Attitude Markers in the Writing of EFL Learners:

A Pragma-Stylistic Study

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Abstract

Attitude markers refer to certain expressions that are used in a text that reflect writers' position toward both the content in the text and the reader. This study aims to investigate the use of attitude markers in the writings of EFL learners. For this purpose, third stage of the department of English, university of Basra was chosen. The study analyzed 177 written texts of students in both a pretest and a posttest. The pretest is designed to find out whether the students use attitude markers or not while the posttest is intended to know if the students are able to develop their performance in the use of attitude markers in their writings. The study reveals that attitude markers are used in the pretest and the posttest respectively, but there were significant differences between the two tests. The result suggests that the students can develop their performance in the use of attitude markers in their writings. The study stresses the need for teaching attitude markers in the writing courses in the academic study.

1. Introduction

Language is not used randomly, but it is used as a mean of communication. Mathews (1997: 198) defines language as "the phenomenon of vocal and written communication among human beings." This definition shows the close relation between language and communication. Writing skill plays important role in communication framework of language. It is used to transfer the information between the addresser and the addressee. Writing needs many requirements.

According to cooperative maxims, the writer needs to write in clear, truthful, relevant, polite, informative, and interesting way (Grice, 1975). One of the

elements that can be used to achieve these requirements is the use of attitude markers. The writer uses attitude markers to help readers understand, interpret, evaluate the texts, and to know the writer's intended meaning (Crismore et al., 1993).

2. <u>Terminology</u>

Pragmatic markers have been studied from different perspectives. These perspectives are represented by various terms: sentence connectives (Halliday and Hasan,1976), pragmatic connectives (van Dijk, 1979; Stubbs, 1983), discourse signaling devices (Polanyi and Scha, 1983), semantic conjuncts (Quirk et al., 1985), discourse particles (Schorup, 1985), , pragmatic markers (Fraser, 1988, 1990), phatic connectives (Bazanella, 1990), discourse operators (Redeker, 1990, 1991), pragmatic expressions (Erman, 1992), cue phrases (Knott and Dale,1994), pragmatic operators (Ariel, 1994), pragmatic particles (Ostman,1995), discourse markers (Blakemore, 2002; Schiffrin, 1987), and metadiscourse (Hyland, 1998, 2005). Each term implies different meanings and functions for different group of researchers. The variety in the terminology reflects the fact that this linguistic phenomenon has many definitions and functions. In terms of function, pragmatic markers can create coherence and represent marking of stance, and other interactional roles. The varieties in the functions of pragmatic markers make it difficult to give a universal definition that covers all their different features. Jucker and Ziv (1998: 1) state, "the terminological diversity reflects both the wide range of linguistic approaches that have been employed for their study, and the multiplicity of functions which these elements are said to fulfill."

From semantic point of view, Halliday and Hasan (1976) use the term **sentence connectives**. They refer to these expressions as "cohesive dvices" (reference, repetition, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction) which are used to create cohesion in a text by indicating semantic relations in the underlying structure of sentences. They do not directly present any definition of sentence connectives, but they explain their functions. They define sentence connectives as 'conjunctions' that involve the use of formal markers to relate sentences, clauses, and paragraphs to each other. The addresser uses these expressions to explain to the addressee the relationship between what is about to be said and what has been said before. Halliday and Hasan (1976) study conjunctions above sentence level and they classify conjunctions into four types: additive conjunctions as **and, or, and nor**) which are used cohesively. Adversative

conjunctions are words like ***but, however,*** and ***though*** which serve as 'contrary to expectation'. Causal conjunctions are expressed by the words ***so, thus, hence, therefore, consequently,*** and a number of expressions like ***as a result (of that), because of that, and in consequence (of that)***. Temporal conjunctions are expressed by words such as ***then, and then, next, afterwards, after that, sequentially*** and a number of other expressions. Each type has certain function in the text.

