A Comparative Study of Hedges Used by Male and Female Native English Writers: A Corpus-based Analysis

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Abstract

This research paper presents a comparative study that examines the usage of hedges by male and female native English writers. Hedges, linguistic devices employed to indicate uncertainty or mitigate the force of statements, play a crucial role in shaping the tone and persuasive power of written communication. However, limited research has been conducted on potential gender differences in the use of hedges among native English writers. Therefore, this study aims to fill this research gap by conducting a corpus-based analysis. The study utilizes a large corpus of written texts by native English writers from various genres, such as academic papers, newspaper articles, and fictional works. Through quantitative and qualitative analyses, the frequency and patterns of hedge usage by male and female writers are examined, allowing for a comprehensive comparison of their respective linguistic strategies. The findings reveal intriguing insights into the gendered nature of hedge usage. While both male and female writers employ hedges, notable variations emerge in their frequency and types of hedges used. Furthermore, contextual factors, such as genre and audience, appear to influence the deployment of hedges differently between genders. The research also explores possible sociolinguistic implications of these gender differences and discusses the potential impact on readers' perceptions and interpretations.

Key words: AntConc, COCA, Corpus, Gender, Hedges, Native

Introduction

Language being the primary and essential source of communication has always played a vital role in the life human being. Language manipulation has been an art, experienced by authors, scholars and writers. Millions of journals, blogs, articles and messages have been written by different writers all around the world. It has been an interesting area for linguists and researchers to investigate how male and female play and manipulate with words (Ajmal & Kumar, 2020; Mahmood et al., 2020). Are they different from each other or the same? A very study was carried out by Pan and Zheng (2017), who presented a paper in "Gender Difference of Hedging in Interpreting for Chinese Government Press Conference". The main purpose of the mentioned study was to test Holmes' (1988) notion. The use of hedges by women, according to Holmes, is more focused on interpersonal interactions than the use of hedges by males. Men's use of hedges is more centred on propositional precession, whereas women's use is more focused on interpersonal interactions. Millions of things are written in different genre by thousands of writers around the world on daily basis, yet they are different in choosing the words to convey their messages to the concerned audience. Females share a handsome amount of writings amongst these writers. Hedges or boosters are used commonly for expressing certainty and doubts in academic writings (Serholt, 2012; Pan et al., 2022).

Tabatabaei and Ramzi, (2015), Takimoto (2015), Kumar et al. (2021) are of the view that hedges are quite common in bilingual writers rather in monolingual writers. This was discovered through an examination of twelve articles, six of which were published in a single language and six of which were written in two or more languages. They were all pursuing English as a second language. Why there is the difference in boosters using among these writers? Moderkhameneh (2008) expresses that there are some personal factors which may EFL learners' learning process are monolingualism and bilingualism. To address the importance of boosters or hedges in discourse we may go through the notions of different writers and scholars' scholarly works. Farrokhi & Emami (2008) consider it very important element of textual as well as interpersonal aspects of language through which writers can personally intervene into the discourse to evaluate materials. Holmes (1988) comes with two fundamental strategies for expressing different degrees of commitment and detachment. These strategies are known as boosters and hedging. Lexical devices used to express strong conviction such as; certainly, obviously, really, and of course are

regarded as boosters. These linguistic elements help writers to assert conviction or proposition with confidence. They can show the solidarity with audience, laying emphasis on shared information, group involvement and direct attachment with the audience (Hyland, 1998; Algi, 2012; Kumar 2020). Hedges are lexical devices that are used to show a speaker's lack of confidence in his or her own ability to talk such as; the use of possible, might and perhaps may indicate that the speaker is not confident or he not sure about whatever he is saying (Albaqami, 2017; Abdelrady et al., 2022).

Hedges and Boosters carry different function in written and spoken discourse. The majority of literary studies on hedging and boosting see it as a linguistic device used by a speaker to demonstrate his or her lack of commitment to the idea or truth stated (Crompton, 1997). According to Kumar (2021), there are two reasons why a speaker might choose to change the vigour and strength with which he says something, as well as the length of a particular sentence. Firstly, to convey modal meaning which involves speaker's attitudes towards the content and secondly to express effective meaning. It was pointed out by Hyland (1998) that very little is known regarding the use, frequency, and distribution of hedges across different genres. Crystal (1995) sought to shed light on under-appreciated areas of the English language.

