

Larissa D'Angelo / Stefania Consonni (eds.)

New Explorations in Digital Metadiscourse

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Volume 10

Larissa D'Angelo / Stefania Consonni
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New Explorations in Digital Metadiscourse

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ELENA MANCA

Australian and US wineries on Facebook: Analyzing interactive and interactional resources

1. Introduction

Over the last few years, social media have been increasingly used by companies to advertise and sell their products (Kaplan/Haenlein 2010). Facebook is the biggest social network worldwide with 2.85 billion active users in the first quarter of 2021 and allows marketing managers to promote their company brands through the creation of pages. On the timeline of these pages, companies usually advertise their products, keep customers updated with the latest news on the brand and influence their customers' choices, behaviours and perceptions by posting messages, images and audios. Facebook also allows companies to exchange information quickly and easily and to establish immediate contact with customers.

As Karjaluoto et al. suggest (2015: 436), social media have contributed to the creation of new practices of contacting and engaging with customers. At the same time, the unique characteristics of the Internet have led to a redefinition of business strategies. Companies have to undergo a systematic process of understanding, attracting, engaging, retaining and learning about target customers (Ibeh / Luo / Dinnie 2005: 359).

The current paper aims to contribute to defining the interactive and interactional resources used by wine companies in business promotion through Facebook.

To this aim, two corpora of posts, posted on the Facebook pages of a series of Australian and US wineries, have been assembled. Corpora have been analysed following the theoretical model of

metadiscourse proposed by Hyland (2005) and by means of analytical methods typical of Corpus Linguistics.

The paper focuses on the following research questions:

1. What linguistic strategies do wine companies use to inform, attract and engage their target customers on Facebook?
2. Do cultural factors influence the language used in business promotion through Facebook?

Section 2 of this paper describes the relationship between digital media and wine advertising, with a brief overview of the more recent research about this topic. Section 3 illustrates the theoretical framework of metadiscourse (Hyland 2005) and describes the linguistic resources employed in digital media. Section 4 provides details on the material and methods used in the current study. Section 5 reports the results of the analyses and, finally, Section 6 draws some conclusions and provides some indications on future research.

2. Digital media and wine advertising

Social media are defined as “a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content” (Kaplan/Haenlein 2010: 61).

Olsen/Hermesmeier (2008) use software terminology to define the relationship between digital media and wine companies: ‘Wine 1.0’ is used to refer to those wine companies which use the Internet traditionally, that is to say by using websites to give background details and information on the winery, its products, its contacts, and, in some cases, to sell online. These websites are not interactive and do not include customers’ comments and reviews. Conversely, ‘Wine 2.0’ refers to those wine companies which use the Internet interactively, to establish a contact with customers. To reach this aim,

they use social networking sites, blogs, video-sites and other user-generated content tools.

Social media and social networking sites have significantly affected the branding of wine firms which depend on a high level of reputation credibility among potential consumers and for which searching for information is part of the consumption experience (Galati et al. 2017: 41; Capitello et al. 2014: 129). Consumers seek advice from experts and recommendations from peers, friends and acquaintances before purchasing and consuming a wine (Nosi 2009; Storchmann 2011); furthermore, being the consumption of wine associated to an emotional experience, consumers are also willing to share their opinions with others (Szolnoki et al. 2014). For this reason, social media have become increasingly important to seek and deliver wine feedback (Szolnoki / Thach / Kolb 2016: 4).

Several studies have been conducted on social media, digital marketing and the wine industry. Some authors (Szolnoki / Taits / Nagel / Fortunato 2014) have studied the use of social media tools by some wineries based in Germany to assess the impact of Facebook membership on customers; Pucci et al. (2019) have focused on the relationship between social media usage by consumers and the intention to buy wine online. Other authors (Begalli / Codurri / Gaeta 2009) have focused on the strategic web marketing models utilized by Italian specialty wineries with attention to the entrepreneur's perception of website quality identifiable in navigability parameters. Further research (Capitello / Agnoli / Begalli / Codurri 2014) has been conducted on the evaluation of the impact of web marketing strategies on online brand visibility and image, as well as on the potential of m-commerce (mobile commerce) combined with social media for the wine industry in order to reach distinctive customer segments (Pelet/ Lecat 2014). Social media marketing capability has also been investigated (Drummond / O' Tool / McGrath 2020) by focusing on the four layers it is constituted of (connect, engage, co-ordinate, and collaborate) and their respective digital engagement strategies.

To my knowledge, no research has been conducted on the interactive and interactional resources used by wine companies to promote and sell their products on Facebook. For this reason, this paper will focus on the relationship between social media and wine advertising by

identifying the linguistic resources used by wine companies to inform, advertise, engage and keep in contact with their Facebook followers.

3. Metadiscourse

The term ‘metadiscourse’ refers to an approach used to conceptualize interaction between text producers and their texts and between text producers and their users (Hyland 2005: 1). The starting assumption is that communication cannot be interpreted only as an exchange of information but should also be understood as an interaction of personalities, attitudes, and assumptions and as mutual acts of comprehension and involvement (Hyland 2005: 3-4). These interactions and mutual acts of comprehension and involvement are achieved through a set of linguistic strategies that can be interactive or interactional (see Table 1).