Syntactically, Quirk et al. (1985) study of conjunctions includes both within and beyond sentence level. Quirk et al. (1985) think that conjuncts function within sentence level and discourse level. Quirk et al. define semantic conjuncts as a word or group of words that joins words, groups, or clauses. According to Quirk et al., semantic conjuncts can be divided into seven types:

1 .Listing: (a- enumerative: e.g. first, second, third, for a star), and (b- additive: likewise)

2. Summative: e.g.to sum up, altogether

4. Appositional: e.g. namely, for example

 4. Resultive: e.g. consequently, as a result

5. Inferential: e.g. in other words, therefore, in that case

6. Contrastive: on the other hand, precisely, rather

7. Transitional: (a- discoursal: incidentally, by the way) and (b-temporal: in the meantime, meanwhile)

Moreover, Schiffrin (1987:31) uses the term ***discourse markers*** and she defines them pragmatically as *"sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk."* She explains the importance of discourse markers and clarifies their pragmatic meanings. She thinks that discourse markers are the product of several joining of components, and they can show addresser's attitudes. She has divided discourse structure into five types:

1- exchange (used in question and answer),

2- action (where speech acts are situated),

3- ideational (show semantic perspective of exchange structure),

4- participation framework (it shows the interaction between speaker and listener),

5- and information state (to show cognitive ability of addresser and addressee, how they organize their knowledge , and what they know of shared knowledge [presupposition]).

Schiffrin (1987) focuses on the relational and connective function of discourse markers. Syntactically, discourse markers are independent, so their deletion "leaves the sentence intact." In addition, discourse markers usually occur at the beginning of the sentence and few of them occur in the middle or the final position of the sentence (Schiffrin, 1987: 31).

It seems that "pragmatic markers" is the most appropriate term for all markers in English since many scholars admit that pragmatic markers need for pragmatic interpretation rather than semantic or syntactic interpretation. Muller (2005: 20) states, "There is a general agreement that discourse markers (pragmatic markers) contribute to the pragmatic meaning of utterances and thus play an important role in the pragmatic competence of the speaker." Meanings of pragmatic markers always depend on the context in which they are used. In this study, pragmatic markers can be defined as lexical expressions that have core meaning. They have pragmatic meanings rather than syntactic or semantic meanings, and they have interpersonal and textual functions. They are often grammatically optional and they have little or no meaning in the propositional content of the sentence.

3. **Attitude Markers**

In the written and spoken language, there are certain expressions that convey humans' attitudes. They are called ***attitude markers***. Attitude markers like those that: *I believe, fortunately, happily* and many other expressions used at sentence level and at discourse level to represent addresser's stance in certain situations. The most important question is what are the differences between *pragmatic markers* and *attitude markers*? Do they relate to each other or not? These questions can clarify the meaning of attitude markers. According to Watson (2001), it is important to explain the meaning of the terms to the readers especially when there is such misunderstanding in the terminology.

The term pragmatic markers has been considered the most appropriate term for all markers in English language. The other terms either have lack in their

definitions or they have too narrow definitions. For instance, the term discourse markers gives impression that these markers are usually used at the level of discourse, not at the level of sentence. Swan (1995:151) describes discourse as a "piece of language longer than a sentence." The word discourse in the above term is used to explain certain expressions that occur at the discourse level higher than the sentence.