In a net shell we may see the importance of hedging in academic writings in English language. Hedges are more common in the writing of non-native English speakers than among native English speakers. The same can also be applied on gender. Male may use more hedges in writings than females or it can go the either way. According to research, females prefer to use more lexical hedges than compared to men. However, according to the findings of Pan and Zheng's (2017) study, males are more likely than females to employ hedges. Taking into consideration all of these studies, the purpose of this investigation is to determine how male and female authors differ when it comes to the use of hedges in their writings. In this study the AntConc tool would be used for making a separate corpus of selected books. Through the selected corpus the ratio of hedging used by male and female writers would be analyzed. Finally, a conclusion would be made on the basis of the received corpus.

Hedges and its Types

Despite being one of frequently emerging component, hedges have not been quantified in any measurable number. However, in English language the following words and phrases are counted as hedges.

a. Modal verbs: all of the modal verbs (may, might, can, could, would, should etc) are taken as hedges as they do not help in making a clear cut statement.

b. Verbs: all of those verbs which act as state/stative verbs such as; estimate, propose, suggest, presume, think, argue, believe etc

c. Nouns: such as; claim, suggestion, possibility, estimate, assumption, etc, are also taken as hedges.

d. Adjectives; such as apparent, certain, likely, probable, possible, etc are regarded as parts of hedges.

e. Adverbs; like, apparently, certainly, presumably, possibly, perhaps etc.

f. Words/ phrases; those words are phrases which express any degree, quantity, or frequency of something; such as roughly, reasonably, about, somehow, somewhat, approximately, etc.

g. Introductory phrases; such as, to our knowledge, we/I believe that, we/I feel that, in our/my opinion/view, one would/may expect that. If clauses; statements containing if clause are also counted in hedges such as; if true, anything etc.

Use of Hedges

Some of the reason why hedges should be accommodated in writing:

a. Using hedges, authors minimize the pitch of the statement to avoid the risk of the opposition. This sort of hedges is regarded as bias based linguistic cues; which help the author to avoid accountability for any statement. Without incorporating hedges writers may take the risk and guarantee the veracity of the written discourse. In such cases they may be held accountable for whatever they have written but in common cases authors do not take the responsibility of their written work rather they state their opinion. So, hedging helps them to state their view without the risk of accountability.

b. Through the use of hedges, writers leave the impression on the readers that whatever he/she has stated is not the final word on the topic/theme. It does not mean that the statement is vague. Hedges help to state the truth but with the less risk while stating on the authors' side. Using hedges will leave the audience with the ground to quest for more information on the very topic. When the writers are not taking any absolute responsibility on the written work than the readers will definitely quest for the reality. They may investigate more to get certain information on the subject.

c. Hedges may fall under the term of politeness strategies. Through hedging a person may portray himself humble with the addition of the notion that he does not know everything. It helps to build writer and reader relationship on the basis of mutual trust. Through use of certain hedges, writers may leave an impression on the audience that he/she is not master in all the things. This way the writer's image remains safe.

d. Some certain figure of hedging has become part and parcel of English language. Today, it is a style to use hedges in writing because hedges do not keep the audience unaware of the lacking on the subject. They may do research and investigation on the very topic for clear understanding. In addition, hedging helps the audience to get a clearer picture of the subject. Sometime, it becomes very hard to the rational topic clear to the readers; through the use of certain hedges this hard task is undertaken.

Research Questions

1. What are the differences in the use of hedges by male and female native English writers?

2. To what extent do male and female native English writers use hedges in their writing?

3. What are the most commonly used hedges in the writing of male and female native English writers?

4. Are there any significant differences in the use of hedges by male and female native English writers in different genres of writing?

