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Persuasive Discourse: Metadiscourse Practices in Chinese Live Streaming

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Abstract

In e-commerce live streaming, businesses are increasingly turning to “TikTok short video + live streaming”, which features as a key marketing method. This study attempts to investigate how persuasive discourse is constructed in this genre through metadiscourse practices. By drawing on Hyland’s (2005) interactional models of metadiscourse and Verschueren’s (1999) metapragmatic awareness theory, this study examines the pragmatic functions of persuasive discourse and the metapragmatic awareness of the streamers reflected on TikTok. This research provides streamers with insights on how to achieve their marketing goals more effectively by enhancing their own metapragmatic awareness and using appropriate practices of persuasive discourse.

Keywords

live streaming, persuasive discourse, metadiscourse, metapragmatic awareness

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Персуазивный дискурс: практики метадискурса в китайских живых трансляциях

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Аннотация

Предпринята попытка исследовать, каким образом конструируется персуазивный дискурс на китайском языке при помощи методов метадискурса. Авторами анализируются прагматические функции персуазивного дискурса на китайском языке, а также метапрагматическая осведомленность стримеров в социальной сети TikTok. Предваряет работу обзор зарубежных научных трудов по проблематике исследования, который нацелен на

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анализ 9 интеракционных источников, а также анализ частоты их употребления, подкрепленный статистическими данными и многочисленными примерами: 50 237 лексических единиц были расшифрованы авторами из прямой трансляции, хронометраж которой составил 180 минут. В результате ими выделяются четыре типа метапрагматической осведомленности: 1) установление гармоничных межличностных отношений с клиентами; 2) удовлетворение когнитивных ожиданий потребителей при совершении покупок; 3) установление взаимодействия и эмоциональной идентификации с потребителями; 4) инициирование взаимодействия с потребителями и совершения покупок. Основываясь на критериях классификации метадискурса, предложенных К. Хайландом, все интеракционные ресурсы метадискурса в статье классифицируются по подкатегориям и идентифицируются при помощи современной среды для аннотирования текстовых корпусов UAM Corpus Tool.

Ключевые слова

живая трансляция, персуазивный дискурс, метадискурс, осведомленность о метапрагматике

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Introduction

TikTok is a musically-creative social media software that can record and produce short videos. It was launched in September 2016 and is becoming a community platform focusing on musical short videos for young people. TikTok has huge commercial value potential, because of its high traffic support and intelligent distribution capabilities, brand communication capabilities, penetration and guidance capabilities of interactive platforms, and user transformation capabilities of short video platforms. It has become the birthplace of brand marketing and the frontier content field of new media marketing, and it is a collection of “short videos + live streaming”, which can help businesses achieve their sales goals. Therefore, how to communicate with consumers more appropriately is a matter of concern, and this paper mainly focuses on the persuasive discourse in the process of living streaming on TikTok.

It is noteworthy that the successful realization of sales, or the construction of persuasive discourse in live streaming is inseparable from the metadiscourse practices. The persuasive discourse in this study is regarded as the discourse that is constructed through specific metadiscourse practices. It is usually defined as “discourse about discourse or communication about communication” [Kopple, 1985]. The concept of metadiscourse provides a framework for analyzing discourse as a form of social engagement. It can help speakers to show their stance on a proposition, negotiate with the audience and draw them into an argument, which has a strong persuasive effect. This paper focuses on the role of metadiscourse in business context according to Hyland’s model of interactional metadiscourse [Hyland, 2005]. The exploration of the essence and categories of metadiscourse within the theoretical framework of metapragmatics can better dynamically match the form and function of discourse in specific natural communication contexts [Chen Xinren, 2020]. In addition, examining the metapragmatic awareness of the streamers can also delve deeper into the motivation behind language, and clarifying the regulation of metapragmatic awareness can more effectively promote the effectiveness of language use and achieve “words make things happen”. This paper gives some inspiration to the streamers through more appropriate metadiscourse practices to achieve sales goals more smoothly.

