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Metadiscourse in Book Reviews in English and Brazilian Portuguese: A Corpus-Based Analysis

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Introduction

Book reviews play different roles in academia. They are used in the selection of what books to read and purchase (Carvalho, 2001) and as a vehicle for publication and visibility, especially for graduate students and novice scholars (Hyland, 2000; Motta-Roth, 2001). Scholars and graduate students must do a great amount of reading in order to stay up to date in any given field, as scientific[1] knowledge has become more and more widespread. This task is undeniably challenging given the amount of time and resources needed for such updating (Carvalho, 2002; Suárez & Moreno, 2008). Academics need to be selective about the information they read and often resort to academic reviews of various sorts to help in the discernment of what is valuable to spend time and resources on. In this context, book reviews enact a particularly important function as they provide valuable information regarding how new books may contribute to the development of a given field (Suárez & Moreno, 2008). Further, book reviews are invaluable tools in helping academics select what to read given the normally short length and evaluative and descriptive nature of the genre (Carvalho, 2002).[2]

Despite the established importance of book reviews in academia (Hyland, 2000), it was not until the past decade that works have begun to be published about their rhetorical patterns (e.g., Motta-Roth, 1995; Carvalho, 2001, 2002; Suárez & Moreno, 2008) as well as linguistic features of book reviews, focusing on, for example, praise and criticism (Hyland, 2000), critical attitudes (Gianonni, 2006; Moreno & Suárez, 2008a, 2008b, 2009), reporting and evaluation verbs (Diani, 2009), rhetorical identity (Tse & Hyland, 2009), phraseology and epistemology (Groom, 2009), and evaluative acts (Shaw, 2009).

We believe that, among these investigations, cross-cultural studies on book reviews (e.g. Carvalho, 2001, Gianonni, 2006; Moreno & Suárez, 2008a, 2008b, 2009; Suárez & Moreno, 2008) seem especially important to novice researchers whose first language is not English and who would like to attempt to participate in the academic discourses of their fields in international

contexts. In our globalized world, more and more scholars and students have access to international publications in languages other than their own, especially English, which is, to many, the international language of academia. When trying to participate in the international conversations of their fields, writers will need to write, at least for publication, in accordance with the genres of these discourse communities.

As Hyland (2000) pointed out, book reviews are "a site where the interpersonal stakes are much higher" given the inherent evaluative and interactional nature of this genre (p. 41), whose main purpose is to critically analyze the work of other colleagues in a discourse community (Lindholm-Romantschuk, 1998). Further, Swales and Feak (2004) explained that because book reviews are public and decidedly evaluative, writers need to be cautious and take into consideration their audience and the strategies they will use when passing judgment onto others' works. In other words, the evaluations in book reviews have actual social consequences, making this genre highly interactive. As Hyland & Diani (2009) put it, "negotiating social interactions in review genres [such as book reviews] can therefore mean charting a perilous course between critique and collegiality, minimizing personal threat while simultaneously demonstrating both disciplinary membership and an expert understanding of the issues" (p. 8).

A few studies have compared book reviews in different languages in search for similarities and differences across languages and cultures that may result in possible solutions to help novice writers in academia. Moreno and Suárez (2008a) conducted a qualitative study on 40 book reviews in Spanish (n=20) and English (n=20) that revealed that frequency and type of criticism seem to depend on language and social factors. More specifically, they found that literary book reviews in Spanish were considerably less critical and offered more praise than the ones in English, a finding that agreed with that reported by Giannoni (2006), whose study compared book reviews in Italian and English. Furthermore, in a previous study conducted by one of the present authors, which consisted of a genre analysis of 20 applied linguistics book reviews in Brazilian Portuguese and English, she found that the book reviews in Brazilian Portuguese also appeared less critical than those in English (Junqueira, 2013). Specifically, the last rhetorical move in the book reviews in Brazilian Portuguese had a tendency to recommend the book under review without pointing to potential shortcomings. Conversely, the book reviews in English recommended the books only after indicating caveats in the works being critiqued. However, Junqueira's (2013) genre-based exploratory study did not aim at examining evaluative language and used a small data sample (i.e., 10 book reviews in each language) in order to manually code rhetorical moves and steps. Similarly, Moreno and Suárez (2008a) and Giannoni (2006) also resorted to smaller scale corpora in their qualitative studies.

Drawing on this literature, the objective of the present study is to contribute to the current body of work on cross-linguistic studies on academic book reviews by taking a more quantitative methodological approach that would allow for the analysis of larger amounts of data and consequently yield more robust findings. In addition, it is important to emphasize here that the aim of our study is not to determine which of these academic communities is more critical as in previous studies on book reviews. The goal is rather twofold: (1) to examine how interpersonal metadiscourse is used in book reviews written in Brazilian Portuguese (BP) and English across three disciplines; and (2) to determine what a corpus-based analysis of metadiscourse features

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can tell us about the evaluative language of book reviews across these languages and different disciplines.

Accordingly, for the present study, a corpus larger than the corpora used in the aforementioned research was compiled, and a different methodology, using Hyland's (2000) metadiscourse model as well as concordancing software, was employed to examine how interpersonal metadiscourse is used in book reviews in BP and English across three disciplines (Applied Linguistics, History, and Psychology) and to explore what corpus-based analyses of metadiscourse features can reveal about evaluation in book reviews. Hyland's (2000) metadiscourse model was used to investigate the book reviews in an attempt to analyze how the writers of these reviews engage with their texts as well as with their readers.