CATEGORY	Function	Examples
INTERACTIVE	<i>Help to guide the reader through the text</i>	<i>Resources</i>
TRANSITION MARKERS	express relations between main clauses; refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages; refer to information in other parts of the text; refer to information from other texts; elaborate propositional meaning	in addition; but; thus; and finally; to conclude; my purpose is; noted above; see Fig.; in section 2; according to X; Z states; namely; e.g.; such as; in other words.
INTERACTIONAL	<i>Make author’s view explicit and involve the reader in the text</i>	<i>Resources</i>
HEDGES	withhold commitment and open dialogue; emphasize certainty or close dialogue; express writer’s attitude to proposition; explicit reference to author(s); explicitly build relationship with reader	Might; perhaps; possible; about; in fact; definitely; it is clear that; unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly; I; we; my; me; our; consider; note; you can see that

Table 1. An interpersonal model of metadiscourse (adapted from Hyland 2005: 49).

As can be seen in Table 1, Hyland's model of metadiscourse includes interactive and interactional linguistic features:

- Interactive features are constituted of text-organising items whose function is that of clarifying and explaining. Furthermore, as Masi suggests (2013: 315), these items conform to readers' expectations about how a text should be structured in a given socio-rhetorical context;
- Interactional features group those items which are used by authors to make their view explicit and to involve readers. These features are evaluative and engaging and conform to readers' expectations about relevant tenor strategies in a given socio-rhetorical context (Masi 2013: 317).

Interactive features can be divided into five broad categories:

1. Transition markers: they are conjunctions and adverbial phrases used in a text to create connections between ideas and make parts of the text clearer to the readers. They can be additive (*and, furthermore, moreover, by the way, etc.*), comparative (*similarly, likewise, equally, in the same way, correspondingly, etc.*), consequential (*thus, therefore, consequently, in conclusion, etc.*), or contrastive (*admittedly, nevertheless, anyway, in any case, of course*);
2. Frame markers: these items sequence parts of the text (*first, then, 1/2, a/b, at the same time, next*), label text stages (*to summarize, in sum, by way of introduction*), announce discourse goals (*I argue here, my purpose is, the paper proposes, I hope to persuade, there are several reasons why*), or indicate topic shifts (*well, right, OK, now, let us return to*);
3. Endophoric markers: they are expressions referring to other parts of the text with the function of facilitating comprehension to the reader (e.g. *see Figure 2, refer to the next section, as noted above*);
4. Evidentials: they are linguistic items indicating the source of information, used to guide the reader's interpretation and establish an authorial command on the subject (*according to,*

Hyland's model). They indicate who is responsible for a position or a statement;

5. Code glosses: they are items and expressions which provide additional information by rephrasing, explaining or elaborating (*this is called, in other words, that is, this can be defined as, for example, etc.*).

Five broad categories can also be identified for interactional features:

1. Hedges: they are those devices that indicate the subjectivity of a position, thus opening that position to negotiation. Examples are *among the others, possible, might* and *perhaps*;
2. Boosters: differently from hedges, these items are used to close down alternatives and to emphasize certainty. Some examples are *clearly, obviously* and *demonstrate*;
3. Attitude markers: they are linguistic items indicating the writer's affective attitude to propositions, that is to say surprise, agreement, importance, obligation, frustration, and so on. They usually are attitude verbs (*agree, prefer*), sentence adverbs (*unfortunately, hopefully*), or adjectives (*appropriate, logical, remarkable*).
4. Self mention: it refers to the degree of explicit author reference in the text, expressed by first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives (*I, me, mine, exclusive we, our, ours*).
5. Engagement markers: these devices explicitly address the readers for two main purposes, 1. to adequately meet the readers' expectations of inclusion and solidarity by addressing them with reader pronouns (e.g. *you, your, inclusive we*) and interjections (e.g. *by the way, you may notice*); 2. to position the audience and to pull readers into discourse. This function is performed by questions and directives, for example imperatives such as *see, note* and *consider* and obligation modals such as *should, must, have to, etc.*, but also by reference to shared knowledge.

3.1. Linguistic resources employed in digital media

Metadiscourse research on digital genres, particularly on academic blogs, began almost twenty years ago with works by Mortensen and Walker (2002) and Luzòn (2006, 2013). Later followed by other scholars (Yus 2015; Bondi 2018), these studies have contributed to the identification of the highly dialogic nature of this genre.