Moreover, the term *discourse connectives* is too narrow because they concern only the semantic meaning of the conjunctions at the level of discourse. The term discourse *particles*, like other terms, serves to show the grammatical function of markers. At the same time, all scholars agree on the multifunctionality of markers, so these markers need pragmatic interpretations depending on the context in which they are used. The term *'markers'* is used to refer to signals provided by the addresser in his/her communication with the addressee. Moreover, Al Kohlani (2010:3) points out that "the word marker does not only refer to syntactic or semantic relations in the text, but they also make intentions, plans, attitudes, as well as social relation." This means that the term *markers* also has pragmatic meaning, so there is no problem in using the word *markers*. Brinton (1996:29-30) states that *Pragmatic* better captures the range of functions filled by these items and *marker* is a suitable term, because in contrast to *particle*, it encompasses both single-word items and phrases. Ajmir (2005) uses the term pragmatic marker as an umbrella term for elements that do not have semantic meaning but have the procedural and pragmatic meaning of signaling the addresser's mood and opinion. Ostman (2011: 226) aslo believes that the term discourse markers is not appropriate because these markers are defined as subordinate elements that connect between the sentences. In contrast, the term pragmatic markers is the appropriate term for all markers because they have textual and interpersonal function. The term **pragmatic markers** is used here as an umbrella for all markers in English, because this term can give impression that such markers can be used at discourse level and at sentence level and they have many meanings according to their contexts. According to their function, pragmatic markers consist of two main types: *discourse markers* that have textual function, and *attitude markers* that have interpersonal function. Ostman (1981) says that pragmatic markers serve to create organization in the text, to make interactional signaling, and to show addresser's opinion. Trillo (2002) points out that pragmatic markers serve to connect the current sentence with the preceding sentence and they can convey addresser's attitudes and emotions.

According to this, ***Attitude Markers*** fall under this umbrella. Attitude markers occur as subclass of pragmatic markers in language. Poggi (2007) says that pragmatic markers (including attitude markers) convey addresser's commitment, his/her intention, attitude, or mood. Ostman (2011:225) describes pragmatic markers as a "window" through which one can know addresser's attitudes and opinion in certain situation. He says "discourse markers (being subclass of pragmatic markers) have emotive and expressive function rather than referential, donatives, or cognitive function". This means that attitude markers occur within pragmatic markers and they share the same features of pragmatic markers. Moreover, Schiffrin (1987) says that one level of discourse is participation framework. This level represents addresser's attitudes and emotions in context. Halliday (2004:139) sees that these expressions are used in the discourse to express addresser's worldview to a "proposition as a whole or to a particular speech function." Fraser (1996:173) explains that lexical basic markers are used to show speaker's propositional attitude toward the following sentence, or show his/her desire, politeness, etc. Moreover, he (1996: 179-188) says that commentary markers and parallel markers are used to represent speaker's attitudes, emotions and displeasure, and the solidarity between addresser and addressee. Using words like *fortunately, frankly, stupidly, brother, etc.* explains how addresser shows his/ her evaluation and stance on the basic message.

Grammatically, attitude markers can be verb (*insist)* adverb (*fortunately),* noun (*president*), or adjective (*remarkable)*. They also can be idioms such as *please* and *Ok* which serve to represent addresser's intention and attitudes in certain situation. Similarly, Fraser (1990) thinks that pragmatic markers are linguistic items that are not similar in their grammatical categories, because they can be nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjective, and interjection. Moreover, discourse markers and attitude markers belong to pragmatic field. They have specific interpretations that depend on the context in which they occur (De Bryum, 1998:134).

In spite of being both subclasses of pragmatic markers, attitude markers have many features that differentiate them from discourse markers. Discourse markers and attitude markers have common related features, but they are different in terms of their functions. There are two main differences between discourse markers and attitude markers, which are considered as distinctive features between the two types. Grammatically, earlier as stated, attitude markers can be *nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives,* while discourse markers can

be conjunctions as *but, and, in, and* or adverbials as *moreover, whatever and wherever.* Attitude markers also occur in initial, middle, and final position while discourse markers appear only in initial position of the second sentence. Schiffrin (2001) states that the feature of initial position of discourse markers is one of the defining characteristics of items belonging to this group. In terms of their functions, attitude markers do not work as discourse connectives that "signal the relationship of the basic message to the foregoing discourse" to create cohesion in the texts (Fraser, 1996: 186). They are only used to represent speakers/ writer's emotions, states, and stance in the conveyed message.