In order to investigate metadiscourse in academic genres, Hyland (2000) designed a metadiscourse framework divided into two models: textual metadiscourse (used to organize propositional information) and interpersonal metadiscourse (used to express writer engagement). This framework has been used in the study of academic texts such as research articles (Hyland, 1999), textbooks (Hyland, 2000), and dissertations (Hyland & Tse, 2004), but, to our knowledge, it has not yet been applied to the comparison of book reviews across languages, especially given the more qualitative nature of previous research. Thus, the present study sets out to apply this approach as an innovative methodology to examine the extent to which a corpus-based analysis of interpersonal metadiscourse can help us determine how these features influence the engagement of writers in book reviews and whether this is an effective approach to be used in cross-linguistic studies with languages other than English.

More information about this framework is provided in the methodology section, and the rest of the article is organized as follows: the next section includes a brief introduction to book review evaluative language followed by a section that describes the corpus used for the present study and details of the methodology. Then the findings of the study are presented together with a comprehensive discussion of those results, and finally we include a summary of the most important results and our conclusions.

Evaluation and evaluative language

One important challenge that book review writers often face is that evaluation, which is a core element of this genre, appears to be bound to context and culture (Hyland, 2000; Hunston & Thompson, 2000; Moreno & Suárez, 2009), and even native speakers of a given language may struggle when using this type of language (Moreno & Suárez, 2008). In effect, Moreno and Suárez (2008) claim that learning to appropriately use evaluative devices is even more difficult for non-native writers of English, especially when writing for academic purposes. Several recent studies on book reviews have attempted to examine the evaluation resources used in this genre through a variety of approaches (e.g., Diani, 2009; Gianonni, 2006; Hyland, 2000; Moreno & Suárez, 2008a, 2008b, 2009; Shaw, 2009; Tse & Hyland, 2009). Therefore, it is important to discuss, even if briefly, the meaning of the somewhat fuzzy term *evaluation*.

The most cited definition for evaluation is that of Thompson and Hunston (2000) who define it as "a broad cover term for the expression of the speaker or writer's attitude or stance towards,

viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about" (p. 5). Also according to these authors, evaluation performs three basic functions in academic discourse: expressing the writer's or speaker's opinions, constructing a dialogue and establishing a relationship with the reader, and organizing or structuring texts (Thompson & Hunston, 2000).

The concept of evaluation has also been investigated under other constructs, such as attitude (Halliday, 1994), epistemic modality (Hyland, 1998; Stubbs 1996), appraisal (Martin 2000; Martin & White 2005), stance (Biber & Finegan 1989; Hyland 1999, 2005a), and engagement and metadiscourse (Crismore et al. 1993; Hyland and Tse 2004; Hyland 2005b). However, as suggested by these different terms, the study of evaluation has taken several approaches as "evaluative language presents difficulties in analysis because there is not a set of language forms, either grammatical or lexical, that encompass the range of expressions of evaluation" (Hunston, 2011, p. 3). While adverbs and adjectives, for example, can be highly evaluative (see Conrad & Biber, 2000), evaluation is usually conveyed in an implicit and cumulative manner (Hunston, 2011).

Hyland (2000) was the first researcher to investigate praise and criticism in book reviews, finding that the writers in his corpus provided more praise on global aspects of the books while criticism was more specific. In addition, his study showed that virtually all reviews opened or closed with praise. In fact, opening the book reviews with praise was "almost a routine move" in his corpus (Hyland, 2000, p.53), although this was not a predictor of how the book was going to be ultimately evaluated. Furthermore, he found that soft knowledge[3] reviews, such as sociology and philosophy, contained more criticism than hard knowledge reviews, like biology or physics, which were dominated by praise. This finding indicates that evaluation in academic book reviews can be subject to the conventions of different disciplinary communities.

Moreno and Suárez (2009) looked at the weight of critical comments in the different rhetorical moves in their corpus of 40 literary book reviews in Spanish and English. They found, as expected, that most criticism was identified primarily in one specific move, although some critical comments were also found in other moves. Further, they found far more critical comments in the reviews in English and that the Spanish reviews offered a "highly positively biased evaluation of the book" (p. 173). Finally, the Spanish reviews were concluded with the highest frequency of positive critical comments while the counterparts in English provided some negative comments and tended to qualify the positive ones.

According to Hunston (2011), the most obvious approach to analyzing evaluation language is the study of words, collocations, and phrases, which once identified in a text, "can be measured against another text to compare the amount and type of evaluative language in each" (Hunston, 2011, p. 2). The literature on stance, engagement, and metadiscourse has been especially extensive (e.g. Biber, 2006; Hyland, 1998a; 2000; Hyland & Tse, 2004) in identifying several features that express evaluation in different types of discourse. Among these, Hyland's (1998a, 2000, 2004, 2009) work on metadiscourse seems to be a particularly useful framework to examine how writers engage with the text and readers. As Hyland and Tse (2004) stated,

> Metadiscourse is an intuitively attractive concept as it seems to offer a motivated way of collecting under one heading the range of devices writers use to explicitly organize their texts, engage readers, and signal their attitudes to both their material and their audience. (p. 156)

As previously explained, the studies reviewed in the introduction investigated evaluation in book reviews by using qualitative methodologies (e.g., Junqueira 2013; Moreno & Suárez, 2008a; Moreno & Suárez, 2009) of relatively small corpora (i.e., 20-40 texts) . The study presented here, on the other hand, used a quantitative, corpus-based methodology to investigate evaluative language from Hyland's (2000) metadiscourse model in two corpora of book reviews written in Brazilian Portuguese and English. Hyland's metadiscourse model has been used in the study of academic texts such as research articles (Hyland, 1999), textbooks (Hyland, 2000), and dissertations (Hyland & Tse, 2004). However, it has not yet been applied to the study of book reviews across languages. These types of studies could, nonetheless, highly benefit from an investigation of features that convey the authors' stance towards their text and their audience given the centrally evaluative and interactively complex nature of book reviews, as previously discussed.