5. How do cultural and social factors influence the use of hedges by male and female native English writers?

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study on a comparative analysis of hedges used by male and female native English writers lies in its potential contribution to the existing body of knowledge on language and gender studies. Specifically, this study can provide valuable insights into the differences in the use of hedges between male and female native English writers, which can help researchers and educators better understand gender-based language differences and their impact on written communication. This study can also have practical implications for improving communication in various fields, such as education, business, and politics. By identifying the specific hedges used more frequently by male and female native English writers, this study can help individuals better understand the nuances of gendered language use, which may improve their communication skills and effectiveness in their respective fields. Furthermore, this study can help raise awareness of gender-based language differences and promote more inclusive language use, which may lead to greater gender equality in society. Understanding the impact of hedges on gender-based language differences may also help address issues related to gender bias and stereotyping in written communication, thereby promoting greater fairness and equity. In conclusion, this study's significance lies in its potential to contribute to the understanding of gender-based language differences, improve communication skills, and promote greater gender equality and inclusivity in society.

Literature Review

Gender-based language differences have been a topic of interest for researchers in the field of linguistics for many years. The use of hedges is one aspect of language that has been shown to differ between male and female speakers and writers. Hedges are defined as words or phrases that indicate uncertainty or lack of commitment to a statement (Holmes, 1984). They are often used to soften the impact of a statement or to signal a lack of confidence in the speaker's or writer's assertions.

Previous research has shown that women tend to use hedges more frequently than men in their spoken and written communication (Holmes, 1984; Lakoff, 1975). This phenomenon has been attributed to various factors, including socialization, cultural expectations, and gender roles. According to Lakoff (1975), women are socialized to use language in a way that reflects their subordinate status in society, which may include the use of hedges.

However, recent research has challenged this traditional view of gender-based language differences. Some studies have found that men and women may use hedges in different ways, depending on the context and purpose of their communication (Hyland & Tse, 2005; Biber & Finegan, 1989). For example, Hyland and Tse (2005) found that male writers in academic contexts used hedges more frequently than female writers, suggesting that the use of hedges may be influenced by the expectations and norms of specific genres of writing.

To date, few studies have investigated the use of hedges in written communication by male and female native English writers using a corpus-based approach. A corpus-based approach involves analyzing a large sample of written texts using computational methods to identify patterns and trends in language use. This method is advantageous as it allows for a systematic and objective analysis of language use in different genres of writing.

Therefore, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on gender-based language differences by conducting a comparative analysis of hedges used by male and female native English writers in written communication using a corpus-based approach. By analyzing a sample of written texts from various genres, we aim to identify the frequency and types of hedges used by male and female writers and explore the implications of these findings for written communication and gender equality in society.

Corpus based studies on hedging have been an interesting field of researchers and scholars all around the world. Comparisons have also been made on the basis of native and non-native speakers, as well as on the basis of gender. Mehboob-Ul-Hassan et al. (2019) conducted a corpus-based study in which they evaluated the "Interaction Markers in Pakistani Journalistic Discourse from a Gender Perspective". In this study, they look into how Pakistani male and female journalists employ hedges in their meta-discourse and how they differ from one another. In order to acquire information, they examined four distinct English newspapers, including Dawn, The News, The Nation, and the Express Tribune. The model of interactional meta-discourse developed by Hyland (2005) served as the theoretical underpinning for this inquiry. It was demonstrated by the researchers using a mixed technique that female Pakistani newspaper columnists use interaction indicators more frequently than their male counterparts. AntConc, was used as corpus tool for this study. In a similar study, Yeganeh and Ghoreyshi (2014) investigated gender discrepancies in academic published research in Iran while using discourse markers. For this study they collected data from non-native English writers who were originally Persians. They only talked about the

abstracts and discussion sections of the articles they decided to read and discuss. The frequency with which hedges and boosters were used in each of the selected researches was compared to one another. The result outcome is in the line of Rashidi and Alihosseini (2012). They have also employed Hyland's (2005) model of meta-discourse taxonomy. Through the use of qualitative and quantitative methods they concluded with the notions that gender differences are significant in using these linguistic devices in the texts. They came with the result that the female Persian writers tend to use more hedges while their male counterparts prefer to use more boosters. Boosters, hedges or interactional markers are prominent in all kind of writings. These devices are quite visible in written and spoken discourse. Writers having the ample ability to use more interactional markers may gain the attention of audience quite easily (Lakoff , 1975; Benyo & Kumar; 2020; Bacha et al., 2021). As earlier mentioned in the study, the gender difference plays vital role in using the certain devices in academic writings.