Mark (2008: 13) states that attitude markers cannot function as connective words, and they do not participate in the conceptual meaning of the sentence. In the following examples, the first sentence illustrates the word *and* functions as a discourse marker that is used to connect the preceding sentence with the following one, while in the second sentence, the word *madly* is an attitude marker that represents addresser's stance regarding the way John drives his car.

1- John travelled to England***, and*** he lived there.
2- ***Madly,*** John drives the car.

There is a common feature between discourse markers and attitude markers in terms of structure, both discourse markers and attitude markers are optional. Their deletions from the sentence do not affect the general meaning of the text or sentence. Linguistically, discourse markers and attitude markers are linguistically optional, but pragmatically, they are obligatory. If addresser does not use them in spoken or written language, the addressee finds difficulty in understanding the whole texts. De Bryun (1998: 127) explains that the main function of attitude markers is to "serve as a means by which the user of the language makes obvious what his feelings, emotions, or views are about the propositional content of the utterance being made." Attitude markers are signals that show humans' happiness, surprise, like, love, hatred, desire, etc, and they are used in interactions to orient the addressee, and to talk in a polite way.

4. **Fraser's taxonomy**

The present study follows the steps of Fraser's model. From a syntactic-pragmatic perspective, Fraser (1996) explains two main types of messages in

language. ***First,*** every sentence has direct message potential derived from the sentence meaning. The message (the meaning that the addresser wants to convey) can be modified by the context and the performance. ***Second***, a sentence can be divided into two distinctive parts. The first part is that every sentence encodes semantic meaning that is called truth-condition meaning of the sentence. The second part is opposite to the first, it does not participate in the propositional meaning of the sentence (non-truth condition meaning of the sentence). The latter is called pragmatic meaning accomplished by pragmatic markers. Fraser has divided these markers into four types: Basic Markers, Commentary Markers, Parallel Markers, and Discourse Markers. Commentary markers are used to represent addresser's attitudes. Commentary markers usually occur at the beginning of the sentence. These markers like other markers. Semantically, they have conceptual meaning, but functionally, they have procedural meaning. They represent addresser's attitudes directly toward the propositional content of the sentence. Commentary markers are classified into eight types according to their function in the text:

4.1. <u>**assessment markers:**</u> this type of the markers describes how the addresser evaluates the state of the world that is presented in the propositional content of the sentence. They can be used only with declarative sentences. In sentence (1), the addresser describes his/her surprise by using the commentary marker (***astonishingly***) regarding how Tom is still alive after the explosion. This type cannot give meaning if they are used in interrogative and imperative sentences as illustrated in (2, and 3).

1- ***Astonishingly***, Tom is still alive after the explosion.
2- *****Sadly***, do you go to war?
3- *****Foolishly***, go home.

Assessment markers have many stylistic variations for instance the sentence (4) is similar to sentence (5) because both of them convey the comment of the addresser on the basic message.

4- ***Astonishingly,*** Tom is still alive after explosion.
5- ***It is astonishing*** that Tom is still alive after the explosion.

4.2. <u>**Manner of speaking markers:**</u>the second type of commentary markers is used to represent the manner in which the addresser talks about certain

situation. They are used to represent addresser's politeness, stance, and his/her belief, etc. Usually, they occur in the initial position of the sentences, so if they occur in the middle or at the end of the sentence without commas between them, they will be considered as a part of the sentence not as manner of speaking markers. This means that pragmatic markers depend on the syntactic position rather than their forms. This type has two main functions. Firstly, they can be used in the declarative sentence (6) and imperative sentence (7) to signal a message to the addressee on the way the addresser conveys the message as frustrated, polite, objective, or honest. Secondly, they can be used in the interrogative sentences to signal the way in which the addresser conveys the message and how the addresser wants the addressee to answer the question as illustrated in (8).

6- ***Quite frankly,*** I will change the design of the project.
7- ***Seriously,*** go out.
8- ***Honestly,*** what do you know about psychology?