Zou/Hyland (2019), for example, examined the ways researchers construct a relationship with readers in journal articles and in academic blog posts. Journal articles are exclusively addressed to a professional audience, while blogs are usually addressed to non-expert or general readers and, for this reason, interpersonal resources are supposed to be differently organized in the two genres in order to engage readers successfully (714). The results of their analysis indicate that features such as hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self mentions, reader pronouns, and questions are much more frequent in the digital genre than in the traditional one. Biri (2018) carried out a metadiscourse and multidimensional analysis of opinion writing discussing political or societal topics in newspapers, news sites and blogs. According to results, blogs are more likely to use writer-oriented strategies (attitude markers, self mentions, transitional markers and hedges) than reader-oriented rhetoric (reader-address, questions and textual organisers) and solidarity-function (inclusive *we*). This may be interpreted as a tendency of blog authors to be more concerned with communicating their own view than with addressing the readers, speaking for themselves rather than for any group they represent (Biri 2018: 169). Conversely, news sites score high in reader- and solidarity-orientedness and seem to be more concerned with readers. They tend to engage the reader through explicit pronouns with the aim of reproducing an intimate style which is typical of online registers. This strategy represents a deviation from the style used in traditional media (Biri 2018: 171).

As regards the linguistic resources typical of social media, the work of Bianchi (2017) examines the linguistic features of Facebook interactions between travel management companies and prospective customers. Bianchi shows that Facebook posts by travel management companies display features more common to spoken communication

rather than to written informal communication. Linguistic and rhetorical techniques include direct dialogue with readers, euphoria terms, reference to a magical dimension, reference to discovery and adventure, expressions of social control, ego-targeting techniques, metaphors, attempts to engage readers in immediate action and deictics. Furthermore, posts show an explicit presence of the tourism operator expressed by first-person pronouns and adjectives and a high degree of direct involvement of the reader, as suggested by second-person pronouns and adjectives and by imperative verbs and questions. Posts have all very similar contents and usually provide readers/customers with suggestions, offers, descriptions and information. Post authors frequently engage in virtual conversation and often present themselves as being on a par with their customers. Readers and their needs, tastes and feelings appear to be central in the posts and some phrases seem to be specifically used to make them feel special and great.

As seen in the previous section, the use of social media as a promotional tool in the wine industry has attracted the interest of scholars particularly in the marketing field, but very little attention has been paid to the way interactive and interactional devices have been used in the promotion of wines and wine events.

For this reason, in the following sections, two corpora containing the Facebook posts of a series of US and Australian wineries will be analysed following Hyland's framework of metadiscourse and with the help of the analytical tools provided by Corpus Linguistics.

4. Data and methodology

The two corpora considered for linguistic analysis were assembled in a period going from July 2021 to August 2021 and include all the Facebook posts published by a selection of Australian and US wineries from 1 January 2021 to 31 August 2021. The Australian

Wineries Facebook Corpus (AusWiFaC) contains 273 posts from 5 different wineries, for a total of 13,957 running words; the US Wineries Facebook Corpus (USWiFaC) includes 309 posts from 4 different wineries exclusively based in California, for a total of 12,577 running words. The reason for choosing US and Australian wineries is due to the fact that the USA and Australia rank first and second among the English-speaking wine-producing countries in the world (fourth and seventh in the list including all the countries in the world which produce wine, not only English-speaking ones). The Facebook pages included in the two corpora were identified by google searching the top wineries of each region or country. As for the contents of the posts, Australian and US wineries usually describe the products available, the tasting events organized and everything related with the activities carried out at the winery and with the people involved in these activities (for example, harvesting, checking the degree of maturation of the grapes, welcoming customers, the unfolding of seasons, and so on). Table 2 below summarizes the details on the two corpora.

CORPUS	<i>Number of Facebook posts</i>	<i>Number of wineries</i>	<i>Total number of words in the corpus</i>
AUSTRALIAN WINERIES FACEBOOK CORPUS (AUSWIFAC)	273	5	13,957
US WINERIES FACEBOOK CORPUS (USWIFAC)	309	4	12,577

Table 2. Details of the two corpora used for analysis.

The methodological approach is mainly quantitative: in order to detect the interactive and interactional resources used by winery owners in their Facebook posts, a first analysis was carried out using Text Inspector, a professional web tool that identifies metadiscourse

markers. The categories used by the tool are based on the types indicated by Bax / Nakatsuhara / Waller (2019) and by Hyland (2005). All the items identified by Text Inspector and grouped into the metadiscourse categories were checked to make sure the tool had assigned them to the right group. To do this, the AusWiFaC and the USWiFaC were uploaded on Sketch Engine and the Wordlists and Concordance tools were used. As the analysis of Attitude markers did not seem to include all the eligible items in the corpus, an advanced Wordlist search was conducted: using Sketch Engine the wordlists of adjectives, adverbs, and verbs were run separately. From these lists, attitude adjectives, adverbs, and verbs were isolated and their concordances were checked to ensure they had been included in the right category. The frequency of occurrence of items was normalised and expressed in percentages calculated out of the total number of words in the corpus.

5. Analysis

As already described above, all the results of the analysis carried out by means of Text Inspector were cross-checked using the Wordlists and Concordances tools provided by SketchEngine. Items included in the different categories and subcategories of interactive and interactional resources were grouped and counted. The following sections describe separately the findings identified in the AusWiFaC and in the USWiFaC.