Even in government press conferences hedges may also be visible for interpretation. Pan and Zheng (2017) conducted a corpus-based study on the "Gender Differences in Hedging in Chinese Government Press Conference Interpreting". The goal of this research was to test Holmes' (1988) argument that women do not necessarily use more hedges than men, but that women's hedge use is more concerned with interpersonal relationships, whereas men's is more concerned with propositional accuracy. Hedges were categorised according to Hyland's (1996) classification technique, with the hedges being divided into categories based on accuracy, speaker-oriented, and audience-oriented characteristics. The outcomes of this study were noteworthy in that they demonstrated that male interpreters employ more hedges on average than female interpreters, which is a significant difference. They utilised four distinct interpretative methodologies to determine whether the discrepancies were due to differences in the original text or were the result of translation adjustments. Direct transfer, indirect transfer, shift, and addition were the four approaches that were tested. The first two types of interference are referred to as source text interference, whereas the third and fourth types are referred to as interpreter manipulation. In cases involving shift and addition, male interpreters outperformed their female counterparts.

Hedges and boosters are quite imminent in spoken discourse as well. A research entitled "A comparative study on Gender Differences in the Use of Lexical Hedges in Academic Spoken Language among Iranian EFL Learners" carried out by Namaziandost and Shafiee (2018). Male and female EFL students were surveyed to see if there were any disparities in the way they used

lexical hedges in their academic spoken speech. Iranian intermediate EFL students from the Islamic Azad University in Abadan were selected for this study by the researchers. Those students were divided into two groups, each with twenty boys and twenty females. Female students use more lexical hedges than male students, according to this study. In addition, female participants were using broader range of variegation in choosing lexical hedges. However, male respondents were not having sufficient production of lexical hedges.

Similar study was carried out by Yeganeh and Ghoreyshi (2014) which was on the two sections of research articles, abstract and discussion section. Researchers were keen to find out which gender use more hedges in these sections. The writers were native speakers of Persian language but they wrote the articles in English. For this study the chose 40 research articles written by native speakers of Persian language. They use the interactional meta-discourse theory formulated by Hyland (2009) to identify the number of hedges and booster in used. It was remarkable to observe that whereas Iranian male writers favoured boosters in their academic writing, Iranian female writers favoured hedges.

Interaction markers in form of hedges and boosters are quite common in social and linguistic text. Yet it is also part of non-social texts such as business and engineering texts. A comparative study was carried out by Elheky (2018) in which he compared two opposing disciplines' texts. He compared business and social texts. As it is important to gain the ability to make an effective statement in academic writing through the use of appropriate hedges; the researcher explored the importance and frequency of hedges in two different study areas (business and social). Thirty business and thirty social articles were selected to make a comparison and come to a conclusion. It was concluded that hedges are frequently used in social texts; that is why it helps in understanding of the practical reasoning and makes convincing statements in business and social writing. The research was similar to Takimoto (2015).

Hedging has been classified into the following types (Namaziandost & Shafiee, 2018).

Table 1
Classification of Hedges

Classification	Words	Example sentences
Modal verbs	May, might, can, could, should, would, will, shall, must, ought to	It might rain today

Lexical verbs	Suggest, assume, believe, estimate, argue, suppose, speculate, think, appear	It seems to a wonderful planning.
Probability adjective	Possible, likely, unlikely, certain, clear	It is certain to start raining in the morning.
Noun	Assumption, suggestion, claim, possibility, estimate	A good suggestion may help a troubled one to come out of it.
Adverb	Practically, presumably, probably, possibly, virtually, certainly, definitely, perhaps	Certainly, the lockdown is going to end to the end of this month
Adverb of frequency	Often, usually, sometimes, generally, occasionally, regularly, always, never	He always found helping poor and needy people in his locality.
If clause	If true, if anything	Government has to take the responsibility if anything happens to the protestors.
Compound hedges	Seems possible, may be acted, somehow	Somehow, he managed to escape from the prison.
Fillers	You know, you see, I mean, I think, by the way, hmmm, huh, sort of, yeah, like, believe me, I swear,	I mean, hedges are the important part of the academic writing.

