writers used more metadiscourse markers. Simin and Tavangar (2009) also observed that more proficient learners used more metadiscourse markers.

In the present study, the analysis of the learner corpus revealed that the high-rated essay writers used more metadiscourse markers than the average- and low-rated writers. The high-rated essay writers used more transitions (*and, also, but*), frame-markers (*in conclusion, finally, first*), and code glosses (*such as, for instance, for example*). Thus, good writers were able to guide the reader through the text (Hyland, 2005a). The high-rated essay writers were also certain about their propositional content as they used more boosters (*indeed, of course, in fact*). Hyland (2005a) explains that boosters are used to express certainty in essays. Although the high-rated essay writers used hedges, the average writers used more). This suggests that the average writers were more interested in presenting their information as an opinion rather than a fact or were less confident of their facts (Hyland, 2005a). On the other hand, the low-rated essay writers used more self-mentions (*I, we, our*) (§ 4.3.1.2.5) and attitude markers (*unfortunately,*

*undoubtedly, ideally*) (§ 4.3.1.2.2). The overuse of self-mentions in the low-rated essays made the essays seem too personal for an academic essay. This is in line with Liao's (2020) finding, as he also observed that the low-rated essay writers overused self-mentions (*I, my, we*). Again, it was observed in the present study that the low-rated essays used more evidentials (*according to, suggests, explains*) (§ 4.3.1.1.4), although it was not a research essay. Also, the essays did not have reference lists, as the students were limited by the number of words and were not given any additional resources to refer to. This finding is consistent with Mohamed and Rashid's (2019) study, as they also observed that the low-rated essay writers used more evidentials than the high-rated essay writers. The findings of the current study also revealed that the low-rated essay writers used more engagement markers (*imagine, consider, note that*) (§ 4.3.1.2.3) than the high-rated and average-rated essay writers. The fact that the low-rated essay writers used more engagement markers suggests that they were unable to distinguish between formality and informality, as high use of engagement markers may connote informality. Hyland (2005a) explains that engagement markers help build a relationship with the reader in the discourse, but considering the fact that the students were writing an academic essay, the overuse of engagement markers was not necessary, as such overuse could render the essay informal if not used strategically.

#### **4.3.4 Summary**

The findings of the learner corpus analysis revealed that the learners deployed more interactive metadiscourse markers than interactional metadiscourse markers. Among the interactive metadiscourse markers, transitions were the most used because the learners were explicitly taught how to use transitions to achieve coherence in their essays. Among the interactional metadiscourse markers, the students used more hedges because they were explicitly taught how to use hedges in their lessons. In addition to the frequent use of transitions and hedges, the

findings showed that the students who spoke northern languages used more metadiscourse markers than those with other home languages. Further investigation is, however, needed to determine the reason for this. In relation to the use of metadiscourse markers by the various courses of study, it was observed that course of study did not play a significant role in the students' ability to use metadiscourse markers. As regards the use of metadiscourse markers by the performance levels in their written essays, the findings from the learner corpus show that the high-rated and average-rated essay writers used more metadiscourse markers than the low-rated essay writers. This suggests that the low-rated essay writers were, indeed, poor writers who were not adequately aware of how to use MD markers appropriately. They used them minimally when the MD markers needed to be used more, and they used them more when the MD markers should have been used minimally.

#### **4.4 Comparing the cloze test results with the findings of the LC analysis**

This study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. Creswell (2013) explains that in the interpretation of data from this type of design, the researcher reports on the comparison of two databases and notes whether there is convergence or divergence between the two sources of information. In the current study, the cloze test was used to investigate the learners' receptive or passive knowledge of metadiscourse markers, while the learner corpus was used to investigate their productive or active knowledge of the use of metadiscourse markers. Thus, the cloze test was used to determine the learners' ability to recognise the correct marker to use in a given context, and the learner corpus was analysed to determine the learners' ability to use these metadiscourse markers freely in their academic writing. In this section, the results of the cloze test and the analysis of the learner corpus in relation to the five subcategories of the interactive resources are discussed first, followed by a discussion of the results of the five subcategories of interactional metadiscourse resources.

#### 4.4.1 Interactive resources

The correct answers for gaps 1, 2, 3, 8, and 9 were interactive resources. These are discussed below.

The results of the cloze test analysis revealed that most of the students were not able to recognise the correct marker for Gap 1, as only 42 (25%) of the 171 students got it right. The correct marker for Gap 1 was *X explains* (evidential marker). This corresponded with the results of the corpus analysis. The analysis of evidentials in the learner corpus indicated that the frequency of the use of evidentials was very low. Of the 6 075 interactive resources identified in the learner corpus, only 70 were evidential markers, and of the 70 evidentials counted in the corpus, *x explains* occurred only four times. The preferred evidential used in the learner corpus was *according to*. The difference between these two markers is that *according to* is neutral, but *explains* is a reporting verb which shows how the author presented the information and the stance taken. The latter requires a deeper understanding of the information being referred to and may, therefore, be more difficult to use than the former, which only presents a neutral stance (Bailey, 2015). The limited use of *x explains* may also point to the low competence level of the students as writers.

The correct marker for Gap 2 in the cloze test was *such as* (code gloss). The results of the cloze test showed that of the 171 students who participated in the test, 121 (71%) were able to select the required marker correctly. The results of the learner corpus analysis revealed that of the 334 code glosses identified in the corpus, *such as* occurred 273 times, and this specific marker was also the most used code gloss in the corpus, suggesting that the learners had both receptive and productive knowledge of the marker *such as*.

For Gap 3 in the cloze test, the correct marker to be used was *in addition* (transition). The results indicated that of the 171 respondents, 68 (40%) were able to choose the correct marker for Gap 3. In the learner corpus, the preferred transition was *and* (5 221 counts). The transition *in addition* occurred only 54 times (1%). The high frequency of the transition *and* in the learner corpus suggests that students are more familiar with basic vocabulary and not more academic words such as *in addition*.

The endophoric marker *noted above* was the correct marker for Gap 8. Of the 171 respondents, 55 (33%) were able to select the correct marker for Gap 8. However, *noted above* was not found in the learner corpus. The endophoric markers identified in the learner corpus were *as mentioned earlier* (2) and *as mentioned before* (1). Although all three expressions are synonymous, the markers used in the corpus are more informal and conversational, whereas *noted above* is more academic, denotes formality, and is only found in written texts. This finding may suggest that the learners had a passive knowledge of the marker *noted above*, but it may not yet have been part of their vocabulary for use. Thus, the zero frequency for the marker *noted above* in the learner corpus may point to the learners' limited academic vocabulary, especially in writing.

The correct marker for Gap (9) was *finally* (frame marker). Of the 171 students, 124 (73%) got it right. However, there were only 47 counts of the use of *finally* in the learner corpus. The preferred frame marker in the corpus was *in conclusion* (86 counts). The students may have had both receptive and productive knowledge of both markers. The difference between the markers *finally* and *in conclusion* is that *finally* can be used within a text to denote a final point or at the end of a text to signal the conclusion, whereas *in conclusion* is used mainly at the end

of the text. The students may have preferred using *in conclusion* because it was specifically used in the concluding paragraph.

Thus, in terms of interactive resources in the cloze test and learner corpus, the findings suggest that for some markers (e.g., the code gloss *such as*), the learners displayed both receptive and productive knowledge, but for others (e.g., *in addition* as a transition and *noted above* as an endophoric marker), they did not have them readily in their vocabulary for active use.

#### **4.4.2 Interactional metadiscourse resource**

The correct answers for gaps 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10 were interactional resources. These are discussed below.

The correct answer for Gap 7 was *unfortunately* (attitude marker). The results showed that 112 (66%) of the 171 students chose the correct answer. However, in the learner corpus, there were only nine counts of the attitude marker *unfortunately*. This could be explained in terms of teaching. Although the majority of the students were able to select the attitude marker *unfortunately* correctly, they did not use it in their essays. Students had been taught to avoid the overuse of such attitude markers in their academic essays.

Of the 171 students, 105 (62%) correctly chose the engagement marker *note that* for Gap 6, but in the learner corpus, only two engagement markers were found. This may be due to the fact that the learners had not learnt the use of *note that*, hence their inability to use it independently in their essays. The ability to use the markers independently in their essays shows that they have acquired the use of the particular marker, and they were, therefore, proficient in its use. The low frequency of *note that* in the learner corpus suggests that it may

not be part of their vocabulary. In this case, their ability to select (receptive knowledge) did not correspond with their use of the marker (productive use).

The correct answer for Gap 10 was *I* (self-mention). The results showed that 113 (67%) of the students were able to select it correctly, and in the learner corpus, there were 38 occurrences (0.32%). This finding suggests that the learners had receptive knowledge of the self-mention *I*, but they did not overuse it in their essays because they were taught the implications of using self-mentions in their essays.

The hedge *may* was the correct answer for Gap 10. The results showed that 99 (58%) of the students had the answer right. In the learner corpus, the hedge *may* occurred 156 times (10.6%). Of the 29 types of hedges counted in the learner corpus, the hedge *may* was the fourth highest. This finding suggests that the learners had receptive and productive knowledge of the hedge *may* and were familiar with it in their usage when writing essays or for comprehension when reading, as in the cloze test.

For Gap 5, the correct marker was *it is clear that* (booster). Of the 171 students, 95 (55%) had it right. In the learner corpus, only three counts were recorded. This finding suggests that a considerable number of learners were not familiar with the expression and were not able to select it correctly in the cloze test. In addition, the majority of students did not use it in the essay.

On the whole, the findings regarding the use of interactional resources in the cloze test and the learner corpus show that the learners have both receptive and productive knowledge of only one MD marker, which is the hedge *may*. For the other markers, their receptive knowledge did not correspond with their productive knowledge.



The results of the non-parametric tests showed that there were no significant differences in the scores of the cloze test in relation to the demographic variables of home language and course of study. However, home language may have played a role in the students' usage of metadiscourse markers in the learner corpus, as the observed differences in the use of MD markers by the students of the various home language groups were statistically significant at a p-value of .008 for interactional resources and .017 for interactive resources. The non-parametric test revealed that course of study did not affect metadiscourse usage in either the cloze test or the learner corpus.

In summary, the comparison of the cloze test results and the analysis of the learner corpus shows that the learners had both receptive and productive knowledge of two metadiscourse markers, which were code glosses and hedges, but for other markers, students' display of their receptive knowledge in the cloze test did not correspond with their productive knowledge or independent use of the markers in the essays.

## **4.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the students' choice of MD markers (interactive and interactional) in both the cloze test and the learner corpus in relation to the variables of home language, course of study, and performance level. The results of the analysis of the cloze test show that the highest percentage of correct responses for interactive MD markers was recorded for the frame marker *finally*, while the lowest percentage was recorded for the evidential marker *x explains*. For the interactional markers, the highest percentage was recorded for the self-mention *I*, while the lowest percentage was recorded for the booster *it is clear that*. Variables such as age, gender, home language, and course of study did not play a statistically significant role in the choice of correct and appropriate markers to complete a passage. On the other hand, the results

of the analysis of the learner corpus show that the students used more interactive than interactional metadiscourse markers in their essays. It was also observed that the northern home language group used more metadiscourse markers than the other home language groups, and finally, the high- and average-rated essay writers used more markers than the low-rated essay writers. However, the difference regarding the use of metadiscourse markers between the high- and average-rated essays was not statistically significant. Finally, the comparison of the cloze test results and the analysis of the learner corpus shows that the learners had both receptive and productive knowledge of two metadiscourse markers, which were code glosses and hedges, but were lacking in their productive knowledge of more formal and academic use of other markers. In the next chapter, the findings of the comparison of the learner corpus and the reference corpus are presented and discussed.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION: COMPARING LEARNER CORPUS AND NATIVE SPEAKERS' CORPUS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

In Chapter 4, the discussion of the cloze test results and the findings of the learner corpus analysis were presented. This chapter presents the findings and discussion of the comparative analysis of the type, frequency and appropriacy of metadiscourse markers in the LC and in the NSC. The results were used to answer RQ3: How did students' use of metadiscourse markers compare to that of native speakers? Quantitative details of the learner corpus and the NSC corpus are first presented to provide background on the two corpora. Thereafter, the results of the comparative analysis for interactive and interactional resources in the two corpora are presented and discussed.

#### **5.2 Quantitative details of metadiscourse usage in LC and NSC**

As stated in section 3.7, the #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020) software tool was used to conduct the quantitative analysis. The same search terms used to identify metadiscourse markers in the LC (§3.7) were used for the NSC. The size of the native speakers' corpus was 167 404 words/tokens, and that of the learner corpus was 98 069 words. The total number of metadiscourse markers in the LC was 8 541, and in the NSC, it was 11 531. The number of interactive resources identified in the learner corpus was 6 055, while the native speakers' corpus yielded 6 875 interactive resources. The learner corpus contained 2 466 interactional resources, while the native speakers' corpus contained 4 656. Interactive resources, according to Hyland's (2005a) classification, comprise frame markers, code glosses, endophoric markers,

evidentials, and transitions, and interactional resources comprise hedges, attitude markers, engagement markers, boosters, and self-mentions.

The details summarised in Table 5.1 below show the number of words in each of the two corpora, the RF, the NF, and the MD density. The NF was used to compare the LC and NSC because it equalises the two corpora.

**Table 5.1: Summary of quantitative details of LC and NSC**

Corpus	No. of words	RF of MD	NF of MD	MD density
LC	98 069	8 541	87 091	8.70
NSC	167 404	11 531	68 881	6.88

Table 5.1 shows that the metadiscourse densities in the two corpora are 8.70 for the LC and 6.88 for the NSC, indicating a higher density in the LC than the NSC. This is further shown in the calculated NF, which shows a higher number for the LC than the NSC.

In order to determine whether the calculated differences in the LC and NSC were statistically significant, a log-likelihood (LL) test was conducted using the LL calculator (freely available at <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/llwizard.html>). The critical value was 3.84, as stated on the LL calculator. The critical value refers to the significance level, so any LL value below 3.84 was not statistically significant, and any value above 3.84 was considered significant. The analysis showed that the LL difference for the two corpora was 266.29, indicating significantly more MD markers in LC than in NSC. A discussion on this difference is undertaken later in the chapter.

In order to determine which corpus employed more or fewer interactive and interactional resources, the normed frequencies of interactive and interactional resources were compared and ranked. The ranking shows the percentages of the normed frequencies from the highest to the lowest in each corpus. The ranking of 1st means that the percentage of the normed frequency in that category was the highest, and the ranking of 5th means that the percentage of the normed frequency was the fifth and lowest, as there were five subcategories of interactive and interactional MD markers. The statistical details of the use of interactive resources in the LC and NSC are presented in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2: Distribution of interactive resources in the LC and the NSC**

Interactive resources	Learner corpus				Native speakers' corpus			
	RF	NF	% (NF)	Ranking	RF	NF	% (NF)	Ranking
Endophoric markers	3	30	0.03	5th	1	5	0.00	5 <sup>th</sup>
Evidentials	70	713	0.81	4th	180	1 075	1.56	4 <sup>th</sup>
Code glosses	334	3 405	3.90	3rd	206	1 230	1.78	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Frame markers	447	4 558	5.23	2nd	410	2 449	3.55	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Transitions	5 221	53 238.	61.12	1st	6 078	36 307	52.70	1 <sup>st</sup>
Total	6 055	61 743	71.09		6 875	41 068	59.59	

As presented in Table 5.2, there were similarities between the two corpora for interactive resources. The order of the rankings for the five subcategories was the same for the LC and the NSC. Both groups have the following scale of preference: transitions, frame markers, code glosses, evidentials, and endophoric markers. The high preference for the use of transitions

suggests that the second-language learners of English and the native speakers may have been aware of the importance of using transitions in writing. Hyland (2005a) points out that transitions help to make texts coherent (Hyland, 2005a). The high preference for transitions by the two groups of writers is consistent with the findings of Akoto (2020) and Afful and Akoto (2020). The low preference for the use of endophoric markers, as shown in Table 5.2, may be attributed to the fact that the two groups of students wrote short academic essays, so the use of more endophoric markers was not necessary since these markers contain reference to other parts of the text.

Although there were similarities in the rankings of the five subcategories of interactive resources, there were quantitative differences, as shown in the LL values provided in Table 5.3. With the exception of endophoric markers, the differences between the pairs of interactive resources in the two corpora were statistically significant. The results of the LL test conducted to determine the statistical significance levels between the normed frequencies of each pair of MD markers under interactive resources in the two corpora are presented in Table 5.3. The significance level was 3.84.

**Table 5.3: LL values for interactive resources across the LC and the NSC**

<b>Interactive resources</b>	<b>% NF (LC)</b>	<b>% NF (NSC)</b>	<b>LL value</b>	<b>Significance status</b>
Endophoric markers	0.05	0.01	2.40	Not significant
Evidentials	1.15	1.56	8.94	Significant
Code glosses	5.51	1.79	137.23	Significant
Frame markers	7.38	3.56	81.93	Significant
Transitions	61.23	52.71	405.07	Significant

\* Significance level: 3.84

With a statistical significance level of 3.84, the observed differences between the normed frequencies in the LC and NSC in terms of frame markers, code glosses, evidentials, and transitions were statistically significant, but the difference between the normed frequencies of endophoric markers was not statistically significant at 2.40. In other words, the difference between the two groups on the use of endophoric markers was very small, as both corpora contained minimal use of these markers due to the length of the texts. The statistically significant values of the other subcategories show that the second-language learners used more frame markers, code glosses, and transitions. As stated in Chapter 4, the learners received instruction in the use of these three interactive resources, which may have contributed to their frequent use in the essays. The native speakers, on the other hand, employed more evidentials than the second-language learners, probably because of the nature of the topics they wrote their essays on. The essays in the reference corpus were written on several topics, as stated in Chapter 3. With an overall percentage of 71.09% for the LC and 59.59% for the NSC, the analysis of interactive resources in the two corpora revealed that the learners employed significantly more interactive resources than the native speakers.

The statistical details on interactional resources in the LC and NSC, as shown in Table 5.4, present a slightly different picture from the distribution of the interactive resources. The rankings of the percentages of the normed frequencies were the same for each subcategory, except for boosters and attitude markers, which were swapped around. Boosters were ranked 4th in LC and 3rd in NSC. Likewise, attitude markers were ranked 3rd in LC and 4th in NSC. The results are presented in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4: Statistical details of interactional resources in the LC and the NSC**

Interactional resources	Learner corpus				Native speakers' corpus			
	RF	NF	%	Ranking	RF	NF	%	Ranking
Engagement markers	8	81	0.09	5th	45	266	0.39	5 <sup>th</sup>
Boosters	33	336	0.39	4th	128	764	1.11	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Attitude markers	34	346	0.40	3rd	62	336	0.54	4 <sup>th</sup>
Self-mentions	921	9 389	10.78	2nd	1 828	10 791	15.85	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Hedges	1 470	14 989	17.21	1st	2 593	15 307	22.49	1 <sup>st</sup>
Total	2 466	25 140	28.87		4 656	27 464	40.38	

The scale of preference for the LC was: hedges, self-mentions, attitude markers, boosters, and engagement markers, while that of NSC was: hedges, self-mentions, boosters, attitude markers, and engagement markers. The high preference for hedges, as stated in Table 5.4, suggests that the two groups of students may have been aware of the need to present propositional information cautiously. The finding that hedges were the most preferred among the interactional resources is consistent with previous studies (Afful & Akoto, 2020; Akoto, 2020; Hyland, 1998, 2004, 2010).

Although three of the interactional resources were ranked the same in both the LC and the NSC, there were quantitative differences in the percentages of the normed frequencies, as shown in the LL values presented in Table 5.5. The LL values show that the differences between the LC and the NSC in terms of the frequency of use of engagement markers, boosters, and self-mentions were statistically significant.



**Table 5.5: LL values for interactional resources across the LC and the NSC**

Interactional resources	% NF (LC)	% NF (RC)	LL value	Significance status
Engagement markers	0.09	0.39	12.45	Significant
Boosters	0.39	1.11	20.44	Significant
Attitude markers	0.40	0.54	0.10	Not significant
Self-mentions	10.78	15.85	14.44	Significant
Hedges	17.21	22.49	1.01	Not significant

\* Significance level: 3.84

With a statistical significance level of 3.84, the observed differences between the LC and NSC in terms of the frequency of use of hedges and attitude markers were not significant, but the differences between the LC and NSC in terms of the frequency of engagement markers, boosters, and self-mentions were significant, and the details show that the native speakers used more engagement markers, boosters, and self-mentions than the second-language learners. In fact, boosters ranked 3rd for the native speakers, whereas it ranked 4th for the second-language learners of English, indicating a higher preference among the native speakers. The limited use of engagement markers (0.09%) and boosters (0.39%) by the second-language learners indicates that they were not able to involve the reader in their texts. However, the minimal use of self-mentions was reasonable, as overuse of self-mentions is not necessary when writing short academic essays. The percentage for the normed frequencies of interactional resources in the two corpora was 28.87% for the LC and 40.38% for the NSC. In effect, the native speakers used significantly more interactional resources than the second-language learners. A discussion of these differences is presented later in the chapter.

In summary, the analysis of the frequencies of interactive and interactional resources in the LC and the NSC revealed that the proportion for the second-language users was 70.90%:28.87%. This means that the percentage of the normed frequencies for interactive resources in the LC was 70.90%, and the percentage in the NSC was 28.87%. As regards the native speakers, the proportion of interactive and interactional resources was 59.62%:40.34%. That is, the percentage of the normed frequencies in the NSC for interactive resources was 59.62% and that of interactional resources was 28.87%. These proportions show that the two groups of undergraduate students employed more interactive resources than interactional resources, suggesting that the students may have been aware of the need to use more interactive resources to organise their academic writing. However, the difference in the proportion of interactive and interactional resources in the NSC was more equally weighted in the NSC than in the LC. Thus, the second-language group may have been more concerned about using interactive resources to achieve coherence in their essays than using interactional resources to involve the reader. On the other hand, the native speakers seemed to have been equally aware of the need to use interactive resources to organise their essays and the need to involve the reader in the text. However, the overuse of self-mentions and attitude markers by the native speakers rendered their essays a bit personal and informal, as shown in the examples of the self-mention *I* and the attitude markers *interestingly*, *unfortunately*, and *surprisingly* from the native speakers' corpus below.

Example 1: Interestingly enough, this topic is one that is important to me. I often dwell on the characteristics of mankind that lead us to continually invent new things (ICLEUSMICHC0021.txt).

Example 2: The airplane has many positive effects-, unfortunately, however, it was [sic] brought about some negative changes (ICLEUSMICHC0012.1.txt).

Example 3: At a conscious level, I support the idea of a united Europe; yet surprisingly often during my year in France I would find myself at dinner parties... (BR-SUR 0021.3.txt).

These examples show how the native speakers' overuse of self-mentions and attitude markers rendered their essays more informal and of a more conversational style rather than the more academic, formal style expected. It seems that although interactional resources are necessary to involve the reader in the text, the writer would have to be strategic in using them in order to maintain an academic stance. Given that these were first-year students, they may not yet have attained the proficient level required to use the interactional resources strategically in an academic essay. This points to the issue of teaching the strategic use of interactional resources to both the L1 and L2 speakers of the language.

### **5.3 Types, frequencies, and appropriate use of MD markers in the LC and the NSC**

Having presented the quantitative details of the use of metadiscourse markers in the LC and NSC in the previous section, this section presents the results of the comparison of the types, frequencies, and appropriate use of the interactive and interactional resources in the LC and NSC. As stated in Chapter 4, the L2 learners received instruction on the use of frame markers, code glosses, transitions, hedges, attitude markers, and self-mentions in their academic writing lessons. In effect, the learners received instruction on the majority of the markers (six out of ten). Metadiscourse markers such as evidentials, boosters, endophoric markers, and engagement markers were neither explicitly taught nor were students' attention drawn to them. The effects of the teaching of the six MD markers are discussed in Chapter 6, where the findings are integrated for discussion and interpretation.

To determine the types and frequency of metadiscourse use, the KWIC tool in #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020) was used (see Chapter 3). In order to analyse the appropriacy of MD use in the corpora, the text tool in #LancsBox was used. The text tool gives a broader context of the use of MD markers in the corpora. Examples of MD use were analysed manually to determine whether the markers had been used appropriately. Hyland’s (2005a) functions of MD markers were used to determine the appropriate use of MD markers.

### 5.3.1 Types and frequencies of interactive resources in LC and NSC

The ten subcategories of interactive and interactional resources were discussed in the previous section. In this section, the types of each subcategory of interactive resources and their frequencies are presented and discussed. For example, some types in the category of frame markers are *first*, *in conclusion*, and *on the whole*.

#### 5.3.1.1 Frame markers

##### 5.3.1.1.1 Types and frequencies of frame markers

Similar types of frame markers were found in the two corpora. Overall, there were 20 similar types. The normed frequency of frame-markers in the learner corpus was 4 558 of 28 types and that of the native speakers’ corpus was 2 449 of 20 types. At LL 81.93, as shown in Table 5.3, the observed difference was statistically significant at a significance level of 3.84. The RF values, NF values, LL values, and significance status of frame markers in the two corpora are presented in Table 5.6.

**Table 5.6: Frequency and LL results for identified frame markers**

Frame markers	RF LC	RF NSC	NF LC	NF NSC	LL value	Significance status
The third	1	12	10	71	6.01	Significant

<b>Frame markers</b>	<b>RF LC</b>	<b>RF NSC</b>	<b>NF LC</b>	<b>NF NSC</b>	<b>LL value</b>	<b>Significance status</b>
Above all	1	1	10	5	0.14	Not significant
In the following	1	0	10	0	1.99	Not significant
On the whole	1	1	10	5	0.14	Not significant
A fourth	1	2	10	11	0.02	Not significant
Next	2	43	20	256	27.27	Significant
To commence	2	0	20	0	3.98	Significant
Fourth	2	8	20	47	1.35	Not significant
This essay seeks	3	0	30	0	5.98	Significant
Discussed below	3	0	30	0	5.98	Significant
To end	3	12	30	71	2.03	Not significant
In a nutshell	3	0	30	0	5.98	Significant
Over all	4	14	40	101	1.81	Not significant
In short	5	4	50	23	1.28	Not significant
To continue	6	11	61	65	0.02	Not significant
A second	7	5	71	29	2.25	Not significant
In summary	8	0	81	0	15.93	Significant
Last but not least	8	0	81	0	15.93	Significant
Third	10	30	101	179	2.60	Not significant
Second	11	44	112	262	7.44	Significant
To start	11	6	112	35	5.37	Significant
To sum up	12	0	122	0	23.90	Significant
Thirdly	13	2	132	11	15.96	Significant
Lastly	26	3	265	17	35.26	Significant

Frame markers	RF LC	RF NSC	NF LC	NF NSC	LL value	Significance status
Firstly	28	5	285	29	32.31	Significant
To conclude	31	6	316	35	34.48	Significant
Secondly	35	4	365	23	47.60	Significant
To begin	37	7	377	41	41.59	Significant
First	39	154	397	919	25.44	Significant
Finally	47	26	479	155	22.51	Significant
In conclusion	86	10	876	59	116.35	Significant
Total	447	410	4 558	2 449	81.93	Significant

RF: Raw frequency; NF: Normalised frequency; NSC: Native Speakers' corpus; LC: Learner corpus

As shown in the zero entries for some items in the reference corpus in Table 5.6, the learner corpus contained types of frame markers that were not found in the native speakers' corpus. These are *in the following*, *to commence*, *this essay seeks*, *discussed below*, *in a nutshell*, *in summary*, *last but not least*, and *to sum up*. On the whole, frame markers were significantly overrepresented in the learner corpus compared to the native speakers' corpus, probably because, as explained in Chapter 4, the learners were explicitly taught to use frame markers in their academic essays in a formal and structured way, so the learners may have used more of these markers to organise their texts, in an attempt to apply what they have learnt. There was an overuse of particular types of frame markers, which are sequential (*in conclusion*, *finally*, *to conclude*, *firstly*, *a first*, *to sum up*). It seems the learners may have relied on the specific frame markers used as examples during lessons. The native speakers, on the other hand, did not use many of these types, especially *to conclude* and *in conclusion*, but their essays had a sense of closure. For example, the first sentence in the concluding paragraph of one of the essays written on the topic 'Capital punishment' states: 'After examining arguments both for and against the

use of capital punishment, it is clear that it should be abolished' (ICLEUSMRQ0011.1.txt). Although the writer did not use any MD marker to signal the conclusion of the essay, there is a sense of closure. Regarding the different types of frame markers used by learners and native speakers, Takač and Ivezić (2019), in a similar study, observed that their learners overused a particular set of frame markers such as *to conclude* and *firstly*, while the native speakers used other, less overt means such as anaphoric/cataphoric references or tenses to frame their arguments.