5.1 Interactive and interactional resources in the AusWiFaC

Among all the interactive resources available to the authors of Facebook posts, the most frequently used are Transition markers, particularly additive conjunctions, followed by consequential,

temporal, and adversative conjunctions (see Table 3 below). Some examples are reported below:

- (1) Share our post *and* tag friends *or* colleagues who might be interested
- (2) Purchase 12 bottles *or* more from our selected ranges
- (3) A backyard barbecue is a favourite Aussie pastime, *so* you want to make sure you've got the right equipment!
- (4) When young, Vat 1 is generally a finer, more delicate Hunter Semillon style, *but* after 4-5 years it begins to show the vanillin, toasty characters of bottle age
- (5) Everyone must wear a face mask *while* inside our Cellar Door

The higher frequency of additive conjunctions may suggest that contents are conveyed as short information or description; the elements and concepts described are almost never compared or contrasted with each other. Furthermore, contents are not reported as a chronological narration, as the low frequency of temporal conjunctions seems to suggest.

Frame markers occur with a very low frequency, which suggests they are resources that are rarely used in these types of Facebook posts. This could be interpreted by taking into account the type of posts which appear more frequently in the Facebook pages under analysis. Posts are usually captions of images, questions, tips, quotes, and short descriptions. All these types of posts do not require a textual organization that implies the use of sequencing, text stage indications, signaling of discourse goals or topic shifts.

On the other hand, the low frequency of Code glosses may suggest that post authors and post readers possess a high degree of shared knowledge about the topics dealt with and no additional information is needed to make contents clearer and more accessible to readers.

Conversely, the category of Endophoric markers shows a higher frequency of usage if compared to Frame markers, Evidentials and Code glosses. It mainly includes directives, which invite readers to visit a section of the winery website following the link provided (6) or just links reported at the end of the post. In some cases, links are replaced by tags, by means of which other Facebook pages can be

accessed (7). These markers are slightly different from those indicated by Hyland (2005) as they do not refer to other parts of the same text, in this case, of the post. However, these markers can be said to refer to other pages which are internal to the Facebook world or to sections of the winery website which constitute the digital world around the company. For this reason, the examples of endophoric markers found in the AusWiFaC could represent a variety, which is typical of social media, of this interactive resource (see Manca/Bianchi in preparation). Other endophoric markers, which are more similar to those indicated by previous literature, are the nouns *example* and *page*.

(6) *DONT MISS OUT & Get your tickets* <https://bit.ly/3av2jGi>

(7) See you at the [Hunter Valley Wine & Beer Festival](#)

INTERACTIVE RESOURCES - AusWiFaC			
MACROCATEGORY	Subcategory	Number of items in the AUSWiFaC	Percentage of occurrence in the AUSWiFaC
TRANSITION MARKERS	Additive	447	3.2 %
	Comparative	0	0 %
	Consequential	20	0.14 %
	Adversative	13	0.09 %
	Temporal	17	0.12 %
	<i>(Total percentage of occurrence)</i>		
FRAME MARKERS	Sequencing	3	0.02 %
	Text stages	2	0.01 %
	Discourse goals	1	0.007 %
	Topic shifts	1	0.007 %
	<i>(Total percentage of occurrence)</i>		
ENDOPHORIC MARKERS		54	0.4 %
EVIDENTIALS		7	0.05 %
CODE GLOSSES		4	0.02 %

Table 3. Interactive resources in the AusWiFaC.

To summarise, the analysis of interactive resources reveals a very low frequency of usage of frame markers, evidentials and code glosses whereas endophoric markers have a relatively high frequency. As for transition markers, only additive conjunctions show a high percentage of occurrence if compared with the items included in the other categories and subcategories. In the socio-rhetorical context of Facebook posts, readers are very likely to find short posts, mainly informative and descriptive, where noun groups or sentences are preferably connected by means of additive conjunctions. Posts do not include text stages or sequences, indications of discourse goals or topic shifts and, perhaps, due to the shared knowledge existing between authors and readers, they contain a very limited use of explicative glosses.

As to interactional resources (see Table 4 below), the AusWiFaC shows a high number of attitude markers, with adjectives occurring more frequently than adverbs and verbs.

MACROCATEGORY	Subcategory	Number of items in the AusWiFaC	Percentage of occurrence in the AusWiFaC
HEDGES		45	0.3 %
BOOSTERS		33	0.2 %
ATTITUDE MARKERS	Attitude verbs	107	0.8 %
	Sentence adverbs	135	1%
	Attitude adjectives	321	2.3 %
	<i>(Total percentage of occurrence)</i>		4.1%
SELF MENTION	1 st person pronouns	174	1.3 %
	Possessive adjectives	312	2.2 %
	<i>(Total percentage of occurrence)</i>		3.5 %
ENGAGEMENT MARKERS	Reader pronouns	197	1.4 %
	Interjections	2	0.01 %
	Imperatives	126	0.9 %
	Questions	46	-
	<i>(Total percentage of occurrences)</i>		2.3 %

Table 4. Interactional resources in the AusWiFaC.

