WINE PROMOTION ON FACEBOOK
A linguistic comparison of posts by producers from English-speaking countries

FRANCESCA BIANCHI, ELENA MANCA[1]
UNIVERSITÀ DEL SALENTO

Abstract – Facebook can be considered one of the main social marketing tools used by companies who decide to advertise their products online and who aim to keep in touch with customers quickly and effectively. Social media in general and Facebook in particular are characterised by a high level of interactivity, and visual, textual and linguistic features are strategically used to attract and involve potential customers and to get their feedback, thus enhancing the company's visibility on the market as well as the company's knowledge of the market. This paper analyses the language used to advertise wine and wine events through Facebook posts by producers from New Zealand, South Africa and the UK. Method-wise, this study applies the same analytical methods used by Manca (2021) in her analysis of the interactive and interactional strategies employed by Australian and US wine companies to advertise their products and activities on Facebook, and also some of the analytical methods used by Bianchi (2017a, 2017b) in her studies on Facebook posts written by travel agencies to advertise their destinations. Besides describing the metadiscursive features which are mostly used on Facebook by wineries (Hyland 2005), this paper aims to establish whether the forms of interaction and the positioning of the writers depend on cultural factors, the medium used or other variables.

Keywords: corpus linguistics; cultural tendencies; Facebook; metadiscourse; wine promotion.

1. Introduction

Promotional communication is a fundamental form of discourse between business companies and their (potential) clients and customers. It is a primary form of external communication (Stevanović, Gmitrović 2015) whose aims are not only to advertise products and services, but also to develop the company's brand image and to receive informative feedback from the market environment. According to Rudczuk (2017, p. 14), choosing the most appropriate external communication is of utmost importance, because even

---

[1] Although the two authors have closely collaborated con the paper, Francesca Bianchi is responsible for sections 4, 4.1, 4.2, 5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 and 6, while Elena Manca is responsible for sections 1, 2.1, 2.2, and 3.

the best products may not produce the expected outcome if potential customers are not properly informed about them.

Linguistic analysis of promotional discourse in English has shown that many factors influence the language and the strategies used in advertising, such as cultural differences (e.g. Manca 2016a, 2016b, 2020 for cultural differences across English-speaking countries), medium (e.g. Bianchi 2017a), and/or market sector (e.g. Bianchi 2017b).

Among the various tools available to companies to interact with the market environment, websites and social media are increasingly used. Facebook, for example, sits at more than 2.89 billion monthly active users[2] and has been chosen as a marketing tool by 92% of social marketing companies (Emrich *et al.* 2015; Tran 2017). Furthermore, many companies choose to create online ads on Facebook, as it is cheaper than other traditional tools or media. The experience offered by Facebook brand pages is also associated with benefits, such as enhancing ad credibility (Xu 2006), and improving brand awareness (Johns, Perrott 2008; Tran 2017). At the same time, customers' reviews and feedback on social media provide a better understanding of the market on the part of companies and help improve the level of customer satisfaction (Ramanathan *et al.* 2017).

One of the main features of social media in general and of Facebook in particular is interactivity. In the status updates, users can express opinions, feelings and moods and receive comments and reactions from their followers. On brand pages, customers can interact with a company by using liking and commenting posts, a type of communication that leads to increasing the brand's popularity (de Vries *et al.* 2012). On the other hand, companies use Facebook posts to advertise their products and activities, and to keep in touch with their customers. This strategic form of digital communication is characterised by a number of visual and linguistic features whose ultimate aim is attracting and involving potential customers.

As we will see in section 3, linguistic research on Facebook discourse is quite recent and although a number of studies provide interesting insights, they are still limited because of the restricted amount and variety of material investigated. For this reason, this paper extends the existing literature by analysing the metadiscursive devices used in the Facebook posts of wineries located in New Zealand, South Africa and the UK and the way in which these wineries perceive themselves and their customers. In particular, the study applies to this new set of data the same analytical methods used by Manca (2021) in her analysis of the interactive and interactional strategies employed by Australian and US wine companies to advertise their products and

---

[2] https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/
     (1.4.2022).

