



CONSTRUCTING ACCESSIBLE AND ENGAGING VIDEO NARRATIVES: METADISOURSE MARKERS IN *PSYCH2GO* YOUTUBE CHANNEL

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Abstract. *The increasing consumption of mental health content on digital platforms has intensified the need for effective communication strategies that balance clarity and audience engagement. This study examines how metadiscourse markers function in Psych2Go YouTube video narratives to construct accessible and engaging edutainment discourse. Drawing on Hyland's (2005) metadiscourse framework and employing Qualitative Content Analysis (Mayring, 2000), this study analyses three selected video transcripts. The findings reveal that interactive markers function as structural devices that organize and simplify complex psychological information, while interactional markers serve as relational tools that foster audience involvement and parasocial connection. More importantly, the study demonstrates that the effectiveness of Psych2Go's narratives lies in the dynamic interplay between these two marker types, enabling the transformation of monologic discourse into a dialogic and relatable experience. These findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how linguistic strategies shape digital communication.*

Keywords: *Metadiscourse, Edutainment, YouTube discourse, Mental-health communication, Psych2Go*

Abstrak. Meningkatnya konsumsi konten kesehatan mental di platform digital telah meningkatkan kebutuhan akan strategi komunikasi yang efektif yang menyeimbangkan kejelasan dan keterlibatan audiens. Studi ini meneliti bagaimana penanda metadiskursus berfungsi dalam narasi video YouTube *Psych2Go* untuk membangun wacana edutainment yang mudah diakses dan menarik. Dengan mengacu pada kerangka metadiskursus Hyland (2005) dan menggunakan Analisis Konten Kualitatif (Mayring, 2000), studi ini menganalisis tiga transkrip video terpilih. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa penanda interaktif berfungsi sebagai perangkat struktural yang mengatur dan menyederhanakan informasi psikologis yang kompleks, sementara penanda interaksional berfungsi sebagai alat relasional yang mendorong keterlibatan audiens dan koneksi parasosial. Lebih penting lagi, studi ini menunjukkan bahwa efektivitas narasi *Psych2Go* terletak pada interaksi dinamis antara kedua jenis penanda ini, yang memungkinkan transformasi wacana monolog menjadi pengalaman dialogis dan mudah dipahami. Temuan ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih bernuansa tentang bagaimana strategi linguistik membentuk komunikasi digital.

Kata kunci: Metadiskursus, Edutainment, Wacana YouTube, Komunikasi kesehatan mental, *Psych2Go*

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-moving media landscape, effective communication relies on linguistic and rhetorical strategies. Content creators must craft their messages intentionally to involve audiences and guide interpretation (Oktaviana, 2024; Susanti, 2023). The primary platform facilitating this evolution is YouTube, the world's second-largest search engine for entertainment, educational, and social interaction, with a projected global user base of approximately 2.85 billion (Global Media Insight, 2025). This widespread access reflects a global trend toward consuming knowledge through narrative and visual forms that merge educational content with entertainment value, a video format that is labelled as edutainment.

A prominent example of this genre is the *Psych2Go* channel, which presents animated video narratives, promoting self-awareness, exploring complex communication dynamics, and addressing emotional intelligence and interpersonal conflict. In this context, creators rely on language strategies, such as personal stories, direct address, tone,

etc., to engage viewers and explain psychological concepts. The success of *Psych2Go*'s rhetorical approach thus invites deeper linguistic exploration into how language functions as both a pedagogical tool and emotional bridge in the digital age.

Understanding how this resonates is achieved requires grounding in Applied Linguistics, particularly the study of metadiscourse, a linguistic resource that organizes discourse and engages audiences. This analysis adopted Ken Hyland's (2005) metadiscourse framework, defined as "the cover term for self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, helping the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community" (Hyland 2005, p. 49). The framework distinguishes between Interactive Markers, which organize, explain, and guide the audience through the text's structure, and Interactional Markers, which express the creator's personality and stance, build solidarity, and anticipate the audience's response.