1. Literature review

1.1 Persuasive discourse

Persuasion is often seen as a language behaviour and strategy used to change the attitude and response of the interlocutor, or to influence their beliefs and consistency. Persuasive discourse is an everlasting research topic, which has also been given different comprehensive explanations [O’Keefe,

2002; Van Dijk, 2006; Jones, Simons, 2017]. Many scholars have studied it from multiple dimensions, such as rhetoric, social psychology, communication, economics, and advertising [Kashiha, 2022; Humă, 2023]. H. Kashiha investigates the persuasive meaning of metadiscourse markers in political speeches and how persuasive discourse is constructed in this genre through metadiscourse practices. Through literature review, it has been found that most discourse on persuasion is concentrated in political speeches or commercial advertisements, with little research focusing on the context of live streaming sales. Therefore, in order to fill this gap, this paper examines the persuasive discourse in live streaming sales.

There are two perspectives for persuasive discourse research, one is social communication perspective, and the other is cognitive perspective. The former shows that in the process of producing persuasive discourse, the persuader constantly adjusts, negotiates, and selects appropriate language in order to achieve the best persuasive effect [Van Dijk, 2006]. The latter mainly indicates that the persuader expects to strengthen or change the cognitive environment of the persuasive object through the information conveyed, making the cognitive environment of both parties clear, achieving the persuasive object's identification with the persuasive discourse, producing persuasive effects, and ultimately achieving their communicative intention [O'Keefe, 2002]. This study follows the perspective of social communication and aims to investigate the types of persuasive discourse in live streaming and the speaker's control of language.

1.2 Metadiscourse

The term “metadiscourse” was proposed by Z.S. Harris [Harris, 1970]. According to its role in language, researchers gave different definitions [Beauvais, 1989; Kopple, 1985; Hyland, 2013]. Among them, the widely accepted concept is that metadiscourse is “discourse about discourse”, which is also “communication about communication” [Kopple, 1985]. It has nothing to do with propositional content and is mainly used to guide readers to organize, classify, interpret and evaluate the information conveyed by the text. With the maturity and improvement of metadiscourse theory, metadiscourse has been widely used in discourse analysis of various genres, covering scientific, academic, and economic discourses [Mauranen, 1993; Valero-Garcés, 1996; Ädel, 2008; Kuhl, Behnam, 2011]. A few studies have tackled the effects of metadiscourse on advertising language. Jiang Hui, based on the metapragmatic theory, investigated the metapragmatic awareness embodied by the audience's metadiscourse in his TED speech [Jiang Hui, 2020]. He Zhongqing and Yan Yufei made a comparative analysis of the use of metadiscourse in the introduction of interdisciplinary academic papers [He Zhongqing, Yan Yufei, 2021]. Obviously, oral metadiscourse in live streaming is seldom explored, therefore, this paper used K. Hyland's model of interactional metadiscourse to explain and analyze the persuasive discourse in live streaming sales [Hyland, 2005]. Metadiscourse research is mostly based on the classification framework proposed by K. Hyland (fig. 1).

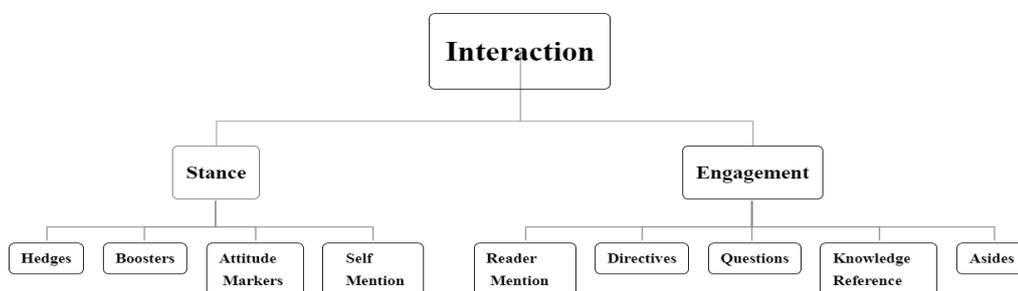


Fig. 1. Model of interactional metadiscourse. As per: [Hyland, 2005]