#### 5.3.1.1.2 *Appropriate use of frame markers (learner corpus and native speakers' corpus)*

Hyland's (2005a) definition of the function of metadiscourse markers formed the basis for determining appropriate use in this study. Grammatical and spelling errors identified in sentences taken from the two corpora were indicated by the abbreviation 'sic' and placed in square brackets because such errors did not affect the appropriate use of the markers. A manual analysis of the results of the #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020) text analysis of the two corpora revealed that all the frame markers were appropriately used, though some sentences had grammatical errors. Hyland (2005a) explains that frame markers such as *first* and *next* are used to sequence parts of the text; examples of frame markers such as *in conclusion* and *on the whole* are used to label stages in the text; and examples such as *this essay seeks* and *in the following* are used to announce goals in the text. The analysis revealed that the frame markers *first*, *to conclude*, and *this essay seeks* were used in the learner corpus to sequence parts of the text, label stages, and announce goals, but in the native speakers' corpus, the frame markers *this essay seeks* and *in the following* were not identified, although the other two functions of the frame markers were identified. This finding could indicate a varietal difference between Ghanaian English and European and American varieties. The most used frame marker to sequence parts in the learner corpus was *firstly*, but it was *first* in the native speakers' corpus.

The most used frame marker to label stages in the learner corpus was *in conclusion*, but it was *over all* in the native speakers' corpus. The most used frame marker to announce goals in the learner corpus was *this essay seeks*, but there was none in the native speakers' corpus. An example of the frame marker *this essay seeks* in the learner corpus is, '**This essay seeks** to discuss reasons why [sic] the use of plastic bags should be banned' (UGCD 56.txt). In the following examples, similar usages of the frame markers *first*, *to conclude*, and *lastly* are presented to show how they were used in the two corpora.

**LC:** **First** of all, plastic bags are harmful to wildlife, marine life and human health (UGCD 22.txt).

**NSC:** This could stem from two reasons: **first** of all, their answerability to the British electorate, which still seems wary about Britain (ICLE-BR-SUR-00005.3.txt).

**LC:** **To conclude**, the use of plastic bags have [sic] become a nuisance to society (UGCD 141.txt).

**NSC:** **To conclude**, it is feasible to imply that the sovereignty of Britain will be impaired in many ways (ICLE-BR-SUR-0016.3.txt.).

**LC:** **Lastly**, plastic bags cause a strain on government expenditure due to the financial burden they come with (UGCD 113.txt).

**NSC:** **Lastly**, I would like to discuss how all this affected the family (ICLEUSMICH0016.1.txt).

The three examples of the frame markers *first*, *to conclude*, and *lastly*, as presented in the examples extracted from the two corpora, show that *first* and *lastly* were appropriately used in the two corpora to sequence parts of the text, while *to conclude* was used to label stages in the text. The next section presents the results of the analysis of the types and frequency of code glosses in the two corpora.



### 5.3.1.2 Code glosses

#### 5.3.1.2.1 Types and frequencies of code glosses

Similar types of code glosses were identified in the two corpora. The normed frequencies of code glosses in the corpora were 3 405 of six types for the LC and 1 230 of the same six types for the NSC. The difference between the frequencies was statistically significant at LL 137.23, as shown in Table 5.3. The details are presented in Table 5.7.

**Table 5.7: Frequency and log-likelihood results for identified code glosses**

Code glosses	RF LC	RF NSC	NF LC	NF NSC	LL value	Significance status
An example	3	1	30	5	2.40	Not significant
Namely	4	6	40	35	0.04	Not significant
In other words	9	4	91	23	5.57	Significant
For example	19	66	193	394	8.38	Significant
For instance	26	14	265	83	12.90	Significant
Such as	273	115	2 783	686	178.15	Significant
<b>Total</b>	334	206	3 405	1 230	137.23	Significant

As presented in Table 5.7, the code gloss *such as* was more frequent in the learner corpus (273 counts) than in the native speakers' corpus (115 counts), and the code gloss *for example* was more frequent in the native speakers' corpus (66 counts) than in the learner corpus (19 counts). The learners received instruction on the use of code glosses in their academic writing lessons. The learners were encouraged to use *such as* or *for instance* instead of *like* to introduce examples. This may explain the high frequency of *such as* in the learner corpus.

### 5.3.1.2.2 *Appropriate use of code glosses (learner corpus and native speakers' corpus)*

A manual analysis of #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020) text analysis results of the two corpora revealed that all the code glosses found in the two corpora were used appropriately, though some had grammatical and language errors. Hyland (2005a) observes that code glosses can be used to rephrase or illustrate an idea. The code gloss used to rephrase an idea in the two corpora was *in other words*. The code glosses used to illustrate ideas in the two corpora were *an example*, *namely*, *for example*, *for instance*, and *such as*. The predominant code gloss used to illustrate an idea in the learner corpus was *such as*, but in the native speakers' corpus, it was *for example*. The following examples were taken from the two corpora and show how similar types of the code glosses *such as*, *for instance*, and *in other words* have been used in context to rephrase or illustrate ideas:

- (i) **LC:** The burning of these plastic bags ends up releasing toxic gases **such as** dioxins, furans, mercury, and polychlorinated biphenyls into the atmosphere (UGCD 163.txt).  
**NSC:** We have to question whether independant [sic] action, **such as** Britain is undertaking in the Gulf at the moment, will be permitted (ICLE-BR-SUR-0003.3.txt).
- (ii) **LC:** Human beings and animals also depend directly on these plants for their survival. **For instance**, man cultivates crops on the soil for his consumption and animals too feed on the fruits of the plants (UGCD 102.txt).  
**NSC:** Things like a single currency **for instance** would probably be totally unacceptable for the average person at present (ICLE-BR-SUR-OO11.3.txt).
- (iii) **LC:** Plastic bags have non-bio degradable properties. **In other words**, they cannot be broken down by natural acts and organisms (UGCD 2.txt).  
**NSC:** What this in essence means is that this unborn body is growing, breathing and functioning inside the body of another. **In other words**, it is not only beginning to take a human form, but it is also taking on all aspects of human life (ICLEUSMRQ0035.1.txt).

As already explained in section 2.5.2, Wei et al. (2016) observe that the appropriate use of code glosses can elaborate on meaning and help readers understand the information presented in the text, as illustrated in these two corpora where *such as* and *for instance* were appropriately used to exemplify an idea, and *in other words* was used to rephrase an idea. The next section presents the analysis of types and frequencies of endophoric markers in the two corpora.

### 5.3.1.3 Endophoric markers

#### 5.3.1.3.1 Types and frequencies of endophoric markers

Different types of endophoric markers were found in the two corpora. The learners used *as mentioned earlier* and *as mentioned before*, while the native speakers used *as noted above*. The normed frequency of endophoric markers in the learner corpus was 30 of two types and that of the reference corpus was five of one type. At LL 2.40, as shown in Table 5.3, the difference in the frequencies was statistically significant. The results are presented in Table 5.8.

**Table 5.8: Frequency and log-likelihood results for identified endophoric markers**

<b>Endophoric markers</b>	<b>RF LC</b>	<b>RF NSC</b>	<b>NF LC</b>	<b>NF NSC</b>	<b>LL value</b>	<b>Significance status</b>
Noted above	0	1	0	5	0.92	Not significant
As mentioned before	1	0	10	0	1.99	Not significant
As mentioned earlier	2	0	20	0	3.98	Significant
<b>Total</b>	3	1	30	5	2.40	Not significant

As presented in Table 5.8, the difference in the frequency of the endophoric marker *as mentioned earlier* was significant at LL 3.98 as the critical value is 3.84. The frequency of endophoric markers was not high in either corpus, and this was expected as the corpora were

made up of short academic essays, so there was no need to point to or emphasise different parts of the text. Hyland (2005a) states that endophoric markers refer to information in other parts of the text and are thus used more often in longer texts.

#### 5.3.1.3.2 *Appropriate use of endophoric markers (learner and native speakers' corpora)*

As explained in section 2.5.2, there are two types of endophoric markers: cataphoric and anaphoric. Cataphoric markers announce what is going to follow in the discourse, for example, *as we will see in the next chapter*. Anaphoric markers tell the reader what the writer has already done in the discourse (Schiffrin, 1980), for example, *as noted above*. The endophoric markers *as mentioned earlier*, *as mentioned before*, and *as noted above* used in the two corpora are anaphoric markers. The two groups of undergraduate students used anaphoric markers, probably because of the type of academic essay they were writing. In short academic essays such as those in the LC and RC, the use of cataphoric markers was not necessary. The native speakers used the endophoric marker *noted above*, which is synonymous with *as mentioned before* and *as mentioned earlier*, as used by the learners. The three examples of endophoric markers used in the two corpora were used appropriately as MD markers, though one of them was used incorrectly in terms of grammar in the learner corpus. The following examples were taken from the two corpora:

- (i) **LC:** (a) **As mentioned before**, plastic bags are made from petroleum and natural gas (UGCD 50.txt).  
(b) **As mentioned earlier** on [sic], plastic bags are light and buoyant in nature and as such easily find their way into waterways where they collect and eventually clog water paths (UGCD 10.txt).
- (ii) **NSC:** One could travel by boat but this was inconvenient and often dangerous because of various things like disease, hunger, and threatening weather; also **as noted above**, it was extremely time consuming (ICLEUSMICH0032.1.txt).

The preposition *on*, which was added to the endophoric marker *as mentioned earlier* in the learner corpus, did not affect the appropriate use of the marker but was grammatically incorrect. The learner had accurately referred to the information in the early part of the text. The incorrect addition of the preposition *on* may have occurred because the learner was familiar with the phrase ‘earlier on’, which is a common phrase used in oral communication in Ghana and was thus imposed on the endophoric marker *as mentioned earlier*. The results of the analysis of the types and frequencies of evidentials are presented in the next section.

#### 5.3.1.4 Evidentials

##### 5.3.1.4.1 Types and frequencies of evidentials

Similar types of evidentials were identified in the two corpora. All the types of evidential markers identified in the LC were also found in the NSC, as shown in Table 5.9 below. The normed frequencies were 40 of eight types in the learner corpus and 179 of eight types in the native speakers’ corpus. At LL 8.94, as shown in Table 5.3, the observed differences were statistically significant. The details of the types, frequency, and significance status of evidentials in the two corpora are presented in Table 5.9.

**Table 5.9: Frequency and Log-likelihood results for identified evidentials**

<b>Evidentials</b>	<b>RF LC</b>	<b>RF NSC</b>	<b>NF LC</b>	<b>NF NSC</b>	<b>LL value</b>	<b>Significance status</b>
Define(s)	1	6	10	35	1.78	Not significant
Argue(s)	2	35	20	209	20.70	Significant
Claim(s)	2	25	20	149	12.78	Significant
Reveal(s)	3	3	30	17	0.42	Not significant
Explain(s)	4	5	40	29	0.21	Not significant
State(s)	4	30	40	179	11.00	Significant
Suggest(s)	14	11	142	65	3.730	Not significant
According to	40	65	407	388	0.06	Not significant
Total	70	180	713	1 075	8.94	Significant

There were statistically significant differences in the frequencies of the evidentials *argue(s)*, *claim(s)*, and *state(s)*. That is, there were more occurrences of these evidentials in the native speakers' corpus than in the learner corpus. It was also observed that of the 70 evidential markers identified in the learner corpus, one was not used as an evidential marker as it was a misspelling of the word 'stake'. Thus, the word 'stake-holder' appeared in the learner corpus as 'state holder', and since one of the linguistic variables used as a keyword to search for evidential markers was 'state', it was captured and counted as the evidential marker. Thus, there were 69 evidentials and three uses of *states* as a metadiscourse marker in the learner corpus. As explained in Chapter 4, the low frequency of evidentials in the learner corpus may be attributed to the fact that the use of evidentials was not included in the first-year academic writing course. In addition, the learners wrote their essays under examination conditions and were not given any reading material, so they were not required to incorporate other sources of

information in their essays. Thus, evidentials were not expected to be used on a large scale, if at all.

#### 5.3.1.4.2 *Appropriate use of evidentials (learner corpus and native speakers' corpus)*

Apart from the one instance of *state* that was not used as an evidential marker in the learner corpus, the rest were used appropriately in the two corpora. Hyland (2005a) explains that evidential markers are used to refer to information from other texts. The analysis of the two corpora revealed that the most used evidential in the two corpora was *according to*. This finding may be attributed to the fact that the undergraduate students wrote non-researched essays, so they may have used the phrase to show what they generally knew about the particular citation without having to use more reporting verbs, which show the attitude of the original writer. The following are examples of how the evidentials *state(s)*, *according to*, and *argue(s)* were used in the two corpora:

- (i) **LC:** Research conducted by the United Kingdom environment agency in 2011 **states** that, “It takes more than four times as much energy to manufacture a paper bag as it does to manufacture a plastic bag” (UGCD 10.txt).

**NSC:** The Orthodox theory of parliamentary legislative supremacy **states** that Parliament cannot restrict its own legislative omnicompetence (ICLE-BR-SUR-0001.3.txt).

- (ii) **LC:** **According to** studies, plastics take 1000 years to decay and as a result, improper disposal of plastic waste adds up to the complexity that already exists with the management of wastes (UGCD 103.txt).

**NSC:** **According to** article 3, it has been entrusted with various tasks (ICLE-BR-SUR-0000.5.3.txt).

- (iii) **LC:** Critics **argue** that although paper bags are degradable, their impact on climate change is alarming (UGCD 61.txt).

**NSC:** Europe may **argue** that the benefits from a single integrated market far outweigh any national drawbacks (ICLE-BR-SUR-0002.3.txt).

The three examples of the appropriate use of the evidential markers *states*, *according to*, and *argue* in the two corpora illustrate that the writers were referring to sources of information that originated outside the current texts (Hyland, 2005a).

### 5.3.1.5 Transitions

#### 5.3.1.5.1 Types and frequencies of transitions

Of the five subcategories of interactive resources, transitions were used the most frequently in the two corpora. The normed frequency of transitions in the learner corpus was 53 238 of 28 types, while that of the native speakers' corpus was 36 307 of 25 types. At LL 405.07, as shown in Table 5.3, the observed difference in the frequencies was statistically significant, indicating that there were more occurrences of transitions in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus. The results are presented in Table 5.10.

**Table 5.10: Frequency and log-likelihood results for identified transitions**

<b>Transitions</b>	<b>RF LC</b>	<b>RF NSC</b>	<b>NF LC</b>	<b>NF NSC</b>	<b>LL value</b>	<b>Significance status</b>
In a similar	1	0	10	0	1.99	Not significant
Contrary	2	10	20	59	2.39	Not significant
Similar	3	20	30	119	6.61	Significant
Nonetheless	3	0	30	0	5.98	Significant
Likewise	3	7	30	41	0.21	Not significant
Similarly	4	6	40	35	0.04	Not significant
Consequently	4	8	40	47	0.07	Not significant
In contrast	5	4	50	23	1.28	Not significant
Among other(s)	8	4	81	23	4.35	Significant



<b>Transitions</b>	<b>RF LC</b>	<b>RF NSC</b>	<b>NF LC</b>	<b>NF NSC</b>	<b>LL value</b>	<b>Significance status</b>
Additionally	13	0	132	0	25.89	Significant
On the other hand	14	28	142	167	0.24	Not significant
Unlike	17	8	173	47	9.89	Significant
Even though	19	34	193	203	0.03	Not significant
Again	33	59	336	316	0.05	Not significant
Though	51	80	520	477	0.2	Not significant
In addition	54	16	550	95	47.05	Significant
Moreover	57	6	581	35	79.43	Significant
Although	60	67	611	400	5.62	Significant
Furthermore	64	9	652	53	81.25	Significant
Another	66	180	672	1 075	11.32	Significant
Thus	85	55	866	328	32.41	Significant
However	93	218	948	1 302	6.82	Significant
As a result	98	24	999	143	96.34	Significant
Hence	98	9	999	53	141.70	Significant
Therefore	147	105	1 498	627	47.30	Significant
But	198	662	2 018	3 954	76.82	Significant
Also	554	421	5 649	2 514	158.20	Significant
And	3 467	4 038	35 352	24 121	268.38	Significant
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 221</b>	<b>6 078</b>	<b>53 238</b>	<b>36 307</b>	<b>405.07</b>	<b>Significant</b>

The differences in the frequencies of transitions in the two corpora were statistically significant, probably because the learners were more aware of the need to use transitions to create textual

cohesion. There were 25 similar types of transitions identified in the two corpora. There were three types of transitions found in the learner corpus that were not identified in the native speakers' corpus. These transitions are *in a similar...*, *nonetheless*, and *additionally*. It could be that the native speakers preferred using other transitions, such as *similarly*, *however*, and *in addition*, which are synonymous with *in a similar...*, *nonetheless*, and *additionally*. Further, as shown in Table 5.10, there were significantly more occurrences of the transitional markers *but*, *however*, and *contrary* in the native speakers' corpus than in the learner corpus, probably because the topic the learners wrote on did not require many contrasting words while the native speakers wrote on topics that required comparison. The learners wrote on the argumentative topic, 'Plastic bags must be banned. Discuss.' The native speakers wrote on topics that required argumentation, but also comparison, such as 'Profit: good or evil', 'Sink or swim', and 'Pride or segregation'.

#### 5.3.1.5.2 *Appropriate use of transitions (learner corpus and native speakers' corpus)*

A manual analysis of both corpora revealed that all transitions in the two corpora were used appropriately. Hyland (2004) observes that transitions can be classified into three forms, namely, addition, comparison or contrast, and consequence, and all three forms were identified in the two corpora. The most used transition to show an additive logical link or addition in the two corpora was *and*, although there were significantly more occurrences of *and* in the native speakers' corpus than in the learner corpus. The most frequently used transition to show comparison in the learner corpus was *similarly*, and in the native speakers' corpus, it was *similar*. The most frequently used transition to show contrast in the two corpora was *but*, although there were significantly more occurrences of *but* in the native speakers' corpus than in the learner corpus. For consequence, the most frequently used transition in the two corpora was *therefore*, although there were significantly more occurrences of *therefore* in the learner

corpus than in the native speakers' corpus. The use of transitions in the two corpora is presented in the following examples:

(i) **LC:** Instead of making our lives easy, plastic bags are the root cause of various issues like environmental, land **and** water pollution (UGCD 103.txt).

**NSC:** The Single European Act, signed by the twelve European Community member states in February 1986, represents a commitment by all the member countries to achieve a single market in goods, services **and** capital before 1992 (ICLE-BR-SUR-00005.3.txt).

(ii) **LC:** Plastics are also flexible which makes it easier for packaging and customizing goods and produce in a particular shape and size as per a customer's requirement. **On the other hand**, plastic bags are harmful to the human society (UGCD 145.txt).

**NSC:** The Orthodox Lord Denning has described Britain's Accession as a "farewell to our sovereignty" on the one hand and yet **on the other hand** he has said that theoretically conferred powers can be redefined even though in practice it would be virtually impossible (ICLE-BR-SUR-0001.3.txt).

(iii) **LC:** This results in flooding and **consequently** causes damage to life and property (UGCD 97.txt).

**NSC:** A fully integrated market with Britain would lead be [sic] to the detriment of our political system, **consequently** leading to a loss of sovereignty (ICLE-BR-SUR-0002.3.txt).

(iv) **LC:** The use of plastic bags have [sic] been banned in some countries. **Similarly**, plastic bags must be banned in Ghana (UGCD 65.txt).

**NSC:** The concept of God is not discouraged in a public school. **Similarly**, praying on school grounds is not a crime (ICLE-US-MRQ0022.1.txt).

The examples from the two corpora show that the transition marker *and*, which is an additive logical link, was used to help create logical cohesion in the texts. The transition *on the other hand* was used in both texts to show contrast. The transition marker *consequently* was used to show consequence, and the transition marker *similarly* was used to show comparison. One of

the ways of creating cohesion in academic essays is by using transitions. The high frequency of transitions in the two corpora is thus acceptable. In the next section, the results of the analysis of types and frequencies of interactional resources in the two corpora are presented.

### 5.3.2 Types and frequencies of interactional resources in the LC and the NSC

In this section, the types and frequencies of interactional resources are presented and discussed. The types refer to the specific words in the subcategory. For example, some types in the subcategory of hedges are *somewhat*, *apparently*, and *fairly*.

#### 5.3.2.1 Hedges

##### 5.3.2.1.1 Types and frequencies of hedges

Similar types of hedges were found in the two corpora. Twenty-nine types were identified in the learner corpus, while 31 were counted in the native speakers' corpus. Hedges were used more frequently than any of the five subcategories of interactional metadiscourse. The normed frequency of hedges in the learner corpus was 14 989, while that of the native speakers' corpus was 15 489. At LL 1.01, as shown in Table 5.3, the observed difference between the frequencies of hedges in the two corpora was not statistically significant. The results are presented in Table 5.11.

**Table 5.11: Frequency and log-likelihood results for identified hedges**

Hedges	RF LC	RF NSC	NF LC	NF NSC	LL value	Significance status
Somewhat	0	11	0	65	10.14	Significant
Apparently	0	6	0	35	5.53	Significant
Fairly	1	9	10	53	3.79	Not significant

<b>Hedges</b>	<b>RF LC</b>	<b>RF NSC</b>	<b>NF LC</b>	<b>NF NSC</b>	<b>LL value</b>	<b>Significance status</b>
Presumably	1	1	10	5	0.14	Not significant
Perhaps	2	58	20	346	39.93	Significant
Possibly	2	21	20	125	9.76	Significant
Probably	2	53	20	316	35.68	Significant
Relatively	3	9	30	53	0.78	Not significant
Generally	5	14	50	101	0.97	Not significant
Appear(s)	5	26	50	155	6.54	Significant
Typically	5	4	50	23	1.28	Not significant
Nearly	8	20	81	119	0.87	Not significant
Might	8	59	81	352	21.34	Significant
Largely	9	2	91	11	9.34	Significant
Approximately	12	5	122	29	7.91	Significant
Seem(s)	13	135	132	8 064	62.33	Significant
Likely	13	37	132	221	2.71	Not significant
Possible	21	63	214	376	5.45	Significant
Quite	28	29	281	173	3.51	Not significant
Almost	32	32	326	191	4.52	Significant
Mostly	35	9	356	53	33.42	Significant
Usually	43	45	438	268	5.19	Significant
Sometimes	44	31	448	185	14.52	Significant
Often	80	81	815	483	10.85	Significant
Tend(s)	81	24	825	143	70.57	Significant
About	85	339	866	2 025	57.03	Significant

Hedges	RF LC	RF NSC	NF LC	NF NSC	LL value	Significance status
Around	100	70	1 019	418	33.37	Significant
May	156	237	1 590	1 415	1.27	Not significant
Some	218	344	2 222	2 054	0.82	Not significant
Most	218	302	2 222	1 804	5.45	Significant
Many	240	517	2 447	3 088	9.11	Significant
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 470</b>	<b>2 593</b>	<b>14 989</b>	<b>15 489</b>	<b>1.01</b>	<b>Not significant</b>

As presented in Table 5.11, the similar types of hedges identified in the two corpora are *generally, may, around, fairly, relatively, tend, largely, mostly, sometimes, nearly, many, about, appear, almost, seem, might, approximately, likely, possible, presumably, probably, quite, some, typically, tend, usually, most, and often*. The analysis showed that two hedges, *somewhat* and *apparently*, were used in the NSC but were not found in the LC. These two hedges are listed in Coxhead's (2000) academic word list—*apparently* is on sublist 4 and *somewhat* is on sublist 7. According to Coxhead's list, the words in sublist 4 are more commonly used in academic writing and thus more formal than the words in sublist 7. The fact that these two words were used by the native speakers and not by the L2 learners may point to the limited academic vocabulary of the latter group.

It was also observed that the frequencies of the hedges *perhaps, possibly, and probably* were lower in the LC than in the NSC. The hedge *perhaps* occurred twice in the learner corpus but 58 times in the native speakers' corpus; *possibly* occurred twice in the learner corpus but 21 times in the native speakers' corpus; and *probably* occurred twice in the learner corpus but 52 times in the native speakers' corpus. Although the hedges *perhaps, possibly, and probably* are not found in Coxhead's (2000) list, they seem to be academic words that are found in written

texts and are used frequently by proficient speakers. In a study conducted by Thabet (2018), the findings suggested that the quality of hedges used in the learner corpus was not as high as that of the native speakers. This indicates that undergraduate native speakers operate at vocabulary levels that are above those of their second-language peers. This difference between native speakers and L2 learners in terms of vocabulary is also echoed by Nation (2006), who explains that native speakers usually have a larger vocabulary than L2 learners. The lower incidence of the more formal academic hedges in the learner corpus points to the low proficiency levels of the L2 learners.

Regarding the use of the hedges *about* and *approximately* in the two corpora, the analysis showed that there were significant differences in the frequencies. That is, there were more occurrences of the hedge *approximately* in the learner corpus and more occurrences of the hedge *about* in the native speakers' corpus. The hedge *approximately* is in sublist 4 of the academic word list, but the hedge *about* is not in the list. Furthermore, the hedge *approximately* may be used with numbers, whereas *about* may be used as a preposition or an adverb in a narrative sense. In essence, in academic writing, it is more acceptable to use the hedge *approximately* than *about* with numbers. The hedge *about* was predominantly used in the narrative sense by the two groups of undergraduate students.

#### 5.3.2.1.2 *Appropriate use of hedges (learner corpus and native speakers' corpus)*

The examples *may*, *almost*, and *approximately* from the two corpora presented below show that these hedges were used to show the writer's reluctance to present propositional information categorically (Hyland, 2010). All the hedges identified in the two corpora were appropriately used to denote reluctance to commit.

- (i) **LC:** If this continues, the consequences **may** be devastating and will affect the wellbeing of humans, animals and the environment (UGCD 1.txt).  
**NSC:** This **may** make Britons resentful of Europe and tired of “1992 and all that” (ICLE-BR-SUR-0002.3.txt).
- (ii) **LC:** Also, when dumped at refuse dumps, the organic waste decomposes but plastic wastes take **almost** a 1000 years to decompose (UGCD 107.txt).  
**NSC:** To untangle the law of Britain from that of the European community would thus be **almost** impossible (ICLE-BR-SUR-0001.3.txt).
- (iii) **LC:** **Approximately** 18% of plastics are recycled (UGCD 111.txt).  
**NSC:** **Approximately** ninety-eight percent of television programs are not for children (ICCLEUSSCU0010.2.txt).

In the next section, the results of the analysis of types and frequencies of attitude markers are presented.

### 5.3.2.2 *Attitude markers*

#### 5.3.2.2.1 *Types and frequencies of attitude markers*

Similar types of attitude markers were found in the two corpora. Eight types were identified in the learner corpus, while ten types occurred in the native speakers’ corpus. Attitude markers were not frequently used in either corpus. The normed frequency of attitude markers in the learner corpus was 346, while that of the native speakers’ corpus was 370. At LL 0.10, as shown in Table 5.5 (§5.2), the observed difference in the use of attitude markers in the two corpora was not statistically significant. The results are presented in Table 5.12.



**Table 5.12: Frequency and log-likelihood results for identified attitude markers**

Attitude markers	RF	RF	NF	NF	LL value	Significance status
	LC	NSC	LC	NSC		
Remarkable	0	2	0	11	1.84	Not significant
Surprisingly	0	2	0	11	1.84	Not significant
I agree	0	8	0	47	7.38	Significant
Fortunately	1	2	10	11	0.02	Not significant
Hopefully	1	12	10	71	6.01	Significant
Ideally	1	1	10	5	0.14	Not significant
Understandably	2	0	20	0	3.98	Significant
No wonder	3	1	30	5	2.40	Not significant
Undoubtedly	8	6	81	35	2.35	Not significant
There is no doubt	9	2	91	11	9.34	Significant
Unfortunately	9	26	91	155	2.00	Not significant
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>0.10</b>	<b>Not significant</b>

As presented in Table 5.12, there were seven similar types of attitude markers identified in the two corpora. The attitude marker *understandably* occurred in the learner corpus but was not present in the native speakers' corpus. The three attitude markers *surprising*, *remarkable*, and *I agree* were not found in the learner corpus but were present in the native speakers' corpus. The learners may have been more cautious about the use of attitude markers because they were taught in their academic writing lessons to avoid using adverbs such as *surprisingly*, *remarkably*, and *luckily* because such adverbs show personal attitude. Since academic essays are objective in nature, words that show personal attitude should be used cautiously or avoided entirely.