The rise of edutainment presents both opportunities and challenges for ethical and effective communication. When channels discuss complex subjects, the creators must establish credibility and relatability with the audience. Despite the wealth of research on metadiscourse in academic writing, formal speeches (Kholifah & Ekawati, 2024), and instructional YouTube videos (Koonala & Chaiwong, 2022), there remains a significant gap in analyzing spoken, narrative edutainment within the digital mental health niche. There is a lack of analysis regarding the functional interplay of markers in spoken, monologic narratives that translate complex concepts for a lay audience. Specifically, the linguistic mechanism by which a creator simulates a dialogue to maintain conversational trust.

Therefore, to fill this research gap, this study investigates the rhetorical approach of *Psych2Go* narratives. Specifically, this research addresses two main questions: (1) what metadiscourse markers are employed in the selected video narratives, and (2) how these markers linguistically contribute to constructing a comprehensible and compelling edutainment narrative. Ultimately, the findings aim to offer actionable insights for digital content creators, providing a linguistic roadmap for crafting more accessible communication. By identifying how metadiscourse fosters solidarity and anticipates responses, the findings can guide ethical communication practices, ensuring that digital mental health resources are not only informative but also engaging and responsible.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Ken Hyland's Metadiscourse Framework

Ken Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse offers a comprehensive lens for examining how language shapes interaction within texts, emphasizing the ways writers or speakers position themselves and their audiences. Jiang and Hyland (2022) note in their overview that metadiscourse is a powerful concept because it reveals how communicators "project themselves into their discourse to signal their attitude towards both the propositional content and the audience" across diverse languages and emerging genres. Hyland (2005) categorizes metadiscourse into two intersecting dimensions as seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Metadiscourse Markers

Interactive Markers:	Organize, explain, and guide the audience through the text's structure	
Sub-categories	1. Transition	: To link ideas logically
	2. Frame Markers	: To delineate stages

	3. Endophoric Markers	: To refer to other parts
	4. Evidentials	: To support the argument
	5. Code glosses	: To clarify complex terms
Interactional Markers:	Express the creator’s personality and stance, build solidarity, and anticipate the audience response.	
Sub-categories	1. Hedges	: To show uncertainty
	2. Boosters	: To emphasize certainty
	3. Attitude Markers	: To express personal feelings
	4. Engagement Markers	: To directly address viewers
	5. Self-mentions	: To create a personal connection

B. Edutainment Discourse on YouTube

The fusion of education and entertainment, often termed edutainment, represents a strategic blend where informational value meets captivating delivery to engage audiences (Moyer-Gusé, 2008). Rather than emphasizing formal instruction, this genre relies on a combination of narrative storytelling, audiovisual affordances, and strategic language choices to engage voluntarily attentive audiences (Grady et al., 2024). Metadiscourse markers play a pivotal role in shaping YouTube video narratives, where spoken discourse must simulate interaction in a monologic medium. In YouTube edutainment, interactive markers act as cognitive scaffolds, structuring content into digestible segments and reducing the cognitive load for viewers who are unfamiliar with the topic. Meanwhile, interactional markers transform passive viewers into active participants, creating a parasocial bond that sustains engagement.

C. Review of Previous Studies

In the digital sphere, metadiscourse has been effectively utilized to analyse contemporary platforms, such as YouTube. Koonnala and Chaiwong (2022) utilized Hyland’s interpersonal metadiscourse model to analyse 30 English language learning videos on YouTube. However, the study was limited to instructional videos, leaving room to explore how metadiscourse functions in less formal or non-educational digital genres. Similarly, Kholifah and Ekawati (2024) applied Hyland’s model to five speeches by Greta Thunberg. While this work effectively captured rhetorical strategies in persuasive spoken discourse, it focused on political speeches and potentially overlooked the nuances of online audience interactions.