Рис. 1. Модель интеракционного метадискурса. По: [Hyland, 2005]

According to K. Hyland, stance can be seen as “an attitudinal dimension and includes features which refer to the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgements, opinions, and commitments” [Hyland, 2005]. Whereas engagement is “an alignment dimension where writers acknowledge and connect to others, recognizing the presence of their readers, pulling them along with their argument, focusing their attention, acknowledging their uncertainties, including them as discourse participants, and guiding them to interpretations”. The interactional dimension concerns the ways writers conduct interaction by introducing and commenting on their message. According to this paper, the detailed interpretations of the subcategories are briefly summarized in the following table.

Table 1

The categories of interactional model

Interactional model	Categories	Function	Language sources
Stance	Hedges	Suppress commitment or start a conversation	might, perhaps, possible, about
	Boosters	Emphasize certainty or end the conversation	in fact, definitely, it is clear that...
	Attitude markers	Contribute to the theme of the text	mild, beautiful, lovely, nice...
	Self mention	Explicitly point to the author	I, we, my, me, our
Engagement	Reader mention	Bring the reader into the text	you, your, yourself
	Directives	Instruct the reader to perform an action in a way determined by the writer	do, start, get, shop, save...
	Questions	Guide interlocutors into the author's point of view	Rhetorical ones requiring a decision rather than a verbal answer

1.3 Metapragmatic awareness

Different metadiscourse can reflect different metapragmatic awareness, communicative intentions of the communicator, and levels of effective information. J. Verschueren formally proposed “metapragmatics”, and he pointed out what forms of language expression can be selected to effectively achieve their own communicative purposes, make corresponding negotiations and adjustments to them, and finally make appropriate language choices. The whole process is made in the brain and belongs to the category of consciousness, which calls “metapragmatic consciousness” [Verschueren, 1999]. Later he put forward one of the ways to reflect the function of the indicator of metapragmatic awareness which is a sign for language users to reflect and interpret speech activities [Verschueren, 2000]. Many scholars interpret metapragmatics, based on J. Verschueren's theory of metapragmatic awareness, so as this study [Culpeper, Haugh, 2014; Hyland, 2017].

Metadiscourse reveals the awareness of the hearers or readers in terms of the type and extent of their need for elaboration, classification, guidance and interaction. The scope of research based on metapragmatic awareness is also expanding [Liu Ping, Ran Yongping, 2020; Jiang Hui, 2022]. Although those studies have explored metapragmatic awareness in written, even oral contexts, there is a lack of research on the business genre of live streaming. This paper discusses what metapragmatic awareness the persuasive discourse embodies in the live streaming context.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Research questions

In order to explore how persuasive discourse on TikTok is constructed through metadiscourse practices, this paper selects persuasive discourse on the TikTok live streaming platform as a corpus, and specifically answers the following two research questions:

- (1) How is persuasive discourse constructed through metadiscourse practices on TikTok?
- (2) What pragmatic functions and metapragmatic awareness do persuasive discourse embody on TikTok?

2.2 Data collection and annotation

The current research corpus consists of discourse from 25 beauty and personal care live streams on TikTok, and in order to explore the distribution characteristics and use of the persuasive discourse on TikTok, about 50,237 words were transcribed from the 3 hours of live streaming to form a small self-built corpus. This paper selects the live streams with the highest traffic on Double Eleven (a festival of shopping in China) to ensure its effectiveness and representativeness. UAM Corpus Tool 3.3 is used in this paper to annotate the interactional metadiscourse resources so as to ensure the accuracy and objectivity of analysis. The UAM Corpus Tool is a state-of-the-art environment for annotation of text corpora. This study mainly adopted the method of manual annotation to improve the data accuracy and statistical efficiency.