Like other commentary markers, this type has stylistic variation such as: *speaking honesty, to speak frankly, or in all*. These expressions can be used in initial, middle, and final position to convey manner of the speaking in the sentences.

4.3. <u>**evidential markers:**</u> This type of commentary markers are used to signal the degree of confidence, positive or negative information that is conveyed by the addresser. These expressions include the adverbial forms: *assuredly, clearly, possibly, seemingly, surely, perhaps, most, quite, etc*. These markers are used to support and strengthen the basic message. They occur only in the declarative sentences. They also have stylistic variations as: *it is possible that, I am sure that, and it may be that, etc*. The following sentences explain the use of evidential.

9- ***Obviously,*** the teacher wants to answer the question to his students.
10- **Seemingly,** Obama will announce the war against Syria.
11- ***Surely,*** the American military force has caught Sadam Hussein.
12- ***I am sure*** that the American military force has caught Sadam Hussein.

4.4. <u>**hearsay markers:**</u> they are used to show the source from which the information has come such as *reportedly, it is claimed, it is appeared*

that…, they say, they tell me, and one hears, etc. They usually occur at the beginning of declarative sentences and they have stylistic variations as illustrated in sentence (14). In sentence (13), the addresser uses the word ' *reportedly'* to explain that he represents this information according to a report, not form his/her personal belief.

13-**Reportedly,** the manager visited the stable yesterday.

14- **It is reported that** the manager visited the stable yesterday.

    4.5. <u>mitigation markers:</u>this type of markers is used to show polite request of the addresser. Fraser (1997) explain "… the addresser's desire to reduce face loss associated with the basic message of the sentence." Mitigation markers occur as the following structures:

If + mitigation marker + basic message

Unless + mitigation marker + basic message

Mitigation marker + but + basic message

15-**If you do not mind,** I want to leave the class.
16- **Unless I am hearing you,** you did not tell me the fact.
17- **I know you are intelligent,** but I should examine you.

    4.6. <u>emphasis markers:</u> they are used to focus on the basic message. This type is illustrated by using expression like: *I insist, without exaggeration, if I ever heard one, mark my words, definitely.*
18-**I insist that** you should do what I want.
19- **Mark my words,** the boss kicked the engineer out.

    4.7. <u>perlocutionary markers:</u> this type of the markers has been mentioned by Frasr (1997: 11). He thinks that perlocuitionary markers "provide a message about the role of the basic message as discourse activity". Prelocutionary markers describe the type of the information that will be conveyed by the addresser. Syntactically, this type is usually introduced as a verb.

20- ***I point out*** that Chomsky differentiate deep structure and surface structure.

In the sentence above, the addresser shows his repetition for this information. This type also has stylistic variations like *let me comment, to say, and at the risk of adding to the confusion, etc.*

5. Methodology

The study attempts to investigate the use of attitude markers in the writings of EFL learners and their pragmatic function in these texts. It is based on the analysis of the written texts of EFL students in the University of Basra.

5.1. Participants

The participants in this study are EFL learners. They are students at the department of English, third stage, and their ages ranged between 20-30 old years. All of them are Iraqi Basri students. They are students in the departments of English in College of Education, College of Art, and Shatt Al Arab University College during the academic year (2013-2014). All of them are considered as advanced students who have the ability to write. This level is chosen because the learners have studied how to write formal essays, so the study tries to know if the learners can develop their ability in the use of attitude markers in their writings or not.