Research Methodology

A mix approach was adopted to fulfill the requirements of this study. This study is contrastive in nature as both methods 'qualitative and quantitative' were needed. Qualitative for detail explanation of words frequency and concordances and quantitative method for statistical data collection of the concern and selected corpus; through qualitative method, concordance and

frequency of hedges were framed using AntConc, and COCA. Explanations were made through the use of qualitative method. Qualitative method was used more as compared to the quantitative methodology because description was need for the detail of understanding.

Theoretical Framework used in the Research

Hyland's (2005) theory of interactional meta-discourse served as the theoretical underpinning for this study. As he was off the view that hedges help authors to recognize others' response refraining from a proposition to a full commitment. AntConc a corpus tool was utilize for analyzing the selected corpus. Corpus of American Contemporary English (COCA) was also engaged to get a clearer picture about hedges of the selected corpus.

Data Collection Tools

As it is a desk research so no field work was needed. Data were gathered through use to reliable websites. Four books written by native English male and female writers were chosen. The gathered data than converted into txt format to feed into the corpus tools; AntConc and COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English) were used as corpus tools. The former one was used for detail analysis of hedges while the later one was practiced for knowing the over-all frequency of hedges present within that corpus.

Procedure

It was not field research, so no field work was done. Rather, data were gathered using internet. Four books written by male and female writers were selected and were converted into txt format. They were added into corpus tools for analysis. The corpus tool selected for this purpose was AntConc. Though, COCA has also been incorporated for the better result.

Data Analysis

The analysis of hedges used by male and female native English writers is being presented in the following. For the analysis of this very study the theory presented by Hyland (2005) was used. As the study is corpus based, so the COCO (Corpus of Contemporary American English) and AntConc were incorporated. Firstly, the frequency of each selected hedges was presented using COCA. Later, the detail of every hedge was analyzed with respect to the gender. Data was

gathered from four different books written by two male and two female English writes. The two female writers were Virginia Woolf and Jane Austin while there books' name were; *To the Light House* and *Pride and Prejudice*. The male writers were; Walter Issacson and James Joyce. Their books were Steve Jobs and Ulysses. Some of the selected hedges were feed into AntConc. It was tried to find out the result that who uses more hedges in writing, male or female? The detail of the analysis has been shown in the following with the screen shorts. The number of hedges under discussion are; may, might, could, would, believe, think, certain, certainly, perhaps, possible, possibility, claim, somehow, something, if anything, if true. These chosen words belong to the different word family; Like, they are modals, verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and if clauses.

The frequencies of some selected hedges are shown in the following to show the occurrences of these words are quite common in English literature. The frequency shown in the below table strengthens the notion that hedges are common in writings (Kima & Miin-Hwa Limb, 2015). COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English) has been used as a corpus tool in the following table. The table shows that the frequency of hedges is in millions. As it was not possible to get the frequency checked of each hedging; certain number of hedges' frequency has been checked in the following.