Methodology

Corpus Description

The corpus used in this exploratory study consists of 180 academic book reviews (nearly 300,000 words) across two languages, Brazilian Portuguese (BP) and English, in three disciplines: Applied Linguistics, History, and Psychology. All book reviews were published in international academic journals in the past ten years (2001-2010). The number of reviews per sub-corpora is illustrated in Table 1, and the total number of words in each of these sub-corpora is presented in Table 2.

The fields of History and Psychology were included as representatives of the humanities[4] and social sciences; and Applied Linguistics (AL) was included, for it is the very field that theorizes about and researches the book review and because these researchers belong to this discourse community. It should be noted that the domain distinction between the different types of academic knowledge is not clear-cut. As Hyland (2000) explained,

> The concept of soft and hard domain of knowledge is not obviously without problems […]. As a result, the use of these terms to characterize academic disciplines by types of knowledge forms clearly runs the risk of reductionism, or even reification, by packing a multitude of complex abstractions into a few simple opposites. (p. 29)

Thus, going in the same direction as Hyland, we view the soft-hard distinction as a continuum rather than a clear-cut dichotomy that offers "a convenient way of examining general similarities and differences between fields without positing rigidly demarcated categories" (p. 30). In this study, we arbitrarily considered History at the soft knowledge end of the continuum, Applied Linguistics in the middle, and Psychology more towards the hard knowledge end.

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The complete names of the specific journals included in the corpus are shown in Table 3.

Table 1
Book reviews in each sub-corpora

	Applied Linguistics		History		Psychology	
	BP	English	BP	English	BP	English
Journal 1	RBLA (10)	TQ (10)	RH (10)	Historian	EP (10)	ACP (10)
Journal 2	DELTA (20)	JP (20)	RBH (20)	HR	EPP (20)	AJP (10)
Total per corpora	30	30	30	30	30	30
Total number	180 book reviews					

Table 2
Number of words in the corpus

BP	N of words	English	N of words
Applied Linguistics	**75791**	*Applied Linguistics*	**47940**
RBLA	23266	TQ	15743
DELTA	52525	JP	32197
History	**53182**	*History*	**26398**
RH	21075	Historian	8404
RBH	32107	HR	17994
Psychology	**30780**	*Psychology*	**57757**
EP	10807	ACP	11154
EPP	27973	AJP	46603
Total in sub-corpora	**167753**		**132095**
Total words in the corpus	**299,848**		

Table 3
Journals used in the corpus

Applied Linguistics		History		Psychology	
BP	English	BP	English	BP	English
Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada (RBLA)	Tesol Quartely (TQ)	Revista de História (RH)	The Historian	Estudos em Psicologia (EP)	Applied Cognitive Psychology (ACP)
Documentação de Estudos em Linguística Teórica e Aplicada (DELTA)	Journal of Pragmatics (JP)	Revista Brasileira de História (RBH)	History Review (HR)	Estudos e Pesquisas em Psicologia (EPP)	American Journal of Psychology (AJP)

The selected journals are all peer-reviewed and were chosen according to the following rationale. First, although the impact factor of Brazilian journals is not measured, a division within the country's Ministry of Education (CAPES) ranks academic journals according to a federal ranking system called "*Qualis*" (A1, A2, B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, C), in which *Qualis A1* is the highest possible ranking and *Qualis C* is the lowest. Thus, the criterion that all Brazilian journals in the corpus should be ranked as *Qualis* A, either 1 or 2, was established to ensure that these were reputable venues according to the corresponding discourse community. In addition, compiling the BP sub-corpora was relatively simple as the journals selected are available online for public access with files in .html and .pdf formats.

In contrast, the collection of the book reviews in English was more challenging. First, the selection of flagship journals of each discipline or the ones with the highest impact factors in their respective fields was attempted. However, this procedure was not successful for two reasons: (1) several high impact journals in the field of AL only offer access to secured .pdf files, which cannot be cleaned[2] or saved in plain text format to be run into a concordancing software; (2) not many journals in History and Psychology include book reviews in every volume, and some only started publishing book reviews in recent years. Accordingly, for AL, two reputable and internationally recognized journals in the field (*TESOL Quarterly* and *Journal of Pragmatics*), which publish book reviews on a regular basis in electronic formats compatible with concordancing software, were selected. For History and Psychology, after an extensive search in indexed databases, the journals in Table 2 were chosen because they followed the time frame and file format criteria established for this study.

Once the corpus was cleaned and compiled, AntConc concordancing software (Anthony, 2011) was used to search the frequency of the words on Hyland's list of "Interpersonal Metadiscourse" expressions (see appendix A) in the corpus. As discussed in the introduction section, these devices show the engagement of the writer with the text and the readers.

Procedures

Hyland's (2000) metadiscourse framework is divided into two models: textual metadiscourse and interpersonal metadiscourse. The former is used to organize propositional information in a way that makes a text coherent and convincing while the latter is used to express a writer's engagement with his/her propositions as well with the readers (for important information on metadiscourse and proposition, see Hyland, 2000 and Hyland & Tse, 2004). In fact, typically argumentative and persuasive genres, such as the research article, have been shown to depend highly on interpersonal metadiscourse features (e.g. Hyland, 1998b, 1999; Mauranen et al., 1993).

Hyland's (2000, p. 188-193) original metadiscourse list contains over 320 words divided into two models, textual and interpersonal metadiscourse, under the following categories: (1) Textual: logical connectives, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code glosses; (2): Interpersonal: hedges, emphatics (boosters), attitude markers, relational markers, person markers. The first group of expressions are used to "organize propositional information in ways that a perceived audience is likely to find coherent and convincing," whereas the latter group "allows writers to express a perspective towards their propositions and their readers" (p. 112). For the

purposes of this study, only the five features under the interpersonal metadiscourse model were used (Table 4) in order to analyze to which extent these features can gloss evaluation in book reviews as they represent "more explicitly interactional and evaluative aspects of authorial presence" (Hyland, 2000, p. 122).