Referring to K. Hyland's classification criteria for metadiscourse, all interactional metadiscourse resources are classified into subcategories and identified in the UAM Corpus Tool by way of manual annotation. First, create a new project on the UAM Corpus Tool and upload the previously live streamed transcripts, then, the interactional metadiscourse scheme is manually created, and the hierarchical creation is implemented in line with the subcategories. Finally, the manual annotation is carried out, stance resources, engagement resources and their subcategories are manually annotated, and the results of the data are exported. The text is manually annotated according to the language resource form of interactional metadiscourse mentioned in 2.2.

3. Results and Discussion

In this part, this paper analyzes the linguistic manifestation and pragmatic functions of persuasive discourse on TikTok and the metapragmatic awareness reflected by persuasive discourse. The manifestation and distribution of the persuasive discourse are presented in the form of a table according to stance and engagement resources, and an analysis with examples is provided. After classifying them, the pragmatic function and metapragmatic awareness of each type of metadiscourse are discussed.

Table 2

The Frequency and Proportion of Interactional Resources

Interactional resources	Number	Percentage
Stance	12806	71.2
Hedges	653	3.6
Self mentions	1460	8.1
Boosters	2254	12.5
Attitude markers	8439	46.9
Engagement	5179	28.8
Reader mentions	1807	10.0
Questions	373	2.1
Directives	2999	16.7
Total	17985	100

According to data statistics, the use of stance resources is more than engagement resources. Among them, there are 8439 attitude markers (46.9%), followed by directives (16.7%), reader mentions (10.0%), boosters (12.5%), self-mentions (8.1%), hedges (for 3.6%) and questions (2.1%). It is worth noting that attitude markers and directives markers appear most frequently, indicating that the main focus of the streamers is consumers, because they are more effective means of persuasion. The following sections describe the results in more detail.

3.1 The manifestations and distribution of the persuasive discourse

4.1.1 Stance

As mentioned before, stance can be seen as an attitudinal dimension and refers to the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgements, opinions, and commitments. The following are the stance resources embodied in the persuasive discourse.

Table 3

The manifestation form and distribution of Stance resources on TikTok

Categories	Examples	Number	Percentage
Hedges	可能会有点油腻的感觉，会感觉不太舒服。 It may feel greasy and uncomfortable.	653	3.6
Self mention	我家这款粉底液，不管你是干皮、油皮、中性肌肤、混合性肌肤，以及你是男生啊还是女生啊，都是可以来用的。 Our liquid foundation can be used no matter whether you have dry skin, neutral skin, mixed skin, or whether you are a boy or a girl.	1460	8.1
Boosters	粉质很细腻，一根头发横切面的十万分之一， 完全 都是零粉感哦。 The powder of this liquid foundation is very delicate, and it is as fine as one hundred thousandth of the cross section of a hair, completely no sense of powder.	2254	12.5
Attitude markers	咱们家是，来，氨基酸的洁面乳， 温和不刺激 ，知道吗？ Our product is, come on, an amino acid facial cleanser, mild and non-irritating , you know?	8493	46.9

4.1.2 Engagement

Engagement is an alignment dimension where writers acknowledge and connect to others, recognizing the presence of their readers, pulling them along with their argument, focusing their attention, acknowledging their uncertainties, including them as discourse participants, and guiding them to interpretations. The following are the engagement resources embodied in the persuasive discourse.

3.2 The pragmatic functions of the persuasive discourse

4.2.1 Beautifying products and conveying product details

The most prominent one in the persuasive discourse on TikTok is attitudinal adjectives, which is the main grammatical category to express the attitude to propositions. The live streamers can emphasize the information and quality of different products through attitudinal adjectives. The following are data examples:

(1) 清新的葡萄柚加上高级的晚香玉，橙花和茉莉花的味道，超级**优雅大气**的一款香水。

The perfume, together with the fragrance of the fresh grapefruit, the high-grade tuberose, orange flower and jasmine, is **in good taste** and super **elegant**.