Table 2
Frequency of Hedges

	CONTEXT	ALL FORMS (SAMPLE): 100 200 500	FREQ	
1	WOULD		2349732	

	CONTEXT	ALL FORMS (SAMPLE): 100 200 500	FREQ	
1	CERTAIN		157076	

	CONTEXT	ALL FORMS (SAMPLE): 100 200 500	FREQ	
1	CERTAINLY		138172	

The first difference in terms of hedges is the use of modals in writing. So, the analysis of selected corpora with respect to the use of selected modals (may, might, would, could) have been mentioned first.
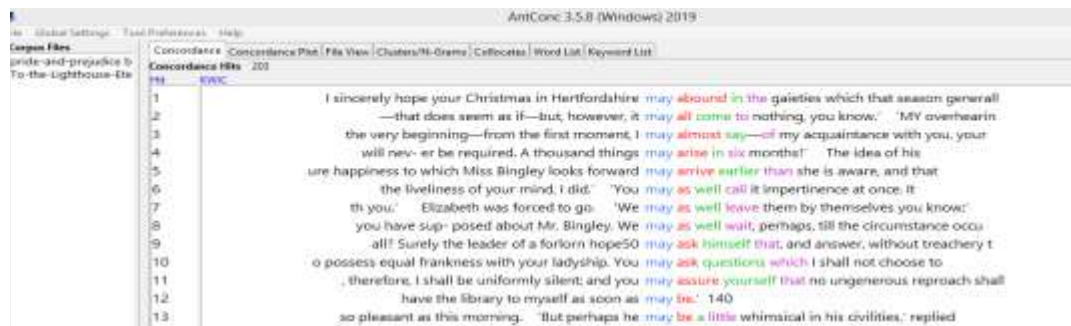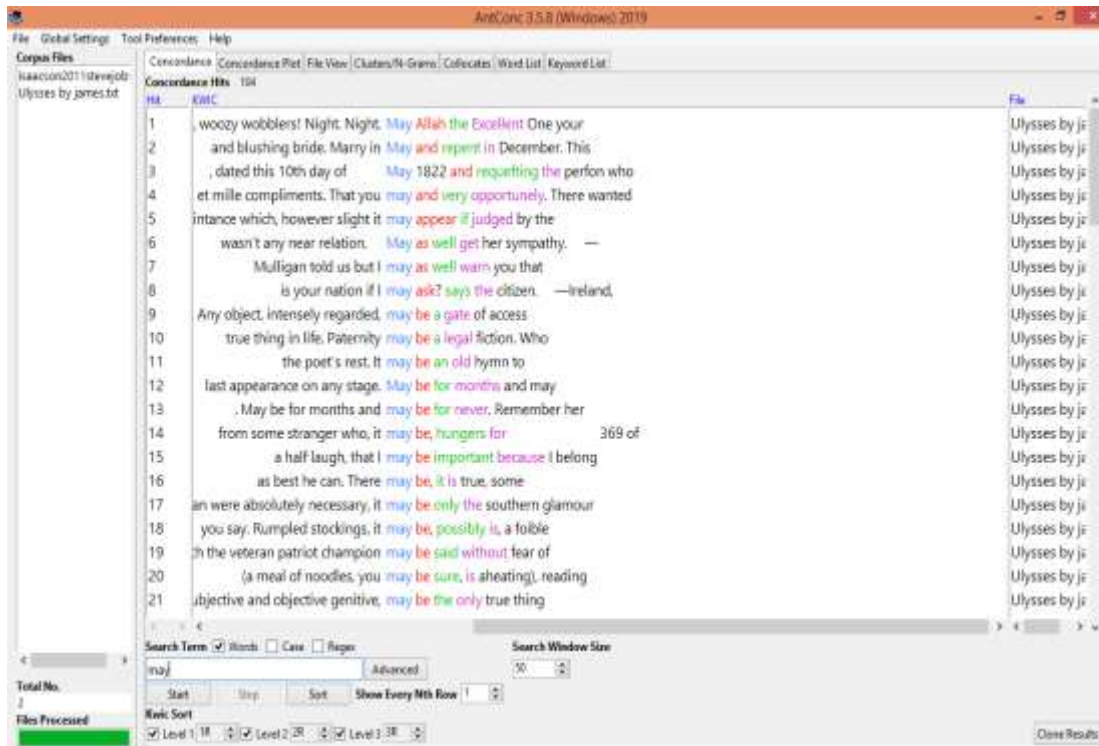
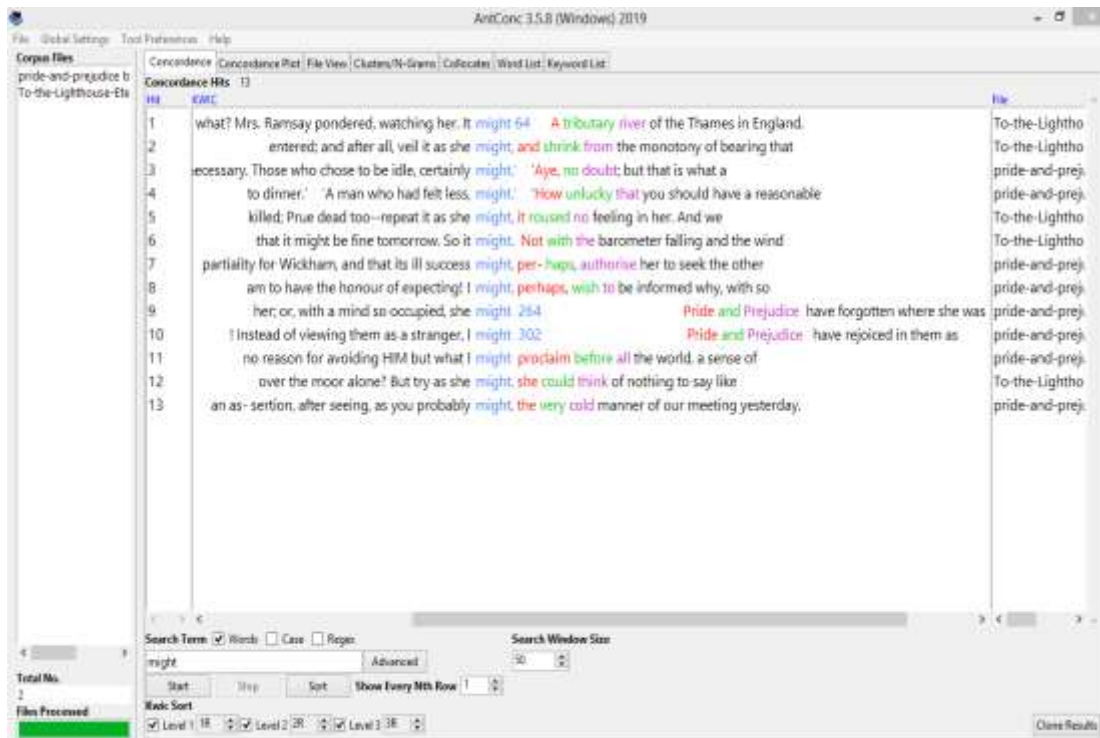Table: 3
'May' used by female