Upon searching for all expressions (n=120) under these five categories in the English corpus, only the most frequent ones (n=29) were selected and searched for in the BP corpus since many of the other expressions occurred just once or twice, and still others had no occurrences at all in the English corpus. Table 4 shows the final list of expressions used in the present study in both sub-corpora.

Table 4
Most frequent interpersonal metalinguistic expressions in the corpus (adapted from Hyland (2000, p. 191-193).

Attitude Markers	Emphatics	Interpersonal Markers	Relational Markers	Hedges
even x	actually	I	( )	could /not
important (ly)	always	we	consider	may
interesting (ly)	certainly	me	our (inclusive)	often
must	clearly/it is clear	my		perhaps
	in fact/the fact that	our		possible (ly)
	indeed			seems
	no/beyond that			sometimes /somewhat
	obvious (ly) will /not			

Next, before loading the sub-corpora into AntConc (Anthony, 2011), it was necessary to translate the expressions from English into BP, a task that was accomplished by one of the present researchers, a native speaker of BP, who resorted to a BP-English dictionary (*Michaelis, 2000*) to ensure that all translations were accurate (see Table 5 for the list of words in BP). Additionally, since Portuguese is a pro-drop language (i.e., a language in which pronouns can be dropped, or not used, because verb conjugations indicate the subject), verb conjugations of verbs had to be manually analyzed for the interpersonal and relational markers as well. For example, for the interpersonal markers 'I' and 'we' ('eu' and 'nós'), the regular conjugation endings in the present, past, and future tense for these persons were searched, such as "-ei" (i.e., analisarei, I will analyze) and "-emos" (analisaremos, we will analyze).

Of course, the tokens had to be checked manually once highlighted on AntConc, for these endings do not only reflect verb conjugation patterns. Just the expressions from Hyland's model were translated, however, and other words in BP that could function as metadiscourse features were not analyzed. This was a limitation of the exploratory methodology devised, and we believe that in future studies it will be important to also compile a list of possible BP expressions that convey engagement with the audience to add to the English metadiscourse features from Hyland (2000). To our knowledge, this type of interactive corpus methodology has also never

been applied in cross-linguistic studies of book reviews as previous studies have all taken a qualitative approach, manually looking at specific comments and features in the reviews (e.g. Moreno & Suarez, 2008a, 2008b).

According to Hyland (2000, p. 113), the five different categories under the interpersonal metadiscourse model enact the following functions in discourse:

(a) attitude makers: "indicate the writer's affective attitude to textual information, expressing surprise, importance, obligation, agreement, and so on."

(b) hedges and (c) emphatics (boosters): "indicate the degree of commitment, certainty, and collegial deference a writer wishes to convey. […] the balance of these epistemic categories play an important role in conveying the extent of author commitment to text content, and observing interactional norms of rhetorical respect."

(d) interpersonal (person) markers: "refer to the degree of explicit author presence in the text measured by the frequency of first person pronouns and possessive adjectives."

(e) relational markers: "are devices that explicitly address readers, either to focus their attention or include them as discourse participants."

Table 5
Translation of most frequent interpersonal metalinguistic expressions in the corpus (adapted from Hyland (2000, p. 191-193).

Marcadores de Atitude	Enfaticos	Marcadores Pessoais	Marcadores de Relacao	Compensadores/ Qualificantes
até x, mesmo	na verdade, em/na realidade	eu	()	poderia/amos, não poderia/amos, poderíamos
	sempre	nós	considere/m	pode/posso/podem/os
importante(mente)	certamente	me, mim	nosso, nossa, nossos, nossas	muitas vezes, freqüentemente
	claramente, é claro	meu, minha, meus, minhas		talvez
interessante(mente)	de fato, o fato de	nosso, nossa, nossos, nossas		possivel(mente)
	realmente			parece/m/o/mos, dar/a/am/amos a impressao
preciso/amos/ar, necessito/amos, ar	não, além /a parte disso			parece/m/o/mos, dar/a/am/amos a impressao
	óbvio, obviamente, evidentemente			

Finally, it is important to remember, in words that echo those of Hyland (2000) and Hyland and Tse (2004), that a classification scheme like this entails a pragmatic analysis, which gives us a

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grounded description of the data, but it does not and cannot completely represent the complexity of natural language use.

Results and Discussion

The findings revealed that the total number of interpersonal metadiscourse features (normalized per 1000 words)[5] was considerably higher in the English corpus than in the BP corpus. As posited in the introduction section (see Table 6 below), this finding agrees with Moreno and Suarez's (2008a, 2008 b, 2009) claims that evaluation expressed in academic discourse in general, and in book reviews in particular, appears to be culture-bound. The BP book reviews contained noticeably fewer interpersonal metadiscourse features than their English counterparts, especially emphatics and personal markers (Figure 1), which may indicate that these reviews are generally less evaluative as book reviews in Spanish and Italian (Moreno & Suarez 2008a, 2008 b, 2009; Giannoni, 2006, respectively).

Table 6
Number of interpersonal metadiscourse features in the corpus (normalized per 1000 words)

	BP	English
AL	14.0	18.5
History	9.8	20.2
Psychology	12.9	27.3
Total	36.7	66.0

A closer analysis of the different categories in the interpersonal metadiscourse model indicates that the book reviews in English presented a higher frequency in all features across the board. The differences between the sub-corpora (i.e., BP and English) are particularly striking for emphatics, as in *"It is **clearly** one of the better single sources of exposure to the stalking phenomenon currently available"* (**ACP03621**)[6] as well as for personal markers, such as in the following example: ***My** own perspective in writing this review is that of a researcher in second language acquisition (SLA)* (**JP016343**).