Wine promotion on Facebook. A linguistic comparison of posts by producers from English-speaking countries

249

activities on Facebook, but also some of the analytical methods used by Bianchi (2017a, 2017b) in her studies on Facebook posts written by travel agencies to advertise their destinations. The current paper – besides describing the metadiscursive features which are mostly used on Facebook by wineries – also aims to establish whether the forms of interaction and the relative positioning of the writers depend on cultural factors, on the medium used or on other variables.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: section 2 illustrates Hyland's framework for metadiscursive analysis, section 3 provides an overview of previous studies on the linguistic strategies used to engage readers on Facebook and describes Manca's (2021) work in detail. Section 4 illustrates the materials and methods used for the current analysis, section 5 illustrates and discusses the findings, and section 6 attempts to draw some general conclusions.

2. Metadiscursive resources

Hyland (2005, p. 37-38) defines metadiscourse as "the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community". His theory of metadiscourse is based on the idea that language is always a consequence of interaction between people, and metadiscourse options are the resources through which these interactions are constructed (Hyland 2005, p. 3). Language is dynamic and, through verbal expressions, we negotiate with others and make decisions about the effects that we want to achieve on the people we are interacting with.

Hyland (2005, p. 49ff) elaborates a metadiscursive model that includes two dimensions of interaction: the interactive dimension and the interactional dimension.

2.1. The interactive dimension

This dimension includes those resources that reveal that writers are aware of their audience and construct the text to meet the needs of their readers and guide them through the text. There are five subcategories: Transition markers, Frame markers, Endophoric markers, Evidentials, Code glosses. Transition markers are additive, comparative, consequential or contrastive conjunctions and adverbial phrases used to guide readers through the text and make them interpret the connections created by the writer. Examples are: *and*, *furthermore*, *moreover*, *by the way* for additive markers; *similarly*, *likewise*, *equally*, *in the same way*, *correspondingly* for comparative conjunctions and

phrases; *thus*, *therefore*, *consequently*, *in conclusion* as resources to show consequentiality and *admittedly*, *nevertheless*, *anyway*, *in any case*, *of course* for contrastive resources.

Frame markers include elements that help create the structure of a text. They can be used to sequence or order parts of the text (*first*, *then*, *1/2*, *a/b*, *at the same time*, *next*), to label and signal text stages (*to summarize*, *in sum*, *by way of introduction*), to announce discourse goals (*I argue her*e, *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*).

Endophoric markers are verbal resources which refer to additional material or which refer to the presence of further material or contents in other parts of the text. These expressions aim to facilitate comprehension and include *see Figure 2*, *refer to the next section*, *as noted above*.

Evidentials are items and expressions that indicate who is responsible for a position or a statement; they provide support for arguments. An example is the expression *according to* or, in academic writing, a reference to a scholar's name as in *Hyland's model*.

Code glosses describe the writer's hypothesis on readers' knowledge and, for this reason, they include items that are used to rephrase, explain or elaborate. Examples are *this is called*, *in other words*, *that is*, *this can be defined as*, *for example*, etc.

2.2. The interactional dimension

This dimension concerns the ways in which writers make their own views explicit and involve their readers. As Hyland suggests (2005, p. 49), in this dimension, metadiscourse is essentially evaluative and engaging and reveals the extent to which the writers jointly construct the text with readers. It includes five broad categories (Hyland 2005, p. 52ff): Hedges, Boosters, Attitude Markers, Self-mention, and Engagement markers.

Hedges are resources that allow information to be presented as an opinion rather than as a fact. Information is based on the writer's plausible reasoning and it is thus open to negotiation. Examples of hedges are *among the others*, *possible*, *might* and *perhaps*.

Boosters, on the other hand, reflect the writer's willingness to close down alternatives by emphasising a single confident voice. This explains why boosters emphasise certainty and the author's involvement. Examples are *clearly*, *obviously* and *demonstrate*.