The most frequent attitude adjectives are *good, great, perfect, exclusive, beautiful, unique, proud, wonderful, favourite, delicious* and they describe the writer's affective attitude to the products, events and experiences described in the posts, as exemplified below:

- (8) *Good* food, *good* wine, and *good* company, what more could you ask for?!
- (9) The result is *great* tasting wine that's free from alcohol and full of flavour
- (10) Quick and easy BBQ lamb and the *perfect* red wine pairing – our Black Label Red!
- (11) The Vault is our premium tasting room, experiencing some of PTW's most *exclusive* wines
- (12) This past weekend we basket pressed some *beautiful* Semillon from the mighty Johnno's vineyard

Adverbs expressing attitude occur with a frequency of 1% and are *only, more, very, just, almost, arguably, extremely, certainly, nearly, approximately, exclusively, truly*, and so on. Some examples are reported below:

- (13) The donation came from proceeds of our Hunter Valley Semillon, one of the *only* Hunter Valley wines that we were able to produce in 2020
- (14) The parcel of land is situated on a vein of *very* old and fertile Cambrian soil which is unique to the region
- (15) An *almost* perfect growing season was experienced for the 2014 vintage, one of the best in recent memory
- (16) It is predominantly sourced from the Short Flat Vineyard, *arguably* one of the best vineyard sites in the Hunter Valley.
- (17) The back vintage reds in this offer are *certainly* the best of the best

The most frequent attitude verb is *love* followed by *wish, want, miss, feel, appreciate* and other one-entry verbs:

- (18) We *love* nothing more than seeing our wine being enjoyed at gatherings of family and friends
- (19) The Founder's Club is designed for wine drinkers who *wish* to receive ready-to-drink wine of excellent quality

- (20) Our Cellar Door is open for business as usual and we *want* to assure our visitors that we are following all NSW government advice
- (21) We *appreciate* all of the support you have given us over the past year, and we look forward to returning to business as usual

The high percentage of occurrence of attitude markers with respect to the other interactional features may be linked to the promoting aim of a commercial Facebook page. Winery owners seem to emphasize and describe with a positive attitude everything having to do with their activity and with what they produce, with the aim of convincing customers to take advantage of sales and offers, to join tasting events and to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries and important days by drinking their wines.

The centrality of the wine-producing activity and the passion that characterizes winery owners is also visible in another metadiscursive feature, that is to say self mention. This resource is an explicit author reference in the text and is expressed by first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives, particularly with the first-person plural *we* and the possessive adjective *our*. The pronouns and possessive adjectives for the first-person singular are much less used. Some examples are reported below:

- (22) *We* will be waiting for you... Stay safe
- (23) Thank you to *our* lovely members for a fantastic afternoon, and *we* look forward to hosting *our* next two Harvest events next weekend and in July!
- (24) *Our* winemakers are in the last stage of preparation for *our* premium Semillons to start getting bottled at the end of this month

As for engagement markers, the most frequent features are reader pronouns followed by verbs in the imperative form and by questions. The reader pronouns identified in the AusWiFaC are *you* and *your* occurring with a total percentage of 1.4%. Examples are reported below:

- (25) If *you* would like the opportunity to attend our exclusive members' events, we invite *you* to join Private Bin (link below), one of the oldest wine clubs in Australia

- (26) We will provide *you* with a bottle of our wine, etched glasses to keep, and locally sourced ploughman's platter boxes so *you* can make yourself comfortable on our historic winery grounds and enjoy the stunning views for as long as *you* wish
- (27) Tag *your* friends & family, we appreciate *your* help getting the word out

Reader pronouns and possessive adjectives are used to address readers and involve them into discourse, thus contributing to create a strong interaction between authors/wine producers and readers/prospective clients. On the other hand, directives aim to pull readers into action by inviting them to purchase wines, to take advantage of sales and offers, to book their places at tasting events and to visit the winery and the vineyards. The most frequent verbs at the imperative form identified in the corpus are *enjoy, check, read, get, purchase, buy, receive, see, visit, pick, follow, try, and grab*, as exemplified below:

- (28) *Take* a break from alcohol and *enjoy* the flavours of your favourite wine with McGuigan Zero!
- (29) Members please *check* your email inbox as we are delighted to have just sent out the event calendar for the remainder of 2021
- (30) *Read* our latest article on why rosé goes best with grilled corn, and *save* the recipe for your next BBQ!
- (31) *Grab* a bottle from Dan's this weekend

Another resource which seems to be among the preferred strategies of post authors are questions. In the AusWiFaC, there are 46 questions. In most cases, that is to say 39 out of 46, the answer to the question is in the post itself, as a text or as an image. In only seven cases, questions are not rhetorical and readers are covertly invited to answer the question by using the comment box. Here are some examples:

- (32) Hello 2021!! *New Years Day plans? Our cellar door is OPEN for tastings and sales today*
- (33) *The key to unwinding after a long day? A glass of Black Label Shiraz and a magazine of course!*
- (34) Dinner is on us - *will you be having red or white tonight?* (no answer in the post)

(35) *What will you be sipping as the sun sets tonight?* (no answer in the post)

As visible in Table 4, hedges and boosters are not central to these types of texts and have a low frequency. The hedges identified in the corpus are *would, could, may, might, almost, approximately, little, possible, generally, in general, perhaps, seems, and sometimes*. This group of items is slightly more frequent than the group of boosters, thus showing that emphasizing certainty is not among the main aims of post authors. Some examples of hedges and boosters are reported below:

- (36) *We could* all use a bit of Samuel's grit and determination at the start of a new week - cheers!
- (37) These changes will remain in place until 9th July and *may* be amended in line with NSW Government advice
- (38) After the challenges of last year, this *might* be the most highly anticipated White Release we have ever had!
- (39) The back vintage reds in this offer are *certainly* the best of the best
- (40) See why you *should* go alcohol-free

Authors of posts in the Facebook pages of Australian wineries seem to make a frequent use of attitude markers, particularly adjectives, with the aim of describing the positive aspects and features of the products and of the events advertised and, thus, of pulling readers into a direction of agreeing with their view. Self mention, particularly expressed by the first-person plural pronoun *we* and the possessive adjective *our*, is another frequent resource. In the Facebook posts under analysis, winery owners have a high degree of visibility and use their authorial presence to provide information and give suggestions and opinions as experts. Creating a presence in a text allows writers to create a discursive self which is tied to the authors' values and beliefs that are connected to their discipline or, in this case, to the wine producing and wine lovers' world.

Engagement markers are third in the list of preferred resources and express the aim of winery owners to include readers as discourse participants, to draw their attention and to build a relationship with them.

As noticed in the analysis above, hedges and boosters have a low frequency of occurrence in the posts selected. In the case of hedges, winery owners do not probably feel the need to show cautiousness in their statements: posts are usually direct and are characterized by the certainty that what is advertised and described is valid, positive and worth experiencing. On the other hand, boosters, which are even less frequent than hedges, may be probably underused because the main aim of posts is not expressing commitment to a statement or strengthening the owners' position but advertising the winery and its activities and products in extremely positive terms in order to convince readers to take advantage of what is offered.

5.2 Interactive and interactional resources in the USWiFaC

The analysis proceeds with the identification of interactive and interactional resources in the USWiFaC. Occurrences and percentages are summarized in Table 5 and Table 6 below.

As visible in Table 5 and as already noticed in the AusWiFaC corpus, among the transition markers available, additive conjunctions show a high preference of usage (3.9%), followed by contrastive, consequential, and temporal conjunctions. Some examples including the most frequent conjunctions for each group are reported below:

- (41) Harvest is coming up quickly *and* we can't wait to test out the 2021 vintage!
- (42) Are you having a glass *or* two to celebrate the occasion?
- (43) You all loved our pizza weekend, *so* we've decided to bring it back!
- (44) Tannins are firm *but* integrated, accenting a bright acidity throughout the finish
- (45) Stop by and see these mustards *while* they're still in bloom until the end of March

Evidentials can be found in only six cases, where reference to opinions or statements of experts is made by using the verb *say* or *according to*:

- (46) "Howell Mountain Cabernets are very muscular, and ours is no exception," says winemaker Michael Eddy

Endophoric markers occur 80 times (0.6%) and, as in the AusWiFaC, are mainly expressed by directives inviting readers to read and learn more at the link provided. Interestingly, out of the 75 expressions including a directive, in 33 cases the link is preceded by *here*, in 17 cases by *now*, and in 8 cases by *today*. Tags are less frequently used in this corpus. Examples are reported below:

- (47) *Read Brenae's full story here: [...]*
 (48) *Learn more and book your virtual tasting today* [link]
 (49) *Find more details here <https://bit.ly/2O10yIu> and then get in touch!*

Both frame markers and code glosses are used in only three occurrences each and have a percentage of 0.02%.

INTERACTIVE RESOURCES - USWiFaC			
MACROCATEGORY	Subcategory	Number of items in the USWiFaC	Percentage of occurrence in the USWiFaC
TRANSITION MARKERS	Additive	492	3.9 %
	Comparative	1	0.007 %
	Consequential	22	0.2 %
	Contrastive	22	0.2 %
	Temporal	16	0.1 %
	<i>(Total percentage of occurrence)</i>		
FRAME MARKERS	Sequencing	1	0.007 %
	Text stages	1	0.007 %
	Discourse goals	1	0.007 %
	Topic shifts	0	0 %
	<i>(Total percentage of occurrence)</i>		
ENDOPHORIC MARKERS		80	0.6 %
EVIDENTIALS		4	0.04 %
CODE GLOSSES		3	0.02 %

Table 5. Interactive resources in the USWiFaC.

Results from the analysis show a similar tendency to the one identified in the AusWiFaC. There is a very low frequency of usage of frame markers, evidentials and code glosses, and additive conjunctions are the most frequently used subcategory of Transition markers. Endophoric markers follow, in terms of frequency of usage, transition markers and are an example of the hypertextual interactivity of posts. These frequencies may, again, be explained considering the nature of Facebook posts, that is to say the fact that they are mainly captions to pictures, questions, direct invitations and very short descriptions. For this reason, posts do not include text stages or sequences, indications of discourse goals or topic shifts and limit clarifying glosses.