Figure 1 presents the metadiscourse features under each category for both corpora. In addition, hedges, as shown for example in "*o texto **parece** adotar um tom reducionista em algumas partes*" (*The text seems to adopt a reductionist tone in certain parts*)[7] (**RBLA101025**), were the most frequent features in both sub-corpora (see also Figure 1) in line with Hyland and Tse's (2004) findings of metadiscourse features in academic dissertations. These authors argued that the highly frequent use of hedges reflects "the critical importance of distinguishing fact from opinion in academic writing and the need for writers to evaluate their assertions in ways that are likely to be persuasive" (p.171). Such function seems especially important in the book review genre in which authors need to carefully balance their opinions with descriptive information about the book while still offering their personal stance, yet without being too negatively critical of their colleagues' work.
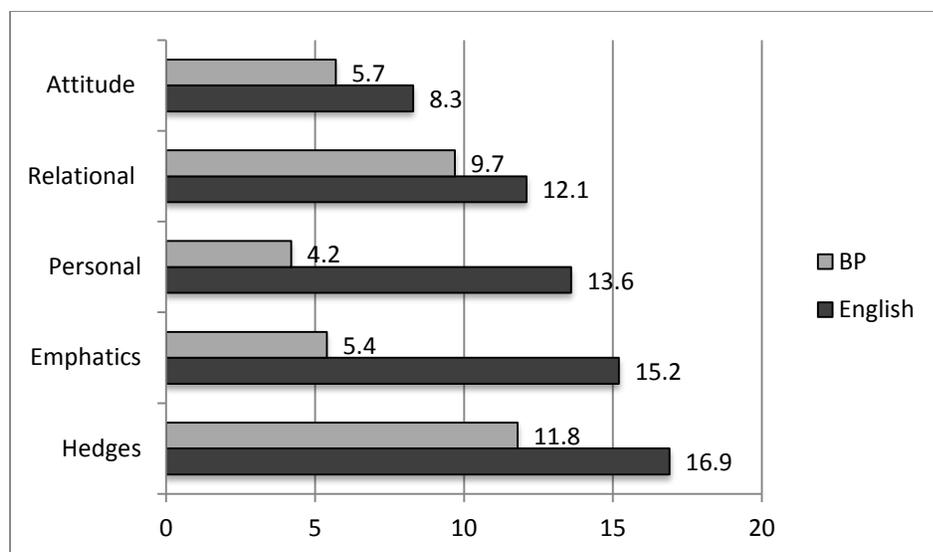
Figure 1. Interpersonal metadiscourse features under each category in both corpora

Similarly, attitude markers, like 'even' in "*As fronteiras assim delimitadas até podem se mostrar pouco definidas; mas mesmo se o resultado for este…*" (*The frontiers delimited in this way might even appear little defined; but even if this is the result…*) (**RH07311**) were the least frequent type of interpersonal metadiscourse in the present book review corpus. This is in agreement with Hyland and Tse's (2004) findings in their analysis of a dissertation corpus. In contrast, emphatics (or boosters) and personal markers were the second and third most frequent features in the English corpus in the present study while the second and third least common in the dissertations in Hyland and Tse's study. It seems quite conceivable that book review writers would resort to emphatics when providing evaluation to the books under review as well as acknowledge that such judgments are their own, which could help soften criticism as well as praise as also suggested by Hyland (2000). In other words, by claiming that a given perspective is theirs by using personal pronouns, such as I or my, the authors put some of the weight of the evaluation on themselves and not on the quality, or lack thereof, of the book under review. It is important to note, however, that these patterns seem to reflect genre conventions (implicit and/or explicit) of book reviews in English as these two features (i.e., emphatics and personal markers) were actually the least frequent ones in the BP corpus.

With regard to the disciplines investigated (i.e. AL, History, and Psychology), the findings revealed a considerable difference in the usage of interpersonal metadiscourse among these fields in the English corpus. The frequency in the BP corpus, on the other hand, was more balanced as illustrated in Figure 2.
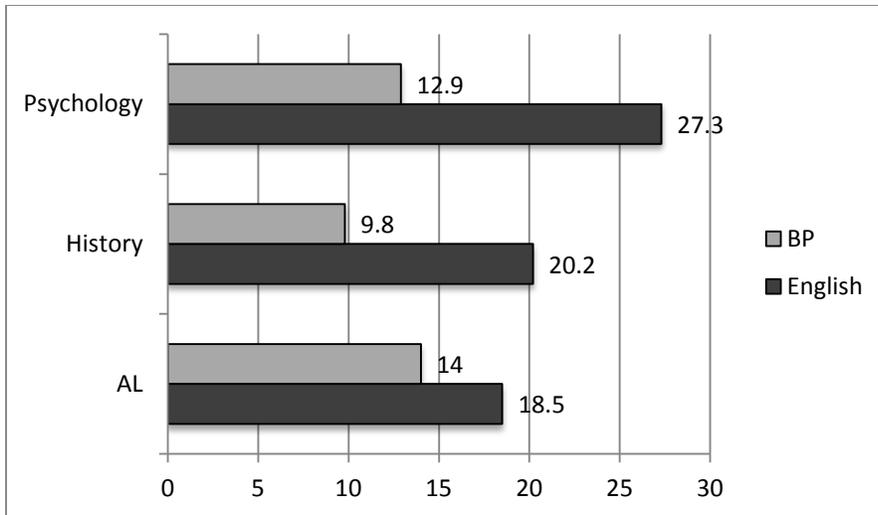
Figure 2. Interpersonal metadiscourse features in reviews by discipline.