Table: 4
 'May' used by male

The data presented in3.5.8 (windows) 2019 table; 4.2 and 4.3 shows the concordance hits are 203 unlike the figure shown in 3.5.8 (windows) 2019 in table 2 that is 104. The above difference in terms of concordance hits gives us the idea that male and female writers are quite different in incorporating the modals in their writings. In modality, the word 'may' is usually used to show surety or certainty. In the selected corpus the female gender incorporated the modal verb may 203 times. It means that they were quite clear in stating their opinions and views. They were not doubtful about the thing they have written. However, the male gender on the other hand found to be less sure and certain about their claims and views. The modal verb may occur in the writing 104 times. The less concordance hits demonstrate the uncertainty of the male writers in the claims and statements.

Table: 5
'Might' used by male

Table: 6
'Might' used by female gender

The data presented above shows quite different result. The number of concordance hits shown in fig 4.4 in AntConc 3.5.8 (widows) 2019 is 195 while the number of concordance hits shown in table; 4.5 in AntConc 3.5.8 (widows) 2019 is 13. It can be extracted from above figures that male genders are quite uncertain about many things in their written discourse. In modality, the word 'might' is used for doubtfulness and uncertainty. On the other hand, the female writer did not engage the very word in their discourse in portrays that they are somehow quite certain in the claims and views.

As it is not possible to incorporate all the screen shorts taken from AntConc. A list of frequency has been presented in the result section. The list presented in the following table contains the result of this study. It will give an insight that which gender incorporates hedges in discourse more. Word category of each hedge has not been mentioned separately due to its changing of category. A word can be a noun, a verb or an adjective at a time. The detail analysis has been given in the following table.