#### 5.3.2.2.2 *Appropriate use (learner corpus and native speakers' corpus)*

A manual analysis of the use of attitude markers in the two corpora showed that all the attitude markers were used appropriately. Hyland (2005a) and Wei et al. (2016) explain that attitude markers are used to indicate the writer's assessment of a proposition. Examples of the attitude markers *unfortunately*, *there is no doubt*, and *ideally* used in context in the two corpora are presented below:

- (i) **LC: Unfortunately**, when there is a heavy downpour, we mostly end up experiencing flooding (UGCD 82.txt).  
**NSC: Unfortunately**, it also contained other clauses which were overlooked and which have now seriously affected the sovereignty of the United Kingdom (ICLE-BR-SUR-0015.3.txt).
- (ii) **LC: In conclusion, there is no doubt** that plastic bags have made our lives simpler (UGCD 116.txt).  
**NSC: There is no doubt** an integrated market would have multiple benefits for the countries involved (ICLE-BR-SUR-0002.3.txt).
- (iii) **LC: Ideally**, to be suitable for recycling, bags need to be clean (UGCD 181.txt).  
**NSC: Ideally**, then, there should be more equality, less crime, greater productivity and greater economic growth (ICLE-BR-SUR-0032.3.txt).

The next section presents the results of the analysis of types and frequencies of engagement markers in the two corpora.

#### 5.3.2.3 *Engagement markers*

##### 5.3.2.3.1 *Types and frequencies of engagement markers*

Similar types of engagement markers were found in the two corpora. Only three types of engagement markers were used in both corpora, showing that engagement markers were not frequently used in either corpus. However, the frequency of engagement markers was higher in the native speakers' corpus. The normed frequency of engagement markers in the learner

corpus was 81 and that of the native speakers' corpus was 268. At LL 12.45, as shown in Table 5.5 (§5.2), the difference was statistically significant, indicating significant underuse of engagement markers in the LC. The results are presented in Table 5.13.

**Table 5.13: Frequency and log-likelihood results for identified engagement markers**

<b>Engagement markers</b>	<b>RF LC</b>	<b>RF NSC</b>	<b>NF LC</b>	<b>NF NSC</b>	<b>LL value</b>	<b>Significance status</b>
Note that	2	3	20	17	0.02	Not significant
Imagine	3	6	30	35	0.05	Not significant
Consider	3	36	30	212	18.02	Significant
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>12.45</b>	<b>Significant</b>

The three engagement markers found in the two corpora are *consider*, *note that*, and *imagine*. As explained in Chapter 4, the low frequency of the use of metadiscourse markers in the learner corpus may be attributed to the fact that the learners were not explicitly taught how to use such markers in their essays. Another possible reason may be that the students were first-year L2 learners of English, so manipulating the language to engage the reader may not have been one of their strong points. Hyland (2005b) observes that students' academic levels influence the use of engagement markers, as students at higher levels tend to use more engagement markers.

#### 5.3.2.3.2 *Appropriate use (learner corpus and native speakers' corpus)*

The examples from the two corpora show that the engagement markers *imagine*, *note that*, and *consider* were used to address readers explicitly by including them as participants in the text (Hyland, 2004). All eight instances of the three types of engagement markers in the learner corpus were appropriately used. As explained in section 2.5.3, engagement markers comprise five sub-types of devices for explicitly involving readers in a virtual dialogue (Hyland, 2001):

directives, which instruct readers to act or see things in a particular way; reader references, which acknowledge reader's presence and address them as participants in knowledge-making; questions, which refer to both rhetorical and real questions asked to engage readers overtly; appeals or references to shared knowledge, which position readers within a shared disciplinary understanding and bring them into agreement with writer's argument; and personal asides, which interrupt the flow of text and are directly addressed to readers (Wei et al., 2016). Examples are *you can see that*, *consider that*, and *imagine*.

The following examples show how engagement markers were used in context in the two corpora.

- (i) **LC: Imagine** this current world without plastic bags (UGCD 55.txt).  
**NSC:** Let's **imagine** a society where all men and women were treated equal. (ICLEUSIND0010.1.txt).
- (ii) **LC: We should note that**, since the abovementioned points affect human lives also, a ban on the use of plastic bags will benefit human beings (UGCD 133.txt).  
**NSC:** It is important to **note that** these bad signals have adverse effect on boys as well as girls (ICLEUSSU0005.1.txt).
- (iii) **LC: Consider** the fact that, the toxic substances that come out from burnt plastics can cause many heart related diseases when inhaled (UGCD 196.txt).  
**NSC:** Also, it is all too important to **consider** the practicalities (ICLE-BR-SUR-0001.3.txt).

The examples of engagement markers presented in the excerpts show that the learners used the markers *note that* and *consider* as directives while the native speakers used them as personal asides. In the next section, the results of the analysis of the types and frequencies of boosters in two corpora are presented.

### 5.3.2.4 Boosters

#### 5.3.2.4.1 Types and frequencies of boosters

Similar types of boosters were found in the two corpora. However, two types of boosters that were found in the NSC were not used in the LC. The results of the frequency analysis showed that there was limited use of boosters in the LC. The LC had seven types of boosters with a normed frequency of 336, and the NSC had five types of boosters with a normed frequency of 764. At LL 20.44, the difference in frequency was statistically significant. The results are presented in Table 5.14.

**Table 5.14: Frequency and log-likelihood results for identified boosters**

<b>Boosters</b>	<b>RF LC</b>	<b>RF NSC</b>	<b>NF LC</b>	<b>NF NSC</b>	<b>LL value</b>	<b>Significance status</b>
Definitely	3	17	30	101	4.74	Significant
Indeed	3	24	30	143	9.27	Significant
It is clear that	4	6	40	35	0.04	Not significant
Of course	5	40	50	238	15.45	Significant
In fact	6	41	61	244	13.86	Significant
It is proved that	6	0	61	0	11.95	Significant
As a matter of fact	6	0	61	0	11.95	Significant
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>20.44</b>	<b>Significant</b>

As presented in Table 5.14, five similar types of boosters were identified in the two corpora. However, the native speakers did not use the two boosters *it is proved that* and *as a matter of fact*, which were found in the learner corpus. Instead, the NSC had a high number of the boosters *of course* (40 times) and *in fact* (41 times), whereas the LC showed only five of the former and six of the latter. It seems the native speakers had a preference for emphasis, whereas the learners did not and rather included boosters that supported the point being made. In sum, the difference between the LC and NSC was statistically significant and showed limited use by the learners.

#### 5.3.2.4.2 *Appropriate use of boosters*

Hyland (2005a) states that boosters are used to express certainty in a text. Although the learners were not explicitly taught the use of boosters, the analysis showed that all the boosters used in the two corpora were used appropriately. The learners who used them may have subconsciously picked them from their reading or communication with others. The following examples show how boosters such as *definitely*, *of course*, and *in fact* were used in context to express certainty in the two corpora.

(i) **LC:** Burning plastic bags will **definitely** reduce their harmful effects on our environment (UGCD 195.txt).

**NSC:** The zip-lock bag was **definitely** a good invention (ICLEUMICH0018.1.txt).

(ii) **LC:** Plastic and plastic made materials like bags and toys are making the life cycle of plants, animals and **of course**, the users of plastic bags, the humans, tougher (UGCD 164.txt).

NSC: This **of course** is the loss of absolute supremacy for the English parliament (ICLE-BR-SUR-0001.3.txt).

(iii) LC: **In fact**, plastic bags have become part of us in our modern lives (UGCD 141.txt).

NSC: **In fact**, these issues have become so heated in Great Britain at present that they have lead [sic] to many disputes within the present government (ICLE-BR-SUR 00010.3.txt).

In the next section, the results of the analysis of types and frequencies of self-mentions in the two corpora are presented.

### 5.3.2.5 Self-mentions

#### 5.3.2.5.1 Types and frequencies of self-mentions

Four types of self-mentions were identified in the two corpora. The normed frequencies of the four types (*my, I, we, our*) were 9 391 in the learner corpus and 10 919 in the native speakers' corpus. At LL 14.4, the difference was statistically significant. This indicates an underuse of self-mentions in the learner corpus. The results are presented in Table 5.15.

**Table 5.15: Frequency and log-likelihood results for identified self-mentions**

Self-mentions	RF LC	RF NSC	NF LC	NF NSC	LL value	Significance status
My	4	219	40	1 308	169.84	Significant
I	38	679	226	4 056	404.66	Significant
We	279	527	2 844	3 148	1.89	Not significant
Our	600	403	6 118	2 407	215.15	Significant

<b>Total</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>1 828</b>	<b>9 391</b>	<b>10 919</b>	<b>14.14</b>	<b>Significant</b>
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As presented in Table 5.15, the learners used a lower number of the self-mentions *my*, *I*, and *we*, although the difference between the frequencies of *we* in the two corpora was not statistically significant. As explained in Chapter 4, the L2 learners were encouraged to avoid the overuse of self-mentions in short academic essays because their overuse makes essays less objective. However, there were more occurrences of the self-mention *our* by the L2 learners compared to the native speakers. Overall, there were fewer occurrences of self-mentions in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus.

#### 5.3.2.5.2 *Appropriate use of self-mentions*

All four types of self-mentions (*me*, *I*, *our*, *we*) used in the essays showed appropriate use by the L2 learners and the native speakers. Hyland (2004) observes that the use of the first-person pronoun suggests the extent of the author's presence in the text. All the self-mentions used in the two corpora were used to indicate the author's presence.

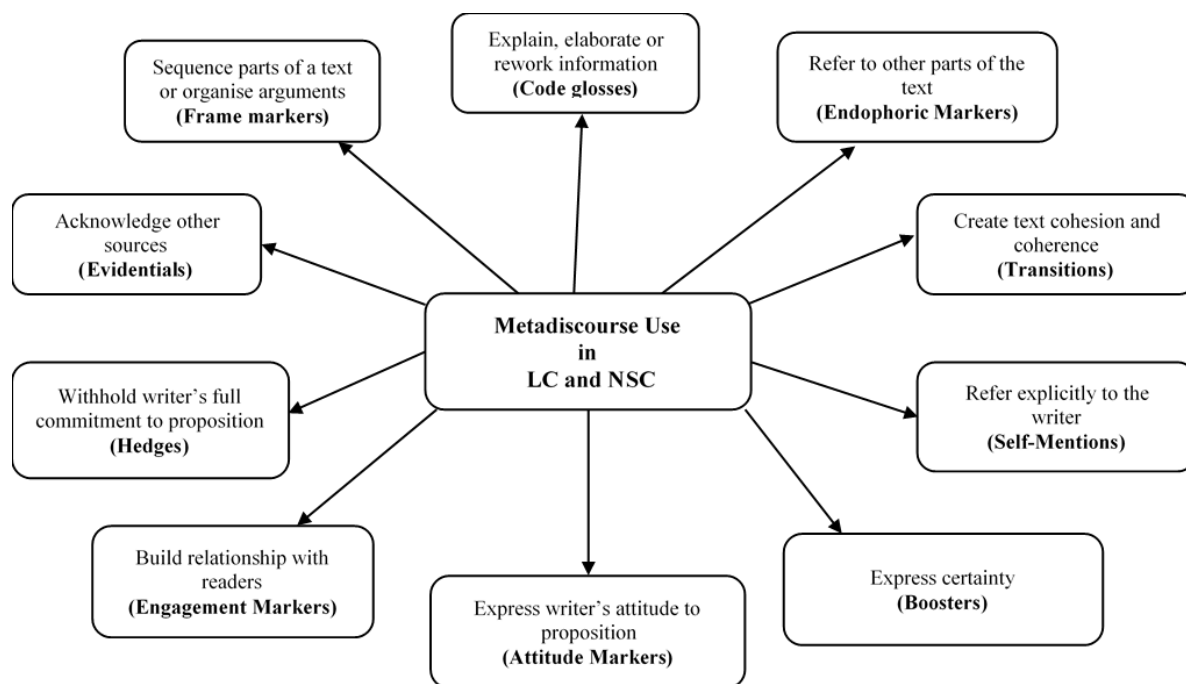
The following examples show the contextual use of the self-mentions *my*, *I*, and *our* in the two corpora.

- (i) **LC:** In **my** opinion, plastic bags should be banned (UGCD 153.txt).  
**NSC:** However, in **my** opinion, Britain should become part of a single European Community (ICLE-BR-SUR-0033.3.txt).
- (ii) **LC:** **I** believe that the reasons stated above tells [sic] how dangerous plastic bags can be (UGCD 191.txt).  
**NSC:** As **I** have said, sovereignty will be lost (ICLE-BR-SUR-00005.3.txt).
- (iii) **LC:** Most of **our** drainage systems are choked with plastic bags (UGCD 82.txt).



**NSC:** This will apparently extend our free market economy to the whole of Europe (ICLE-BR-SUR-0006.3.txt).

In summary, the results of the comparative analysis of the two corpora revealed that with regard to interactive resources, on the whole, there were similar types of frame markers, code glosses, evidentials, and transitions in the two corpora. The results of the comparison also revealed that different endophoric markers were identified in the two corpora. The learner corpus had *as mentioned earlier* and *as mentioned before*, while the native speakers' corpus had *noted above*. Endophoric markers were underused in both corpora. Furthermore, there was a statistically significant overuse of frame markers, code glosses, and transitions in the learner corpus. However, the learners underused evidentials. As regards interactional metadiscourse, the results of the comparison revealed that although there were similar types of all five subcategories, some types of hedges, attitude markers, and boosters were identified in the learner corpus but were not found in the native speakers' corpus. On the other hand, there were types of attitude markers and hedges identified in the native speakers' corpus that were not found in the learner corpus. The native speakers used markers that are usually found in academic texts, such as *apparently* and *somewhat*, while the learners used markers such as *many* and *most*, which are commonly found in ordinary texts. Moreover, the learners underused hedges, attitude markers, and self-mentions when compared to the native speakers. Finally, the results of the comparison of the two corpora revealed that all the metadiscourse markers identified in the learner corpus and the native speakers' corpus were used appropriately according to the functions given by Hyland (2005a), although there were grammatical errors in some of the sentences. Figure 5.1 summarises the functional use of metadiscourse in the two corpora.



**Figure 5.1: Functional use of metadiscourse in undergraduate students' essays**

As stated in Figure 5.1, metadiscourse was used appropriately in the two corpora as frame markers to sequence parts of the text or organise arguments; code glosses to explain, elaborate, or rework information; endophoric markers to refer to other parts of the text; evidential markers to acknowledge other sources; transitions to create text cohesion and coherence; hedges to withhold the writer's full commitment to a proposition; attitude markers to express the writer's attitude towards a proposition; engagement markers to build a relationship with the reader; boosters to express certainty; and self-mentions to refer explicitly to the writer.

## 5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the use of metadiscourse markers in the learner corpus and the native speakers' corpus were presented and discussed. The findings revealed that the normalised frequency for the LC was 87 091

markers per million words and that of the NSC was 68 881 per million words. The log-likelihood test conducted to compare the frequencies of the MD markers revealed that, at LL 266.29, the difference between the frequencies was statistically significant. Metadiscourse density also showed 8.70 for the LC and 6.80 for the NSC. This also shows that MD markers were denser in the LC than in the NSC. In other words, the L2 learners used relatively more MD markers than the native speakers. Although the numbers show that the LC used more MDs than the NSC, in relation to interactive resources, there were more occurrences of evidentials in the NSC than in the LC, and under the interactional resources, there were more occurrences of hedges, attitude markers, engagement markers, boosters, and self-mentions in the NSC than in the LC. However, more does not always mean better, as, in some instances, restraint in the use of certain markers such as self-mentions and attitude markers denotes good academic writing. The LC had more metadiscourse markers, but most of the markers were normal, everyday words, whereas the NSC had fewer markers but more of the academic words included in Coxhead's (2000) academic word list. The differences in the use of MD markers in the LC and the NSC are further discussed in light of previous studies and the literature, with probable interpretations and explanations to provide a better understanding of the results of the corpus analysis. In the next chapter, the qualitative and quantitative data used for this study are integrated and discussed.

## **CHAPTER 6**

# **DISCUSSION: INTEGRATING QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, an in-depth discussion of the major findings of the quantitative and qualitative data analyses of metadiscourse markers is presented in five sections. The first section discusses the findings of interactive and interactional resources in both the LC and the NSC. The second section relates the explicit teaching of metadiscourse markers—specifically, transitions, hedges, code glosses, frame markers, attitude markers, and self-mentions—to the students' use of MD markers in their essays, and the third section discusses the effect of home language on their use of metadiscourse markers. The fourth section relates the use of MD markers to the three performance levels in the written essay, and the final section discusses students' active and passive knowledge of MD markers and the implications thereof.

### **6.2 Interactive and interactional resources in the LC and NSC**

The analysis of the two corpora revealed that the two groups of undergraduate students employed more interactive resources than interactional resources in their essays. However, there were significantly more interactive resources in the LC than in the NSC. It was also observed that there were significantly more interactional resources in the LC than in the NSC. On the whole, metadiscourse markers were more dense in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus. A discussion of interactive resources employed in the two corpora is provided in the next section.

### 6.2.1 Interactive resources in the LC and NSC

The comparison of the two corpora revealed that there were more interactive resources in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus. The percentage of the normed frequencies in the learner corpus was 71.09%, whereas that of the native speakers' corpus was 59.59%. In addition, the analysis of the types and frequencies of interactive resources in the corpora reflected similar patterns of usage among the learners and the native speakers of English. This is shown in the frequencies of the five subcategories of interactive resources. The highest preference was for transitions, the second was for frame markers, the third was for code glosses, the fourth was for evidentials, and the fifth was for endophoric markers.

The high preference for transitions in the two corpora suggests that the two groups of undergraduate students may have been aware of the need to use transitional markers to make their essays more coherent to their readers. Various types of transitions were identified in the two corpora. Twenty-eight types of transitions were identified in the learner corpus, while the native speakers' corpus had 25 types. The analysis revealed that there were more occurrences of the transitions *but*, *however*, and *contrary* in the native speakers' corpus than in the learner corpus. This quantitative difference in the use of contrastive transitions may be due to the nature of the topics the two groups of students wrote their essays on. In a similar study, Tan and Eng (2014) explain that the high frequency of transitions in the corpora they used could be attributed to the fact that students are aware that the use of transitions to link clauses and sentences would make their ideas more coherent to their readers. Hyland and Tse (2004) also explain that a high frequency of transitions is an important feature of academic argument. Transitions comprise conjunctions that allow writers to link their ideas in the text, and so they are generally emphasised in the teaching of writing. The high frequency of transitions in the two corpora is, therefore, acceptable.

Although the scale of preference for interactive resources was the same in the two corpora, the L2 learners used more frame markers, code glosses, and transitions, while the native speakers used more endophoric markers and evidentials. The frequencies of frame markers, code glosses, and transitions were higher in the learner corpus, probably because the learners concentrated on achieving coherence in their essays in order to answer the second part of their examination question, which required students to explain how they achieved coherence in their essays. The L2 learners may, therefore, have focused on achieving coherence in their essays by using more frame markers, code glosses, and transitions. In addition to the learners' frequent use of these interactive resources due to the second part of the examination question, the explicit teaching of these three markers may also have accounted for their high frequencies in the learner corpus.

The differences between the frequencies of endophoric markers in the two corpora were not significant. The findings showed that the two groups of students used different endophoric markers. The learners used *as mentioned before* and *as mentioned earlier*, although the preposition *on* was incorrectly added to *as mentioned earlier*. The frequency of endophoric markers was not high in either corpus. The low frequency of endophoric markers by the students was to be expected due to the length of the essays. As stated previously in chapters 4 and 5, the students wrote short academic essays of 400 to 500 words. The use of endophoric markers is usually higher in longer research essays due to their nature.

### **6.2.2 Interactional resources in the LC and NSC**

The results of the analysis showed a statistically significant difference between the frequencies of interactional resources in the two corpora. The percentage of the normed frequencies for the learner corpus was 28.87%, while that of the native speakers' corpus was 40.38%, indicating

that the native speakers used more interactional resources than the L2 learners. The scale of preference, although similar, was not the same for interactional resources. The scale of preference for the LC was hedges, self-mentions, attitude markers, boosters, and engagement markers, while that of the NSC was hedges, self-mentions, boosters, attitude markers, and engagement markers.

Considering the fact that the students wrote argumentative essays, the high preference for hedges in the two corpora is understandable. Explaining the components of academic style, Bailey (2015) cautions that absolute statements should be avoided in academic writing. William (2007) also points out that good writers hedge more in their academic writing. In a similar vein, Heng and Tan (2010) note that writers who are able to hedge more are usually successful in their writing. The high frequency of hedges in the two corpora suggests that the students may have been aware of the need to use a cautious style in their short academic essays. There was no significant difference between the frequencies of hedges in the two corpora, although the analysis revealed that the native speakers used hedges such as *somewhat* and *apparently*, which were not found in the learner corpus. The hedges *somewhat* and *apparently* are academic vocabulary listed in Coxhead's (2000) academic word list. The fact that these hedges were not found in the learner corpus suggests a limited academic vocabulary among the L2 learners or a larger vocabulary among the native speakers' group by virtue of their being native speakers. The most frequently used hedges in the learner corpus were *many* and *most*, which do not occur in Coxhead's (2000) academic word list. It was also observed from the analysis that the use of hedges such as *perhaps*, *possibly*, and *probably* was low in the learner corpus but high in the native speakers' corpus.

In relation to boosters, the analysis showed that the learner corpus had fewer occurrences than the native speakers' corpus. A high frequency of boosters in a text shows that the writer is certain about the propositional content (Hyland, 2005a). The low incidence of boosters in the learner corpus suggests that the L2 learners may not have acquired the skill of presenting propositional content with certainty.

As regards engagement markers, the analysis revealed that there were fewer occurrences of engagement markers in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus. However, it was observed that three similar types of engagement markers (*note that*, *imagine*, and *consider*) were used by both groups of students. The analysis of the functional use of these markers revealed that although similar types were employed, the native speakers sounded more convincing in their use of the engagement markers *note that* and *consider*. That is, the native speakers premodified these markers with the clauses, *it is important to...* and *it is all too important to....* An example of a script by a native speaker stated, 'it is important to note that...', while a learner's script stated, 'we should note that...'. Another example from the native speakers' corpus stated, 'it is all too important to consider...', while an example from the learner corpus was, 'consider the fact that...'.

A high frequency of engagement markers shows that the writer has been able to involve the reader in the essay, making the essay reader-friendly (Hyland, 2005a). The low frequency of engagement markers in the learner corpus, therefore, suggests that the L2 learners were not able to involve their readers in their texts.

In relation to the analysis of attitude markers in the two corpora, it was observed that the differences in the frequencies were not statistically significant, although the native speakers used more types with a higher frequency than the L2 learners. There were ten types of attitude



markers in the native speakers' corpus, while the learner corpus had eight. The types and frequencies of attitude markers were lower in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus because the learners received instruction on the need to avoid using words that show their personal attitude. The low frequency of attitude markers in the learner corpus was necessary and recommended because it is assumed that an academic essay should be factual and objective. Bailey (2015) explains that in academic writing, words that show personal attitude should be avoided.

With regard to the analysis of self-mentions in the two corpora, it was revealed that the differences in their frequencies were statistically significant, indicating that the native speakers used more self-mentions than the learners. The two groups of students employed similar types of self-mentions, namely, *I*, *we*, *my*, and *our*. As in the case of attitude markers, the frequency of self-mentions in the learner corpus was lower because the learners were taught to underuse self-mentions in short academic essays as their overuse renders the essay personal. The lower frequency of self-mentions in the learner corpus is, therefore, to be expected, especially because the learners wrote short academic essays and not research essays. Bailey (2015) observes that self-mentions render the text too personal.

### **6.2.3 Summary of interactive and interactional resources in the LC and NSC**

On the whole, the findings of the comparison of interactive and interactional resources in the two corpora revealed that the proportions of interactive and interactional resources in the native speakers' corpus were more equally weighted than in the learner corpus. That is, the proportion of the learner corpus was 71.09% interactive resources and 28.87% interactional resources, while that of the native speakers' corpus was 59.59% interactive resources and 40.38% interactional resources. From these proportions, it can be seen that the L2 learners used

resources that provided coherence in texts rather than those that related to involving the reader in the text. On the other hand, the proportions of the native speakers' corpus suggest that the native speakers used resources that provided coherence in the texts as well as those that involved the reader in the text. In other words, the native speakers were more aware of the need to write coherent and reader-friendly essays. This finding on the proportions of interactive and interactional resources in the two corpora implies that in order to produce coherent and reader-friendly texts, the proportions of the two resources should be somewhat equally weighted. A 60%:40% proportion may be acceptable. That is, the percentage of interactive resources should be 60%, and the percentage of interactional resources should be 40%. The reason for this suggested proportion is that in short academic essays, endophoric markers and evidentials under interactive resources are not generally overused, but a high frequency of transitions is acceptable. On the other hand, the percentage for interactional resources should be 40% because attitude markers and self-mentions should not be overused as they may render the text too personal and subjective. The L2 learners employed more MD markers because they had received instruction on the uses and functions of some of the MD markers (six out of ten). The influence of explicit teaching of MD markers in academic writing courses is discussed in the next section.

### **6.3 Teaching of six MD markers and MD use in students' essays**

As stated in Chapter 3, the L2 learners whose essays were used for the study were taught by the researcher. As part of the Academic Writing Skills syllabus for the Language Centre at the University of Ghana, students were taught how to achieve coherence in their essays. As stated in section 1.2, students received instruction on how to use transition signals to achieve coherence in their essays. Students were taught the importance of using transition signals to show the connections between ideas within a paragraph. They were also taught to use transition

signals between paragraphs to show how one paragraph was related to the next. Students were informed that transition signals tell the reader if the topic of the next paragraph follows the same line of thought or reverses the direction of the argument. As a follow-up exercise on the explicit teaching of how to achieve coherence through the use of transition signals, students were given a model essay to read and tasked with adding appropriate transition signals to the beginning of each paragraph. Students were required to indicate the relationship of each body paragraph to the preceding one and determine whether it was an additional idea or an opposing idea. In another exercise, students were required to choose appropriate transition signals for specific paragraphs. They were required to use different transitions in each paragraph and rewrite the entire sentence where necessary. Students were also made aware of the appropriate use of frame markers. They were given a model essay containing frame markers, and they were required to observe how frame markers such as *first*, *second*, and *third* were used in the model essay. In addition, students were given guidelines and explanations on the use of certain language forms. For example, students were advised to avoid being definite and to use hedges such as *may*, *tend*, *approximately*, and *perhaps* as much as possible when writing academic essays. They were also advised to avoid overusing self-mentions such as *I*, *we*, and *my* in their essays in order to avoid being too personal and subjective. A third guideline was the avoidance of adverbs that showed personal attitudes such as *unfortunately*, *happily*, and *surprisingly*, and a fourth was the avoidance of the word *like* to introduce examples. They were encouraged to use *such as* or *for instance*. The L2 learners were given several exercises in the form of paragraphs that needed to be rewritten in an academic style. As regards the teaching of frame markers, students were taught how to write the various paragraphs in a short academic essay: introduction, body (middle section), and conclusion. Students were encouraged to signal that they were concluding their essays by using phrases such as *to conclude*, *in conclusion*, or *to summarise*. Students were not informed that *first* was a frame marker, *such as* was a code gloss,

or *unfortunately* was an attitude marker. The researcher used Hyland's (2005a) taxonomy to classify the various metadiscourse markers analysed in the two corpora.

In addition to the explicit teaching of some of the metadiscourse markers to achieve coherence in academic writing, as stated in section 1.2, the learners were taught how to achieve coherence in other ways, such as using a natural or easily recognised order, repetition of keywords, substitution of pronouns for key nouns, and parallelism, but these other means were not included in this study. In a similar study conducted by Tan and Eng (2014) on the use of MD markers, the authors observed that transitions are fundamental linguistic elements that are taught to students in grammar lessons, so students are aware that the use of transition markers to link clauses and sentences would make their ideas more coherent. In the next section, a discussion of the influence of home language in terms of metadiscourse use is presented.