Figure 2 also shows that Psychology book reviews in English presented a much higher density of interpersonal discourse than the other two disciplines, with AL having the lowest frequency in this corpus. Further, a breakdown of the data per category shows that the Psychology book reviews indeed contained a higher frequency of features in all categories, except for hedges, which had the same frequency as in AL, and emphatics, which were the least frequent in that corpus (i.e. Psychology), as illustrated in Figures 3, 4, and 5.
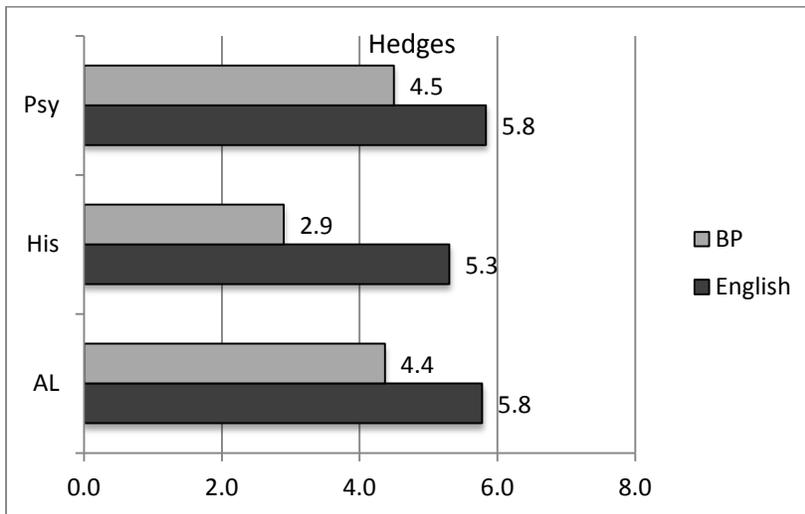

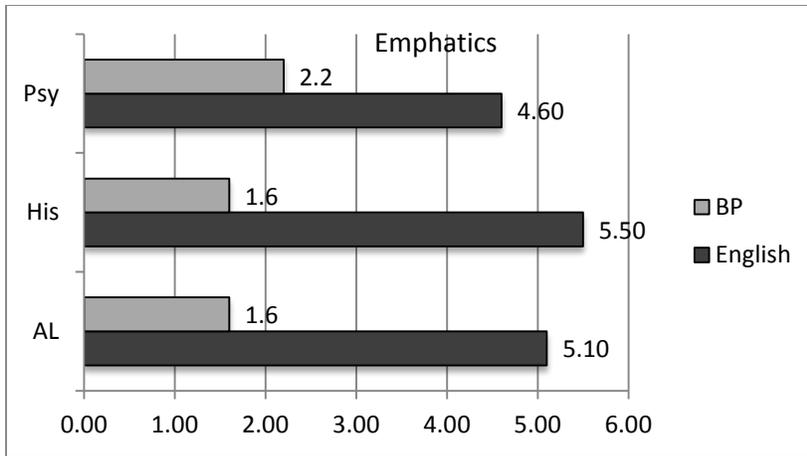*Figure 3.* Hedges in reviews by discipline.

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Figure 4. Emphatics in reviews by discipline.
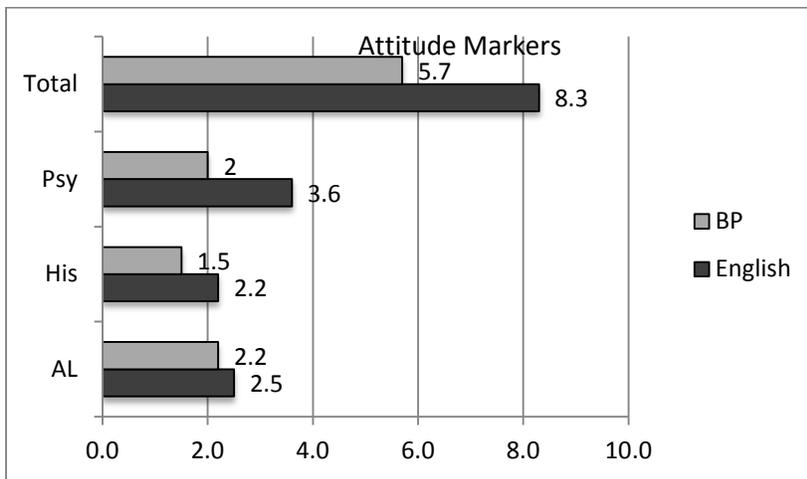

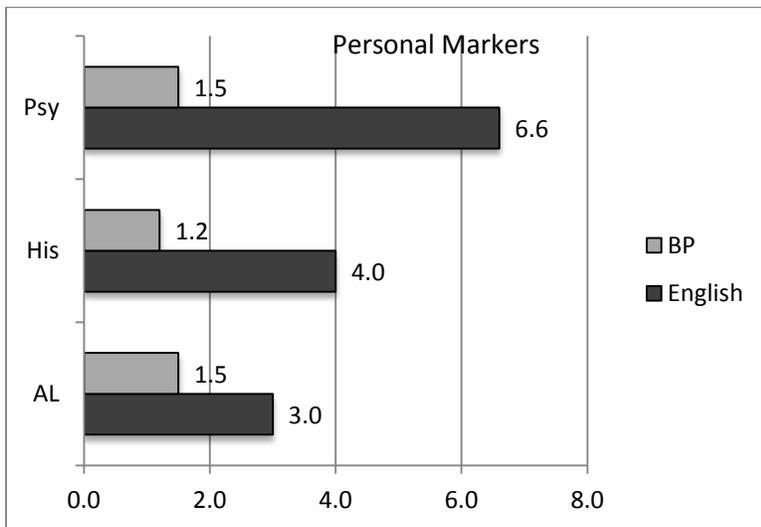*Figure 5.* Attitude Markers in reviews by discipline.