Table: 7
Concordance hits by male and female

Words (different word category)	Concordance hits By male	Concordance hits By female	Who use more hedges? Male/female
May	104	203	Female
Might	195	13	Male
Could	601	822	Female
Would	889	922	Female
Should	121	340	Female
Estimate	01	00	Male
Argue	02	02	Equal
Think	267	262	Male
Believe	121	89	Male
Possibility	13	10	Male
Claim	39	06	Male
Suggestion	14	00	Male
Assumption	00	00	Equal
Possible	68	61	Male
Certain	98	66	Male
Like	829	335	Male
Unlike	06	04	Male
Perhaps	87	126	Female
Certainly	41	79	Female
Virtually	00	00	Equal
Practically	02	02	Equal

To our knowledge	00	00	Equal
We feel that	00	00	Equal
Seems reasonable	00	00	Equal
Looks possible	00	00	Equal
If true	00	01	Female
If anything	02	01	Male
Somehow	13	20	Female
Something	228	235	Female
I mean	46	02	Male
You know	87	47	Male
You see	49	12	Male
I think	57	41	Male
By the way	18	04	Male
Sort of	01	43	Female
Believe me	04	09	Female
Huh	01	00	Male
Yeah	05	00	Male
Total hedges	3,995	3,757	Male

The myth that males incorporate more hedges in their discourse has been falsified by many studies including this study. The above table containing the result of the number of hedges encountered into the discourse of male and female writers strengthens the notion that male gender tends to use more hedges in their discourse than female gender. The concordance hits of both genders have been mentioned separately. In order to get the required result, five modal verbs (may, might, could, would and should) were checked first. It was interesting to find out that female gender tends to use more modal verbs than male. Except one modal verb which was 'might'; females were on the top in using the other modal verbs in their books. However, male writers used the very term 'might' on larger scale than female.

Discussion

The theory 'interactional meta-discourse' presented by Hyland has been incorporated in this study. In addition, two of the commonly used corpus tools were engaged for detail data analysis. The data was gathered from four different English books written by native English writers. The purpose of selecting only the native writers was that the non-native authors or writers said to be addicted to use more hedges. So, selecting native and non-native writers could affect the result of the study. This is why two male and two female English writers who were native English speakers were chosen. Certain number of hedges were nominated first than those hedges were listed. To know the importance of these hedges some of them were feed into COCA. Their frequency was taken which has been mentioned in the very study above. The detail

difference between male and female writers in terms of using hedges were compared and the result has been given in table no; 4.4. On the whole male members were found using more hedges in their written discourse as compared to the female counterparts. Nevertheless, female members were leading in the use of modals. Five modal verbs were checked and the result was four on one. Females were found showing more modality in the writing except the word might. Likewise, female writers tend to use more adverbs than their male counterparts. Secondly, they used the adverbials 'certainly and perhaps' 79 and 126 comparatively in against of '41 and 87' hits used by male writers. Thirdly, female writers used some fillers such as; 'somehow, something, believe me and sort of' more than those of the male writers. But in the remaining words/ hedges, male writers were ahead. They lead by using more hedges in terms of 'adjectives, nouns, verbs, fillers, approximants etc. some hedges were equal in number in the selected corpus of both genders. However, some hedges, including some nouns (suggestion and assumption) and the introductory phrase (to our knowledge, we/I feel that, one would expect that etc) did not appear in the corpus of both genders. But on the whole male writers found using more hedges as they used '3,995' hedges as compared to the female writers. They used only '3,757' hedges only.

Conclusion

This comparative study of hedges used by male and female native English writers reveals significant differences in the use of hedges between the two genders. Our analysis of the written texts shows that female writers use hedges more frequently, and the types of hedges they use differ significantly from those used by male writers. Furthermore, we found that the use of hedges varies across different genres of writing, suggesting that the context of written communication influences language use. These findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge on gender-based language differences and their impact on written communication. The study also has practical implications for improving communication skills and promoting inclusivity in various fields, such as education, business, and politics. By understanding the nuances of gender-based language differences, individuals can become more effective communicators and promote greater fairness and equity in society. The study highlights the importance of gender-sensitive language use and challenges traditional gender stereotypes. It also suggests that language use is a reflection of social and cultural norms, which may influence individual perceptions and behaviors. As such, the study underscores the need for greater awareness and education on gender-based language differences and their potential impact on social and cultural norms.

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