#### **6.4 Home language and its relationship with the use of metadiscourse**

The analysis of the learner corpus revealed that of the five language groups used in this study, the highest frequency of MD use was recorded for the L2 learners who indicated that their home language was one of the languages spoken in the northern part of Ghana. There is no definitive reason for this finding, but it could be that the northern language speakers learnt how to use metadiscourse in English and used them appropriately or as formulaic phrases in their essays rather than borrowing from their northern Ghanaian home languages. In a similar study, Alipour et al. (2015) compared the use and variations of MD markers in three corpora: a corpus of English native speakers, a corpus of Persian essays written by Iranian students, and a corpus of English essays written by Iranian students. The researchers found that the Iranian students' writing in the Persian language used a limited number of MD markers, but in their English essays, the frequency of MD markers was quite high, as they seemed to have learnt how to use

metadiscourse markers in formulaic ways and used them appropriately in their English essays without any transfer from their home language. With regard to the other home language groups, namely, Akan Ewe, English, and Ga-Adangme, the findings revealed that the differences in their frequencies were not statistically significant. A discussion of the influence of performance levels in students' essays on MD markers is presented in the next section.

## **6.5 Students' rated performance and use of MD markers**

In order to ascertain whether students' performance levels in the essays had a relationship with their use of MD markers, the student essays were categorised into high-rated, average-rated, and low-rated essays and analysed for MD markers. The findings revealed that the differences in the types and frequencies of MD use between the high-rated essays and the average-rated essays were not statistically significant, but the differences between the types and frequencies between the high-rated essays and the low-rated essays were statistically significant. The differences between the types and frequencies of MD markers in the average-rated essays and the low-rated essays were also statistically significant.

In relation to the use of the ten categories of MD markers—with the exception of endophoric markers, which had more types and a higher frequency in the average-rated essays—the findings revealed that the high-rated essays had the highest number of types and the highest frequencies of frame markers, code glosses, transitions, and boosters. These markers are very useful in academic writing, specifically short academic essays, as they help writers present their propositional content coherently and confidently. On the other hand, the low-rated essays had more types and more occurrences of self-mentions, attitude markers, evidentials, and engagement markers. Engagement markers help the writer to involve the reader in the text. High frequencies of the other MD markers, namely, self-mentions, attitude markers, and

evidentials, are not necessary in short academic essays. High frequencies of self-mentions and attitude markers, as previously stated in section 4.3.1.2.5 of Chapter 4, render the text too personal. A high frequency of evidential markers is not necessary in short academic essays such as those used in this study because they are not research essays, so there is no need to overuse evidential markers. The average-rated essay writers had the highest frequency of hedges. A high frequency of hedges is necessary in academic writing. As Bailey (2015, p. 112) explains, ‘a cautious style is necessary in many areas of academic writing to avoid making statements that can be contradicted.’ The findings of the present study with regard to the students’ rated essays revealed that the high frequencies of transitions, frame markers, code glosses, and hedges corresponded with their performance in their essays. It seems that students who wrote the high-rated essays were aware of the appropriate use of the subcategories of MD markers. They used transitions, frame markers, code glosses, and hedges frequently where necessary and used self-mentions, attitude markers, and evidentials minimally where limited use was required in the type of essay they were writing. The students who wrote the low-rated essays showed no awareness of the appropriate use of the subcategories of MD markers. They used self-mentions, attitude markers, and evidentials frequently when minimal use was required and used transitions, frame markers, code glosses, and hedges minimally when more frequent use was required.

## **6.6 Receptive and productive knowledge of MD markers**

In the current study, a cloze test was used as an instrument to determine the learners’ receptive (passive) knowledge of the use of MD markers, and the learner corpus was used to ascertain their productive (active) use of MD markers.

The overall pass rate for the cloze test was 55%. With regard to the use of code glosses, the results of the cloze test showed that 71% of the learners were able to choose the correct and appropriate code gloss *such as* to fill in a gap, and the findings of the learner corpus revealed that the highest frequency (81%) of metadiscourse usage was recorded for the code gloss *such as*. This finding indicates active and passive knowledge of the code gloss *such as*. In other words, the learners' passive or receptive knowledge of the code gloss *such as* translated into active production in their writing. The learners' ability to use the code gloss *such as* in both the cloze text and their essays may be attributed to the explicit teaching of this code gloss. Furthermore, the results of the cloze test showed that in relation to evidentials, only 25% of the students were able to choose the correct and appropriate evidential *x explains* to fill in a gap, and in the learner corpus, the percentage for the frequency of the use of the evidential *x explains* was 5.7%. The findings also revealed that 73% of the learners were able to choose the correct and appropriate frame marker *finally* to fill in a gap in the cloze test, but in the learner corpus, the percentage of the frequency of *finally* was 10.5%. This suggests that although the learners had a passive knowledge of the frame marker *finally*, they were not able to use it actively in their essays.

In summary, the analysis of the cloze test and the learner corpus revealed that in the case of the code gloss *such as*, the cloze test scores confirmed the percentage of the frequency of use in the learner corpus (71% for the cloze test and 81% for the learner corpus). However, the analysis of the markers *finally* and *x explains* did not yield the same results, as the cloze test results did not correlate with the findings of the learner corpus. In effect, the correct selection of MD markers does not always indicate the ability to use the markers independently in essays. This finding is contrary to that of Chung and Ahn (2019), who observed that cloze test scores corresponded with writing scores.

## 6.7 Conclusion

From the discussions of the main findings of the quantitative and qualitative analyses discussed in this chapter, it can be seen that with regard to the use of interactive and interactional resources employed in the two corpora used in this study, the two groups of undergraduate students used more interactive resources than interactional resources in their essays. However, the comparison of the two datasets showed that there were more occurrences of interactive resources in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus, and there were more occurrences of interactional resources in the native speakers' corpus than in the learner corpus. On the whole, metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional resources) were denser in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus, although the proportions of interactive and interactional resources were more equally weighted in the native speakers' corpus than in the learner corpus. This finding on the use of interactive and interactional resources in the two corpora implies that although the L2 learners were able to use a high frequency of interactive sources to achieve coherence, they were not able to use a high frequency of interactional resources to involve their readers in their essays. A high frequency of the use of interactional resources helps make the text reader-friendly. On the issue of the explicit teaching of MD markers, the findings revealed it may have had an influence on the learners' use of MD markers. Furthermore, the analysis of the use of MD markers in relation to the L2 learner's home language revealed that there were more occurrences of MD markers in the northern home language group than in the other four home language groups. However, there seems to be no definite reason why the northern home language group used more MD markers. Further research is thus needed in this area. Regarding the students' performance levels in their essays and their use of MD markers, the findings revealed that the L2 learners' performance levels in their essays corresponded with their use of MD markers. That is, the high-rated and average-rated essay writers had more MD markers in their essays than the low-rated essay writers,



implying that more proficient writers employ more MD markers in their writing. Finally, the findings on the active use of MD markers in the LC and the passive use of MD markers in the cloze test revealed that the L2 learners had active and passive knowledge of the code gloss *such as*, but for the other markers, although they were able to use them correctly in the cloze test, they were not able to use them independently in their essays. This finding implies that the ability to select the correct and appropriate MD markers in a cloze test does not always indicate the ability to use the markers independently in writing. The general conclusion of this study is presented in Chapter 7, the final chapter.

# CHAPTER 7

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

### 7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a summary of the entire study is presented to conclude the thesis. Thereafter, the research questions and key findings of the study are briefly discussed, followed by a discussion of the contributions made by the study to the body of knowledge on metadiscourse use. Recommendations based on the findings of the study are then presented. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the study's limitations and suggestions for further research.

### 7.2 Summary

This thesis reports on a study of the use of metadiscourse markers by undergraduate students. The aim of the study was to investigate the use of metadiscourse markers in undergraduate students' academic writing. In order to achieve this aim, three sets of data were collected: a cloze test data, a learner corpus, and a native speakers' corpus. Data were collected from undergraduate students who were enrolled in the Academic Writing Skills 1 course. The data comprise a learner corpus of the students' written essays and their responses to a cloze test. Additional data were sourced from a native speakers' corpus made up of essays written by native speakers of English. These essays were extracted from LOCNESS (§3.6.1). The learner corpus was analysed separately and compared to the native speakers' corpus to determine how the two groups of undergraduate students employed MD markers in their academic essays. The theoretical framework that guided the identification of metadiscourse markers in the two corpora was Hyland's (2005a) classification of metadiscourse markers and their subcategories of interactive and interactional resources. The software tool #LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015, 2018, 2020) was used to analyse the type and frequency of metadiscourse markers—first in the

learner corpus and then in comparison to the native speakers' corpus. The aims were achieved in three phases corresponding to the three research questions. Phase 1 related to RQ1 and dealt with the students' receptive knowledge regarding MD markers. A cloze test was used to determine the extent to which students were able to select appropriate and correct interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers to complete a cloze test exercise. IBM's SPSS software was used to analyse the students' answers. In addition, Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney non-parametric tests were conducted to determine the significance levels in the differences between the students' cloze test scores in terms of gender, age, home language, and course of study. Addressing RQ1 and its two sub-questions formed the first phase of the study. Phase 2 related to RQ2 and involved the analysis of the types and frequencies of metadiscourse markers used in the learner corpus. The learner corpus was analysed to determine the most frequently used metadiscourse markers and the significant differences in the use of metadiscourse markers in relation to students' home language, course of study, and performance levels in their end-of-semester academic essays. Since it was difficult to get the variables of age and gender for the learner corpus analysis, as explained in section 3.4.2.2, they were left out. Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney non-parametric tests were also conducted to determine the significance levels of the differences in metadiscourse use in terms of the variables of home language, course of study, and performance levels in students' end-of-semester essays. A further analysis using a Z-test (§ 4.3) was conducted to determine the significance level of the observed differences in the proportions of the use of interactive and interactional resources. Thus, the second phase dealt with RQ2 and its five sub-questions. Phase 3, corresponding to RQ3, dealt with the comparison of the learner corpus and the native speakers' corpus in terms of the use of interactive and interactional resources. In order to accurately compare the frequencies of MD use in the two corpora (learner corpus and native speakers' corpus), before the analysis, the frequencies were normalised at a per-basis frequency

of 1 000 000 words (§5.2). In addition, a log-likelihood test was used to determine the significance levels of the observed differences in the normalised frequencies. MD density (§5.2) was then calculated to determine how dense the two corpora were in terms of MD use. Thus, the current study was conducted in three phases, and three sets of data were analysed in relation to undergraduate students' use of metadiscourse. The research questions and main findings are presented in the next section.

### **7.3 Research questions and main findings of the study**

This section highlights the research questions and the main findings of the study, which have been discussed in more detail in chapters 4, 5, and 6. These findings are presented according to the research questions.

RQ1 (Phase 1—cloze test):

To what extent were students able to select appropriate and correct metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional resources) to complete a cloze test?

- i. What type(s) of metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional resources) were the students able to select correctly?
- ii. Were there significant differences between the students' appropriate and correct selection of interactive and interactional resources in relation to gender, age, home language, and course of study?

RQ2 (Phase 2—learner corpus)

How were metadiscourse markers utilised in the learner corpus?

- i. What type of metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional) did the students use in their essays?

- ii. Which interactive resources were used most frequently by the students?
- iii. Which interactional resources were used most frequently by the students?
- iv. Were there significant differences in the use of metadiscourse markers in relation to the students' home language and course of study?
- v. Was there a relationship between the students' performance in the essays and their use of metadiscourse markers?

RQ3 (Phase 3—learner and native speakers' corpora)

How did the students' use of metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional resources) compare to that of native speakers?

The following findings emerged in Phase 1 when addressing RQ1: To what extent were students able to select appropriate and correct metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional resources) to complete a cloze test?

- The analysis of the cloze test results revealed that of the 171 students, 111 (65%) passed with 50% and above, while the remaining 60 (35%) scored below 50%. The highest percentage of correct and appropriate responses was recorded for the frame marker *finally*, as 73% of the students were able to use it appropriately and correctly to fill in Gap 9 in the cloze test. This could be attributed to the explicit instruction students received on the use of frame markers. The lowest percentage was recorded for the evidential marker *x explains*. This suggests that the students may not have been familiar with its use because they did not receive instruction in that regard.
- The analysis of the cloze test results also revealed that 71% was recorded for the code gloss *such as*. The explicit teaching of this code gloss may have accounted for this finding. The

descriptive analysis for gender showed that males performed better than females in the cloze test, although the difference was not statistically significant. This is surprising as, from anecdotal experience, females are generally known to perform better than males in language-related courses.

- The descriptive analysis for age also revealed that although students aged 21 years and older performed better than those aged between 18 and 20 years, the difference was not statistically significant. This finding suggests that age did not affect the students' ability to select the correct and appropriate metadiscourse markers to complete a given passage.
- The analysis to determine whether the learners' home languages influenced their ability to select correct and appropriate MD markers in the cloze test revealed that the mean scores for all the language groups (namely, Akan, Ewe, Ga-Adangme, English, and northern languages) were quite close, ranging from 52.92% to 55.22%, but the differences observed in the mean scores were not statistically significant. In effect, the findings of the present study revealed that students' home languages did not influence their ability to select correct and appropriate MD markers to complete a passage in a cloze test.
- Also, the analysis to ascertain whether the learners' course of study influenced their scores in the cloze test revealed that learners in the BA Education group performed better than those in the other courses, as their mean score was 66.67%. The mean scores of the other home language groups ranged between 52.7% and 57.50%. However, the observed differences were not statistically significant. In the current study, therefore, the students' course of study did not influence their selection of correct and appropriate MD markers in the cloze test. In sum, the analysis of the cloze test results showed that just over half of the

students were able to pass the cloze test. In addition, the cloze test results did not have any statistically significant relationship with the age, gender, or home language of the students.

The following are the findings for Phase 2—RQ2: How were metadiscourse markers utilised in the learner corpus?

- All ten subcategories of interactive and interactional resources were identified in the learner corpus. There were more interactive resources (frame markers, code glosses, endophoric markers, evidentials, and transitions) than interactional resources (hedges, engagement markers, attitude markers, boosters, and self-mentions). Of the 8 451 metadiscourse markers identified in the learner corpus, 6 075 were interactive and 2 466 were interactional. The observed difference in the proportions of the two classes of metadiscourse resources was statistically significant. This indicates that the learners used significantly more interactive resources in their essays. Other researchers of metadiscourse markers have observed that students employed more interactive resources than interactional resources (Alkhathlan, 2019; Davaei & Karbalaei, 2013; Kashiha, 2018; Livingstone, 2019; Mohamed & Rashid, 2018) because interactive resources help readers understand the messages through the use of transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, code glosses, and evidentials. Hyland (2005a) explains that interactive resources help writers produce coherent texts. As explained in previous chapters, the learners received instruction on three of the five subcategories of interactive resources—transitions, code glosses, and frame markers. The explicit teaching of these markers may, therefore, have contributed to their ability to use more of these markers in their essays. On the other hand, the low frequency of interactional resources in the learner corpus indicates that the students were not able to involve the reader in their essays. In other words, their essays were not reader-friendly.

Hyland (2005a) explains that interactional resources help writers involve their readers in their texts.

- Among the interactive resources, transitions were used most frequently. In all, 5 221 transitions of 28 types were counted (86.94%). The highest frequency was recorded for the transition *and*, which occurred 3 467 times in the corpus. This was followed by *also* (554 times) and *but* (198 times). These are basic words that students learned in primary school, so they were familiar with them and could use them readily. These words also occur frequently in oral communication. In fact, the overuse of transitions such as *and*, *but*, and *also* indicates their vocabulary level. The use of more academic transitions such as *in addition*, *in contrast*, and *therefore* is preferable because they are considered academic vocabulary. However, these three transitions were not used frequently by the students. On the whole, the frequency of transitions in the learner corpus was the highest among the five interactive resources. Hyland and Tse (2004) opine that a high frequency of the use of transitions is an important feature of academic writing. Transitions are very useful as they help achieve cohesion and coherence in academic writing. Halliday and Hassan (1976) observe that transitions are used to create textual cohesion.
- In relation to interactional resources, the analysis indicated that hedges were the most frequently used. The total number of hedges identified was 1 470. This represents 59.19% of the interactional resources. The hedge *many* was the most preferred, occurring 537 times. The analysis revealed that the learners did not use many academic hedges such as *apparently*, *somewhat*, and *perhaps*. The infrequent use of these markers indicates the learners' limited knowledge of academic vocabulary. On the whole, the frequency of hedges was the highest among the five interactional resources. Students received



instruction on the need to use a cautious style by using hedges in their writing in order to avoid making statements that can be contradicted. The explicit teaching of the use and functions of hedges may have contributed to the high frequency of hedges in the learner corpus.

- The analysis of the learner corpus in relation to predominant use revealed that there were significantly more occurrences of MD markers in the essays of the L2 learners who indicated that their home language was one of the northern Ghanaian languages. This area needs further research as there is no definite reason for this finding. The analysis of the learner corpus also revealed that there were no significant differences in the frequencies of MD use in relation to the learners' course of study. Thus, there was no relationship between the number of MD markers used in the essays and the students' course of study.
- In relation to the learners' performance levels in their essays, the analysis revealed that the observed difference in the use of MD markers between the low-rated essays and the average-rated essays was statistically significant. It was also observed that there were significantly more MD markers in the high-rated essays than in the low-rated essays. However, there were no significant differences between the high-rated essays and the average-rated essays, although the high-rated essays contained more MD markers. The analysis also revealed that the high-rated and average-rated essay writers used more transitions, frame markers, code glosses, and hedges but used fewer self-mentions, attitude markers, and evidentials. On the other hand, the low-rated essay writers used more self-mentions, attitude markers, and evidentials. This finding implies that the high-rated and average-rated essay writers were more aware of the appropriate use of the subcategories of MD markers. That is, they used them in appropriate proportions. The low-rated essay

writers did not show evidence of this awareness, however, as they used the MD markers minimally when frequent use was required and frequently when minimal use was expected.

- On comparing the cloze test results with the analysis of the learner corpus, the findings revealed that in relation to the learners' receptive and productive knowledge, the highest frequency (81%) was recorded for the code gloss *such as* in the learner corpus and was reflected in their ability to select the same marker correctly and appropriately in the cloze test. It was also observed that a low frequency was recorded for the evidential marker *x explains* in the cloze test, as only 25% of the learners got it right. Furthermore, it was observed that the learners had passive knowledge of the attitude marker *unfortunately* and the self-mention *I*. However, these markers were not frequently used in their essays, probably because they had been taught not to overuse such markers. In sum, the comparison of the cloze test results and the analysis of the learner corpus revealed that the correct selection of MD markers did not indicate the ability to use the markers independently in essays. In other words, although 50% of the learners had receptive knowledge of some of the markers, they were not able to use them in their essays. That is, their receptive knowledge did not correspond with their productive use.

The following are the findings for Phase 3—RQ3: How did students' use of metadiscourse markers (interactive and interactional resources) compare to that of native speakers?

- The findings for the comparison between the learner corpus and the native speakers' corpus in terms of metadiscourse usage showed that the difference between the normed frequencies of the two corpora was statistically significant at LL 266.9, indicating that there were significantly more occurrences of MD markers in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus. The calculation of MD density also showed that the learner corpus was

denser in relation to the use of MD markers. In other words, there were more metadiscourse markers in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus. However, more does not always mean better, as in some cases, minimal use of certain markers denotes good academic writing.

- The analysis also revealed that the learners used more interactive resources than the native speakers. The percentage of the normed frequencies of interactive resources was 71.09% for the learner corpus and 59.59% for the native speakers' corpus. As mentioned previously, the learners were required to explain how coherence was achieved in their essays, and that might have accounted for the high frequency of interactive resources. Hyland (2005a) explains that interactive resources help to create coherent texts.
- On the flip side, the native speakers used more interactional resources than the learners. The percentage of the normed frequencies of interactional resources was 28.87% for the learner corpus and 48.38% for the reference corpus. This finding shows that the native speakers may have been more aware than the learners of the need to involve the reader in their texts.
- Another observation from the comparison of the two corpora was that the scale of preference with regard to the highest to the lowest frequencies of interactive resources was similar in the two corpora. That is, in the two corpora, the highest frequency was recorded for transitions, followed by frame markers, and then code glosses and evidentials, with endophoric markers having the lowest frequency among the interactive resources. The high frequency of transitions in the two corpora suggests that the two groups of undergraduate students may have been aware of the need to use transitions to connect ideas in their essays.

Hyland and Tse (2004) explain that transitions represent the internal connections in a discourse; therefore, a high frequency of transitions is an important feature of academic writing. On the other hand, the lowest frequency was recorded for endophoric markers in the two corpora because of the nature of the essays the students wrote. The students wrote short academic essays that did not contain any visual images. Hyland and Jiang (2018) opine that endophoric markers are used more in texts that have visuals in them, as the writer has to refer back to those visuals to clarify information. With regard to the types of interactive resources used in the two corpora, the analysis showed that, with the exception of endophoric markers, similar types of interactive resources were identified. This finding indicates that, to a large extent, the learners attempted to use interactive resources in the same way as the native speakers, implying that the two groups of students may have been aware of the need to use interactive resources to organise their academic essays.

- The scale of preference for the interactional resources showed a different picture. Apart from hedges and self-mentions, the scale of preference for attitude markers, evidentials, and boosters was not similar. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that the percentage of the normed frequencies for the learner corpus was 28.87%, while that of the native speakers' corpus was 40.34%. The differences in the percentages of the normed frequencies show that the native speakers may have been more aware of the need to use interactional resources to involve the reader in their essays than the L2 learners.
- On the whole, the findings of the comparison between the learner corpus and the native speakers' corpus in terms of interactive and interactional resources revealed that the native speakers' corpus was more equally weighted in the use of the interactive and interactional resources than the learner corpus. This finding implies that the L2 learners focused more

on using interactive resources, perhaps with the organisation of their essays in mind, while the native speakers seemed to combine the use of MD markers that organise texts with those that involve the reader, as shown in the close proportions of the use of interactive and interactional resources.

#### **7.4 Contributions of the study**

The study identified and filled a gap in existing research on metadiscourse, provided a methodological contribution to the study of metadiscourse, may have pedagogical implications to the study of metadiscourse, and contributed to the field of academic writing in the ESL context.

The study has added to the body of knowledge on metadiscourse markers by filling a gap in existing research studies on metadiscourse marker use in ESL students' writing, specifically among Ghanaian and West African students. Most of the studies conducted on metadiscourse have been done by researchers from Asia (Khedri, 2018; Simin & Tavangar, 2009; Taghizadeh & Tajabadi, 2013) and Southern Africa (Letsoela, 2013; Ramoroka, 2017).

In terms of methodological aspects and approach, this study has contributed to knowledge by using a novel combination of a cloze test and a learner corpus to investigate the use of metadiscourse markers. Previous studies conducted on metadiscourse markers have used interviews as instruments in addition to the learner corpora. The addition of the cloze test was done to ascertain the receptive knowledge of MD markers, and the learner corpus determined how the MD markers were used independently in the essays, indicating the productive use of the markers. The correct selection of MD markers to complete a cloze test does not indicate the ability to use the markers independently. The ability to use the markers independently in

texts indicates that learners have acquired the use of the markers. The use of the cloze test and the learner corpus in the present study was, therefore, essential as it helped to determine the proficiency levels of the learners with regard to their passive/receptive use of MD markers. In addition to the cloze test, this study also compared the learner corpus with a native speakers' corpus. Most studies have solely investigated and analysed the learner corpus. In sum, the study has contributed to knowledge by using a unique combination of data collection tools and by shedding more light on a very specific group of students' usage of metadiscourse markers in their academic writing.

The findings of the current study may provide pedagogic implications for the teaching of English as a second language. This study may be useful to Ghanaian tertiary-level educators as it provides information on how students use MD markers in their essays. Thus, the insights derived from this study may have implications for writing pedagogy.

The current study has contributed to the field of academic writing by adding to the data on students' academic writing within the Ghanaian and West African context by providing findings that are supportive of previous findings, confirming that highly proficient learners make use of metadiscourse markers to make their writing more cohesive and coherent. Again, the study has added knowledge to our understanding of ESL learners' use of MD markers in comparison to that of native speakers of English.

Research shows that metadiscourse is an important resource for communication as it plays a vital role in organising and producing texts and making a text coherent. The study of metadiscourse can, therefore, be valuable for those who study academic writing, as the insights from this study can be useful in the teaching and learning of academic writing.

## **7.5 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, recommendations can be made regarding the need for learners to receive more training on the use of boosters and engagement markers and on the nuanced use of the ten subcategories of MD markers:

- The second-language learners used fewer interactional resources, especially boosters and engagement markers. This finding suggests that the learners need more training on using these markers in order to persuade the reader of their arguments by involving the reader in their essays.
- Although there were more interactive than interactional resources in the two corpora, it was observed that the proportions of the use of these two resources were more equally weighted in the native speakers' corpus than in the learner corpus. The second-language learners need more training on the nuanced use of the ten subcategories of MD markers in order to enable them to use interactive and interactional resources in similar proportions. The proportion of interactive resources for the learner corpus was 71.09%, and the proportion of interactional resources was 28.87. For the native speakers' corpus, the proportion of interactive resources was 59.59%, and the proportion of interactional resources was 40.38%. I propose that frequencies of 60% interactive resources and 40% interactional resources would help students achieve coherence and reader-friendliness in their short academic essays.

## **7.6 Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research**

This study attempted to investigate the use of MD markers in undergraduate students' essays. Despite considerable efforts to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings, the study was subject to limitations. The limitations of this study were the limited sample size due to

COVID-19 restrictions and the researcher's inability to have the learners write in their home languages.

First, the sample size was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns. The study coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, and due to the physical restrictions put in place during that time, the cloze test was administered via Google Forms. Some students had travelled back to their homes and found it difficult to complete the cloze test since their internet connectivity was poor. Other students simply did not have an internet connection. These connectivity issues affected the sample size of the study. Thus, although 197 cloze tests were administered, only 171 students were able to return their completed tests. Besides the limited sample size, the restrictions also prevented the cloze test from being conducted in a test-controlled environment, as students took the test in their homes without adequate supervision. Future research could attempt to conduct the test in a controlled environment to see if similar results are obtained.

Second, the study did not include learners' essays in their home languages, as was the case in Alipour et al. (2015) and other studies. Additional data made up of students' essays written in their home languages would have provided more comparisons. However, the focus of the current study was to explore and analyse the types, frequencies, and appropriate use of metadiscourse markers in English and did not include indigenous languages. Further research on variations of MD use in corpora made up of essays written in students' home languages and in English would provide another dimension to the study of students' metadiscourse use.



## 7.7 Conclusion

The present study investigated the use of MD markers in undergraduate students' essays. Cloze test data from second-language learners, a learner corpus, and a native speakers' corpus were used for the study. The cloze test was conducted to investigate the learners' receptive knowledge of metadiscourse markers. The learner corpus and the native speakers' corpus were compared to determine the similarities in the use of MD markers. The results of the cloze test showed that demographic variables did not play any significant role in students' receptive knowledge of metadiscourse markers. The findings of the analysis of the learner corpus showed that students used more interactive resources than interactional resources. The findings of the analysis of the learner corpus also revealed that the variables of age, gender, and course of study did not play a significant role in the use of metadiscourse markers, but the students' home language showed significant differences. In relation to whether students' level of performance in their essays influenced the use of MD markers, the findings showed that students' performance levels in their essays corresponded with their use of MD markers. That is, the high-rated essay writers employed more interactive resources than the low-rated essay writers, and the average-rated essay writers employed more interactive resources than the low-rated essay writers, pointing to a relationship between performance in the essays and the use of MD markers. Furthermore, the comparison of the learner corpus and the native speakers' corpus revealed that the two groups of undergraduate students employed more interactive resources than interactional resources, and they also showed similar preferences in their use of interactive resources. This might be because interactive resources help the reader understand the text and help the writer organise the text.