Unlike the instructional focus of Koonnala and Chaiwong (2022) or the political emphasis of Kholifah and Ekawati (2024), edutainment blends education with entertainment, offering a hybrid space where psychological topics are presented engagingly to diverse audiences. The channel’s success is predicated on its ability to effectively deploy metadiscourse markers to make psychological concepts comprehensible (interactive markers) and compelling (interactional markers) to a vast, non-academic audience

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilized Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA), outlined by Mayring (2000), as its methodological design. The qualitative approach was essential because the research aims to deeply analyze and interpret the functional meaning and rhetorical utilization of linguistic features, specifically metadiscourse markers, within a specified

context, rather than simply measuring their statistical distribution. Mayring's (2000) QCA provides the necessary systematic framework, which is rule-guided and context-focused. Moreover, the study adopted the Metadiscourse model by Hyland (2005) as the main deductive analytical tool.

The primary data source for this study is the *Psych2Go* YouTube channel. The data selection utilized purposive sampling as conceptualized by Patton (2002), which involves deliberate selection of information-rich cases that effectively illuminate the phenomenon under investigation. The corpus consisted of the textual transcripts derived from three (3) selected video narratives. Videos were approximately 10 minutes to ensure manageable and comparable narrative units. The sample included one video categorized as Mental Health Awareness & Symptom Identification, one video categorized as Personality and Self-discovery, and one video categorized as Life Hacks and Wellness Tips. This sampling ensures content balance and deeper contextual reading of each marker.

The core process of the analysis was systematic identification followed by in-depth interpretation. The analyst systematically applied the definitions of the ten subcategories of Hyland (2005) to the corpus. The analysis focused on how the markers collaboratively structure the argument (Interactive markers) and manage the writer/reader relationship (Interactional markers). The analysis detailed how metadiscourse was utilized to make complex psychological concepts relatable and compelling (the entertainment aspect) while simultaneously guaranteeing the information was easy to follow and comprehensive (the educational aspect).

To ensure validation, the analysis moved beyond subjective observation and achieved scientific verifiability. Each functional interpretation of a metadiscourse marker was systematically cross-referenced and validated against established linguistic and rhetorical literature. The interpretation was demonstrably supported by the surrounding discourse in the transcript, providing the strongest evidence of the markers in situ function.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the linguistic data extracted from the three selected *Psych2Go* video narratives. Video 1 (V1), *This Is How Depression Feels*, which falls under the category of mental health awareness and symptom identification, as it narratively breaks down depression into seven recognizable symptoms. Video 2 (V2), *You Have Fear of Abandonment, Not Just Loneliness*, is categorized as personality and self-discovery content, presenting a causal explanation that connects present relational insecurities to childhood trauma and attachment patterns. Meanwhile, Video 3 (V3), *10 Habits That Boost Your Emotional Well-Being*, belongs to the life hacks and wellness tips category, offering a structured set of practical behavioral strategies intended to improve emotional well-being. By analyzing these distinct narrative types, this section details both the systematic identification of markers and interprets how they collaboratively work to construct a narrative that is both linguistically comprehensible and emotionally compelling.

A. Structuring Accessible Narratives through Interactive Markers

The analysis shows that all three selected *Psych2Go* narratives systematically employ four categories of interactive metadiscourse markers: frame markers, transitions, code glosses, and evidentials. Their recurrence across videos with different communicative goals suggests that these resources are not incidental stylistic choices, but core linguistic strategies for organizing psychological content for a non-specialist audience. Functionally, these markers jointly contribute to the

construction of a comprehensible edutainment narrative by segmenting information, clarifying logical relations, translating abstract concepts, and calibrating credibility.