5.2. Material and instruments

The research consists of two tests (pretest and posttest). In the pretest, the learners are requested to write an essay on the topic entitled "*Many of us spend hours in front of our computers and communicate more by e-mail or instant-messaging than in person. Some people believe that this is good because it helps shy people communicate more openly with others. Others believe that computer communication prevents us from developing interpersonal skills and limits our ability to have meaningful relationships with others. How do you feel about this issue? Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.*" The purpose of the pre-test is to know if the learners have knowledge about the use of attitude markers in their writings. The test involves general information such as name, nationality, and age. The study does not concentrate on gender, identity, or any other sociolinguistic factors rather it aims to know the use of

attitude markers of EFL learners in written language. The learners know the purpose of the study, and they know these papers are going to be used for scientific research only. The students are asked to write at least five paragraphs, and to answer the question realistically and honestly.

Before the posttest, a lecture is given for students to clarify the types of attitude markers and their pragmatic functions. Before starting the lecture, they are asked if they know what attitude markers are, but the answer was negative what they are. The lecture starts with the definition of attitude markers, their common characteristics, and their importance. The students know all types of attitude markers used in the writing such as structural markers, commentary markers, and parallel markers. In the lecture, there are examples for all subcategories of each type. At the end of the lecture, the students are delivered some notes on attitude markers. The lecture aimed to find if attitude markers instruction has any impact on the performances of the participants in the posttest of writing. In the posttest, the students are required to write an essay on the topic entitled: *In your opinion, what is the best way to choose a marriage partner? Use specific reasons and examples why you think this way is best.* The time of the test is also one hour and they are allowed to use dictionaries in the test.

5.3. Procedure

At the beginning of the study, a pretest of writing was administered. In the pretest, the respondents were asked to show their attitudes in their writing. Then, the participants involved in a lecture to give them instructions to on the different types of attitude markers. The respondents wrote many examples that convey their stance. At the end of the lecture, there was a quiz for the students to investigate the impact of the given instructions. Finally, they received some notes that help them understand the varieties of attitude markers and their pragmatic meanings. After one week, the students were given the posttest.

5.4. Statistical analysis

In order to investigate whether the use of attitude markers developed the students' performance, the mean and t-test were used to compare the pretest and the posttest. The data analysis was viewed by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

5.5.   <u>Results and discussions</u>

Some of the attitude markers were used extensively in the pretest and few of them were not used in the posttest. Frankly speaking, most of the respondents used evidential markers that constituted the high significant value among all markers in the posttest (t = 5.41). Other types scattered between significant and insignificant. Emphasis markers, assessment markers, hearsay markers, and mitigation markers were significant. Manner of the speaking and perlocutionary markers were insignificant. Table (1) shows the learners' scores on the pretest and posttests.

5.5.1. <u>Assessment Markers</u>

This type was used in the pretest and the posttest. In the pretest, the mean of this type was 0.25 which was lower than the posttest (M = 0.72). There were noticeable differences between the two tests where the respondents in the posttest used assessment markers more than the pretest. The difference between the two tests was significant (t = 4.51).

5.5.2. *<u>Evidential Markers</u>*

Many respondents used this type in a wide range in the posttest. Evidential markers occurred in both the pretest (M = 0.12) and the posttest (M = 0.54). This means the use of this type in the pretest less than the posttest. There was a clear change in the use of this type in the posttest. In the pretest, a very few respondents used evidential markers while in the posttest; many respondents used evidential markers with many stylistic variations. In fact, the difference between the pretest and the posttest scores was highly significant (t = 5.08). The difference in the mean of the pretest and the posttest may refer to the enhancement in the students' performance that took place after the meaningful instructions passed to them.

5.5.3. <u>Hearsay Markers</u>

This type functions to attribute the source of information from which the writer brings his/ her information. Hearsay markers occupied a relatively high score of use in the posttest. The respondents used them slightly in the pretest (M = 0.16), but they extended their use of hearsay markers in the posttest (M =0.52). There was significant difference between the two tests (t = 3.76). This means that the respondents' ability to show their stance in the written texts has been developed.