(2) 它是香奈儿 coco 小姐香水味的护手霜，质地很**丝滑**，涂在手上很**滋润**，没有任何油腻的感觉。

Table 4

The manifestation form and distribution of Stance resources on TikTok

Categories	Examples	Number	Percentage
Directives	你们手速怎么这么快的？宝宝们直接 去拍 。 Why are you so fast? Babies just go buy this.	2999	16.7
Reader mention	如果 你们大家 脸上毛囊孔比较严重的，有没有小闭口啊，小粉刺呀，都没有问题。 If you guys have serious hair follicles on your face, there is no problem whether you have small acne.	1807	10.0
Questions	好像一瞬间开启了一键美颜，一键磨皮的，太高级了啊！ 这持妆能力给不给力啊？ 姐妹们。 It seems that a key to beautify the skin has been turned on in an instant, so advanced! Is this makeup holding ability awesome? Sisters.	373	2.1

It is a hand cream with the flavour of Chanel's Coco perfume. It is very **silky** and **smooth**. It is very moist when applied to the hands, without any greasy feeling.

The above bold items are explicit representations of attitudinal adjectives, for example, adjectives such as "elegant" and "silky", used to describe the different products during the live stream are instances of the attitude markers since the streamers use these items to stress the qualities of the products and the message of buying it. The streamers often use attitudinal adjectives to directly express the advantages, characteristics and brand information of the product, stimulating consumers to find out more and finally buy the product.

4.2.2 Emphasizing product advantages and enhancing credibility

The live streamers can guarantee the quality or efficacy of the product through the boosters and establish strong trust with consumers, so as to guide consumers to buy. Here are some examples:

(3) 用粉底液搭配我们家的粉饼进行一个“一加一大于二”的一个妆感，并且**肯定**一整天都不会脱妆。

Using liquid foundation to match our powder for a sense of "one plus one is more than two", and this **definitely** won't rub off throughout the day.

(4) 这款口红是枫叶橘棕色的，营造一个高级优雅的女明星的既视感，**肯定**让你看起来很干练。

This lipstick is like an orange maple leaf, creating the sense of a senior and elegant female star that **must** make you look very capable.

Boosters usually emphasize certainty at the end of the statement, for example, words such as "definitely" and "must" can strengthen the certainty of the proposition. Affirmative suggestive words are very helpful to sales success, which give consumers positive psychological hints, guide consumers to be satisfied, and help streamers to achieve transactions. Consumers' understanding of product information is only the premise and basis for sales. The streamers should realize that the discourse information with strong certainty can give consumers a preconceived memory and help them make decisions quickly. Therefore, boosters can build a good trust relationship, give customers psychological hints, and let customers believe that the product really has the efficacy described by reinforcement.

4.2.3 Generating resonance and establishing trust relationships with consumers

The first-person plural pronoun “we” and the self-mentioning singular form “I” are frequently used to create the sense of traders and manufactures being one team. Here are some examples:

(5) 没错啊，**我们家**一号链接粉底液销量已经突破 60 万了，不好用的话，不会有这么多宝贝愿意回来复购的。

Sure, the sales volume of **our** No. 1 Link liquid foundation has exceeded six hundred thousand, and if it is not good to use, there will not be so many babies willing to come back for repurchase.

(6) 我用了三年哦，**我**觉得效果非常好，任何肌肤都可以用。

I have used it for three years, and **I** think it is very effective.

Self-mentions explicitly point to the author, that is, the streamers. Selling products in the first person make consumers feel real, friendly and natural. According to research, the streamers often put themselves in the shoes of the consumers, use the first person to describe, and talk about their feelings and experiences in the process of use. Their own experience is the best way to impress consumers, conducive to reducing the pressure of the consumers. In addition, the use of the first-person plural can present the streamers and the business as a community, so that a good relationship can be built between the consumers and the streamers.

4.2.4 Inducing further understanding and making verbal concessions

Hedges indicate probable, rather than absolute, truth of a claim. Hedges are considered to be a sign of powerless language. The live streamers are willing to show more absolute authenticity of the discourse than the possible authenticity when promoting products, so as to guide consumers to make a positive evaluation of its credibility. Here are some examples:

(7) **可能**会有点油光感，不适合追求哑光妆感的宝贝们。

It **may** be a little greasy and not suitable for babies who pursue matte makeup.