Table 2. Interactive Markers across the Selected *Psych2Go* Narratives

Category	V1: Depression	V2: Abandonment	V3: 10 Habits
Frame Markers	Goal announcement, sequencing	Goal announcement, topic shifting	Goal announcement, sequencing
Transitions	Contrastive	Consequential, additive	Consequential, additive
Code Glosses	Metaphorical, exemplification	Exemplification	Metaphorical, narrative anecdote
Evidentials	None	Academic citation, expert attribution	Academic citation, expert attribution

As summarized in Table 2, frame markers appeared in all three videos through sequencing labels, goal announcements, and topic-shifting questions. Transitions were likewise pervasive, especially contrastive, consequential, and additive relations. Code glosses were conveyed through metaphors, exemplification, and short narrative anecdotes, while evidentials appeared selectively in videos focused on causation or behavioral advice rather than on phenomenological description. This distribution indicates that accessibility in the corpus is achieved not through one dominant marker, but through a layered system in which different marker types perform complementary explanatory functions.

Frame markers function as macro-organizers, making dense psychological topics easier to process. In V1 and V3, explicit numbering, such as “**Number One:** *Waking up exhausted and drained*” (V1) and “**Number Five:** *Make socialization part of your routine*” (V3), transforms potentially continuous explanations into bounded informational units. Rather than forcing viewers to process an uninterrupted stream of symptoms or advice, the discourse is packaged into countable stages. This matters rhetorically because list structures create anticipation, progress, and closure. These features are especially valuable in online environments where attention is fragile. Goal announcements such as “*Here are a few ways...*” (V2) and “*Here are ten healthy habits...*” (V3) further preview discourse scope, helping viewers know what kind of knowledge they are about to receive.

Numbering might be merely a common YouTube formatting habit rather than meaningful metadiscourse. However, that objection overlooks function. In Hyland’s framework, the issue is not whether a form is common, but whether it guides interpretation. Here, numbering does precisely that: it sequences conceptual content and reduces uncertainty about textual progression. In educational discourse, predictability itself is a comprehension aid.

Frame Markers are also performed through Topic-shifting interrogatives, a related but distinct role. Questions such as “*How will a fear of abandonment affect your future?*” (V2) and “*So, what are we supposed to do about all these feelings?*” (V3) signal movement from one explanatory stage to another. For example, from diagnosis to consequences, or from problem description to practical coping strategies. These shifts help maintain narrative momentum while preventing abrupt transitions that could fragment comprehension (Rheisa, 2021). Instead of sounding like disconnected segments, the video sustains a guided journey through a topic.

At the micro-discursive level, transitions clarify how one proposition relates to the next. Contrastive markers such as “but” and “instead” are particularly important in V1, where the narrator distinguishes ordinary sadness from depression. For instance, statements like “*Depression is much more than having a bad day... but what happens when someone doesn’t enjoy life in general*” (V1) rhetorically correct oversimplified public assumptions. This is significant because mental-health discourse often competes with popular misconceptions; contrastive transitions allow creators to redefine terms without requiring technical jargon.

Consequential transitions such as “because” and “so” are more salient in V2 and V3, where causal explanation and advice dominate. “*We want words of reassurance... because it’s a vital part of our upbringing that we never had, so we look for these things in the people we’re closest with now.*” (V2), this expression linking childhood reassurance deficits to adult relational behavior, or emotional build-up to recommended coping responses, linguistically models cause-and-effect reasoning. In practical terms, viewers are not only told what happens but shown why it happens. Additive transitions, such as “*aside from professional help*” (V2) and “*not only that*” (V3), extend arguments without disrupting coherence, enabling layered explanations common in psychology topics where multiple factors often coexist.

Code glosses are perhaps the clearest accessibility mechanism in the corpus because they explicitly translate expert or abstract content into everyday cognition. Metaphors such as depression as “*an invisible weight*” (V1) or anger erupting “*like a volcano*” (V3) convert intangible internal states into sensory imagery. This matters because many psychological experiences are difficult to observe directly. Therefore, metaphor provides embodied anchors for understanding. Similarly, exemplification, such as “*homework or chores,*” localizes abstract dysfunction into familiar routines, allowing viewers to recognize concepts through lived experience rather than textbook definition alone.