Attitude markers express the writer's affective attitude to propositions and are mainly constituted by attitude verbs (*agree*, *prefer*), sentence adverbs (*unfortunately*, *hopefully*), or adjectives (*appropriate*, *logical*, *remarkable*).

Self-mention concerns the author's presence in a text and describes how authors stand in relation to their arguments, their community and their

Wine promotion on Facebook. A linguistic comparison of posts by producers from English-speaking countries

251

readers. This category is linguistically expressed by first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives (*I*, *me*, *mine*, exclusive *we*, *our*, *ours*).

Engagement markers focus on readers' participation and have a twofold function: attracting the readers' attention and including them as discourse participants. Reader pronouns (e.g. *you*, *your*, inclusive *we*) and interjections (e.g. *by the way*, *you may notice*) are used to include readers into the communicative exchange, while questions, directives such as imperatives, obligation modals, and references to shared knowledge aim to pull readers into the discourse and guide them in the interpretation of contents and ideas.

3. Engaging readers on social media

Several studies have been carried out on the discourse features of computer-mediated communication (CMC) and social media. Research about CMC (Barton, Lee 2013; Herring 2007) has investigated the linguistic features of this language variety and its use of speech-like features in synchronous communication. Colloquial language and syntactic constructions have also been identified by Crystal (2004) and by Herring (2012). The latter describes the syntax of Internet English as fragmented, particularly if compared to standard syntax. Moving on to Facebook, two interesting studies on its discourse features have been conducted by Bianchi (2017a, 2017b). The first of the two studies (Bianchi 2017a) investigates six months of Facebook posts of three large international travel operators based in English-speaking countries. Findings show that the posts considered for analysis are characterized by features typical of spoken communication. The linguistic and rhetorical techniques adopted 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. The travel companies under investigation seem to build a relationship with their prospective customers through these posts. To achieve this, on the one hand, the posts emphasize the companies' authorial presence, as suggested by the use of first-person pronouns; on the other hand, they trigger a high degree of reader involvement by using resources such as second-person pronouns, but also a large range of questions and directives. They also give suggestions, describe offers, provide descriptions and information, and guide the readers' interpretation. For this reason, readers feel as if they were the main and only focus of the companies' attention, thus reinforcing the perception of booking a unique, tailor-made holiday.

Bianchi (2017b) analyses and compares six months of Facebook posts by international tourist operators specializing in luxury holidays, and compares them against the posts by the three general or low-cost tourist

operators which were investigated in Bianchi (2017a). Regarding the linguistic items signalling operator-customer interaction, possessive adjectives and pronouns, imperative forms, and questions are all present, but with different frequencies. Luxury tourism operators use fewer first- and second-person adjectives and pronouns than general tourism operators. In those posts where destinations are described, both types of operators use second-person pronouns more frequently than first-person ones. Conversely, in those posts which do not advertise destinations, luxury tourism operators frequently use second-person pronouns, while general tourism operators make a more frequent usage of first-person pronouns. Imperative forms of verbs have a higher frequency in general tourism operators' posts, whereas questions are used with a particularly high frequency in those posts in which general tourism operators describe destinations. In the case of luxury tour operators, the operators are less visible than the destinations described, dialogue with readers is monodirectional, and readers are addressed primarily as customers; in non-luxury operators, instead, both operators and readers appear as highly active subjects, and the readers are engaged in a wider range of lively forms of interaction.

The analysis of advertising on social media from a metadiscursive perspective has been the object of recent research by Al-Subhi (2022), who selected a number of ads from the official social media accounts (Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter) of global cosmetic companies and beauty brands. Results show a very low occurrence of interactive features, with conjunctions being the most used resource. As for interactional resources, attitude markers and engagement markers display the highest frequency of occurrence. Attitude markers are explicitly signalled by adjectives, attitude verbs and sentence adverbs. Engagement markers are mainly directives followed by reader-inclusive pronouns and questions. Most of the questions in the posts analysed require no answer and are employed to arouse the consumers' interest and encourage them to explore the advertised products without a proper verbal answer (Al-Subhi 2022, p. 29).