Attitude markers are the interactional resource that shows the highest percentage of occurrence (4.6%). Attitude adjectives precede, in terms of percentage, sentence adverbs and attitude verbs. Some examples of the most frequent adjectives are reported below:

- (50) We're ringing in 2021 with *good* wine and *good* vibes only
- (51) Follow the yellow brick road to your *favorite* Sonoma Valley winery!
- (52) Linguine with clams is the *perfect* dish to pair with our 2018 Chardonnay
- (53) A birthday trip to Napa Valley for *great* wine and *great* company
- (54) Paired with a *special* selection of small-lot wines, this promises to be a memorably *mouthwatering* experience

Adverbs expressing attitude occur with a frequency of 1.3% and are *only*, *most*, *very*, *just*, *more*, *beautifully*, *incredibly*, *simply*, *especially*, *carefully*, *truly*, and so on. Here follow some examples:

- (55) Rich textures and the salinity of the pecorino cheese *beautifully* contrast the dark fruit notes of our full-bodied Cabernets
- (56) We are *incredibly* proud to have strong female leadership across all areas of the business here
- (57) A new year is always case for revelry, but this year seems *especially* welcome
- (58) Our Cellar No. 254 Meritage is made from *carefully* selected Napa Valley grapes

As in the AusWiFaC, *love* is the most frequent attitude verb followed by *need, like, want, remember, hope, miss* and so on:

- (59) We *love* seeing our Chardonnay paired with magnificent international cuisine!
- (60) Sometimes all you *need* is fresh air, simple bites, and a Napa wine
- (61) Our renovated tasting room is finished and we *want* to share it with the world!
- (62) We certainly *miss* this great event and hope to return next year!

Self mention and engagement markers are used with the same percentage (3.4 %, which however does not include the occurrence of the subcategory of questions of engagement markers), showing a balance between authorial presence and readers' involvement. Self mention is expressed by the personal pronoun *we* and the possessive adjective *our*, while there are only seven occurrences of the first-person singular pronoun *I*:

- (63) We are proud to farm our land sustainably and organically
- (64) We look forward to hosting you safely
- (65) This Saturday, *we're* very excited to showcase *our* Cellar No. 254 wines paired with hand-made chocolate from Woodhouse Chocolate

Second-person pronoun *you* and the possessive adjective *your* are the engagement marker devices which occur with the highest frequency (2.3%).

- (66) Bring *your* beloved pooch and join us on Saturday, May 22nd for another Vineyard Dog Walk!
- (67) Bring a truly unique piece home with *you*, or simply browse and enjoy a glass of wine

As for directives, the most frequent verbs at the imperative form are *join, enjoy, make, learn, reserve, grab, shop, raise, listen, book, bring, get, find, save*, and so on:

- (68) *Make* a reservation and *bring your* besties for a Napa getaway!
- (69) *Learn* more and *book your* virtual tasting today
- (70) *Grab* a large pour of *your* favorite and *rock out* to our wine themed playlist

- (71) *Raise a glass of your favorite white wine and cheers!*

Questions are included in the engagement markers category and can also be considered one of the preferred strategies to keep readers engaged and involved. In the USWiFaC, there are 64 questions, almost 20 questions more than in the AusWiFaC. What is interesting is that in 30 cases out of 64, the answer to the question is not in the post itself, as a text or as an image, and readers are indirectly invited to answer the question by using the comment box. Here are some examples:

- (72) A dreamy setting for your journey through wine. *Will you join us?* (no answer in the post)
- (73) A romantic trip to Napa Valley isn't complete without a little wine tasting. *Have you booked your experience with us?* (no answer in the post)
- (74) Setting the stage for a weekend of wine tasting. *Who would you bring to your tasting reservation?* (no answer in the post)
- (75) *Have you tried our 2018 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon? [In this short video, winemaker Michael Eddy sheds light on our 93-point* Cabernet and explains why he's so fond of the 2018 vintage](#)*
- (76) *What's the first step in grilling the perfect steak? [Decanting your Cabernet, of course](#)*

As already observed in the AusWiFaC, hedges and boosters are not relevant in Facebook posts and show a very low frequency. The hedges identified in the corpus are *would, almost, could, perhaps, seems*, and other one-entry items while the most frequent boosters are *always, sure, definitely* and the verb *know*. Some examples of hedges and boosters are reported below:

- (77) Corks soaking in the lab can *only* mean one thing - bottling is *almost* here!
- (78) We *could* get used to this view. Can you recognize each wine from their tops?
- (79) There's *perhaps* no pairing more iconic than a perfectly grilled steak with a glass of rich, complex Cabernet Sauvignon
- (80) Sip some wine and savor the day at our dog-friendly winery. It's *always* a party when they're in the mix!

INTERACTIONAL RESOURCES - USWiFaC			
MACROCATEGORY	Subcategory	Number of items in the USWiFaC	Percentage of occurrence in the USWiFaC
HEDGES		35	0.3 %
BOOSTERS		42	0.3 %
ATTITUDE MARKERS	Attitude verbs	91	0.7 %
	Sentence adverbs	168	1.3 %
	Attitude adjectives	333	2.6 %
	<i>(Total percentage of occurrence)</i>		4.6%
SELF MENTION	1 st person pronouns	172	1.4 %
	Possessive adjectives	248	2 %
	<i>(Total percentage of occurrence)</i>		3.4%
ENGAGEMENT MARKERS	Reader pronouns	292	2.3 %
	Interjections	0	0 %
	Imperatives	144	1.1 %
	Questions	64	-
	<i>(Total percentage of occurrence)</i>		3.4 %

Table 6. Interactional resources in the USWiFaC.