Short narrative anecdotes in V3 extended this pedagogical function. Rather than merely instructing viewers to regulate emotion or build habits, anecdotal mini-scenarios demonstrate how advice may appear in ordinary life (Christiansen et al., 2025). This is a hallmark of edutainment discourse: explanation is embedded in story-like recognizability. However, one caution is necessary. Simplification through metaphor and anecdote can enhance accessibility, but it may also compress nuance (Nygård and Lindfors, 2025). Thus, these glosses are effective communicatively, even if not always exhaustive conceptually.

Evidentials complete the accessibility system by addressing trustworthiness. V2 and V3 contain academic citations and expert attributions, such as references to the “*Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*” (V1) or named psychologists. These markers lend epistemic legitimacy to claims about attachment styles, posture, fatigue, or behavioral outcomes. In a digital environment saturated with unverified wellness advice, citing external authority can reassure viewers that explanations are research-informed rather than purely anecdotal (Li et al., 2025).

Interestingly, V1 contains no explicit evidentials. This absence should not automatically be read as a weakness. The depression video is primarily phenomenological; it explains what depression feels like rather than making causal or prescriptive claims. In such contexts, experiential resonance may function more effectively than formal citation. Put differently, the relevant evidence is not laboratory authority but recognitional accuracy: viewers feel that the description

matches lived experience. This variation suggests that evidentials in edutainment are strategically deployed according to communicative purpose, not uniformly required.

Taken together, the findings indicate that interactive metadiscourse is the principal linguistic infrastructure through which *Psych2Go* renders complex psychological discourse accessible. Frame markers segment content, transitions expose reasoning, code glosses bridge expert-lay knowledge gaps, and evidentials secure credibility when needed. Their combined use comprehensibility is not achieved by simplification alone, but by carefully guiding viewers through content that is sequential, coherent, relatable, and trustworthy.

B. Building Engagement through Interactional Markers

While interactive markers primarily organize information for comprehension, the findings indicate that interactional markers are central to transforming informational content into an emotionally engaging viewing experience. Across the corpus, the narratives employ five categories of interactional metadiscourse, namely engagement markers, hedges, boosters, self-mentions, and attitude markers. Rather than merely decorating the text, these markers linguistically contribute to constructing a compelling edutainment narrative by simulating interpersonal dialogue, softening sensitive claims, emphasizing salient points, and projecting an empathetic speaker persona.

Across the corpus, interactional resources appear consistently despite topical variation, suggesting that audience involvement is not secondary to content delivery but structurally embedded in the channel’s discourse style. If interactive markers answer the question of how viewers understand the message, interactional markers address why viewers remain psychologically invested in it. This distinction is especially important in mental-health communication, where retention often depends as much on emotional resonance as on conceptual clarity.

Table 3. Interactional Markers across the Selected *Psych2Go* Narratives

Category	V1: Depression	V2: Abandonment	V3: 10 Habits
Engagement Markers	Direct questions, second-person address	Direct questions, second-person address	Direct questions, directives, second-person address
Hedges	some, may, might	may, might	may, might, sometimes
Boosters	Of course, always, extremely, much, never	always, never,	too, sure, every time
Self-Mentions	we, us	we, our	we, us
Attitude Markers	Deontic	Affective, Validation	Validation, Conversational Interjection

Among these categories, engagement markers are the most visible mechanism for audience involvement. Direct questions such as “*Have you ever wondered what depression feels like?*” (V1), “*So, do you or a loved one struggle with a fear of abandonment?*” (V2), or “*Which habits will you enact? And which bad habits are you guilty of?*” invite viewers to internally respond rather than passively receive information. Although no verbal reply is expected, the interrogative form creates what may be called pseudo-dialogic participation; viewers are positioned as

conversational partners. This is rhetorically significant because monologic video discourse can otherwise feel distant or lecture-like. By repeatedly asking questions, the narrator creates the illusion of mutual exchange.