With the exception of endophoric markers, there were similar types of MD markers in the two corpora, although the native speakers used more academic words than the second-language

learners. The findings of the comparison of the two corpora also revealed that although MD markers were denser in the learner corpus than in the native speakers' corpus, the native speakers' corpus was more equally weighted in terms of interactive and interactional resources, as the frequencies of both categories were quite close to the native speakers' corpus. This specific finding implies that the second-language learners may not have fully acquired the skill of using interactive and interactional resources proportionally in their essays. The current study has shed light on the use of metadiscourse markers in the context of Ghanaian undergraduate students, and it is hoped that the study has made a meaningful contribution to the research on metadiscourse markers at the undergraduate level, nationally, regionally, and globally.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Ethical approval from the University of Pretoria



Faculty of Humanities  
Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe  
Lefapha la Bomotheo



4 August 2020

Dear Mrs J Bannerman-Wood

Project Title: Metadiscourse in Undergraduate Students' essays  
Researcher: Mrs J Bannerman-Wood  
Supervisor(s): Dr Naomi Boakye  
Department: Afrikaans  
Reference number: 19190060 (HUM063/1019)  
Degree: Doctoral

I have pleasure in informing you that the above application was approved by the Research Ethics Committee on 4 August 2020. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should the actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

1. Permission from the University of Ghana is outstanding. The Committee also requires the introduction letter that was sent to the University.
2. The researcher will interview the participants therefore they cannot remain anonymise. The Committee recommends that the letter of informed consent be revised to state that participants will be anonymised in the study.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Innocent Pikirayi'.

Prof Innocent Pikirayi  
Deputy Dean: Postgraduate Studies and Research Ethics  
Faculty of Humanities  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
e-mail: PGHumanities@up.ac.za

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe  
Lefapha la Bomotheo

**Research Ethics Committee Members:** Prof I Pikirayi (Deputy Dean); Prof KL Harris; Mr A Bizos; Dr A-M de Beer; Dr A dos Santos; Ms KT Govinder Andrew; Dr P Gutura; Dr E Johnson; Prof D Maree; Mr A Mohamed; Dr I Noomé; Dr C Puttergill; Prof D Reyburn; Prof M Soer; Prof E Taljard; Prof V Thebe; Ms B Tsebe; Ms D Mokalapa

## Appendix 2: Application for ethical approval (University of Ghana)

Faculty of Humanities  
Unit for Academic Literacy  
University of Pretoria, SA  
16<sup>th</sup> March, 2020

The Chairperson  
Ethics Committee for Humanities  
ISSER, University of Ghana  
Legon

Dear Chairperson

### Application for Ethical Approval

Protocol Name: Metadiscourse in Undergraduate Students' Essays

I wish to submit to you the above-named protocol and essential documents for approval by your committee.

I look forward to receiving any comments that you may have in relation to the above.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,



Jessie Bannerman-Wood (19190060)  
PhD Candidate  
Tel. 0267845333  
Email: nessiebwood@gmail.com

Enclosed:

1. Cover letter from investigator
2. Letter from the Head of Department
3. New Protocol Submission Form
4. Protocol Consent Form
5. Research Proposal
6. Work Plan
7. Budget
8. Questionnaire/Instrument
9. CVs of PIs and Co-PIs



## Appendix 3: Ethical approval from the University of Ghana



### UNIVERSITY OF GHANA ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR THE HUMANITIES (ECH)

*P. O. Box LG 74, Legon, Accra, Ghana*

My Ref. No...ECH159 /19-20 ...

May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Mrs. Jessie Bannerman-Wood  
Language Centre  
University of Ghana  
Legon

#### **ETHICAL CLEARANCE (ECH 159/19-20)**

The protocol title below has been reviewed and approved by the ECH Committee.

**TITLE OF PROTOCOL: METADISCUOURSE IN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS  
ESSAYS**

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: MRS. JESSIE BANNERMAN-WOOD**

Please note that the final review report must be submitted to the Committee at the completion of the study. Your research records may be audited at any time during or after the implementation. Any modification of this research project must be submitted to ECH for review and approval prior to implementation.

Please report all serious adverse events related to this study to ECH within seven (7) days verbally and in writing within fourteen (14) days.

This certificate is valid till May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. You are to submit annual reports for continuing review.

Please accept my congratulations.

Yours Sincerely,

**Professor C. Charles Mate-Kole**  
**ECH Chair**

Cc: Dr. Naomi Boakye, University of Pretoria, South Africa  
Dr. Ruth Scheepers, University of South Africa, SA  
Professor Gordon S. K. Adika, University of Ghana, UG

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## Appendix 4: Participant consent form for students

### Research: Metadiscourse in undergraduate students' essays

I, the undersigned, confirm that (please tick box as appropriate):

1.	I have read and understood the information about the project, as provided in the information sheet	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and my participation	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	I voluntarily agree to participate in the project	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	I understand I can withdraw at any time without giving reasons and that I will not be penalised for withdrawing nor will I be questioned on why I have withdrawn	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (use of names, pseudonyms, anonymization of data) to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	The use of data in research, publications, sharing and archiving has been explained to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 5: Participant information sheet for students**

### **Research: Metadiscourse in undergraduate students' essays**

#### **Introduction**

Thank you for considering participating in this study. My name is Jessie Bannerman-Wood, a PhD candidate of the Department of Linguistics, University of Pretoria. This project forms part of a research thesis project to fulfil the requirement of completion for the course of Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics in the University of Pretoria, South Africa.

#### **Background**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the use of metadiscourse in undergraduate students' academic essays with the view of using this information to help improve the writing of academic essays.

Data will therefore be collected through the filling out of questionnaires which is supposed to last not more than 20 minutes.

All data collected will be treated with the utmost protection and stored under a protected password. It is only the supervisor and the researcher who will have access to the data.

Participation in this research is voluntary. You are therefore free to decide to participate in this study or not.

To the best of my knowledge, there will be no known physical risk to you. There are no direct benefits to the participants but it is hoped that the information collected will provide an insight that will help improve the quality of writing academic essays.

If you want to know more about the project, or have any queries, please contact:

Jessie Bannerman-Wood (Researcher)

Email: [nessiebwood@gmail.com](mailto:nessiebwood@gmail.com)

Dr Naomi Boakye (Supervisor)

Senior Lecturer

Unit for Academic Literacy

University of Pretoria

South Africa

Email: [naomi.boakye@up.ac.za](mailto:naomi.boakye@up.ac.za)

## Appendix 6: Cloze test

Dear student

This is a test investigating students' use of metadiscourse elements to achieve coherence in their academic writing. Please note that this test is for research purposes only and will be treated as strictly confidential. Your honest and sincere responses will be appreciated.

Kindly fill in the information to provide your details and tick (√) the appropriate option that applies to you.

### Section A: General information

Gender      (      ) Male  
                 (      ) Female

Age            (      ) 15–20  
                 (      ) 21–25  
                 (      ) 26–30  
                 (      ) 31–35  
                 (      ) 36–40

Which level are you in?

(      ) 100  
(      ) 200  
(      ) 300  
(      ) 400

Please state your college: \_\_\_\_\_

Please state your school/department: \_\_\_\_\_

Please state your programme/course: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section B: Metadiscourse usage**

Choose words or phrases from the box to fill the blanks in the following paragraphs:

<u>in addition</u>	<u>finally</u>	<u>as discussed</u> <u>above</u>	<u>X</u> <u>explains</u>	<u>such as</u>	<u>may</u>	<u>in fact</u>	<u>unfortunately</u>
<u>note that</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>Seem</u>	<u>surprisingl</u> <u>y</u>	<u>note that</u>	<u>namely</u>	<u>my</u>	<u>it is clear that</u>

Possession of a degree should assist a graduate in finding a satisfying job more quickly and give greater prospects for promotion inside the chosen career. (1) ----- that a university course will not only provide students with up-to-date knowledge in their subject area, but also provide practice with the essential skills required by many employees today, (2) ----- the ability to communicate effectively using ICT or the skills of team working and problem building. (3) -----, living away from home gives the opportunity to make new friends from all over the world, and build networks of contacts that (4) ----- be invaluable in a future career (Bailey, 2015 p.25).

Although (5) ----- a university degree is the key to a better future for any student, most post-secondary school leavers do not gain admission to the universities of their choice. It is worthy of (6) ----- the requirements for admissions differ from one university to the other. (7) ----- most students who do not gain admission to any university may end up hawking in the streets.

On the other hand, students who gain admission to the university are faced with many challenges; one of which is essay writing. Writing is a skill as well as a process of discovery involving a series of steps. As already (8) ----- writing is a skill, and as a skill such as cooking, typing or driving, writing can be learned. Learning to write an essay will help one express one's ideas in a logical manner. Learning to write will also help the student to succeed in an academic discourse community.

(9) -----, (10) ----- believe that writing will train your mind to think clearly, and that ability will prove to be of value in every phase of your life.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

**Expected answers**

1. X explains (evidentials)
2. such as (code glosses)
3. in addition (transitions)
4. may (hedges)
5. it is clear that (boosters)
6. note that (engagement markers)
7. unfortunately (attitude markers)
8. noted above (endophoric markers)
9. finally (frame markers)
10. I (self-mentions)

## **Appendix 7: American argumentative essays: Marquette University**

- Euthanasia
- Controversy in the classroom
- Capital punishment
- Does affirmative action work?
- Yoga
- Nuclear power
- Values and consequences of school interaction
- Pride or segregation
- Surrogate motherhood
- Can we afford wellness?
- Prozac: the wonder drug
- Homosexuality
- Animal testing
- Prayer in schools
- Praying for a miracle
- Sex equality
- Teenagers
- Aids
- Orphanages
- Profit: good or evil
- Freedom of the press
- Sex in schools
- Welfare reforms need a return to family values
- The cost of grass

- Abortion
- Ethics
- Would anyone care for a drink?
- Cheating in colleges
- O.J. Simpson
- Suicide



## **Appendix 8: American argumentative essays: Indiana University**

### **Indianapolis**

- Money is the root of all evil
- Crime does not pay
- A man/woman's financial reward should be commensurate with their contribution to the society in which they live
- Feminists have done more harm to the cause of women than good

## **Appendix 9: American argumentative essays: University of South Carolina**

- The confederate flags
- Rules and regulations
- Death penalty
- Legalization of marijuana
- Teachers deserve recognition and reward
- Salary caps
- Sex in the media
- Euthanasia
- Gender roles, feminism
- US government
- Premarital sex
- Football
- Drinking age
- Talk shows
- Professors that don't speak English should not teach English students
- Violence on Television
- Gun control
- Portrayal of women in fashion magazines
- Recycling
- The word card and its effects on baseball
- Journalists should not reveal their sources
- Welfare
- Women in combat
- Rules

- Sink or swim
- Early are drinking
- Should the Browns stay in Cleveland?
- Curfew
- Government support for the Arts
- Abortion
- Stereotyping the colours pink and blue
- The media's right to know
- Emerging women
- Book banning in America
- Frivolous Lawsuits

## **Appendix 10: American argumentative essays: Presbyterian College, South**

### **Carolina**

- Adolescent suicide
- Water pollution
- Legalization of marijuana
- Homelessness
- The welfare system
- Divorce

## Appendix 11: Concordance lines

### Example of the use of *first* in a broader context in UGCD 22

Context

UGCD-22

In today's society life without plastic is nearly impossible. We depend on it for our basic needs. Plastic is a material that is used for some items such as; bags, bottles, tables and chairs. Plastic bags remain in their present forms in the soil or water even after several years of disposal. Being cheap and convenient, it has managed to creep into every household and has become an inevitable component in our lives. It has come to a world-wide realization that plastic bags are causing more harm than good and therefore needs to be banned. Instead of making our lives easy, these plastic bags have become the root cause of various issues such as environmental pollution and illness in humans and animals. Discussed below are some reasons for which plastic bags should be banned.

**First** of all, plastic bags are harmful to wildlife, marine life and human health. Birds, mammals and aquatic animals often mistaken the plastic bag and other plastic materials for food and consume them. Once these plastic bags are consumed, the digestive system of animals gets congested leading to the development of health infections and death when there is suffocation. The toxic chemical from which these plastics are made can disrupt the normal functioning of hormones in the body. Through food web, these chemicals are transferred to humans when they consume the fishes. Humans could also develop cancers or other serious conditions which would affect their health. For this reason, plastic bags should be banned.

## Context

Furthermore, plastic bags are a major cause of environmental pollution. Plastic bags are non-biodegradable and thus remain in the environment for hundreds of years polluting it immensely. Most people burn these plastics as an alternative to dispose them but the burning also causes air pollution which can affect the respiration process of humans. Some people have also created a site to collect these plastic in heaps but anytime it rains, these plastic bags are washed into gutters which causes it to be choked and makes drainage a challenge. Notwithstanding, the rain also washes these bags into oceans and seas which also become polluted. This causes our beaches to be unclean and also renders our water bodies harmful for consumption. Due to this, plastic bags should be banned.

Also, there are some external cost that are linked to these plastic bags, one of which could be production cost. Even though plastic bags are mostly given out for free when one purchases an item, there is a huge cost associated with its production. The raw materials or resources needed for its production could be very scarce and limited making the demand exceed supply thus affecting the price negatively. Moreover, it is difficult and expensive to remove plastic bags from our surroundings. Expensive in the sense that it really cost to hire people to undertake cleanup exercises. For this reason, plastic bags should be banned.

### Example of the use of *first* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 00005.3

#### Context

The Single European Act can be analysed according to three broad areas. Firstly, it reaffirms the Treaty of Rome's original aims- to remove all internal, physical, technical and fiscal barriers, creating one external frontier with uniform standards and rates within the market. Secondly, it reallocates the powers as they were laid out by the Treaty of Rome, abolishing the right to veto in the Council of Ministers. Thirdly, it recognises the position of the European Council (not originally included in the treaty), gives the role of foreign policy creation to the European Policy Corporation (EPC), changes the voting procedure for the Council of Ministers and makes the European Parliament a directly elected body. These are quite significant changes and are aimed at facilitating the transition from the partial integration which exists at the moment into fully integrated economic and monetary union.

Britain's reputation in Europe on these issues is not an enviable one. If her image in the foreign press represents any kind of standard, she is seen variously as the most obstructive, bellicose, insular power, thwarting the path of progress, with Margaret Thatcher, the most insular Brit of all, at the helm.

Perhaps it is not an unfair image. Although Margaret Thatcher is no longer leading the country, the position of most British politicians on the European issue appears extremely ambiguous. Very few members of parliament are willing to openly and unreservedly affirm their support for the idea of a fully integrated Europe. This could stem from two reasons: **first** of all, their answerability to the British electorate, which still seems wary about the idea

## Context

of a Britain fully incorporated into Europe, and secondly, the belief that their own role will be diminished by the abdication of sovereignty to the European Parliament in Brussels.

This final point brings out a strong emotional response on the part of the British and, I suspect, represents one of the core aspects of the present government's apparent fear of being steam rolled into a more united Europe.

Inevitably, it will involve a transfer of sovereignty which will have different political implications for each member state. The relocation of power in the European Parliament and the direct elections held in each country to elect their members has created a parallel body to the national leadership in each country which, in many cases, has the theoretical power to overrule and impose its decisions on the member states. According to Article 3, it has been entrusted with various tasks- the elimination of customs duties, the establishment of common customs tariffs, the creation of the free movement of people, services and capital within the European Community, agricultural and transport policy, the coordination of economic procedures, the establishment of a fund for investment purposes and a body to coordinate overseas states policy. All these decisions were previously the domain of national governments.



### Example of the use of *to conclude* in a broader context in UGCD 141

#### Context

Furthermore, plastic bags may lead to the destruction of animal life. Plastic bags are non-biodegradable, so they can stay on our environment for several years. Because of this, plastic bags which have not been burned but have been left on our environment tends to pose a great threat to animal lives. Some animals end up eating these plastics whenever they confuse them as food. However, these plastics do not digest within their bodies, but stays in their bodies. This might cause the death of the animals through choking and suffocation.

In addition, plastic bags may lead to environmental pollution. The continuous use of plastic bags without recycling and reusing them tends to increase the rate of environmental pollution. Plastic bags are used each and every day, and are dumped on our roads, behind our houses and even in our water bodies. The dumping of plastic bags on our lands causes land pollution, and as a result, reduces the fertility of our lands. Also, the dumping of plastic waste in our water bodies tends to pollute our water bodies, and also renders our water bodies unsafe for drinking.

**To** conclude, the use of plastic bags have become a nuisance to society. Human and animal lives have been lost and are still fading away. The government must introduce some systems such as the imposition of plastic bag levies on individuals who might use them, and if possible, ban their usages in order to reduce or eradicate the damage it has caused.

### Example of the use of *to conclude* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 0016.3

#### Context

In accordance with the Constitutional Law of Britain, Parliament is the supreme law-making body in the United Kingdom. Consequently the emergence of another source of law, deemed to be supra-national is inevitably a problem. One of the prerogative powers conferred upon Parliament is the right to make treaties. However these treaties are not directly effective on British individuals, so that where a treaty contains provisions giving rights and duties to an individual, he cannot place reliance upon the treaty until it is substantially incorporated into the law of the United Kingdom, by an Act of Parliament. This acts as a curb to the enforcement of European Community Law, so that to a certain extent, a degree of sovereignty is retained. Yet, this is not as advantageous as it may at first appear, for there exists a general judicial presumption that Parliament does not intend to legislate contrary to European Community Law.

Personally, I think that although the integration of Britain into Europe will be beneficial in so many matters such as freedom of transportation, movement, work and many other realms, there are also many disadvantages in store, including the loss of sovereignty to a certain extent. Although the British Parliament will continue to regulate the acts or omissions of individuals on a personal basis, for example in Criminal Law, its freedom to legislate in the domain of public law will be severely restricted. Not only will Parliament be obliged to enforce Community Law, but also any later statutes passed by the British Parliament will either be construed in the light of Community provisions or declared invalid.

## Context

To conclude, it is feasible to imply that the sovereignty of Britain will be impaired in many ways, although only within the sphere of Community Law prevailing over national law. In other senses the sovereignty of Britain will be safeguarded for Parliament will still reign supreme within the United Kingdom.

### Example of the use of *lastly* in a broader context in UGCD 113

## Context

To begin, there is a threat to human life from suffocation by plastic bags. Many accidents such as suffocation and subsequent death have occurred from plastic bags being wrongly placed. Although most manufacturers strongly discourage the handling of plastic bags by children for a number of reasons and even go as far as putting the instructions which mention "Keep Away from Children" and other disclaimer signs on the plastic bags, they can only go this far as their jobs are to produce plastic bags and not to monitor its usage by the consumer. Cases of death by suffocation, some by accident, others intentional have all been recorded. However, no matter what the case may have been these deaths could all have been avoided had plastic bags been absent from the equation.

Furthermore, plastic bags cause a wide range of environmental problems especially when they find their way into the ocean. They pose a threat to the world's marine species and aquatic life altogether. Research by the United Nations Joint Group of Experts on Scientific Aspects of Marine Pollution, estimated that plastic constitutes about 80 percent of the

## Context

world's marine pollution. Besides the fact that they destroy the beauty of the ocean, they are quite commonly mistaken for food residues by these animals. Aquatic animals can become entangled in or ingest plastic debris causing suffocation and starvation. The ingestion of plastic may also lead to the extinction of certain species discovered and undiscovered.

**Lastly,** they cause a strain on government expenditure due to the financial burden it comes with. Since plastic bags can be easily used and disposed of, they are often found to be littering the streets, hanging from tree branches, clogging drains and also constitutes about 60 percent solid waste at dump sites. Despite the provision of dustbins at vantage locations, the government still has to employ persons to take care of these plastic waste. The government in partnership with waste management companies such as Zoom Lion employ people to undertake this sanitation.

In conclusion, the disadvantages of plastic bags far outweigh the advantages as they pose a threat to human life, cause a wide range of environmental problems on marine life and cause a financial strain on the government. Plastic bags have caused more harm than good and should be banned.

## Example of the use of *lastly* in a broader context in ICLEUSMICH 0016

### Context

and they needed to go out to the theater in order to enjoy visual forms of entertainment. As television programming improves there is an increasing number

of programs to choose from with a push of a button. There is much controversy about whether this new form of indoor entertainment is beneficial or not. Many believe that the problem with television is people become yonkies (with eyes glued to the set). They prefer to sit in front of the television instead of reading, exercising, or going to a museum. Culturally speaking, it appears that T.V. has some detrimental aspects.

Besides entertaining people, television has become a major source for fast & accurate communicating. With this invention people can be informed about everything from the weather conditions in their own town to the economic situation of a city half way around the world. The T.V. not only allows one to hear the news, it can be seen as well. This mode of communicating has been helpful in warning people of dangers, both natural and social, and increasing awareness about what is happening around the world. **Lastly**, I would like to discuss how all this has affected the family. It is obvious that T.V. has changed communicating within the family. For instance, some argue it is a way to bring the family together. Everybody comes together at night to watch a favorite program. However, others say the T.V. disrupts the "family dinner"

and and diminished communication among family members because they would rather watch T.V. than talk with one another. The types of programs is another issue. Many agree

## Context

that T.V. is too violent or lacking in family morals. The children grow up watching violence and sex and they become desensitized to it. This creates problems with values which in turn, creates problems in society.

Obviously, the invention of the television has impacted people in many ways. It has created new forms of entertainment & communication. On a deeper level it has also impacted values within the family. There is a tremendous amount of controversy over the beneficial and detrimental aspects of the television and it is anyone's guess if it will ever be resolved. One thing is certain and that is the television is the invention of the 20 century!

### **Example of the use of *such as* in a broader context in UGCD 163**

## Context

First and foremost, plastic bags cause environmental damage. A single plastic takes about 1,000 years to decay completely. Plastic bags contain chemical structures that resist them from many natural degradation processes and as a result they are slow to degrade. As a result of this, the plastic bags are left on the surface of the land for a long period of time. This affects the soil fertility, nutrition, moisture and the PH of the soil. This as a result leads to lack of fertile land for farming, outbreak of plant diseases, stunted growth in plants which reduce the rate of food production. Henceforth, plastic bags are a factor for land deterioration.

## Context

Secondly, plastic bags cause pollution. Plastic pollution is the accumulation of plastic waste which is a threat to vegetation, human life and wildlife. Individuals all over the world dump plastic bags anywhere and anyhow. The plastic bags end up in our gutters which result into choked gutters, this serve as a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Also, the scent from the gutters pollutes the air. In addition, plastic bags are one of the main factors of marine pollution. When it rains the plastic bags in the gutters are been transported into the water bodies which contaminate the water bodies. This may result in the killing of fishes and other living creatures in the marine environment. Also, may result in lack of treated water for domestic purpose and irrigation.

Moreover, plastic fumes are deadly. The burning of plastic release toxic gases **such** as, dioxide and furans mercury into the atmosphere, poses a threat to vegetation, humans and animal health. Dioxin and furans can cause death, if this element are in the atmosphere and an individual inhale it into his or her system may result in skin lesions, **such** as chloracne and patchy darkening of the skin, kidney and liver damage. May also cause cancer, impotence, asthma, and a myriad of other determinant effect to human beings.

In conclusion, the above point are the main reason why plastic bags should be prohibited. Paper bag must be used rather than plastic bags. Also, the government must provide trash can at various places. In addition, law must be made to punish individual which dump plastic bags anywhere and anyhow. If measures are not made to prevent this, in years to come it will be very difficult for as to get fertile land for farming, fishes for consumption, treated

Context

water for domestic purpose and irrigation and our great children will not be happy with our deeds.

**Example of the use of *such as* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 0003.3**

Context

As far as economics is concerned, British independant economic policy would be undermined, primarily as being in a monetary union with other states would lead to a loss of the exchange rates as a method for controlling the flow of goods in and out of Britain. The British government would no longer be in a position to devalue or revalue the pound, to regain competitiveness with our European neighbours. This could mean Britain becoming an unproductive backwater in Europe. The Bank of England would also loose the right to print and distribute an independant currency, ie. the pound, and the British government would loose power over all monetary policy, as there would be a single European exchange rate, interest rate, and inflation rate. This is because the supply of money would be controlled by a central European bank, having jurisdiction over these variables. This would render Britain with only fiscal policy to control her economy, but there are even rumours that this may also be centralised in a new Europe, embracing everything from tax policy to social security payments.

As a natural cosequence of this, there would be a political loss of sovereignty, because if there is no way that British instructions can exercise their power, they may as well not exist.



## Context

Already there is a European Parliament, being given ever greater powers to govern. This natural power shift to the centre would leave the British parliament and House of Lords with a greatly reduced scope for policy making in important economic, social and political matters, though it is important not to forget that we would be adequately

represented. As far as defence is concerned, Britain is an integral part of NATO, something which is increasingly becoming debateable if we will soon have to consider making united defence plans with all of our European partners, which will probably involve a defence policy for all of Europe rather than many individual ones as we currently have. We have to question whether independent action, **such** as Britain is undertaking in the Gulf at the moment, will be permitted.

Law making would also be decided by a central European body, and the institutions which currently pass laws in Britain for Britain would be altered. This is because any laws passed would be binding for the whole of Europe. There will undoubtedly be a loss of sovereignty for Britain in a single Europe, though naturally not a complete loss, as we would have equal rights to determine Europe's future as the other members. The event of a single European state would entail Britain losing power over its own affairs in a number of different areas, and would make us partly responsible for all of Europe, rather than wholly responsible for Britain. It would also however deprive us of the right to independently govern ourselves and manage our affairs, as we have effectively been doing for over 200 years.

## Example of the use of *for instance* in a broader context in UGCD 102

### Context

First and foremost, plastic bags are not biodegradable. They cannot be broken down by microorganisms and therefore remain in refuse dumps for so many years. Research shows that plastic bags have an average lifespan of 400 years. Their continuous presence on the earth surface causes pollution of the environment. This poses a lot of health hazards to the lives of people in the society. Since it is non-biodegradable, people resort to burning them which emits harmful radiations. These radiations causes respiratory disorders and are also capable of causing cancer. So in order to have a well ventilated environment, the use of plastic bags should be banned.

Also, plastic bags endanger the lives of aquatic species. In the advanced cities, people who live closer to the sea mostly dump heaps of plastic bags into the sea. Most of these bags contain harmful chemicals which are dangerous to the health of the animals in the sea. This can result in the death of the animals. Also these plastic bags looks like feed for some aquatic animals which make them into taking them into their systems. For example, the plastic bag looks like a jelly fish which is also the only source of food for the sea turtle. So when the turtle takes it in, it choked at the throat resulting in its death. Therefore banning the use of plastic bags will go a long way to saving the lives of endangered aquatic species.

Equally important, apart from plastic bags causing harm to aquatic lives, they also cause soil infertility. The continuous dumping of plastic bags on the soil surface leads to soil infertility. This makes it difficult for plants to grow. Human beings and animals also depend directly on these plants for their survival. **For** instance, man cultivates crops on the soil for his

## Context

consumption and animals too feed on the fruits and leaves of plants. In the case where the soil is infertile, there would be low crop yield leading to famine. To protect the soil from losing its fertility, banning the use of plastic bags is the best alternative.

In conclusion, the use of plastic bags is bringing a lot of negative effects to the environment. Plastic bags cannot be decomposed and their continuous presence on the earth surface causes a lot of health hazards. They also endanger the lives of aquatic species. The presence of plastic bags on the soil surface for a long time would render the soil infertile. So to save the environment from these dangers, plastic bags should be banned.

### **Example of the use of *for instance* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 0011.3**

## Context

An obvious problem with a single Europe of course would be the language barrier, should we learn a common language? There is no way that people should allow their individual languages to be lost, and therefore it would have to be clearly defined as to where and when the common language should be used.

There are many advantages in a single Europe, such as an increase in trade which would be allowed free movement, especially with the new tax laws that have already been planned for 1992.

## Context

If a single Europe could be created then the scope of its success would be enormous, the international cooperation would be amazing, something for others to envy all around the world. But there are so many factors that could prevent it from happening. Things like a single currency **for** instance would probably be totally unacceptable for the average person at present. Yet people adapt and it eventually would be accepted over time with the passing of generations.

### **Example of the use of *in other words* in a broader context in UGCD 2**

## Context

### UGCD-2

Plastics with the passage of time have become a part of our everyday life. From the smallest toffee wrappers to huge containers possess an amount of plastic in them. Plastic bags as a product of plastics are widely used all over the world due to its convenience. Despite all the benefits plastic bags have, they are one of the major causes of environmental pollution. Besides many countries such as China have taken the step to either ban or Levi tax on the usage of it. It has become a necessity to ban plastic bags before the ruin our planet completely due to some reasons enumerated below.