These findings are very similar to those described by Manca (2021) in her analysis of Facebook posts of US and Australian wineries, carried out using Hyland's framework of metadiscourse and with the help of the analytical tools provided by Corpus Linguistics. Manca (2021) assembled two corpora, the Australian Wineries Facebook Corpus (AusWiFaC) containing 273 posts from 5 different wineries, for a total of 13,957 running words; and the US Wineries Facebook Corpus (USWiFaC) including 309 posts from 4 different wineries exclusively based in California, for a total of 12,577 running words. A first analysis of the interactive and interactional features of the posts was carried out using Stephen Bax's Text Inspector, a professional web tool that identifies metadiscourse markers based on Hyland

Wine promotion on Facebook. A linguistic comparison of posts by producers from English-speaking countries

253

(2005) and on Bax *et al.* (2019). In order to further check the metadiscursive resources used in the posts, the two corpora were uploaded on Sketch Engine and the wordlists of adjectives, adverbs and verbs were run separately. The analysis of interactive resources of the AusWiFaC reveals a low frequency of occurrence of frame markers, evidentials and code glosses and a relatively high frequency of endophoric markers. Transition markers are frequently used, particularly additive conjunctions used to connect content and ideas. The posts in the AusWiFaC do not contain items for signalling text stages or sequences, indications of discourse goals or topic shifts and have a very limited use of explicative glosses. As for interactional resources, Australian wineries frequently use attitude markers, mainly signalled by positive qualifying adjectives, and self-mention, expressed by the first-person plural pronoun *we* and the possessive adjective *our*, thus suggesting a high degree of authorial presence. Engagement markers are also used and are mainly expressed by the reader pronoun *you*, followed by imperatives and questions. Regarding questions, it is interesting to notice that out of a total of 46 questions in the posts, 39 provide an answer in the post itself in the form of a text or message. Hedges and boosters have a very low frequency of occurrence, probably due to the fact that expressing certainty or cautiousness is not a feature of winery Facebook posts. The analysis of metadiscourse resources in the USWiFaC displays similar findings to those observed in the AusWiFaC. Frame markers, evidentials and code glosses have a low frequency of occurrence and transition markers are mainly signalled by the subcategory of additive conjunctions. Hypertextual interactivity, which may be considered an example of endophoric markers, is frequently used and is visible in the presence of links, hashtags and tags. USWiFaC posts do not signal text stages or sequences, discourse goals or topic shifts and have a very limited usage of clarifying glosses. The most frequent interactional resources are attitude markers, particularly qualifying adjectives, attitude verbs and sentence adverbs. Self-mention and engagement markers have the same percentage of occurrence and show a balance between authorial presence, expressed by the first-person plural pronoun *we* and the possessive adjective *our*, and readers' involvement, achieved through the use of second-person pronouns *you* and the possessive adjectives *your*, verbs in the imperative form and questions. In 30 out of the 64 questions in the USWiFaC the answer is not in the post and readers are covertly invited to interact by answering in the comment box. Hedges and boosters do not occur very frequently, as already observed in the AusWiFaC.

Considering the three studies reported above, a strong similarity of usage of metadiscursive features can be observed in the Facebook posts investigated. Posts are short texts whose contents and ideas are mainly linked together by additive conjunctions. They are characterized by attitude markers

used to convey highly positive descriptions and by engagement markers including directives and rhetorical and non-rhetorical questions, all acting as strategies to involve potential customers and persuade them to take action. This may suggest that this genre possesses some general features which are not influenced by cultural factors. However, more quantitative studies on a series of corpora from other English-speaking countries would be needed to highlight whether and to what extent cultural difference may or may not apply in this highly globalised medium. For this reason, the present study aims to analyse the interactive and interactional resources used in the Facebook posts of a selection of wineries from South Africa, New Zealand and the UK, as described in the following sections.