Second-person address intensifies this effect. Frequent use of “you”, “your”, and “yourself” personalizes generalized psychological claims. Instead of stating that “individuals experiencing depression may lose motivation,” the discourse frames the issue as something potentially happening to “you”. This shift reduces social distance and increases relevance. A skeptical observer might argue that second-person pronouns are generic internet language rather than a meaningful strategy. Yet in discourse-functional terms, pronoun choice determines audience positioning. Here, viewers are interpellated as personally concerned subjects rather than detached observers.

Directives in V3, such as encouragement to rest, socialize, or reflect, serve as stronger engagement devices because they move beyond recognition toward action. Importantly, these commands are typically mitigated by the channel’s supportive tone, preventing them from sounding authoritarian. Thus, directives function less as orders than as affiliative coaching moves, consistent with the self-help dimension of edutainment discourse (Khoutyz, 2023).

Hedges are particularly important in mental-health communication because they soften claims that could otherwise appear diagnostic, deterministic, or overly universalized (Mauliana and Mubarak, 2025). Expressions such as “may,” “might,” and “sometimes” acknowledge variability in human experience. For example, stating that certain symptoms, “*People suffering from depression **might** feel as if there’s no joy or pleasure in their life at all...*” (V1), indicates depression is discursively safer and more responsible than asserting that they definitely do. Likewise, abandonment experiences, “*It **may** feel inevitable that your partner or close friends will leave you...*” (V2), shape later relationships without implying inevitability. This cautious stance protects both credibility and audience trust, as viewers are less likely to feel miscategorized or judged (Aini and Ekawati, 2022).

From a critical perspective, hedging can also be misread as weakness or lack of authority. However, in public psychological discourse, certainty is not always persuasive. Excessive certainty about mental states often sounds simplistic or irresponsible. Therefore, strategic tentativeness may enhance legitimacy precisely because it reflects the complexity of psychological realities.

In contrast, boosters such as “I’m sure,” “extremely,” “of course,” (when contextually bounded), or “important” provide moments of certainty and emphasis. Their function is not to dominate the discourse, but to highlight key takeaways (Zulkifli and Noor, 2025). For instance, emphasizing that self-care is important, “***I’m sure** we all have negative habits, but now it’s time to start incorporating some mentally beneficial behaviors...*” (V3) or that emotional suppression can worsen distress, “*Trying to stop thinking you’re a failure is **extremely** difficult,*” (V1) signals evaluative salience. In discourse terms, boosters help viewers distinguish peripheral remarks from central messages. Without such cues, informational narratives may sound flat or undifferentiated.

The coexistence of hedges and boosters is especially revealing. Rather than contradictory, they create a calibrated rhetorical balance: uncertainty is maintained where psychological claims require nuance, while certainty is projected where

practical guidance or ethical emphasis is needed. These dynamic supports compelling communication because viewers receive both realism and direction.

Self-mentions, especially inclusive pronouns such as “we,” “us,” and “our,” play a major role in reducing hierarchical distance between narrator and audience. Instead of speaking to viewers from an expert pedestal, the *Psych2Go* creator speaks with the viewers as part of a shared human community. Statements like “*We will always try to fill the voids we find in ourselves,*” (V2) or “*I’m sure we all have negative habits,*” imply collective vulnerability and mutual growth. This is particularly effective in mental-health contexts, where audiences may resist content that feels clinical, judgmental, or patronizing (Chen et al., 2023).

An alternative reading is that inclusive *we* can sometimes mask asymmetry, since the creator still occupies the role of advisor. That critique is valid. Yet even if the equality is partial, the linguistic effect remains meaningful: inclusive pronouns soften authority and frame guidance as solidarity rather than instruction.