Plastic bags have non-bio degradable properties, **in** other words, they cannot be broken down by natural acts and organisms. This means when plastic bags are carelessly discarded on the

## Context

land it does not deteriorate and also constitute chemicals making the soil lose its fertility causing environmental pollution. Studies shown that over one trillion plastic bags are used world-wide every single year. Its disposal is the fear and if burnt releases harmful gasses into the atmosphere which causes serious health issues when inhaled. Moreover as these plastic waste heaps it becomes a threat to the ecosystem as both plants and animals are endangered. In the case of plants, as the soil loses its fertility due to the inability of disposed plastic bags in the soil to degrade, plant yield is greatly affected. Also in the case of animals, when these plastic bags are disposed carelessly, dogs, cows and cats may feed on it as food blocking their digestive system leading to their slow death and untimely death if it is not noticed on time.

Plastic bags also pose threat to marine life, wild life and human health. As most of the disposed plastic bags all over the world end up in the sea if not heaped on the land, marine and wildlife such as birds, fishes and sea turtles mistake it for food and consume them. As they consume it, they move through the food web then finally into humans who eat fish together with other marine animals. Besides, these plastic bags have some pollutant such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) which affect the proper functioning of human hormones. As humans consume these marine lives who unknowingly fed on waste plastic bags in the sea, it ends up affecting them health wise leading to serious diseases and a case in point is cancer. This causes the malfunctioning of certain hormones.

In addition, plastic bags are the major reason for blocked sewage and drainage systems in the cities. Moreover, as many people carelessly drop these plastic bags after been used shows

## Context

the high probability that they will end up in drains such as gutters retarding the free flow of liquids passing through them. It makes the gutters clogged resulting in floods consequently, disrupting the normal lives of people. To add to this, if the liquids that flows in these gutters are retarded from flowing freely, it becomes stagnant and turns to be a breeding place of harmful insects such as mosquitoes. Persons who live close to these gutters, which are now places harmful insects breed due to the use of plastic bags, have their health threatened. For instance, if youthful people stay around any drainage system which is clogged due to plastic bags causing stagnancy, mosquitoes will definitely breed there, making these youth prone to malaria. Moreover this does not only threaten the health of these youth, but also the economy of the country since they will take a number of days off, if they are tested positive for malaria. Hence, low productivity making the county's economy a shaky one.

### **Example of the use of *in other words* in a broader context in ICLEUMRQ 0035.1**

## Context

wing by the sixth week after conception: What this in essence means

is that this unborn body is growing, breathing, and functioning inside

the body of another. **In** other words it not only is beginning to take

human form, but is also taking on all aspects of human life. Biological

Context

proofs such as these have been enough, indeed, to help Louisiana pass

**Example of the use of *as mentioned earlier* in a broader context in UGCD 10**

Context

Plastics have become an entrenched part of our lives since their introduction in the 50s. Plastics are used for constructional purposes, manufacturing of electronic products, equipment, furniture and bags. The usage and disposal of plastic bags are a matter of great controversy with countries such as Rwanda banning the use of the plastic bags in 2008. The negative effects plastic bags outnumber the positive effects and hence should be banned.

Plastic bags have an adverse effect on both terrestrial and aquatic bodies. From the United Nations (UN) environment document reposition, 1 to 5 trillion plastic bags are produced annually with less than 5% of the amount being recycled. The rest of the plastic bags produced are either dumped at landfills where they decompose or are incinerated, releasing toxic chemicals into the environment. Also, the light and buoyant nature of plastics makes it easy for plastic bags to end up in the ocean. In the ocean, plastic bags decompose into tiny plastics called microplastics from exposure to sunlight and air. These microplastics kill oceanic creatures that feed on them.

Furthermore, plastic bags clog drains resulting in floods. **As** mentioned earlier on, plastic bags are light and buoyant in nature and as such easily find their way into waterways where

## Context

they collect and eventually clog water paths. In 2002, Bangladesh banned plastic bags after reports had shown that the flood in July of that year was aided by plastic bags that had clogged the drains. From the UN environment report, Kibera, a large informal community in Kenya has seen a significant change in the flow of water in the drains after the ban of plastic bags in Kenya.

As much as plastic bags have adverse effects on the environment, alternatives to plastic bags are not safe either. Research conducted by the United Kingdom environment agency in 2011 states that, "It takes more than four times as much energy to manufacture a paper bag as it does to manufacture a plastic bag". To produce paper bags, forest trees are felled, cut and heated under pressure at high temperatures. This process harms the environment as trees are felled and toxic chemicals that cause air pollution and water pollution are used. Plastic bags, however, are produced from the waste product of oil refining.

In conclusion, it can be observed that both plastic bags and alternatives are harmful to the environment although the harm caused by plastic bags is significantly greater as such plastic bags should be banned.



**Example of the use of *noted above* in a broader context in ICLEUSMICH 0032**

Context

An invention of the 20th century which I think has significantly changed people's lives is the invention of the airplane. The extent to which this invention has altered people's lives is astronomical. The airplane opened doors to traveling and also broadened people's perceptions of the entire world. It also introduced what seemed a completely impossible concept which no human is capable of doing without a machine: the concept of flying.

Before the invention of the airplane, long distance traveling was a very difficult, time consuming task. For this reason people did not travel extremely long distances and missed the opportunity of visiting countries with cultures very different from their own. One could travel by boat but this was inconvenient and often dangerous because of various things like disease, hunger, and threatening weather; also as **noted** above, it was extremely time consuming. Because of the lack of long distance travel people often had a very ethnocentric and limited concept of the world. I have learned a lot about my own culture just from being in Spain and that is the only foreign country I have ever visited. I can admit that before I came to Spain I was very ignorant about other cultures. Even though I would watch the news and read about other cultures I still did not have the opportunity to witness it first hand.

The invention of the airplane has opened many doors and one other door is international relations. Since the invention of the airplane the world has increased close contact between political systems, and international business endeavors. The frequency that which foreign countries are able to communicate and negotiate face to face has improved drastically the

## Context

establishment of international trade. The airplane has also basically speeded up the whole postal communication system also. Life with airplanes is more rapid paced.

### **Example of the use of *states* in a broader context in UGCD 10**

## Context

Plastic bags have an adverse effect on both terrestrial and aquatic bodies. From the United Nations (UN) environment document reposition, 1 to 5 trillion plastic bags are produced annually with less than 5% of the amount being recycled. The rest of the plastic bags produced are either dumped at landfills where they decompose or are incinerated, releasing toxic chemicals into the environment. Also, the light and buoyant nature of plastics makes it easy for plastic bags to end up in the ocean. In the ocean, plastic bags decompose into tiny plastics called microplastics from exposure to sunlight and air. These microplastics kill oceanic creatures that feed on them.

Furthermore, plastic bags clog drains resulting in floods. As mentioned earlier on, plastic bags are light and buoyant in nature and as such easily find their way into waterways where they collect and eventually clog water paths. In 2002, Bangladesh banned plastic bags after reports had shown that the flood in July of that year was aided by plastic bags that had clogged the drains. From the UN environment report, Kibera, a large informal community

## Context

in Kenya has seen a significant change in the flow of water in the drains after the ban of plastic bags in Kenya.

As much as plastic bags have adverse effects on the environment, alternatives to plastic bags are not safe either. Research conducted by the United Kingdom environment agency in 2011 **states** that, "It takes more than four times as much energy to manufacture a paper bag as it does to manufacture a plastic bag". To produce paper bags, forest trees are felled, cut and heated under pressure at high temperatures. This process harms the environment as trees are felled and toxic chemicals that cause air pollution and water pollution are used. Plastic bags, however, are produced from the waste product of oil refining.

In conclusion, it can be observed that both plastic bags and alternatives are harmful to the environment although the harm caused by plastic bags is significantly greater as such plastic bags should be banned.

### **Example of the use of *states* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 0001.3**

## Context

We are experiencing today a definite movement towards an ever closer and more integrated Europe, principally through the creation of the European Communities i.e. the European Economic Community (EEC); the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). The passing of the Single European Act

## Context

1986 has given the concept of an open and common market a new lease of life by adding much detail to existing provisions in the EEC Treaty. Since the Single European Act 1986 the completion of such an open common market (ie one free market for Europe with no trade barriers) can now be seen as a reality. However, even though Britain has joined the European Communities and accepted its affects through the passing of the European Communities Act 1972, there has arguably been a very high price paid. This of course is the loss of absolute supremacy for the English Parliament.

The Orthodox theory of parliamentary legislative supremacy **states** that Parliament cannot restrict it's own legislative omnicompetence. That is, Parliament today cannot pass laws which limit tomorrow's Parliament's legislative powers, be they restrictions on manner and form, or as in the case of the European Communities Act, restrictions on subject matter. Inherent in the founding treaties as amended is the idea that European Community law must prevail over national law. Therefore, in the case of a contradiction between the two, European Community law must be abided by. This first aspect of Britain's membership of the European Communities has thus already shown a restriction on Britain's legal system: that of the doctrine of implied repeal. The court's view of this argument is of utmost importance; however the judges have not had to decide this point as yet. The orthodox Lord Denning has described Britain's Accession as a "farewell to our sovereignty" on the one hand and yet on the other hand he has said that theoretically conferred powers can be retained, even though in practice it would be virtually impossible.

## Context

The radical theorists would agree that it is "farewell to our sovereignty" completely. They believe that if Parliament is indeed supreme then it should be able to legislate on absolutely anything, including putting legal limitations on itself. Such fettering is permanent according to the radical theory and the passing of the European Communities Act 1972 is one example of entrenchment (or rather, it has not been proved otherwise).

I tend to agree with the radical view that there must be some restrictions, for example, there must always be rules laid down as to the manner and form of Parliament, otherwise anybody could pass any law and that would simply be ludicrous. I believe that the same applies to the fettering of Parliament's powers as regards subject matter. Also, it is all too important to consider the practicalities. Apart from Greenland, no other country has tried to leave the European Communities (and Greenland was an exception anyway because its reason for leaving was a regaining of independence). Thus, for any of the present members, especially those long-standing members, to leave now there would be an indeterminable legal upheaval. This would be especially so in Britain's case as it has a common law system and has adopted European Community precedents. To untangle the law of Britain from that of the European Community would thus be almost impossible. However, it must be emphasised that contrary to the way the title of this essay could be construed, Britain's Accession has not caused a total submission of its supremacy; but, like all other Member States, it has only given up some of its powers and thus supremacy in particular areas to the European Communities.

### Example of the use of *according to* in a broader context in UGCD 103

#### Context

To begin, plastic bags are very harmful to wildlife and marine life. Plastic bags are not disposed of properly. As a result, plastic bags are carried into the ocean and other water bodies by rain which goes a long way to affect marine life. Marine creatures often mistake plastics for food. When the plastics are taken in by the marine creatures affects their digestive system and causes health issues like infections, starvation, painful intestinal blockages or suffocating to death.

Secondly, plastic bags are very harmful to human health. Plastic bags contain harmful substances. Should plastic be located in our digestive tract, absorption of some elements which is necessary may be affected leading to the inability of maintaining proper health. This is also because toxins are released into food and when we eat causes diseases like cancer. Also, when plastics are carried away, our gutters get choked. Choked gutters are a breeding place for mosquitoes give out leading to illnesses like malaria and cholera.

Furthermore, plastic bags make waste management very difficult. **According** to studies, plastics take 1000 years to decay and as a result, improper disposal of waste plastic adds up to the complexity that already exists with management of wastes therefore, plastics now have to be recycled at a cost, because when they are combusted too, they will produce carbon monoxide which is harmful to humans especially. It is costly to recycle plastic waste. This discourages entrepreneurs from investing in waste management, this leads to a rise in pollution.

## Context

Plastics pollute our land and water. Plastic bags are the most common litter in our environment. They can be seen hanging on trees, seen at the beaches, floating in water etc. The wind easily carries plastic bags because they are light in weight. These plastic bags travel long distances to pollute our environment. Plastic bags can cause flooding in our communities. Although they look small in nature. Discarded plastic bags clog water drainage channel and sewers in cities and when it rains get waterlogged because the rainwater cannot pass through clogged sewage pipes.

With all the reasons stated in the numerous paragraphs above, it is obvious that the move for plastics to be banned is a good and reasonable one. Its effects on humans, wildlife and aquatic animals are without doubt, dangerous and displeasing. Also, its contribution to the stress in waste management has proven to be large, causing both economic and social distress to countries. Plastics have become therefore more of a harm than a blessing and it is high time its production and usage came to a halt by placing a ban on it, through a legislation.

### **Example of the use of *according to* in a broader context in 00005.3**

## Context

Perhaps it is not an unfair image. Although Margaret Thatcher is no longer leading the country, the position of most British politicians on the European issue appears extremely ambiguous. Very few members of parliament are willing to openly and unreservedly affirm their support for the idea of a fully integrated Europe. This could stem from two reasons:

## Context

first of all, their answerability to the British electorate, which still seems wary about the idea of a Britain fully incorporated into Europe, and secondly, the belief that their own role will be diminished by the abdication of sovereignty to the European Parliament in Brussels.

This final point brings out a strong emotional response on the part of the British and, I suspect, represents one of the core aspects of the present government's apparent fear of being steam rolled into a more united Europe.

Inevitably, it will involve a transfer of sovereignty which will have different political implications for each member state. The relocation of power in the European Parliament and the direct elections held in each country to elect their members has created a parallel body to the national leadership in each country which, in many cases, has the theoretical power to overrule and impose its decisions on the member states. According to Article 3, it has been entrusted with various tasks- the elimination of customs duties, the establishment of common customs tariffs, the creation of the free movement of people, services and capital within the European Community, agricultural and transport policy, the coordination of economic procedures, the establishment of a fund for investment purposes and a body to coordinate overseas states policy. All these decisions were previously the domain of national governments.



## Context

In Britain's case, her traditional suspicion of continental Europe seems to have created a dual policy- a theoretical acceptance of the need to abdicate this power to Brussels but a refusal to implement it through her policies.

Admittedly, Europe's history would not seem to offer much hope for the success of such a venture. All such past attempts have foundered on the thorny issue of national interest as present attempts at creating a common agricultural policy have shown. Yet, British fears do not seem to be particularly influenced by the historical perspective. It is rather a present conviction, perhaps encouraged by the British politicians, that Brussels would adopt policies not in the British interest. Given that each country has equal representation and will participate equally in the decision making process, this seems a curious anomaly. The effects will be equal throughout Europe, each gaining and losing according to its own particular position but no one nation having total domination over the others.

### **Example of the use of *argue* in a broader context in UGCD 61**

## Context

In spite of the overwhelming impact it has on economies, environmental experts argue that the cost and energy consumed by recycling and the irreversible damage of nonbiodegradable plastic causes our environment is even more expensive. According to an article published by Julian Ambrose in *The Guardian* on 13th October, 2019, the battle to reduce plastic waste

## Context

could become a quarter of a billion dollars more expensive every year as the cost of recycled plastic soars. The alternative would rather be costly.

Furthermore, environmental cost is the other basis of argument on whether plastic bags should be banned or not. Plastic is a nonbiodegradable material and it takes between 20 to 1,000 years to decompose depending on its thickness. Over a trillion pieces are used worldwide every year according to the United Nations Environmental Agency(UNEA) and out of this number, a billion pieces end up on our streets and in the oceans. Also 46,000 bits of plastic float in every square mile of the sea(UNEA). The bits that find their way into the sea breakdown into smaller microplastics which can harm aquatic life. All these data gives a clear picture of how devastating plastic pollution is to our environment and banning seems to be a tangible

On the other hand, banning plastic bags takes us back to the use of paper bags. Critics **argue** that although paper bags are degradable, their impact on climate change is alarming. Substituting plastic with paper bags will mean more tree felling and as a result, there will be fewer plants to utilize the worlds growing carbon emissions and eventually a global warming.

In summary, both positions on the banning of plastic bags through the economic and environmental cost prespectives have reasonable and solid assertions. This notwithstanding does not supersede the fact that action needs to be taken to reduce plastic pollution. The most potent and fair measure is to reuse whether plastic or paper bags. Tree will be saved, littering

Context

would be minimal and pollution would reduce drastically. This measure would yield better results.

**Example of the use of *argue* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 002.3**

Context

There is no doubt an integrated market would have multiple benefits for the countries involved. Businesses and other trading organizations are preparing themselves for 1992, and the single market. Trade will be easier, with no frontier controls allowing free flowing transportation of merchandise. There will be business booms and free competition with the removal of protective practices, along with greater freedom to travel.

Many Britons would consider Europe has affected Britain too much already, with decimalization, the new Euro-passports and now the pound sterling being tied to the ECU. They may feel Britain is being pulled into Europe. Further changes are forecast for Britain, effecting day to day matters, to create a "European Standard". This may make Britons resentful of Europe and tired of "1992 and all that". A single market requires one central institution to co-ordinate all movements of goods and policies. Will the people of Britain be prepared to give up their government and be directed from Strasbourg or Brussels?. Many people would not. Will the day come when the pound sterling is taken over by the ECU? It may well- but will the Britons have a chance to voice their opinions and views?

## Context

Europe may **argue** that the benefits from a single integrated market would far outweigh any national drawbacks. As the date draws nearer, the awareness of Britons to Europe must increase. They must look into the future and consider possible effects. Will Britain be drawn into Europe against its will? Perhaps as more of Britain becomes "Eurofied", Britons will wake up and see their sovereignty is being taken away. Britain has never geographically been a part of Europe. We are in the EEC and we should be able to benefit from free trade. We have been an island for too long- being independent and able to stand alone. We have a sound democratic process, which many people would not want to give this up. A fully integrated market with Britain as a full member would be to the detriment of our political system and consequently leading to a loss of sovereignty.

## Example of the use of *and* in a broader context in **UGCD 103**

## Context

Secondly, plastic bags are very harmful to human health. Plastic bags contain harmful substances. Should plastic be located in our digestive tract, absorption of some elements which is necessary may be affected leading to the inability of maintaining proper health. This is also because toxins are released into food and when we eat causes diseases like cancer. Also, when plastics are carried away, our gutters get chocked. Chocked gutters are a breeding place for mosquitoes give out leading to illnesses like malaria and cholera.

## Context

Furthermore, plastic bags make waste management very difficult. According to studies, plastics take 1000 years to decay and as a result, improper disposal of waste plastic adds up to the complexity that already exists with management of wastes therefore, plastics now have to be recycled at a cost, because when they are combusted too, they will produce carbon monoxide which is harmful to humans especially. It is costly to recycle plastic waste. This discourages entrepreneurs from investing in waste management, this leads to a rise in pollution.

Plastics pollute our land **and** water. Plastic bags are the most common litter in our environment. They can be seen hanging on trees, seen at the beaches, floating in water etc. The wind easily carries plastic bags because they are light in weight. These plastic bags travel long distances to pollute our environment. Plastic bags can cause flooding in our communities **Ð**though they look small in nature. Discarded plastic bags clog water drainage channel **and** sewers in cities **and** when it rains get waterlogged because the rainwater cannot pass through clogged sewage pipes.

With all the reasons stated in the numerous paragraphs above, it is obvious that the move for plastics to be banned is a good and reasonable one. Its effects on humans, wildlife and aquatic animals are without doubt, dangerous and displeasing. Also, its contribution to the stress in waste management has proven to be large, causing both economic and social distress to countries. Plastics have become therefore more of a harm than a blessing and it is high time its production and usage came to a halt by placing a ban on it, through a legislation.

### Example of the use of *and* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 00005.3

#### Context

The Single European Act, signed by the twelve European Community member states in February 1986, represents a commitment by all the member countries to achieve a single market in goods, services and capital before 1992. Its potential as an organisation is huge. With over 312,000,000 inhabitants, it will constitute the largest single market yet to have been created, its gross product being equal to that of the United States and double that of the Soviet Union. As the title implies, one of the greatest stumbling blocks in Britain towards fuller integration with Europe is the belief that it will imply a loss of sovereignty for the elected government. In the course of this essay, we shall attempt to analyse whether this is a belief founded in reality and, if it is, why it should cause such fear.

The Single European Act can be analysed according to three broad areas. Firstly, it reaffirms the Treaty of Rome's original aims- to remove all internal, physical, technical and fiscal barriers, creating one external frontier with uniform standards and rates within the market. Secondly, it reallocates the powers as they were laid out by the Treaty of Rome, abolishing the right to veto in the Council of Ministers. Thirdly, it recognises the position of the European Council (not originally included in the treaty), gives the role of foreign policy creation to the European Policy Corporation (EPC), changes the voting procedure for the Council of Ministers and makes the European Parliament a directly elected body. These are quite significant changes and are aimed at facilitating the transition from the partial integration which exists at the moment into fully integrated economic and monetary union.

## Context

Britain's reputation in Europe on these issues is not an enviable one. If her image in the foreign press represents any kind of standard, she is seen variously as the most obstructive, bellicose, insular power, thwarting the path of progress, with Margaret Thatcher, the most insular Brit of all, at the helm.

Perhaps it is not an unfair image. Although Margaret Thatcher is no longer leading the country, the position of most British politicians on the European issue appears extremely ambiguous. Very few members of parliament are willing to openly and unreservedly affirm their support for the idea of a fully integrated Europe. This could stem from two reasons: first of all, their answerability to the British electorate, which still seems wary about the idea of a Britain fully incorporated into Europe, and secondly, the belief that their own role will be diminished by the abdication of sovereignty to the European Parliament in Brussels.

### **Example of the use of *on the other hand* in a broader context in UGCD 145**

## Context

Waste plastic bags destroy our environment tremendously. Due to its non-biodegradable nature, waste plastic bags end up destroying the environment if not properly disposed. For example, in Ghana figures estimate that only 2 per cent of the plastic waste generated yearly are recycled and the remaining 98 per cent find their place with the waste management companies who send them to landfill sites, water bodies and other open places. Some of these

## Context

waste materials are also burnt which pollutes the air and the ozone layer as well. This clearly indicates that plastic bags end up deteriorating the environment in every possible way.

Waste plastic bags in our environment is a major reason for choking the drains and sewers, especially during rains. This results in floods and disrupts the normal lives of people. Over 150 lives perished on the night of Wednesday, June 3, 2015 due to a flood that occurred across the capital of Ghana. This was a huge blow to many families and the nation as a whole. In recent times, waste plastic bags have been the main reason for choking the drains, so it is unlikely that this situation will end if an action is not taken to curb this problem.

Waste plastic bags also have a damaging effect on the health of individuals. It is obvious that plastic bags are more durable than paper bags and also promote food safety. On the other hand, they pose a lot of threats to human lives. The production of plastic bags releases toxic substances into the atmosphere. This is the main cause of birth defects, cancer, asthma, bronchitis and other deadly diseases. This calls for appropriate measures to be implemented in order to sustain the lives of people.

Although the use of plastic bags is becoming a huge threat for all of us, this situation has been underestimated and overlooked by many. This is because people do not focus on the dangers in using plastic bags in their everyday life. Today, people keep using plastic bags due to its convenience. Some countries are better off now after placing a ban on the use of



## Context

plastic bags. This is a call for governments, firms and individuals all over the globe to play a unified role to forbid the use of plastic bags to promote safety in our environment and earth.

### **Example of the use of *on the other hand* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 0001.3**

## Context

We are experiencing today a definite movement towards an ever closer and more integrated Europe, principally through the creation of the European Communities ie the European Economic Community (EEC); the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). The passing of the Single European Act 1986 has given the concept of an open and common market a new lease of life by adding much detail to existing provisions in the EEC Treaty. Since the Single European Act 1986 the completion of such an open common market( ie one free market for Europe with no trade barriers) can now be seen as a reality. However, even though Britain has joined the European Communities and accepted its affects through the passing of the European Communities Act 1972, there has arguably been a very high price paid. This of course is the loss of absolute supremacy for the English Parliament.

The Orthodox theory of parliamentary legislative supremacy states that Parliament cannot restrict it's own legislative omncompetence. That is, Parliament today cannot pass laws which limit tomorrow's Parliament's legislative powers, be they restrictions on manner and form, or as in the case of the European Communities Act, restrictions on subject matter.

## Context

Inherent in the founding treaties as amended is the idea that European Community law must prevail over national law. Therefore, in the case of a contradiction between the two, European Community law must be abided by. This first aspect of Britain's membership of the European Communities has thus already shown a restriction on Britain's legal system: that of the doctrine of implied repeal. The court's view of this argument is of utmost importance; however the judges have not had to decide this point as yet. The orthodox Lord Denning has described Britain's Accession as a "farewell to our sovereignty" on the one hand and yet **on** the other hand he has said that theoretically conferred powers can be retained, even though in practice it would be virtually impossible.

The radical theorists would agree that it is "farewell to our sovereignty" completely. They believe that if Parliament is indeed supreme then it should be able to legislate on absolutely anything, including putting legal limitations on itself. Such fettering is permanent according to the radical theory and the passing of the European Communities Act 1972 is one example of entrenchment (or rather, it has not been proved otherwise).

I tend to agree with the radical view that there must be some restrictions, for example, there must always be rules laid down as to the manner and form of Parliament, otherwise anybody could pass any law and that would simply be ludicrous. I believe that the same applies to the fettering of Parliament's powers as regards subject matter. Also, it is all too important to consider the practicalities. Apart from Greenland, no other country has tried to leave the European Communities (and Greenland was an exception anyway because its reason for leaving was a regaining of independence). Thus, for any of the present members, especially

## Context

those long- standing members, to leave now there would be an indeterminable legal upheaval. This would be especially so in Britain's case as it has a common law system and has adopted European Community precedents. To untangle the law of Britain from that of the European Community would thus be almost impossible. However, it must be emphasised that contrary to the way the title of this essay could be construed, Britain's Accession has not caused a total submission of its supremacy; but, like all other Member States, it has only given up some of it's powers and thus supremacy in particular areas to the European Communities.

### **Example of the use of *consequently* in a broader context in Corpus 25**

## Context

Firstly, plastic bags are highly detrimental to animal health particularly marine creatures. Most of these bags end up i our water bodies hence they have become a threat to these animals because while feeding they ingest the pieces of the plastics together with their food. As a result of the indigestion of the plastic particles, the pieces get trapped in their digestive system, thus causing grave health issues and death in extreme cases. Also, it has been proven that sometimes, when animals swallow plastic bags, it gets stuck in their throat and chokes them to death. Marine creatures are mainly known for mistakenly swallowing plastic bags. Studies have also revealed that polyethene found in the respiratory and digestive system of bovidae has been one of the major reasons for premature animal deaths.

## Context

Additionally, plastic bags have induced the deterioration of our environment overtime. Waste plastic bags are disposed off indiscriminately into drains, bushes and also unto our streets and the ones collected by the waste management companies are dumped at landfill sites where they take around 500 years to decompose. The litter around cause land pollution and the bags that enter water bodies also cause water pollution. Plastic bags are thus destroying our environment owing to their harmful effect.

Furthermore, clogged sewers and drains are commonly caused by waste plastic bags. They get trapped in the drainage systems when they run down with water or are blown away by wind. During the rainy season specifically, clogged drains are a serious threat to human and animal life. The choked drains prevent the easy flow of water hence causing a build-up of the water. This results in floods and **consequently** a damage of properties. An example is the June 3rd, 2015 disaster in Ghana.

In conclusion, it is evident that plastic bags are extremely harmful to human beings and the environment as well. There is a pressing need to stop overlooking and underestimating the problems caused by plastic bags but rather seek to develop alternatives such as reusable cloth bags and baskets. The onus is on us to ensure a healthy environment and plastic bag usage is not and would never be the way forward.

## Example of the use of *consequently* in a broader context in Corpus 1

### Context

There is no doubt an integrated market would have multiple benefits for the countries involved. Businesses and other trading organizations are preparing themselves for 1992, and the single market. Trade will be easier, with no frontier controls allowing free flowing transportation of merchandise. There will be business booms and free competition with the removal of protective practices, along with greater freedom to travel.

Many Britons would consider Europe has affected Britain too much already, with decimalization, the new Euro-passports and now the pound sterling being tied to the ECU. They may feel Britain is being pulled into Europe. Further changes are forecast for Britain, effecting day to day matters, to create a "European Standard". This may make Britons resentful of Europe and tired of "1992 and all that". A single market requires one central institution to co-ordinate all movements of goods and policies. Will the people of Britain be prepared to give up their government and be directed from Strasbourg or Brussels?. Many people would not. Will the day come when the pound sterling is taken over by the ECU? It may well- but will the Britons have a chance to voice their opinions and views?