Figure 6. Personal markers in reviews by discipline.

As shown in figure 6, the frequency of personal markers is especially low in the BP corpus, suggesting that writers in this culture may avoid explicitly associating their personal opinion with evaluations provided in the reviews. In contrast, the book review writers in the English corpus seem more engaged, expressing ownership of their propositions.

Finally, as seen in Figure 7 below, the AL book reviews in BP contained the only interpersonal metadiscourse feature that was more frequent in the BP corpus than in the English one: relational markers.
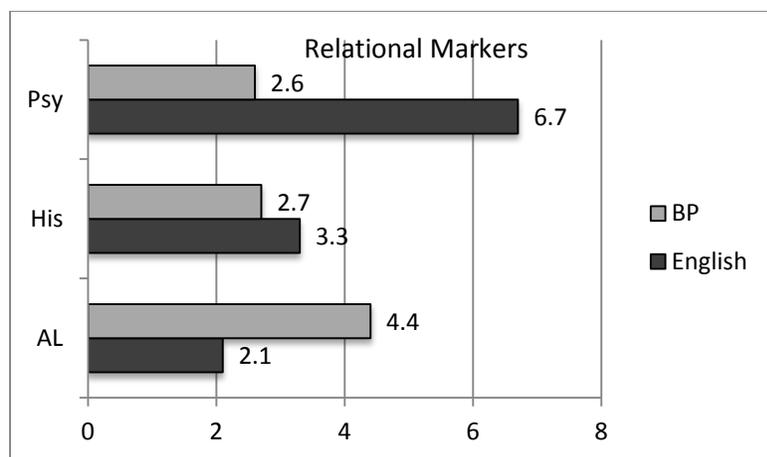

Figure 7. Relational markers in reviews by discipline.

The most frequent relational marker in all the sub-corpora and in particular in the BP AL reviews was the parentheses, in which authors provide extra information about the content just discussed or offer qualifications for claims just made (e.g., citations, acronyms, and any form of bibliographic information were not included in the analysis). This device can thus function as an aside the author makes, showing great interaction with the audience. It is noteworthy that even though the BP AL reviews had a higher frequency of devices in this category, i.e. relational markers, the overall frequency of interpersonal metadiscourse was much more similar across the disciplines in this corpus (the biggest range is close to 3.0 per thousand words) than in the English corpus (range of 9.0 per thousand words) as previously indicated in Figure 2.

The findings of the present study reveal that interpersonal metadiscourse devices were considerably more frequent in the book reviews in the English corpus across the three disciplines investigated than in the BP counterparts. Remarkably, all studies that have investigated (through a variety of methodologies) evaluation in cross-linguistic academic genres, such as book reviews and research articles, have found that romance language texts, such as Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, and Italian are less critical than their counterparts in English (e.g. Giannoni, 2006; Moreno & Suarez, 2008 a, 2008 b, 2009; Hirano, 2009; Junqueira, 2013). In the same vein, the present corpus-based analysis has shown that the BP corpus employed fewer metadiscourse devices. This might suggest that these reviews may have a more descriptive rather than argumentative or persuasive nature, which are marked characteristics of genres with a high density of interpersonal metadiscourse (Hyland, 2000).

Our findings, to a certain extent, parallel those reported by Hirano (2009) who found in her cross-cultural move-analysis of research article introductions (RAIs) in BP and English that 70% of the RAIs in BP lacked Move 2 ("Establishing a niche") while only one RAI in English lacked this move. Moreover, the three RAIs that did point to a gap in the literature cited articles written in English by non-Brazilian authors or claimed that no research in that area was available in Portuguese. The lack of assessment of the body of literature in the BP RAIs in Hirano's study also seem to indicate a less critical stance adopted by these Brazilian writers. Similarly, Junqueira's (2013) study revealed that applied linguistics book reviews in BP presented a lack of negative critical evaluation in the last rhetorical move performed in the texts, generally recommending the books without pointing to shortcomings in the works.

Hirano (2009) argued that a possible explanation for Brazilian authors to avoid establishing their niche might be the "solidarity with the local research community" (Hirano, 2009, p. 245). Such avoidance of conflict in Brazilian research communities had been previously reported in de Rezende and Hemais's (2004) study on research articles and was also found in Junqueira's (2013) analysis of book reviews. Furthermore, although linguistic features were not the focus of Junqueira's (2013) study, she pointed out that only two reviews in her corpus used first person singular conjugations while the other writers opted for first person plural conjugations even when the books reviewed were penned by single authors, a phenomenon known as 'magisterial plural' (Bennett, 2010). As she put it, "[g]iven the smaller applied linguistics community in Brazil, critiquing others' works can be understandably more face threatening and resorting to this 'magisterial plural' could be an effective way to express modesty" (Junqueira, 2013, p. 211). Likewise, the lower frequency usage of interpersonal metadiscourse devices in the BP book reviews analyzed in the present study seem to also point to an avoidance of confrontation or of critically evaluating the works of members of their fields, thus possibly demonstrating their allegiance to their local discourse communities as well.

Conclusion

Further studies still need to be conducted so that we can have a better understanding of how evaluative patterns are employed in the book review genre across the aforementioned cultures (i.e., Spanish, Italian, Brazilian), but at this point it seems safe to conclude that writers from the studied romance language backgrounds do not engage with and perhaps evaluate their reviews in the same way writers publishing in the English international community do. This information might be potentially relevant not only for writing scholars or romance language writers trying to get published in English-medium venues, but also for consumers of book reviews in various academic fields since such readers might encounter more critical reviews in English than in the aforementioned languages.