Attitude markers complete the engagement system by explicitly signaling emotional or evaluative stance. When delivering core psychological concepts or behavioral advice, the creator frequently uses deontic attitude markers, e.g., “*It is important you avoid...*” (V1). Linguistically, deontic forms encode prescribed behavior anchored in social or clinical expectations; thus, they maintain the necessary instructional authority to ensure the educational message is taken seriously. However, to prevent the discourse from becoming overly didactic or emotionally burdensome, these are counterbalanced by affective markers and conversational interjections, e.g., “*Unfortunately,*” “*Jeez,*” “*Uh-oh,*” and “*Hehe*” (V3). Koonnala and Chaiwong (2022) demonstrate that adopting this everyday conversational style shapes an informal tone that fosters a sense of social partnership. By applying the personalization principle to make complex content significantly more engaging and less intimidating. In edutainment discourse, affective framing matters because audiences often seek not only information but emotional acknowledgment.

Collectively, these findings show that interactional metadiscourse transforms psychological explanation into relational communication. Engagement markers simulate dialogue, hedges preserve nuance, boosters emphasize significance, self-mentions create solidarity, and attitude markers signal empathy and evaluation. Their combined effect directly answers that *Psych2Go*’s narratives become compelling not merely because of what they explain, but because viewers are linguistically invited, reassured, guided, and emotionally recognized throughout the explanation.

C. The Interplay of Markers: Constructing Comprehensible and Compelling Narratives

While the previous sections analytically separate interactive and interactional resources, the findings suggest that the persuasive strength of the selected *Psych2Go* narratives does not lie in either category alone. Rather, comprehensible and compelling edutainment discourse is constructed through the coordinated interplay between both marker types. Interactive markers make psychological information cognitively manageable, whereas interactional markers make that information socially and emotionally meaningful. Accessibility and engagement, therefore, emerge not as parallel outcomes but as mutually reinforcing discourse effects.

This rapid interplay is vividly illustrated in the video *This is How Depression Feels* (V1), where the creator translates the clinical abstraction of psychomotor retardation for a lay audience:

“**Number one:** waking up exhausted and drained. **Have you ever stayed up really late and woke up feeling awful? Imagine that,** but every day... You can think of depression as **an invisible weight** that brings you down everywhere you go. You may not be able to see it, but it’s always there making life harder.” (V1)

In this excerpt, the interactive frame marker “Number one” anchors the viewers cognitively, signaling the beginning of a structured list. However, rather than following this with a rigid clinical definition of depressive fatigue, the creator immediately pivots to interactional engagement markers, “Have you ever stayed up really late...?” and the directive “Imagine that”. This draws the viewer’s universal experience of sleep deprivation into the discourse. Finally, the creator employs an interactive code gloss by offering a metaphor, “an invisible weight”. The synthesis here is profound: the frame marker provides the educational structure, the engagement markers force empathetic participation, and the code gloss simplifies the medical complexity.

A different, yet equally effective, utterance synthesis occurs when the creator balances scientific authority with parasocial intimacy. In the video *10 Habits that Boost Your Emotional Well-being* (V3), the creator discusses the psychological impact of posture:

“**Number ONE: Perfecting Your Posture... According to a study in the Journal of Behaviour Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry,** upright posture can have a positive effect and reduce fatigue. **Are you slouching while you're watching this video?** It’s time to sit up straight now!”

This paragraph exemplifies the medical-casual pivot unique to digital edutainment. The creator establishes undeniable clinical credibility through an interactive evidential “According to a study...”. In a traditional academic setting, this would be followed by more passive, objective data. Instead, the creator shatters the fourth wall with interactional engagement markers, directly targeting the viewer’s physical reality in real-time: “Are you slouching while you're watching this video?” By enveloping a rigid academic citation within a highly interactive, personalized command, the creator ensures the scientific data is not just passively heard but actively felt by the audience, effectively preventing cognitive fatigue.