Europe may argue that the benefits from a single integrated market would far outweigh any national drawbacks. As the date draws nearer, the awareness of Britons to Europe must increase. They must look into the future and consider possible effects. Will Britain be drawn into Europe against its will? Perhaps as more of Britain becomes "Eurofied", Britons will wake up and see their sovereignty is being taken away. Britain has never geographically been a part of Europe. We are in the EEC and we should be able to benefit from free trade. We

## Context

have been an island for too long- being independent and able to stand alone. We have a sound democratic process, which many people would not want to give this up. A fully integrated market with Britain as a full member would be to the detriment of our political system and **consequently** leading to a loss of sovereignty.

### Example of the use of *Similarly* in a broader context in **UGCD 65**

## Context

Man should return to plastics usage of cloth paper and use bags was how the baby boomers lived in this world. We were also aware that when man returns to making paper bags, forest may be cut down. Efficient choices such as beneficial lifestyle choices like a reusable bag, carrying your water bottles, drinking the juice from your cups rather than using a straw etc, can help the society be sustainable. Bangladesh insured and you jute industry which thrived when they banned plastic bags.

Also plastic bags clog waste drainage. As a result, water gets stagnant and breeds insects such as mosquitoes which spread malaria and other diseases one can think of this also affect the water in the community.

In other countries, retailers are fined for selling plastic bags. **Similarly**, the retailers in Ghana must be fined for selling plastic bags. Those carrying plastic bags should likewise be fined.

## Context

Another strategy which can be used in the good quality plastic bags which are made available in the market must be made changeable.

There is no doubt that plastic bags have made our lives simpler from multiple points of view. We see them blowing around on the roads and they regularly wind up in streams and seas. These bags can be unsafe through creatures, for example, turtles, that digest them or choke by them, particularly in marine conditions where plastic bags look like jellyfish another eatable things.

To conclude plastic bags must be banned. This is because if they are banned it will make the environment safe for living.

## Example of the use of *similarly* in a broader context in ICLEUSMRQ 0022

### Context

right of religious freedom that a prayer would supposedly perpetuate in

actuality infringes upon it in its most fundamental definition.

The concept of God is not discourage in a public school. **Similarly,**

praying on school grounds is not a crime. The laws of the United States .

Context

Students do not have to leave their religion and beliefs at the

**Example of the use of *may* in a broader context in UGCD 1**

Context

UGCD-1

Plastic bags are one of the cheapest and most convenient way to package, carry and transport goods such as food and clothing. They are thin, light and consume less space compared to other forms of packaging such as paper bags. They are part of our modern lives. However, people are unaware of the numerous problems they present to world. Plastic bags should be banned because they cause climatic change, endanger wildlife and affects humans negatively.

Plastic bag production is a major contributor to climatic change. Plastic bags are made from plastic, which is made out from petroleum. During the production stage, the petroleum must be extracted, refined and shaped. All these processes requires large amounts of energy produced from the burning of fossil fuels. Burning of fossils release greenhouse gases. These greenhouse gases cause greenhouse effect, which trap some of the sun's warmth at the lower atmosphere of the earth. This causes a general increase in the temperature around the world and leads to climatic change. Climatic change has increased the strength of storms, changing weather patterns, droughts, ocean acidification and rise in sea levels. If this continues, the



## Context

consequences **may** be devastating and will affect the wellbeing of humans, animals and the environment.

Third, Plastic bags should also be banned because they endanger wildlife and marine life. Natural Environment estimates that about 100,000 sea turtles and other marine animals die yearly. Animals mistakenly take these plastic bags as food especially when there are small food particles on them. These animals can choke on them causing them a lot of pain and may eventually die. This may cause the animal to die of starvation or infection. Since plastic bags take over 400 years to decay, once the animal dies by eating plastic bags and decomposes, the plastic bag is released back into the environment and continues killing other wildlife. Animals can also be stranded in the plastic bags, which can cause suffocation and drowning.

Furthermore, plastic bags affect humans negatively. Plastic bags clogs sewages and storm drain, which can cause severe flooding. Flooding leads to the destruction of properties and human lives. Flooding also helps the breeding of mosquitoes and exposes people to water borne diseases as it releases toxins in rivers. This causes serious health issues to humans. Plastic bags if not disposed of well can be hazardous to children. About 20 children die of suffocation by plastic bags yearly. Children can suffocate when playing with the bag and puts over his/her head, they may fall into them or even choke when swallowing it.

## Example of the use of *may* in a broader context in UGCD 1

### Context

There is no doubt an integrated market would have multiple benefits for the countries involved. Businesses and other trading organizations are preparing themselves for 1992, and the single market. Trade will be easier, with no frontier controls allowing free flowing transportation of merchandise. There will be business booms and free competition with the removal of protective practices, along with greater freedom to travel.

Many Britons would consider Europe has affected Britain too much already, with decimalization, the new Euro-passports and now the pound sterling being tied to the ECU. They may feel Britain is being pulled into Europe. Further changes are forecast for Britain, effecting day to day matters, to create a "European Standard". This may make Britons resentful of Europe and tired of "1992 and all that". A single market requires one central institution to co-ordinate all movements of goods and policies. Will the people of Britain be prepared to give up their government and be directed from Strasbourg or Brussels?. Many people would not. Will the day come when the pound sterling is taken over by the ECU? It may well- but will the Britons have a chance to voice their opinions and views?

Europe **may** argue that the benefits from a single integrated market would far outweigh any national drawbacks. As the date draws nearer, the awareness of Britons to Europe must increase. They must look into the future and consider possible effects. Will Britain be drawn into Europe against its will? Perhaps as more of Britain becomes "Eurofied", Britons will wake up and see their sovereignty is being taken away. Britain has never geographically been a part of Europe. We are in the EEC and we should be able to benefit from free trade. We

## Context

have been an island for too long- being independent and able to stand alone. We have a sound democratic process, which many people would not want to give this up. A fully integrated market with Britain as a full member would be to the detriment of our political system and consequently leading to a loss of sovereignty.

### Example of the use of *almost* in a broader context in **UGCD 10**

## Context

Over the years, people needed something to enable them carry their possessions around with ease, thus bags were created as a solution to this problem. Before the invention of plastic bags, paper bags were being used but, it did not totally solve the problem. Paper bags easily tore when loaded with heavy or wet stuffs, they were not durable and were not resistant to natural decay, the production of paper bags also led to an alarming increase of trees being chopped yearly, leading to deforestation. There was a need to create something that would solve both problems therefore the invention of plastic bags. It was considered an alternative to paper bags however plastic bags though durable and resistant to natural decay brought a host of problems that proved dangerous to the natural world and human life. The introduction of plastic bags have done more harm than good to society and should be banned.

There is no denying the fact that plastic bags have proved effective for carrying goods from place to place with ease, can be used several times for different purposes, cheap, durable and long lasting but, compared to the harms plastic bags have had on the natural environment

## Context

has proved to outweigh the benefits of plastic bags. The same properties of plastic bags which helped solve a host of problems gave way to other problems such as pollution and, endangering wildlife which have proven to be detrimental to the survival of the earth.

Plastic bags have caused pollution in water bodies, land and the air. Plastic bags are pollutants that have degraded life in the oceans, land and the air as well. The chemical structure plastic bags make them resistant to degradation and the ineffective disposal of plastic bags have led to high rate of pollution in the environment today. Due to high resistance to natural decay, plastic waste have accumulated over the years as there are no effective ways of disposing them. There are more plastic waste in our ocean bodies and they keep increasing as the years go by since they are in high demand due to their durable nature and how cheap they are. Every year tons of plastic waste are washed into the ocean and they pollute the ocean. Also, when dumped at refuse dumps, the organic waste decomposes but plastic wastes take almost a 1000 years to decompose, therefore the land cannot be cultivated for agricultural purposes, thereby making the land a wasteland. In finding permanent avenues to get rid of plastic bags, burn them and the gases released causing the greenhouse effect and depletion of the ozone layer.

Also, plastic waste endanger wildlife and human life. Plastic bags are made from chemicals that are harmful to organic life on earth. Chemicals from plastic waste in landfills seep into the ground depleting the fertility of the land as it is poisonous to organic matter in the soil as well as seep into groundwater which is distributed to homes for consumption and other purposes and in the long run cause health complications. Moreover, plastic wastes in oceans

## Context

and water bodies pose a threat to the survival of marine life as fishes and other sea creatures are caught in plastic bags and usually suffocate to death. Their habitats are also destroyed as the oceans are polluted and the release of harmful chemicals from the plastic bags harm these creatures as well.

All in all the negative impact far outweigh the positive impact plastic bags have had on the environment and should be banned. There are other alternatives that are far safer and healthier for the environment than plastic bags such as non woven and woven polypropylene bags which are safer for the environment. Laws should be entrenched and enforced against the use of plastic bags. With these solutions, the environment will be safer from the toxic harm that plastic bags pose on the environment.

### **Example of the use of *almost* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 0001.3**

## Context

The Orthodox theory of parliamentary legislative supremacy states that Parliament cannot restrict its own legislative omniscience. That is, Parliament today cannot pass laws which limit tomorrow's Parliament's legislative powers, be they restrictions on manner and form, or as in the case of the European Communities Act, restrictions on subject matter. Inherent in the founding treaties as amended is the idea that European Community law must

## Context

prevail over national law. Therefore, in the case of a contradiction between the two, European Community law must be abided by. This first aspect of Britain's membership of the European Communities has thus already shown a restriction on Britain's legal system: that of the doctrine of implied repeal. The court's view of this argument is of utmost importance; however the judges have not had to decide this point as yet. The orthodox Lord Denning has described Britain's Accession as a "farewell to our sovereignty" on the one hand and yet on the other hand he has said that theoretically conferred powers can be retained, even though in practice it would be virtually impossible.

The radical theorists would agree that it is "farewell to our sovereignty" completely. They believe that if Parliament is indeed supreme then it should be able to legislate on absolutely anything, including putting legal limitations on itself. Such fettering is permanent according to the radical theory and the passing of the European Communities Act 1972 is one example of entrenchment (or rather, it has not been proved otherwise).

I tend to agree with the radical view that there must be some restrictions, for example, there must always be rules laid down as to the manner and form of Parliament, otherwise anybody could pass any law and that would simply be ludicrous. I believe that the same applies to the fettering of Parliament's powers as regards subject matter. Also, it is all too important to consider the practicalities. Apart from Greenland, no other country has tried to leave the European Communities (and Greenland was an exception anyway because its reason for leaving was a regaining of independence). Thus, for any of the present members, especially those long-standing members, to leave now there would be an indeterminable legal

## Context

upheaval. This would be especially so in Britain's case as it has a common law system and has adopted European Community precedents. To untangle the law of Britain from that of the European Community would thus be **almost** impossible. However, it must be emphasised that contrary to the way the title of this essay could be construed, Britain's Accession has not caused a total submission of its supremacy; but, like all other Member States, it has only given up some of its powers and thus supremacy in particular areas to the European Communities.

### **Example of the use of *approximately* in a broader context in UGCD 111**

## Context

To begin, environmental pollution. Plastic bags have huge impact on land and water. The inability of people to properly dispose of plastics have affected the environment negatively. Plastics do not undergo the natural process of decomposition due to its non-biodegradable properties; hence, it paves the way to severe environmental pollution, spoils the soil and its fertility. Not only do plastic bags fill up our landfill sites where they will remain forever more, but people throw them into the streets. They accept plastic bags when they do not need to and once they are out of the shops, they take out the items and litter the streets with the unwanted plastic bags. This plastic bags get into our water bodies and pollute them. Gutters get choked up with plastic bags when the wind blows.

## Context

Also, Humans and animals suffer. It is very obvious that, this plastic bags would affect living things. Every plastic bag which looks attractive are toxic making food products harmful. For instance, in Ghana, food vendors sell hot food in plastic bags which is harmful to consumers. The heat from the food melts the chemicals that is very dangerous for human consumption. Used bags that are thrown onto the roads are consumed by animals such as cows, goats since they think it is edible. This can cause the animals to choke which can lead to illnesses and eventually death.

Furthermore, poor waste management. In Ghana, many people have poor waste management skills. **Approximately** 18% of plastics are recycled. Their Inability to manage wastes have left the rest in choking drains, polluting the soil, land and water. Plastics when burnt give out very harmful chemicals such as carbon monoxide and sulfur dioxide which is very harmful to humans when inhaled into the body.

To conclude. The banning of plastics bags does not mean it will end totally. This will only control individual use of plastics bags because people are irresponsible when it comes to the disposal thus causing environmental pollution. Banning the use of plastics will reduce the exposure of man to a harmful environment. Paper bags and other recycled products can be used.



**Example of the use of *approximately* in a broader context in ICLEUSSCU 0010.2**

Context

When people sit down to watch a television program that has sex in it, they do not realize that somewhere a child could be watching that same program. The most common time for a child to watch a program that should be screened from them is when dad is at work and mom is in the kitchen cooking or cleaning. Children starting at age four, generally watch what looks interesting to them. Children like to watch what they call "Big people shows". Those kinds of shows not only interest the children but make the children to want to experiment and do what the people on the shows do. Watching "Big people shows" makes the child feel older and grown up. Parents are too busy in the nineties providing for their family, cooking, cleaning, and socializing to know what their child is watching on television all of the time. Also, most children have televisions of their own at young ages and that gives them more freedom to watch what they want in the privacy of their bedroom while moms cooking or cleaning. This brings us to one major problem. Approximately **ninety** eight percent of television programs are not for children. That only leaves a small two percent of television programs for children to watch. If you spread that out in a seven day period that's about two programs a day. Let us start when a child gets home from school at

out three o'clock. On one channel at three o'clock a soap opera is on which has sex, violence, and profanity. At four o'clock Opra talk show is on which has sex and profanity usually. At five o'clock Ricki Lake talk show is on which has sex and profanity. After her show we have the News a game show and then a nigh time soap opera. By this time it's nine o'clock and time for the child to go to bed and out of six hours there was one thirty minute game show that is fit for a child to watch. With these television programs on every day the child starts

## Context

to watch his or her favorite show and once interested then wants to experiment. Children from ages four to twelve have not been educated about sexuality to understand what they are watching on television. Children see people on television as role models and want to be like them, dress like them, and copy what they do. The child's mind and body have not yet matured and developed for them to experiment what they see on television. For an example, if an eight year old is watching the Ricki Lake show who has unmarried thirteen and fourteen year old girls that are pregnant, the child might think when she turns thirteen that she might get pregnant or that it's okay. Also, the child is not knowledgeable enough to know how the thirteen year old got pregnant. Once the child starts putting the television programs together they will soon learn how the teenager got pregnant and the child will think it's all right to have sex and get pregnant at an early age.

Children are not educated enough below the age of twelve to experiment everything they see on television. The variety of television programs that children have to choose from is not large at all. But yet children have more time and use their time to watch television more than adults do. There are even some cartoon programs that are on early in the morning and early in the evening that are suitable for children, to watch. The parents do not pay attention to the cartoon programs to see what the content is. They just assume that because it is a cartoon that it is suitable for their child to watch. I do not allow my four year old and eight year old to watch "The Simpsons", because along with profanity Bart Simpson is disrespectful and yet children think he is so great and so funny. The children that see Bart Simpson as a role

Context

model will tend to copy his tactics and think that it is all right to talk back to your parents and be disrespectful when it is not.

**Example of the use of *unfortunately* in a broader context in UGCD 82**

Context

Plastic bags for years now have been used in shopping centers and market places to help shoppers carry their goods. Plastic bags are not degradable when disposed of, and as a result, have led to water pollution and land degradation. It is so sad that we find dead whales that have been choked by plastic bags on our beaches. Plastic bags that end up in water bodies choke aquatic life when they feed on them, and they pollute the water which may make it unsafe to drink. The pile-up of plastic bags on land especially at landfills has also led to the degradation of the land as these bags are non-degradable.

The production of plastic bags has led to the creation of jobs at the expense of the protection of the environment. Through the jobs created from plastic bag production, people have been able to afford their basic needs such as food and shelter. This though elating is not as sweet as it sounds. Plastic bags are produced from polythene and in the production of polythene, greenhouse gases are released. This leads to air pollution, and it makes the environment unpleasant to live in. Banning the production of plastic bags may lead to people being

## Context

unemployed, and result in their search for other jobs. On the other hand, if plastic bags are not banned, the level of pollution may rise.

Lastly, poor waste management has been a major problem Ghana currently faces. Most of our drainage systems are choked with plastic bags. **Unfortunately**, when there is a heavy downpour, we mostly end up experiencing flooding. These floods have led to the loss of property and sometimes life. This has led to grief and economic problems. Domestic waste from homes largely comprises of plastic bags mostly because, when we purchase goods, we are given plastic bags to carry them. Sadly, some people empty their domestic waste into drainage systems and this causes flood when the rains come.

In conclusion, plastic bags have done more harm than good. Though the production of plastic bags creates employment for some people, it is done under the expense of the natural environment. Plastic bags pollute water bodies and kill aquatic life. They degrade the land and cause flooding due to poor waste management systems. It is therefore advisable to use reusable bags instead of plastic bags. This in the long run will help protect the environment from pollution.

**Example of the use of *there is no doubt* in a broader context in UGCD 181**

Context

Additionally, plastic bags are non-biodegradable. They cannot be effectively broken down into harmless residue, making their disposition an immense task. Largely due to their irreversible chemical bond of polymers, plastics such as plastic bags, disposable cups and syringes are some of the main unrecyclable plastics. Regardless of the heat intensity applied, unrecyclable plastics can never change their shapes. They remain the same.

Lastly, plastic bags are harmful to human health. Micro-plastics are usually found in human excrement and this is as a result of numerous drinks and food containing plastic build-ups. The raw micro-plastics are exposed to various harmful synthetics before their arrival at the chosen destinations. The inorganic dyes used in plastic items contain amounts of metals such as lead, which is dangerous to the human body, particularly the kidneys. Whenever ingested, these synthetic compounds are recorded to be the cause of the consequences with the ordinary hormone elements of the human body.

In conclusion, **there** is no doubt that plastic bags have made our lives simpler from multiple points of view, however the use of plastic bags has become an imminent catastrophe which needs immediate address. Plastic bags should be banned because they cause environmental pollution, they are non-biodegradable and harmful to human beings. They can be substituted with materials such as paper bags, which are more environmentally friendly.

### Example of the use of *there is no doubt* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 0002.3

#### Context

When the treaty of Rome was signed in 1957, the foundation was laid for a new "continent"- a united Europe. It was said that Europe would not be created quickly, but over several years. When Britain entered the European Community in 1973 after a national referendum, the debate began concerning Britains relationship with Europe. When 1992 was set as the date for the single European Market, the debate flared up again, but over how far Britain should be integrated. The rest of Europe seems prepared for 1992 but Britain seems to be decidedly hesitant. The former Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher was not been to lead Britain into a United Europe because she felt it would lead to a loss of our sovereignty.

**There** is no doubt an integrated market would have multiple benefits for the countries involved. Businesses and other trading organizations are preparing themselves for 1992, and the single market. Trade will be easier, with no frontier controls allowing free flowing transportation of merchandise. There will be business booms and free competition with the removal of protective practices, along with greater freedom to travel.

Many Britons would consider Europe has affected Britain too much already, with decimalization, the new Euro-passports and now the pound sterling being tied to the ECU. They may feel Britain is being pulled into Europe. Further changes are forecast for Britain, effecting day to day matters, to create a "European Standard". This may make Britons resentful of Europe and tired of "1992 and all that". A single market requires one central institution to co-ordinate all movements of goods and policies. Will the people of Britain be prepared to give up their government and be directed from Strasbourg or Brussels?. Many

## Context

people would not. Will the day come when the pound sterling is taken over by the ECU? It may well- but will the Britons have a chance to voice their opinions and views?

Europe may argue that the benefits from a single integrated market would far outweigh any national drawbacks. As the date draws nearer, the awareness of Britons to Europe must increase. They must look into the future and consider possible effects. Will Britain be drawn into Europe against its will? Perhaps as more of Britain becomes "Eurofied", Britons will wake up and see their sovereignty is being taken away. Britain has never geographically been a part of Europe. We are in the EEC and we should be able to benefit from free trade. We have been an island for too long- being independent and able to stand alone. We have a sound democratic process, which many people would not want to give this up. A fully integrated market with Britain as a full member would be to the detriment of our political system and consequently leading to a loss of sovereignty.

### Example of the use of *ideally* in a broader context in Corpus 16

## Context

UGCD-181

Plastic bags are a major cause of the depletion of man's ecosystem. Plastic as a substance is a non-biodegradable and thus harmful to human health. Plastic bags emit some radiation and also prove to be a choke hazard for small animals and people. It is essential to ban plastic

## Context

bags because they cause several different types of harm to our health, but the most four troubling problems they cause include, pollution of land and water bodies, wildlife harm, harm to human health and difficulty in recycling. Plastic bags are doing more harm than good and hence, they must be banned. The following paragraphs contain the details of why plastic bags must be banned.

To begin, the difficulties in recycling plastic bags is one of the most reasons why they must be banned. As plastic bags get caught in recycling machinery, most recycling facilities do not accept them. Since plastic bags recycling requires a specialized equipment that can break down the plastic and mold it into a new product, most municipalities do not have the budget to include their recycling in their waste management programs. An additional problem with plastic grocery bags recycling is their cleanliness. Ideally, to be suitable for recycling, bags need to be clean to be accepted, which is often a problem, considering that we use them to carry groceries and potentially leaky goods.

Additionally, the pollution of land and water bodies is also a major reason why plastic bags must be banned. Plastic bags are usually lightweight hence, they can travel long distances by either water through drains or wind. The wind blows the plastic bags and trashes over or across a wide area or distance which may get caught up in between trees, fence and eventually float on water bodies thus moving to the world's oceans. Plastic bags could also cause infertility of the soil which in tend to affect the growth of crops thereby leading to shortage of food to support human and animal lives.



## Context

Furthermore, plastic bags must be banned because of their harm to human health. It is believed that these plastic bags contain chemicals such as polychlorinated biphenyl and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons which are hormone disrupting. Once marine animals consume these chemicals as a result of water pollution, they move through the food web and later get into human and other living creatures which may put their life in danger. All these chemicals when consumed by humans, may cause cancerous diseases or any other serious diseases.

### **Example of the use of *ideally* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 0032.3**

## Context

There has been such a lot of talk about a Single Europe in recent years that it is hard to believe that it will be upon us very soon. Now that it is a reality, and not just a probability, the question in the minds of many Britons is indeed: Will this mean a loss of sovereignty for Britain or the birth of a nation?

Firstly, a positive approach. Looking at things from an economic perspective, this is not a problem. The benefits in terms of cost-cutting owing to doing things once, instead of twelve times, will be enormous. Firms, because of being able to pool their resources, will be able to devote more time to research and development, and thus products will improve. Europe will therefore be a nation to be reckoned with as regards competition.

## Context

To look at things on a more individual level, every member of the new Single Europe's standard of living should increase. A greater potential of ideas from a greater number of experts will, in theory, result in more knowledgeable and better-informed individuals. Simplicity is one of the Commission's key aims, with the idea that if things are simpler and more easy for everyone to understand people will be happier, get on better. If this is so, they should also work better. **Ideally** then, there should be more equality, less crime, greater productivity and greater economic growth.

On the other hand, will this Single Europe mean a loss of sovereignty for Britain? It must be remembered that not only does Britain have a small population compared to the majority of the other member states, but it is an island- which none of the others are. Why should this matter? Well, Britain has quite a history and therefore a fair number of traditions. It is possible that it could become engulfed in the new Single Europe and lose its identity. Britons (especially those from older generations) may then feel "lost" and that they do not really "belong" any more. The new Single Europe may be too new and unknown for them to make their allegiance to it. Then there is the question as to whether all this idealism really will work. Will there be greater prosperity, better-informed, happier citizens, or will this never come off because of politicians being unable to agree on policies? Britain, although small, is more often than not in the fore of international matters, taking a definite stance on what it considers to be right. Has it then not got quite a lot at stake, its character at least, in integrating itself into this Single Europe?

## Context

No one would dispute that this is a difficult question. The fact remains however that next year (in 1992) there is going to be a Single Europe. This, as everyone is well aware, is not going to be achieved with ease, but the more tolerant every member state is of each other, the more successful the Single Europe will be. It is up to Britain therefore to accept this fact and to show an example by leading the way as regards tolerancy. Then we will all be able to look at the future in a more positive way.

### Example of the use of *imagine* in a broader context in UGCD 55

## Context

UGCD-55

**Imagine** this current world without plastic bags, packaging items would have been very difficult. Plastics have been of great use since the 1960s. Plastic bags have made packaging of items very simple and portable. But due to many instances, plastic bags have so many adverse effects on the environment than positive effects on environment. As a matter of fact, plastic bags should be banned due to these reasons: recycling difficulties and high costs of clean-up, environmental pollution, the risk they cause to human health, and the fact that there are even better alternatives available.

To begin, one reason why plastic bags should be banned is that it is difficult to recycle and also cause intensive in cleaning up. In order to achieve the ultimate aim in the recycling of

## Context

plastics, various towns and communities must be ready to cause- effectively dispose, collect, sort and compress plastics. Various recycling companies and business are not ready to avail themselves to accept these materials and process them into other useful products. As a result, the recycling of plastics has become a bottle-neck for individuals and the community at large.

Moreover, another reason why plastic should be banned is that, they cause environmental pollution. Environmental pollution is the contamination of the physical and biological parts of the earth or atmosphere to such an extent that environment is negatively affected. Plastic bags disturb the environment in a serious way. Unseemly disposals of plastic bags in the soil release toxic chemicals into the soil with results in affecting the living organisms in the soil. Due to this, planted crops are affected and hence affect humans as well.

### **Example of the use of *imagine* in a broader context in ICLEUSIND 0010.1**

## Context

In a society each person has the same basic needs for survival. Long ago the quest for fulfillment of these needs took up of majority of each person's day. In order to feed your family you had to plant. In order to live you had to build. To have clothing, you had to sew. Each hour of each day was devoted to meeting these needs. Even in early times the harder you worked, the more food, shelter or clothing you gained. This is a very simple support of reward equaling effort.

## Context

Bringing this to a more present time, we are now reaping the benefits of advanced technology, expanding knowledge, and modern times. We have many machines to help us meet our food, clothing and shelter needs with little or no effort on our part, it would appear. Persons with great technical minds are using their talent on the job and paying someone to do their labor. However, just as in earlier days, the harder you work, the greater the reward.

Let's **imagine** a society where all men and women were treated equal. All basic survival needs (and even wants for that matter) were provided regardless of the effort put forth. I would venture to guess that we would not be as advanced of a society as we are today. Competitiveness and jealousy would set in and fights would occur. Worst case scenario: the world would become divided or even destroyed because someone was sitting on the sidelines and not doing their share. We would not have motivation to develop our talents and abilities and to use them in a way to benefit others. Our society would become selfish and hoarding and our culture would suffer. It may be a pessimistic view, but I feel a very real view, to say that we would become lazy and stagnate people.

Life is about rewards. It is about learning where you are and how you can move yourself to the next level. Each of us is measured daily by some scale of achievement. Effort is vital to success, motivation is the key to effort. Some are content with needs, others want more, much more! Our system of rewards is money...but is it really about money? I don't think so. It's about meeting needs (and even wants!) and how much one is willing to give for the opportunity for something better.

### Example of the use of *note that* in a broader context in UGCD 133

#### Context

Secondly, it has also caused wildlife damage: animals swallow plastic bags most at times during feeding. It affect their digestive system because of the chemical content of plastic bags, coupled with the fact that digestive tract of the animal takes a longer to break down food particles. This has the potential to shorten the live span of wildlife and may eventually lead to extinction. Aquatic animals are also affected because, they tend to feed on plastic bags deposited in water bodies like the sea and rivers. This may eventually poison them and lead to the death. Ultimately, Human beings may be affected as well through consumption.

Thirdly, manufacturing of plastic bags in large scale result in greenhouse effect: greenhouse effect is the process by which radiation from the earth atmosphere warms the earth's surface to a particular temperature to support lives. When manufacturing plastic bags, fossil fuels are used. Burning of fossil fuels leads to global warming. Global warming occurs when carbon dioxide and other air pollutants and greenhouse gases collect in the atmosphere and absorb the sunlight and solar radiation. When the gases accumulates in the atmosphere, it causes the sea level to rise and increase in heat waves on the earth. This may lead to an outbreak of diseases that are very detrimental to human lives.

In conclusion, poor disposal management of plastics bags has many harmful effects but chiefly among them are clogged sewage system, wildlife damage and production of harmful greenhouse gases. We should **note** that, since the above mentioned points affect human lives also, a ban on the use of plastic bags will benefit human beings.