4. Materials and methods

In order to guarantee comparability of findings, this study adopts the same methods and analytical tools used in Manca (2021), and applies them to three new corpora of Facebook posts by wineries located in English-speaking countries. Furthermore, both Manca's (2021) data and the data from the new corpora are further investigated in order to establish the communicative role of specific relevant elements. This facilitates comparison of the current data to the other linguistic studies of the language of Facebook posts, namely Bianchi (2017a, 2017b). The materials and methods used in the study are described in the following sections.

4.1. Materials

Manca's (2021) study collected data from wineries in the two topmost English-speaking wine-producing countries in the world – the USA and Australia;[3] this study extends the analysis by considering data from the next two English-speaking wine-producing countries in the global list – South Africa and New Zealand – and also from the UK, this latter being an interesting 'emerging' English-speaking country in the production of wine. For each country, an Internet search of the top wineries provided a list of candidates; however, inclusion of a winery in the corpus depended on the winery's presence and frequency of posting on Facebook. This explains the eventual unevenness in the number of wineries considered per country (see Table 1).

---

[3] https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/wine-producing-countries (accessed April 2022).

$\mathcal{L}$ingue e
$\mathcal{L}$inguaggi

Wine promotion on Facebook. A linguistic comparison of posts by producers from English-speaking countries

255

All corpora were collected during the time span from 1 January 2021 to 31 August 2021; all the Facebook posts belonging to that time span were manually saved into separate text files, one file per country. Table 1 provides a summary description of the five corpora.

CORPUS	COUNTRY	N. FACEBOOK POSTS	N. WINERIES	TOTAL N. WORDS
Australian Wineries Facebook corpus (AusWiFaC)	AUS	273	5	13,957
US Wineries Facebook corpus (USWiFaC)	US	309	4	12,577
South African Wineries Facebook corpus (SAfWiFaC)	SA	238	4	11,619
New Zealand Wineries Facebook corpus (NZealWiFaC)	NZ	301	3	17,323
UK Wineries Facebook corpus (UKWiFaC)	UK	451	5	35,147

Table 1
Description of the five corpora selected for analysis.

4.2. Methods

Each corpus was analysed using Text Inspector, an online language analysis tool created by Stephen Bax. Among other things, Text Inspector retrieves and quantifies metadiscourse markers according to Hyland's list (e.g. Hyland 2005), then modified by Bax *et al.* (2019).[4] The metadiscourse markers retrieved by the software were manually checked, and incorrect identifications were assigned to the correct category or removed from the final counts. To this aim, a corpus concordancer was used. Furthermore, to make sure that all attitude adjectives, adverbs, and verbs were identified, the concordancer was set to produce separate word lists for each grammatical category and the lists were manually scanned searching for candidate items. The frequency of occurrence of items was normalised to percentages. Similarly, questions – belonging to the engagement markers category – were counted in MS Word, and the row figures retrieved were transformed into percentages over the total number of words of the corpus, for direct comparison with the other markers.

Quantitative analysis was followed by a qualitative analysis of selected relevant markers. Qualitative analysis aimed at establishing the communicative role of the observed elements.

---

[4] https://textinspector.com/help/metadiscourse/ (1.4.2022).

5. Findings

In this section, for an easier and clearer comparison, Manca's (2021) data are reported on a par with the data from the new corpora. The data are provided in table format and also graphically by means of bar charts. Sections 5.1 and 5.2 report quantitative findings, while section 5.4 offers a qualitative analysis of specific markers; furthermore sections 5.3 and 5.5 discuss the quantitative and qualitative findings, respectively.

5.1. Interactive resources

Table 2 reports percentage counts of interactive resources for the different countries, while Table 3 zooms in on transition and frame markers. The same values are graphically shown in Charts 1 and 1a, respectively.

INTERACTIVE RESOURCES	NZ	SA	UK	US	AUS
Total transition markers	4.62	4.29	3.98	4.40	3.55
Total frame markers	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.04
Endophoric markers	0.69	0.39	0.70	0.25	0.11
Evidentials	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.04	0.05
Code glosses	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.02	0.02

Table 2
Percentage counts of Interactive resources, by type.