Finally, the interplay of transitions and stance markers (hedges and boosters) resolves the tension between causal coherence and psychological variability. When explaining the behavioral traits of attachment styles in V2, the creator states:

“If you have an anxious attachment style, you **might** hate being alone. You **might** have a poor sense of self-worth, and you **might** constantly be aware of potential threats to your relationship. It **may** feel inevitable that your partner or close friends will leave you, and in your relationships, you **might** constantly require validation or reassurance.” (V2)

Logical connectors provide the reasoning linking childhood deficits to adult behaviors. Yet, causal explanation alone can sound overly deterministic. The dense repetition of the hedge “might” calibrate the epistemic force of the diagnosis. The transitions supply the reasoning (comprehensibility), while the hedges ensure the viewer does not feel rigidly pathologized (compellingness).

From a broader discourse perspective, these interaction patterns show how the channel resolves a core tension of edutainment: educational discourse traditionally prioritizes accuracy and clarity, whereas entertainment discourse prioritizes attention and emotional investment. *Psych2Go*’s narratives bridge this tension linguistically.

Interactive markers align with the pedagogic need to organize and clarify; interactional markers align with the affective need to connect and sustain attention. Their co-occurrence enables one discourse event to perform both functions simultaneously.

Such combinations might simply intuitive communication habits common to successful creators, not analytically meaningful patterns. Yet recurrence across three videos with different themes suggests otherwise. The repeated sequencing of structure followed by personalization, explanation followed by mitigation, or evidence followed by warmth indicates patterned rhetorical design rather than random stylistic instinct. Even if some choices are intuitive, intuition itself may reflect stabilized genre conventions.

These findings also extend Hyland's framework into contemporary platform discourse. Originally developed largely from written texts, the distinction between interactive and interactional resources remains useful here, but the corpus demonstrates that in spoken-digital narratives, the categories often operate in rapid alternation. A single short segment may move from frame marker, to metaphor, to direct question, to hedge, to booster within seconds. This density suggests that platform communication compresses multiple interpersonal and textual functions into highly economical discourse units.

Finally, the findings indicate that *Psych2Go*'s success in producing comprehensible and compelling narratives cannot be attributed solely to simplified content or emotionally appealing delivery. Rather, it emerges from the systematic orchestration of metadiscourse resources that guide understanding while sustaining viewer involvement. Interactive markers help audiences know where they are, what ideas relate, and what concepts mean; interactional markers help them feel addressed, respected, reassured, and motivated. Through this interplay, monologic video narration is transformed into an experience that feels simultaneously informative, conversational, and emotionally resonant as defined by Horton and Wohl (1956).

5. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the efficacy of *Psych2Go*'s edutainment relies on the strategic and systematic deployment of metadiscourse. Rather than forcing a choice between clinical accuracy and audience engagement, the channel utilizes these linguistic resources to satisfy both mandates simultaneously. Interactive markers, specifically frame markers, transitions, code glosses, and evidentials, serve as the cognitive scaffolding, effectively translating abstract psychological jargon into sequential, logically coherent, and accessible stages. Concurrently, interactional markers, including engagement markers, hedges, boosters, self-mentions, and attitude markers, construct a parasocial relational space. By simulating dialogue, softening diagnostic rigidity, and actively validating the viewer's emotional reality, these markers ensure the educational content remains highly compelling and stigma-free.

Ultimately, the success of this digital discourse emerges from the rapid, utterance-level interplay between these two dimensions. The findings reveal that comprehensibility and compellingness are not parallel achievements but mutually dependent discourse effects; structural clarity provides the necessary foundation for learning, while empathetic connection lowers the audience's affective filter. By extending Hyland's framework into the fast-paced realm of YouTube video narratives, this research provides actionable insights for digital content creators, educators, and mental health professionals, offering a clear linguistic roadmap for navigating the complexities of online informational

discourse. While this study focused exclusively on verbal metadiscourse, edutainment on platforms like YouTube is an inherently multimodal experience. Future research should expand beyond textual transcripts to incorporate multimodal discourse analysis. Investigating how these linguistic markers interact with visual animations, vocal tone, pacing, and on-screen text would provide a more holistic understanding of how digital creators construct parasocial intimacy and pedagogical clarity in digital space.

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