(8) 这款卸妆油**可能**有点油腻的感觉，比较不舒服。

This makeup remover **may** feel greasy and uncomfortable.

Generally, powerless language, the hedges, are realized by modal auxiliaries and are used to tone down the message by lowering the force of the proposition in the live streaming discourse. For example, the use of “may” above. Contrary to the boosters, the use of hedges is actually not conducive to sales, because it implies some uncertainty and often suppresses propositions. However, in the face of such a large and complex group of consumers, the streamers can also make some concessions to the perfect functions described by them.

4.2.5 Stimulating customers to make decisions and purchasing products

Directives are signaled mainly by imperatives, modals of obligation, and predicative adjectives expressing judgements of necessity or importance. These directives are used to stimulate consumers to perform immediate actions as the following example illustrates:

(9) 今天只要 9.9，**你试**一下，我不需要多说，姐姐们啊，能够征服你的，这个产品的品质跟效果。

Today, it's only 9.9. **You try it**. There's no need to say much. Sisters, what will conquer you is the quality and effect of this product.

The streamers use directives to instruct the consumers to perform an action in a way determined by the streamers. The directives are used to stimulate consumers to perform immediate actions. It is worth mentioning that most directives are imperative to achieve a persuasive effect and directing consumers to do actions in the real world.

4.2.6 Attracting customer attention and establishing interaction

The frequent use of second person pronouns is an explicit means of appealing to an audience, which personalizes the discourse, and more closely involves readers by directly addressing them [Hyland, 2005]. Here are some examples:

(10) 来，如果**你们**特别爱化妆的女生啊，来宝贝们不要眨眼睛，我要给你们看一下它的效果到底有多惊艳了啊。

Come on, if **you girls** especially love making up, please don't blink your eyes. I want to show you how amazing the effect is.

(11) 宝贝们啊，这一款香水持久留香，就是**你们男生女生**在任何场合可以随意驾驭的。

Babies, this perfume will last for a long time. **You boys or girls** can control it at will on any occasion.

Personalization creates meaningful, real-time personal interactions between interactants in discourse. The use of reader mention pronouns can attract consumers to interact, achieve good two-way interaction when purchasing products, learn product information faster and judge whether they need the products, as the above examples showed, produce a sense of solidarity with the targeted customers. They will bring customers a different consumption experience, make consumers feel respected, make it easier to enter the shopping state and establish a harmonious interpersonal relationship with consumers, so as to achieve sales more easily.

4.2.7 Emphasize and enrich product features

Most of these questions were simple ones requiring no answer. They are employed to arouse the consumers' interest and encourage them to explore the products. Most of the questions are rhetorical ones requiring a decision or an action from the addressee rather than a verbal answer.

(12) 巴黎的香水味道洗过之后自带体香，这个味道真的很高级，**也很撩人对不对？**

This perfume scented shower gel can make you bring your own body fragrance after washing, the smell is really advanced, and it's also very alluring, **isn't it?**

As the above examples showed, the questions are not real ones, instead, they are the equivalent of modifying ingredients. The streamers' multiple use of questions can attract consumers' attention, guide consumers to have a sense of identity, so that consumers have a positive psychological hint about the quality or function of the product, and it is easier to buy the product.

3.3 The metapragmatic awareness embodied in the persuasive discourse

In this study, there are mainly four types of metapragmatic awareness reflected in persuasive discourse through metadiscourse practices, as shown in (Table 5).