5.5.4. **Emphasis Markers Markers**

They were used in a wide range distribution among the respondents in the posttest. Emphasis markers occurred in the texts of respondents in the pretest (M = 0.04) and the posttest (M = 0.48) with clear difference between the two tests. The use of this type of markers enables the respondents to index their concentration in their writing. Actually, most of respondents did not use emphasis markers in the pretest, but they highly tended to use them in the posttest. Therefore, the difference between the two tests was significant (t = 5.08).

5.5.5. **Manner of The Speaking**

The respondents preferred to use this type of markers in their writing in the posttest. To be specific, the mean of respondents in the posttest (M = 8.00) was higher than the mean of the pretest (M = 0). Therefore, there was significant difference between the pretest and the posttest. Statistically speaking, t-value of the two tests was 2.53. Although the respondents did not use manner of the speaking markers in the pretest, they used them extensively in the posttest. One can say that the respondents now know how to use attitude markers to represent different types of stance in their writing.

5.5.6. **Prelocutionary Markers**

This type of markers is used to show the role of what follows. They were little used by the respondents in the two tests. Statistically speaking, the mean of respondents in the posttest (M = 0.0 6) was slightly higher than that of the posttest (M = 0.04). Overall, there was no significant difference between the mean of the pretest and the posttest (t = 0.72). Most of respondents preferred to use other types of the markers and a very little of them used this type.

5.5.7. <u>Mitigation Markers</u>

The final type of commentary markers is used to reduce face loss or to represent politness of the addresser. No one of the respondents used this type in the pretest ($M = 0$) while they are only used three times in the posttest ($M = 0.04$).

According to data analysis, most of the students did not use attitude markers in the pretest appropriately since they did not know the functions and pragmatic meanings of such markers. After the instructive lecture, the students knew these markers functionally and pragmatically. In the posttest, the statistical analysis shows that there is difference in the students' performance in the use of attitude markers. The students have developed their ability in the use of assessment, evidential, hearsay, emphasis, manner of the speaking markers. There is significant difference in the students' performance in the pretest and the posttest. Clearly, the results show that the learners performed better in the posttest of writing than that of the pretest. As expected, the students did not use prelocutinary markers and mitigation markers in their writing. The students did not use these two types because they may have less important function in presenting addresser's stance in writing. These markers may be used extensively in other types of writing such as articles, journals, magazines, or stories.

Table (1) The results of the mean and the t-test of attitude markers in the pretest and the posttest

No	Type	Mean		Std Deviation		T Value		Sig
		Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	t	Std	
١	Assessment Markers	0.253	0.720	0.495	0.745	4.514	1.96	sig
٢	Evidential Markers	0.120	0.546	0.237	0.599	5.411	1.96	sig
٣	Hearsay Markers	0.160	0.520	0.404	0.723	3.763	1.96	sig
٤	Emphasis Markers	0.480	4.00	0.197	0.723	5.08	1.96	sig
٥	Manner of Speaking	0	8.00	0.479	0.569	٢.٥٣	1.96	No sig
٦	Prelocutionary Markers	4.000	6.667	0.197	0.251	0.723	1.96	No sig
٧	Mitigation Markers	0.34	0.04	0	0.273	0.612	1.96	sig

4.1. <u>Conclusions and suggestions</u>

This study aims to investigate the use of attitude markers in EFL learners' writings. 177 EFL learners received lecture instructions concerning the Fraser's taxonomy (1996). The data of this study reflects that there is a significant difference in the performance of the respondents of the pretest and the posttest in most types of attitude markers. Actually, it is found that the learners performed better in the posttest than that of the pretest. Statistically speaking, the study revealed that the learners can use attitude markers that help them to perform better in their writing.

This study may be helpful to teachers of writing essay to explain the important role of attitude markers in improving EFL learners' writings since these markers make the texts more effective, polite, and interesting. The teachers of writing need to teach their students the function and pragmatic meaning of attitude markers, and they should make their students know how to use them when designing their messages. Importantly, materials designers should develop textbooks in a way that provides the learners with enough information about the different types of attitude markers and the function they perform in the text.

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