In conclusion, it appears that attitude markers and the subcategory of attitude adjectives, verbs and sentence adverbs are the most frequently used resource in the Facebook posts in the USWiFaC. The tendency to establish a relationship with readers by expressing attitudes is also visible in the resources of self mention and engagement markers. Self-mention resources, particularly expressed by the first-person plural pronoun and the possessive adjective *our*, make authors visible and signal them as experts in the wine producing and wine drinking world.

Engagement markers aim to include readers as discourse participants and to keep readers' attention always focused on what is advertised. As already noticed in the AusWiFaC, hedges and boosters do not occur very frequently, probably because the content of posts does not require expressing cautiousness in statements. On the other hand, boosters may not be used because the certainty of a statement

might be considered as implicit due to the strong presence of authorial voice and stance.

6. Conclusion

The current paper has described eight months of Facebook posts by nine wine companies based in Australia and in California (USA). The posts were analysed in their metadiscursive resources with the help of Corpus Linguistics methods in order to identify the linguistic features of Facebook promotion and the influence of cultural factors on the linguistic strategies used.

Results show that Australian and US wineries tend to communicate through Facebook in a very similar way.

The most frequent interactive feature used by both groups is represented by transition markers, in particular additive conjunctions which occur with a frequency of 3.2% in the AusWiFaC and of 3.9% in the USWiFaC. This occurrence may be interpreted by considering the way Facebook posts are organized as a message. They are very short texts characterized by simple descriptions or brief information, questions or directives and the different parts of these texts are usually connected by additive conjunctions. For this reason, texts appear linear, easily accessible to the reader, highly dialogic and informal. The nature of Facebook posts may also be the key to interpreting the low frequency of frame markers (0.04% in the AusWiFaC and 0.02% in the USWiFaC): text stages or sequences, indications of discourse goals or topic shifts are not needed here and their presence could add complexity to a post that should be read quickly by Facebook users when scrolling down the newsfeed page. Furthermore, the shared knowledge existing between authors and readers of posts may be the reason why posts contain very few evidentials (0.05% in the AusWiFaC and 0.04% in the USWiFaC), and code glosses (0.02% in both corpora). As for endophoric markers (0.4% in the AusWiFaC and 0.6% in the USWiFaC), links and tags redirect readers to pages or

website sections where more details on what is described in the post can be obtained or where readers can actually perform the directive included in the post, for example, shopping online or making a reservation. For this reason, links and tags could be seen as the digital version of traditional endophoric markers.

As for interactional resources, attitude markers (4.1% in the AusWiFaC and 4.6% in the USWiFaC), self mention (3.5% in the AusWiFaC and 3.4% in the USWiFaC) and engagement markers (2.3% in the AusWiFaC and 3.4% in the USWiFaC) are the most used linguistic devices in both corpora. As Zou / Hyland (2018) notice, in research papers the credibility of the writer is constructed through adherence to norms of authorial reticence and explicit affect is avoided. Conversely, in the case of Facebook posts, authors seem to establish their credibility by explicitly conveying and describing their attitude towards what is advertised or communicated in the post. As mentioned above, self mention signals the presence of authors thus allowing them to speak directly to readers. Furthermore, it is used to express informality, a sense of proximity and the perception of sharing ideas between writers and readers (Zou / Hyland 2018). This allows authors to encourage trust in readers, an element that is fundamental in the advertising process. Engagement markers have a higher percentage of occurrence in the USWiFaC (1.1% more than the AusWiFaC), where conversational intimacy and proximity with readers seem to be more emphasized. As already noticed, in the USWiFaC, there are almost 20 questions more than in the AusWiFaC (46 in the AusWiFaC and 64 in the USWiFaC) thus confirming this tendency towards a face-to-face type of discourse interaction.

The high similarity of usage of metadiscourse linguistic resources in both corpora and the evidence of a tendency that is in line with previous studies on Facebook linguistic strategies (see Bianchi 2017) may suggest that Facebook posts have some general features which do not seem to be influenced by cultural factors. Facebook posts advertising products and services are usually short posts which provide simple but highly positive descriptions and information and which often include direct invitations to take advantage of what is described and proposed, and rhetorical and non-rhetorical questions

which act as a way to convince readers to take action or to make them feel as an important part of the community.

The limits of this study are evident, in that corpora of bigger size would be needed to generalize on the results achieved. Furthermore, for a deeper analysis of the relationship between Facebook linguistic devices and cultural factors, the Facebook posts of wineries from other English-speaking countries should also be investigated and compared.

Nevertheless, the results described in the current paper may be considered as a useful starting point for a more detailed mapping of the linguistic features of Facebook interactions in posts advertising products, services and activities.

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