Table 5

The metapragmatic awareness embodied in the persuasive discourse

Metapragmatic awareness	Examples
Establishing harmonious interpersonal relationships with customers	小白款的水光隔离，真的非常的养活打造水光奶油肌， 是你们女生们真的是一定要入手的单品哦。 The water light isolation of Xiaobai style really supports the water light cream skin. It is a piece that you girls really must start with.
Satisfying consumers' cognitive expectations for shopping	这个颜色不施粉黛却又唇红齿白，看着好清新，好温柔纯欲对不对？ This colour is red and white without powder. It looks so fresh, gentle and pure, right?
Establishing interaction and emotional identification with consumers	这个气垫就是那种半哑光半高光的，我觉得它真的很高级，很贵妇感啊。 This air cushion is the semi matte and semi high gloss one. I think it is really advanced and noble.
Triggering consumer interaction and purchasing actions	如果你用再贵的还是会卡粉，会浮粉，你抓紧拍，抓紧秒。 If you use the expensive powder, it will still stick and float. Then you have a quick shop.

Throughout the entire live streaming and sales process, the streamers demonstrate the meta-pragmatic awareness of establishing good interpersonal relationships with customers through reader mentions, guiding consumers to personally participate in the interactive and creative marketing process, leaving a deep brand impression, and selling from the perspective of consumers, which can create a sense of satisfaction for consumers' psychological focus, such as "you girls" in the example. In addition, in order to meet consumer shopping expectations, the streamers establish a meta-pragmatic awareness of emotional identification, and reasonably choose the metadiscourse practices such as attitude markers, boosters and self-mentions, which can better present product information, establish trust relationships, and smoothly achieve sales goals. Finally, through the strategy of directives as a persuasive discourse, customers are urged to make quick decisions and purchase products, completing a series of sales processes.

4.4 Discussion

Research shows that in the context of business live streaming, the two types of attitude markers and directives are very obvious, which reveal a large number of interactional metadiscourse resources, with higher frequency of stance and engagement markers. Hedges in stance resources and questions in engagement resources are the two types of interactional metadiscourse with the lowest frequency. The reason is that the live streamers make full use of time to attract consumers' attention and establish trust during the promotion. Some suggestive resources like hedges and questions cannot provide product information so they are less used.

Moreover, the stance and engagement resources in the interactional metadiscourse model are fully utilized in the persuasive discourse and play a key role in enhancing the persuasive power of business promotion. Metadiscourse plays a vital role in constructing persuasive discourse, attracting audiences and consumers, and helping the streamers communicate with consumers well. In the process of sales, the streamers first organize information reasonably and then sell through metadiscourse practices. The product is described and beautified through attitude adjectives, so as to clearly convey various details of the product to customers. The role of reader mentions includes establishing a harmonious interpersonal relationship with customers, attracting customers' attention, giving customers the psychological feeling of being respected and valued, and putting customers into the shopping scene. It is effective to sell from the perspective of customers and the considerations of customers give them a sense of closeness. Establishing a good trust relationship through boosters, giving customers psychological hints, and making customers believe that the product really has the efficacy described by the streamers are the common methods to achieve persuasive discourse in living streaming. Using directives is also one of the most commonly used metadiscourse practices in live streaming to encourage customers to make decisions and buy product. Question resources are used to revise the product information, and gain customers' attention. Through hedges, customers are reminded of their psychological preparation, because products do not have the same effect on different individuals, so the streamers make concessions to the affirmation of their words. In addition, from the practice of the gathering of the corpus collection, it becomes apparent that the live streaming sales procedures are compact, and most of the live streaming discourse is repetitive.

4. Conclusion

This study shows that the persuasive discourse in oral discourse is the explicit expression of the communicators' metapragmatic awareness. They choose different metadiscourse to implement pragmatic behaviour and convey pragmatic meaning so as to achieve ideal pragmatic effects. In general, the interactional metadiscourse selected on TikTok live streaming reflects that the streamers pay enough attention to consumers and their time. They provide consumers with product information quickly and accurately within a limited time, and so they can establish harmonious interpersonal relationships with consumers, enhance trust between them, deepen consumers' understanding of product information through repetition, and make efforts to persuade consumers.

The streamers can adjust and control their own metapragmatic awareness, and choose the appropriate metadiscourse practices to construct the persuasive discourse in the whole process of sales, so as to maximize the persuasive effect.

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