In addition, this study shows that the book reviews in the BP corpus across the three disciplines examined were more homogeneous than in the English corpus. More specifically, the BP AL book reviews had the highest frequencies of interpersonal metadiscourse features examined (14), followed by Psychology (12.9) and History (9.8) reviews. On the other hand, the cross-disciplinary difference was greater in the English corpus with Psychology reviews having the highest frequencies of these metadiscourse devices (27.3), followed by History (20.2) and AL (18.5).

At first, this may seem to contradict previous research findings, which have shown that the humanities and soft sciences are more critical than the hard sciences (Hyland, 2000). However, it is important to keep in mind that interpersonal metadiscourse features do not necessarily correspond to criticism or to praise but rather to how authors engage with their texts. It is interesting, nonetheless, that the AL reviews in the English corpus contained the lowest frequencies of these features given that other studies have shown that this field provides more evaluation and is more critical than other disciplines in the social sciences and humanities and especially more so than the hard knowledge disciplines (Hyland, 2000).

With respect to psychology, we speculate that a possible explanation for the greater writer engagement in this corpus could be related to the fewer numbers of books published in this community, which has the research article as its main venue for advancing the field. Accordingly, given the paucity of books to be reviewed, psychology book review authors may feel the need to provide more evaluative comments and/or offer more relational explanation to their audience as evidenced by the highest frequency in the corpus being the use of parentheses (a total of 300 instances or 5.2 per a thousand words). Additionally, the fact that this disciplinary community is much larger than the AL community could also account for the greater engagement identified in the reviews as the authors might not have the same need to consider critical comments face-threatening acts towards the books' authors who they may never meet at conferences or work with in any capacity. It is also important to point out that Psychology was not included in Hyland's (2000) study, and although we have considered it to be nearer to the hard knowledge end of the continuum when compared to History and Applied Linguistics, one could argue that Psychology is not as hard of a discipline as Physics and Engineering, which were used by Hyland.

Hyland's (2000) interpersonal metadiscourse model seems to be an effective framework to analyze the engagement of writers with their book reviews and audiences across cultures and disciplines. The results here discussed reveal important differences in how this genre is realized in BP and international, English-medium communities as well as across different disciplines. Future studies combining this methodology with qualitative discourse analysis of the findings may help us gain an even greater understanding of how writers construct their reviews, following the genre conventions of their discourse communities. This knowledge is important for book review writers, as book reviews tend to be the first publication venue for graduate students initiating their scholarly career and given the highly evaluative and interactively complex nature of this genre. The findings of this study and those of similar studies that compare book reviews cross-linguistically could be used to inform genre-based academic writing classes, focusing on the differences in use across languages and instructing students in those courses to carefully review their use of evaluative markers when writing their reviews.

Furthermore, because evaluation and now interpersonal metadiscourse have been shown to be culture-bound, writers coming from a different language and cultural background most likely would face challenges when trying to publish a review in another culture's discourse community as is often the case with many authors' first attempt to publish a book review in an international journal. Hence, studies that go beyond discourse and corpus analysis and investigate writers', editors,' and readers' perspectives on these evaluation issues could also significantly advance our

current knowledge of how multilingual writers navigate academic genres in clearly very different discourse communities.

Notes

1. In Applied Linguistics, we use "scientific" to talk about the sciences, that is, more disciplinary knowledge (or discourse, for example). We use "academic" for a more general view of knowledge at the university level.

2. In this paper, the term "genre" is used according to Swales' (1990) definition of "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" and whose exemplars "exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience" (p.58).

3. A more detailed discussion of the soft/hard knowledge distinction can be found in the methodology section.

4. The disciplines represented in our study were a sample of convenience. We worked with disciplines that had been used before in applied linguistics studies to have some framework of reference for comparison.

5. Given the great difference in number of words between the sub-corpora, raw frequencies would not have offered an accurate representation of the use of interpersonal metadiscourse in the corpus and were, therefore, normalized.

6. All the examples come from the corpus used in this study, and the codes refer to the name of the journals, year of publication, and number of the first page of the article in which the example was identified (e.g., **ACP03621** refers to 'Applied Cognitive Psychology', year 2003, and the number of the first page of the book review is 621).

7. All translations are literal and translated by the first author.

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APPENDIX A

Interpersonal Metadiscourse (from Hyland, 2000, p.191)

Attitude markers	Hedges
!	about
admittedly	almost
I agree	apparently
amazingly	appear to be
appropriately	approximately
correctly	assume
curiously	believed
disappointing	certain extent / amount / level
disagree	could / couldn't
even x	doubt
fortunately	essentially
have to	estimate
hopefully	frequently
important (ly)	generally / in general
interesting (ly)	indicate
like (prefer)	largely
glad	likely
pleased	mainly
must (obligation)	may
ought (obligation)	maybe
prefer/preferable	might
remarkable	mostly
should (obligation)	often
surprisingly	perhaps
unfortunate (ly)	plausible
unusually	possible (ly)
understandably	presumably
	relatively
	seems
	should
	sometimes / somewhat
	suggest
	suspect
	unlikely
	uncertain
	unclear
	usually
	would / wouldn't
	little / not understand

Emphatics	Relational markers
Actually	()
always	?
apparent	incidentally
I believe	by the way
certain that	determine
certainly	consider
clearly / it is clear	find
conclusively	imagine
decidedly	Let x=y
definitely	Let's/ let us
demonstrate	note (that)
determine	notice
doubtless	our (inclusive)
essential	recall
establish	
evidently	
in fact / the fact that	
find/ found that	
indeed	
(we) know	
it is known that	
must	
never	
no / beyond that	
obvious (ly)	
of course	
prove	
we show	
sure	
(we) think	
true	
undoubtedly	
well-known	
will / won't	

Personal markers	
I	my
we	our
me	mine