### Example of the use of *note that* in a broader context in Corpus 1

#### Context

In a constantly changing world, it is important for both genders to have a firm grasp on just what it means to be a man or a woman. This establishment of gender identity should begin at the earliest age possible. Masters and Johnson say children begin to recognize gender roles by age three. (548) Children should be taught that there is a core of behavior that makes them boys or girls but, there are other types of behavior that is open to change. The message children are given now is a stereotype that has been the root of many problems they encounter later in life. Men and women today need to understand and respect the fact that they are different. They communicate in different styles. This difference is what makes life exciting. Gender roles, like relationships, must remain dynamic. People must know and be comfortable with who they are before they can pursue a meaningful career, relationship, or anything else that matters.

To achieve a well adjusted, gender related, adulthood society must ammend the method and the message we are giving our children. Katha Pollit does an excellent job of illustrating how television, one of the more influential sources for children, is giving kids a skewed start in shaping their ideas of what's important in being a boy or a girl. In her essay "The Smurfette Principle", she cites. many painful examples of how little ones receive a terribly distorted picture of gender roles. Although the method takes on many forms, the message is the same. Pollit pints out that even the more enlightened Public Broadca stations engage in male gender bias.

## Context

Starting girls into life's roller coaster ride with the idea that boys lives are more important than their's is a tremendous disadvantage. It's a bad message delivered at a bad time through a bad medium. Even the best parents allow their children to watch Saturday morning cartoons where, as Pollit cites, the most egregious errors occur. Parents allow their kids to watch these cartoons for two reasons; first, because they watched them when they were kids and second, because parents are not interested in justice, they just want quiet. It is important to **note** that these bad signals have an adverse effect on boys as well as girls. Pollit contends:that the message is more straight forward for the boys.

Now that our children are off to a wonderful start they are ready for adulthood. The effects of this twisted gender identity beginning are made evident in two startling stories of problems people encounter when they realize they have spent their lives doing something they don't like. "Ralph's Story" by Warren Ferrell is a scary confession of a successful lawyer who has neglected his family and himself. He hates the person he has become. Ralph's case is one of mistaken identity. His idea of what a man is supposed to be is wrong. Wrong because Ralph lives his life the way society tells him to, instead of doing the things that make him happy or a better sponse. Betty Frieden's excerpt on what women were going through in the 1960's is similar to Ferrell's essay. Friedon writes how women homemakers live a life that others expect of them. These twisted exogenic pressures deny women of any real choice in life. Both of these stories are examples of how women and men fall into stereotypical gender roles without any curiosity. They do not ask themselves if a different lifestyle would make them happy. They fail to confront that great fear of the unknown. It is difficult to face your family and friends with a confession of your life of unhappiness. On the other hand, its easy



## Context

to do the things everyone expects of your gender. Society's semiotics on how each gender is supposed to behave are everywhere. One cannot go to work, watch ,T.V. listen to the radio, or even drive in your car without being exposed to clear and definitive signs of massed produced gender identity.

Friedan, Ferrell and Pollitt do an excellent job of exposing the problems of stereotypical gender roles. Their approach is that gender rolds are needed, they just need to be ammended to fit in a changing society. Dr. John Grey, a Californian marriage counselor, is trying to ammend these roles. His book "Men are From Mars, Women are From Venue" goes a long way in helping both sexes understand that it is not only o.k. to be different, but it's exciting. Grey's planet metophor enriches his piont of men's and women's different style of communication. He also promotes the concept of gender roles being open to change. The people cited in Friedan's and Ferrell's essay were static. Grey calls this man going into their caves and women wanting to talk. (29) Here Grey's metophor explains and validates how different genders react under pressure. He explains that if both parties learn to accept the others methods their own lives will become better.

### **Example of the use of *consider* in a broader context in UGCD 196**

## Context

There are many retail centers in our world today. And there are many factors that keep such businesses growing. In this business sector where buying and selling is prominent, one of

## Context

the strategic ways retailers cannot do away with is the choice of package for goods and products. Packaging options could be done in so many ways. One of the most convenient package options is the use of plastics.

One advantage of plastic bags is that, it is used for packaging. One thing no out there can deny is the fact that plastic bags are the most convenient and functional package option. This is the most reason why they are used worldwide on large scale functions such as parceling, retailing, just to mention a few. (Caldwell, 2018). Statistics shows that approximately five hundred billion plastic bags are used every year mostly for shopping. The use of plastic bags is beneficial in many ways for both retailers and their customers. Even at the local level, the food vendors in our various communities and towns tend to make very good use of these plastic bags when it comes to packaging of food. We would all bear to the fact, no customer would like to have their food dished out with no parceling. Vendors who would do that can lose their customers. This can affect the standard of the business at the end of the day.

A recent push to reduce the use of plastic bags is based on information concerning negative impacts. One bad aspect of plastic bags is that, it is made of a non- renewable resource. This means they cannot be recycled like paper bags. They can take up to hundred years before they decay completely. This has led to the production of non-biodegradable bags. (Frost 2018). One factor that disrepute our country Ghana is its trouble when it comes to proper disposal of refuse. Plastic bags are flimsy. If they are indisposed properly, they can constitute environmental hazards to human beings and especially, wildlife animals when these plastic bags end up in water bodies. Plastic bags pollute our farmlands and cities. Most plastic bags

## Context

can clog our roadside drains which may lead to flooding in case of heavy rainfalls. In a similar manner, plastics can clog people's lungs. Most plastic bags are made with polymer and this makes them flammable. They produce toxic fumes when burnt. **Consider** the fact that, the toxic substances that come out from burnt plastics can cause many heart related diseases when inhaled. An example is lung cancer, whose causes include smoking and exposure to certain toxins (Mayo Clinic et al.).

Plastic bags can be a debating topic due to their benefits but when banned, can cause retailers to find alternative bags.

### **Example of the use of *consider* in a broader context ICLE-BR-SUR 0001.3**

## Context

The Orthodox theory of parliamentary legislative supremacy states that Parliament cannot restrict its own legislative omnicompetence. That is, Parliament today cannot pass laws which limit tomorrow's Parliament's legislative powers, be they restrictions on manner and form, or as in the case of the European Communities Act, restrictions on subject matter. Inherent in the founding treaties as amended is the idea that European Community law must prevail over national law. Therefore, in the case of a contradiction between the two, European Community law must be abided by. This first aspect of Britain's membership of the European Communities has thus already shown a restriction on Britain's legal system: that of the doctrine of implied repeal. The court's view of this argument is of utmost

## Context

importance; however the judges have not had to decide this point as yet. The orthodox Lord Denning has described Britain's Accession as a "farewell to our sovereignty" on the one hand and yet on the other hand he has said that theoretically conferred powers can be retained, even though in practice it would be virtually impossible.

The radical theorists would agree that it is "farewell to our sovereignty" completely. They believe that if Parliament is indeed supreme then it should be able to legislate on absolutely anything, including putting legal limitations on itself. Such fettering is permanent according to the radical theory and the passing of the European Communities Act 1972 is one example of entrenchment (or rather, it has not been proved otherwise).

I tend to agree with the radical view that there must be some restrictions, for example, there must always be rules laid down as to the manner and form of Parliament, otherwise anybody could pass any law and that would simply be ludicrous. I believe that the same applies to the fettering of Parliament's powers as regards subject matter. Also, it is all too important to **consider** the practicalities. Apart from Greenland, no other country has tried to leave the European Communities (and Greenland was an exception anyway because its reason for leaving was a regaining of independence). Thus, for any of the present members, especially those long-standing members, to leave now there would be an indeterminable legal upheaval. This would be especially so in Britain's case as it has a common law system and has adopted European Community precedents. To untangle the law of Britain from that of the European Community would thus be almost impossible. However, it must be emphasised that contrary to the way the title of this essay could be construed, Britain's Accession has not

Context

caused a total submission of its supremacy; but, like all other Member States, it has only given up some of its powers and thus supremacy in particular areas to the European Communities.

**Example of the use of *definitely* in a broader context in UGCD 195**

Context

I have been following with keen interest recent articles in the dailies on plastic bag pollution and its menace to the society. My worries heighten upon the observation that, a plastic bag which is a type of solid waste and hence occupies space is indiscriminately disposed and there is an urgent need to address this cankerworm which has eaten into the fabrics of our society.

The effects of plastic bags usage are not difficult to trace. This social menace depletes our natural resources. The resource extraction and the raw materials used in the manufacturing of plastic bags go through a process known as film extrusion. These plastic bags are generally made from polythene, which is a petroleum derived polymer consisting of synthetic substance produced from natural gas and petroleum. Plastic bags lead to the depletion of these nonrenewable nature resources. According to statistics, it takes 12 millions bars of oil to produce the amount of plastic bags used in U.S per day. You can imagine what it takes to produce all the plastic bags used across the world. Whereas paper bags made from a recycled

## Context

paper helps in reducing a burden on natural resources and would also put to better use the waste papers produced from multiple other industries worldwide.

In Addition, environmental conservation should be prioritized. Banning plastic bags will **definitely** reduces its harmful effect on our environment. The ban will regulate the disposal of these plastic bags and preserve our natural resources. Unlike paper bags which are biodegradable, most plastic bags do not breakdown easily. A plastic bag can take up to 1,000 years to decompose and this endangers the safety of people, wildlife and ultimately pollute our environment. Irrespective of how convenient, durable and is used for containing and transporting goods, it also litter our surroundings. Plastic bags is one of the commonest packaging products. Today, you can hardly walk around and not spot people with plastic bags. It is so simple and easy to carry. However, waste plastic bags continue clog our waterways, oceans, forest, and natural habitats. In some places in Accra environs, plastic bags have been dubbed as "natural flowers" because some can be seen flapping from roads to fence. And those who burn these plastic bags in attempt to eradicate the waste end up polluting the air, making it inconvenient for other. Considering the high demand for plastic bags and its effect on the environment, it's imperative to ban its usage.

Moreover ,the problem of using plastic bags is more serious than it appears. There's a need to ban usage due to its expensive nature of recycling. Plastic bags though useful in many ways go a long way to affect the quality of life of people. For instance, heating food in a

## Context

microwave causes diseases like cancer when consumed. Also, plastic bags that end up in water bodies causes deleterious effect to aquatic life due to improper disposal.

Additionally, the police of recycling plastic bags has pathetically failed because people do not adhere to rules due to ignorance of harmful effects. Therefore, there's a need to spread awareness on the ill effect of plastic bags and embrace the 3Rs, namely, Reduce, Re-use and Re-cycle to make our environment a better place.

### **Example of the use of *definitely* in a broader context in ICLEUMICH 0018.1**

## Context

There are also times when foods tend to take on the smells of other foods to which they are near. One solution would be to put the odorous food in a bag, but if that cannot be done for some reason (for example, you are going to serve it for a fancy dinner later), you can put the surrounding food in the bag, to keep the smell out. A third solution would be to bag everything!

But, there are other uses for zip-lock bags. Where else can you put ice to hold on a swelling lip, without it melting and getting everything wet? And for traveling, these baggies are even better. Too many times people have opened suitcases at the end of a long day, only to find shampoo all over their "dry-clean only 's" (onlies???) Gallon size zip-lock bags, solve this problem. In these a person can fit a whole bottle of shampoo and a bottle of conditioner! And

## Context

for the Q-tips that you want to keep dry, the pantyhose you do not want to snag, the earring you do not want to lose one of, and the shaving cream you do not want to squirt all over the place, the bathing suit that's too wet to pack, the zip-lock bag is the answer.

What more could you ask for? A place where you can put food, clothes, wet things and dry things-- and it does not weigh anything nor take up space. The zip-lock bag was **definitely** a good invention.

### **Example of the use of *of course* in a broader context in UGCD 164**

## Context

Moreover, on a larger scale, plastic bags should be banned as they can be dreadful to wild and marine life as well. Many times, these bags are mistaken for eatables by birds and animals. The plastic, which is consumed by these species, will then congest their digestive tracts, often leading to health problems like infections. Sometimes, this could even lead to the death of these animals by suffocation.

Above all, there are some external costs linked to these plastic bags. In addition to the costs linked to the production and buying of these plastic bags, there are other costs, such as; environmental costs, Resource extraction, Resource depletion, Loss of quality of life, Economic loss, Wildlife loss.



## Context

In conclusion, Plastic bags are banned in most of the countries globally. However, we must understand that mere ban can never help to sort the hazardous effects of the plastic bags. It is high time that we realize the importance of our precious environment and avoid things that can degrade our environment. It is proved that plastics and plastic made materials like bags and toys are making the lifecycle of plants, animals and **of** course, the users of the plastic bags, the humans tougher. So, let's go green and avoid plastics for a safer environment and a healthier life.

### **Example of the use of *of course* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 0001.3**

## Context

We are experiencing today a definite movement towards an ever closer and more integrated Europe, principally through the creation of the European Communities ie the European Economic Community (EEC); the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). The passing of the Single European Act 1986 has given the concept of an open and common market a new lease of life by adding much detail to existing provisions in the EEC Treaty. Since the Single European Act 1986 the completion of such an open common market( ie one free market for Europe with no trade barriers) can now be seen as a reality. However, even though Britain has joined the European Communities and accepted its affects through the passing of the European Communities Act

## Context

1972, there has arguably been a very high price paid. This of course is the loss of absolute supremacy for the English Parliament.

The Orthodox theory of parliamentary legislative supremacy states that Parliament cannot restrict its own legislative omniscience. That is, Parliament today cannot pass laws which limit tomorrow's Parliament's legislative powers, be they restrictions on manner and form, or as in the case of the European Communities Act, restrictions on subject matter. Inherent in the founding treaties as amended is the idea that European Community law must prevail over national law. Therefore, in the case of a contradiction between the two, European Community law must be abided by. This first aspect of Britain's membership of the European Communities has thus already shown a restriction on Britain's legal system: that of the doctrine of implied repeal. The court's view of this argument is of utmost importance; however the judges have not had to decide this point as yet. The orthodox Lord Denning has described Britain's Accession as a "farewell to our sovereignty" on the one hand and yet on the other hand he has said that theoretically conferred powers can be retained, even though in practice it would be virtually impossible.

The radical theorists would agree that it is "farewell to our sovereignty" completely. They believe that if Parliament is indeed supreme then it should be able to legislate on absolutely anything, including putting legal limitations on itself. Such fettering is permanent according to the radical theory and the passing of the European Communities Act 1972 is one example of entrenchment (or rather, it has not been proved otherwise).

## Example of the use of *in fact* in a broader context in UGCD 141

Context

UG CD-141

Plastic bags are everywhere in our environment. Whenever we go out to purchase our foodstuff, we use plastic bags to serve as containers because of the convenience they provide.

**In** fact, plastic bags have become part of us in our modern lives. However, the use of these plastic bags comes with its own cost to the society, and negatively affects both human and animal health. Three of the costs imposed on the society are that, plastic bags tends to cause respiratory diseases to humans, it also may lead to the destruction of animal lives, and also leads to the pollution of our environment.

First of all, plastic bags may cause respiratory diseases to humans. The burning of these plastic bags ends up releasing toxic gases such as dioxins, furans, mercury, and polychlorinated biphenyls into the atmosphere. These toxic substances gets into our bodies in two ways. Humans may either inhale these toxic substances into their bodies or may either take them in as food when they settle on crops and in our waterways. However, this may lead to the contraction of diseases which include lung cancer, asthma and if one is already having these diseases, ones diseases might be aggravated.

Furthermore, plastic bags may lead to the destruction of animal life. Plastic bags are non-biodegradable, so they can stay on our environment for several years. Because of this, plastic bags which have not been burned but have been left on our environment tends to pose a great threat to animal lives. Some animals end up eating these plastics whenever they confuse

## Context

them as food. However, these plastics do not digest within their bodies, but stays in their bodies. This might cause the death of the animals through chocking and suffocation.

### Example of the use of *in fact* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 00010.3

## Context

Firstly what is European Union? It seems to have two distinct forms of which one seems to worry the British public most; Political Union, followed by Economic and Monetary Union. **In** fact these issues have become so heated in Great Britain at present that they have lead to many disputes within the present government. They also appear to be one of the major reasons for the resignation of Mrs. Thatcher. In losing her, have we not already lost a part of our sovereignty ? Europe is forcing change upon us as we have been attempting to stand back, "not letting socialism in by the back door", instead of playing an important role in positively affecting the decision making processes- or in the European Community. Great Britain cannot afford to play a minor role in a two speed Europe especially in the time of recession at present, and this has manifested itself in the top governmental disputes. So, a loss of sovereignty seems inevitable, whether we like it or not. On monetary and economic Union, I don't feel that we have much to lose; **in** fact on the contrary I think that we would benefit enormously, especially in the light of 1992. If only the issue were presented in a more positive light, perhaps with some modifications, I am sure that the British public would give their agreement. After all, how long is it since we lost our sovereignty to the follies of the international Stock Exchanges of New York, Tokyo and Frankfurt? Will losing our

## Context

sovereignty to Brussels or the Bundesbank make much difference ? Did not the "Big Bang" in October 1987 send shock waves world wide with share prices plummeting? World processes are continuously becoming more and more interlinked; the effects of which often see no physical borders. I therefore see this European Unity as a natural process in World development, something which should be made easier rather than hindered. Can we really afford to play for time by dragging our feet?

The issue of Political Union is still more disputed. Yes, we have a Queen and what would happen to her- would she be forced to abdicate and be succeed by King Jacques Delors?

This is a very typical misinformed and ignorant statement posed by certain British "patriots". There are five other Monarchs in the European Community and their statuses to a great extent will not be greatly affected by any such Union.

### **Example of the use of *my* in a broader context in UGCD 153**

## Context

Also, plastic bags pollute the environment; in other words our land and water. Plastic bags contain some chemicals that make them not to decompose, so they stay on the land for a very long period of time. Mind you, those chemicals bring about negative impacts on land. The fertility of the land is destroyed because of the chemicals from the plastic bags. These plastic bags are mostly blown away into water bodies which makes the water unsafe for human

## Context

consumption. Not forgetting that creatures like fish, crab and others live in water bodies hence, they die due to the chemicals from the plastic bags. The water therefore becomes less safe for human consumption.

Furthermore, plastic bags should be banned due to its negative impacts on the lives of humans. Its impacts are of great threats to the environment and the country at large, no one would like to live a life of threats.

I am going to conclude by saying plastic bags have their own advantages they have introduced, but not withstanding the fact that lives are at stake. Plastic bags polluting the environment which causes harm to the human health. In **my** opinion plastic bags should be banned despite its advantages but not overlooking its outweighing disadvantages.

### **Example of the use of *my* in a broader context in ICLE-BR—SUR 0033.3**

## Context

At present, the issue of whether Britain should become more closely integrated within the European Community, be it either to a lesser extent with the establishment of a single, common currency, the ,E.C.U. in each of the member states, or to a greater extent with the complete Political unification of the "Twelve" into the so-called United States of Europe, is very controversial. It is such a political powderkeg, especially for the Conservative Party- which seems to have divided itself into the two distinct factions one for and one against

## Context

closer integration- that it led to the resignation of Margaret Thatcher who attempted to "bully" her Cabinet and Parliamentary Party into supporting her undoubtedly "Europhobic" views.

In **my** opinion, a single Europe in a political sense would both be disadvantageous for Britain but also unworkable because of the mix of opinions and cultures that the E.C. contains. This would mean that there would probably not be a large enough number of M.E.P.s of a particular persuasion for a single group, be it Socialist, Centre Right or Christian Democratic to hold a stable majority. This would lead to coalitions being formed, out of necessity, across ideological boundaries which, as we have seen recently with Italy and Belgium, would lead to unstable and ineffectual governments. A perfect example of both the effect of coalition governments and also the lack of agreement of E.C. members at the moment on such crucial issues as Defence and Foreign (ie extra-European) Policy could be seen during the Gulf War: Britain was running low on stocks of ammunition for certain types of guns and artillery in the build up to the launch of Operation Desert Storm, so it asked one of its European Community partners and NATO allies, namely Belgium, to sell it some of its stocks. Belgium, under the premiership of Wilfried Martens refused despite the fact that Britain among others was engaged in an operation to combat the naked aggression of Iraq against its tiny neighbour, Kuwait- and what's more: the operation had the full backing of the Security Council of the United Nations. Belgium refused to cooperate for fear of aggravating some of the extremist minorities in its country and thus splitting its coalition government.

## Context

Another disadvantage of a single Europe would be the coalition of certain aspects of the culture of individual members which may seem completely abhorrant to some or all of the other members. For example, bull-fighting in rural parts of Spain is considered to be a tradition that has gone back hundreds of years and which therefore must be preserved whereas in Britain the overwhelming majority of people find bullfighting not only barbaric but also needless. These sorts of disagreements and cultural differences may seem banal but only serve to illustrate what would happen in the political sphere, but of course the consequences of disaccord there would be much more far reaching.

In conclusion, I would say that a single europe would lead to a damaging loss of sovereignty for Britain in that Westminster would have no control over important Defence and Foreign Policy issues as well as internal issues such as the Police and crime as well as the prevention of terrorism. In the latter issue, Northern Ireland especially would probably be managed worse by a combined European Police force and Army than it is at present by our experienced security forces. In this way, interference from Brussels would both be damaging and necessary. However, in my opinion, Britain should become part of a single European Community Economy with an independent European Central Bank, made up of prominent economists from each of the member states, running the major monetary, economic and trading policies of the Community. Such an economic unit would pose a greater threat to the economic supremacy of Japan and the U.S. and the newly emerging economies of the Pacific rim: such as Taiwan, S. Korea and Thailand, which are becoming more and more powerful as years go by and could one day even topple Japan from its "top spot". In essence, I would say "No, No, No" to a single country made up of the European Community members but an



Context

emphatic "Yes, Yes, Yes" to a single Economic zone within the E.C. with a common Economic Policy directed by the finest Economic brains Europe has to offer.

**Example of the use of *I* in a broader context in UGCD 1**

Context

Secondly, the cost of recycling them is very high and this has become a major challenge to governments around the world. A very good example is the government of Ghana which is not able to meet up with the financial demands of the recycling sector. As a result, we do not have adequate machinery to run the recycling sector and this has led to many non-degradable plastic bags turning into waste which in the long run become very difficult to deal with. This is because they become useless when they are not recycled for further use. This shows that banning them will reduce a great deal of cost.

Also, when we do not handle these plastic bags very well and dispose them improperly, they tend to pollute the environment and affect good sanitation. The korle lagoon is a very good example of environmental pollution. Due to the improper disposal of plastic bags, they've turned into waste which has accumulated greatly over a period of time. This in turns damages fertile lands and renders them useless for beneficial purposes such as farming. Then again accumulation of these plastic bags in water bodies pollutes the water bodies and makes the use of these water bodies for human purposes such as drinking unsafe.

## Context

In conclusion, I believe that the reasons stated above tells us how dangerous plastic bags can be especially when they are not handled properly. In view of this, I suggest that plastic bags be banned and people should rather opt for the use of paper bags which are degradable and more convenient in terms of usage as compared to the plastic bags.

### Example of the use of *I* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 00005.3

## Context

In Britain's case, her traditional suspicion of continental Europe seems to have created a dual policy- a theoretical acceptance of the need to abdicate this power to Brussels but a refusal to implement it through her policies.

Admittedly, Europe's history would not seem to offer much hope for the success of such a venture. All such past attempts have foundered on the thorny issue of national interest as present attempts at creating a common agricultural policy have shown. Yet, British fears do not seem to be particularly influenced by the historical perspective. It is rather a present conviction, perhaps encouraged by the British politicians, that Brussels would adopt policies not in the British interest. Given that each country has equal representation and will participate equally in the decision making process, this seems a curious anomaly. The effects will be equal throughout Europe, each gaining and losing according to its own particular position but no one nation having total domination over the others.

## Context

This view does not seem to hold much credibility in Britain. We want the economic benefits but are unwilling to concede the political powers necessary for it to take effect. If all nations take such a view then the Single European Act is likely to become deadlocked and founder very quickly. A change in perspective is required that enables a nation to see beyond its own narrow interests to the benefits that could accrue from a more supranational approach. As I have said, sovereignty will be lost but, with an innovative and unblinkered view, this could be a positive rather than negative development for Britain.

### Example of the use of *our* in a broader context in UGCD 82

## Context

Plastic bags for years now have been used in shopping centers and market places to help shoppers carry their goods. Plastic bags are not degradable when disposed of, and as a result, have led to water pollution and land degradation. It is so sad that we find dead whales that have been choked by plastic bags on our beaches. Plastic bags that end up in water bodies choke aquatic life when they feed on them, and they pollute the water which may make it unsafe to drink. The pile-up of plastic bags on land especially at landfills has also led to the degradation of the land as these bags are non-degradable.

## Context

The production of plastic bags has led to the creation of jobs at the expense of the protection of the environment. Through the jobs created from plastic bag production, people have been able to afford their basic needs such as food and shelter. This though elating is not as sweet as it sounds. Plastic bags are produced from polythene and in the production of polythene, greenhouse gases are released. This leads to air pollution, and it makes the environment unpleasant to live in. Banning the production of plastic bags may lead to people being unemployed, and result in their search for other jobs. On the other hand, if plastic bags are not banned, the level of pollution may rise.

Lastly, poor waste management has been a major problem Ghana currently faces. Most of **our** drainage systems are choked with plastic bags. Unfortunately, when there is a heavy downpour, we mostly end up experiencing flooding. These floods have led to the loss of property and sometimes life. This has led to grief and economic problems. Domestic waste from homes largely comprises of plastic bags mostly because, when we purchase goods, we are given plastic bags to carry them. Sadly, some people empty their domestic waste into drainage systems and this causes flood when the rains come.

In conclusion, plastic bags have done more harm than good. Though the production of plastic bags creates employment for some people, it is done under the expense of the natural environment. Plastic bags pollute water bodies and kill aquatic life. They degrade the land and cause flooding due to poor waste management systems. It is therefore advisable to use

Context

reusable bags instead of plastic bags. This in the long run will help protect the environment from pollution.

**Example of the use of *our* in a broader context in ICLE-BR-SUR 0006.3**

Context

The single European market now seems to be inevitable, although many differing views and interpretations of the idea are still evident. The fact that the concept of a single market is itself very hard to define has been the source of much confusion and some hostility towards it from the British public. A great fear of losing our sovereignty has stemmed from the varying theories of what "1992" entails, and from many people's wish to remain ignorant of current developments.

The most evident implication of the single market is, in my view, the abolition of trade and customs barriers. This will apparently extend **our** free market economy to the whole of Europe, or at least to those countries who participate. The consequences of the lifting of these barriers can be viewed positively or negatively: for British firms which rely on international trade to survive, the single market will be an incentive to increase dealings with other European firms. In addition, it will be more convenient to move goods across frontiers-especially with the eminent launch of the Channel Tunnel for public and commercial use. However, it can be argued that firms in the British economy will suffer from European

## Context

competition, or even dominance. Also, if a single European currency is ever introduced as part of the process, it is thought that European firms will have a new incentive to "buy British", as the formalities required in foreign exchange will no longer exist and the UK's current balance of payments situation may even improve as a result. Similarly, British firms might look for new products in other countries if they are no longer constrained by tariffs, bringing more diversity to their product range and therefore enhancing profits.

But the question of the single currency is itself a subject of much controversy. I believe that it is an aspect which is more threatening to British sovereignty than the general concept of the single market. Somehow, the prospect of treating Europe as one market is more acceptable if the countries participating keep their individual currencies and hence their identities. However, the idea of all the states using one currency is generally regarded as being a much greater threat to sovereignty, and would mean, to many people, the sacrificing of their pound to suit the aims of the Europeans. Exactly how far the negotiations on a single monetary union will go is still debatable but it must be seen as a real possibility.

These practical considerations are, then, major factors in Britain's attitude towards European monetary union, and on one hand I feel them to be a threat to sovereignty. On the other hand, I consider that the many varying cultures and languages which will continue to exist throughout Europe will serve to retain the individual nations' identities once the single market is in operation. It must be noted that so many Britons regard themselves as being somehow "different" from other Europeans, probably due to the fact that Britain is detached geographically from "the Continent", that it is highly unlikely that we will merge into a mass

## Context

culture, losing all of our Britishness. This detachment, or even aloofness, is demonstrated by the British Government's current lack of commitment to the European cause and its persistence in voting against motions which are favourable to the other representatives of the EEC.