TRANSITION MARKERS	NZ	SA	UK	US	AUS
Additive	4.16	3.78	3.57	3.90	3.20
Comparative	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00
Consequential	0.14	0.13	0.16	0.20	0.14
Adversative	0.20	0.33	0.15	0.20	0.09
Temporal	0.12	0.05	0.10	0.10	0.12
FRAME MARKERS	NZ	SA	UK	US	AUS
Sequencing	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.02
Text stages	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01
Discourse goals	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01
Topic shifts	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01

Table 3
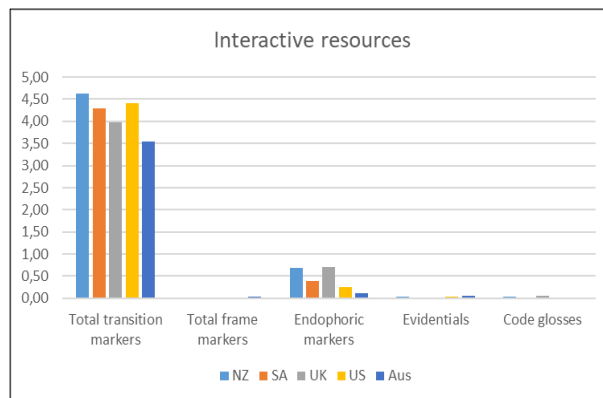Percentage counts of Transition and Frame markers, by type.
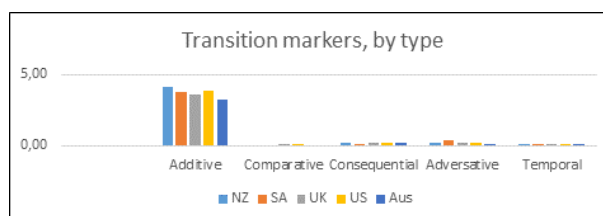
Chart 1
Interactive resources, by type.

Chart 1a
Transition markers, by type.

As Chart 1 shows, the five corpora share the same general picture. The most frequent type of interactive resource is represented by transition markers, extensively present in the form of additive markers, and rarely in that of consequential, adversative or temporal markers (Chart 1a). Comparative markers are almost totally absent (Chart 1a). In all these posts, ideas are thus linearly connected, and no comparisons are made.

Next for frequency of use come endophoric markers (Chart 1), almost exclusively represented by links to the winery's website or to other Web or Facebook pages connected to the winery's activities. This is no surprise, given the medium we are investigating.

Finally, evidentials, code glosses and frame markers are present, but very rare (Chart 1).

5.2. Interactional resources

Table 4 reports percentage counts of interactional resources for the different countries, while Table 5 zooms in on attitude, self-mention and engagement markers. The same values are graphically shown in Charts 2, 2a, 2b, and 2c, respectively.

*L*ingue e
*L*inguaggi

INTERACTIONAL RESOURCES	NZ	SA	UK	US	AUS
Hedges	0.38	0.21	0.35	0.30	0.30
Boosters	0.16	0.51	0.32	0.30	0.20
Total attitude markers	3.99	4.45	5.35	4.60	4.10
Total self-mention	3.19	3.62	9.90	3.40	3.50
Total engagement markers	4.26	3.39	3.86	3.65	2.42

Table 4
Percentage counts of Interactional resources, by type.

ATTITUDE	NZ	SA	UK	US	AUS
Attitude verbs	0.22	0.28	0.47	0.70	0.80
Sentence adverbs	1.23	1.27	1.19	1.30	1.00
Attitude adjectives	2.54	2.90	3.69	2.60	2.30
SELF-MENTION	NZ	SA	UK	US	AUS
1st person pronouns	1.30	1.51	1.70	1.40	1.30
Possessive adjectives	1.88	2.11	2.19	2.00	2.20
ENGAGEMENT	NZ	SA	UK	US	AUS
Reader pronouns	1.54	1.51	1.83	2.30	1.40
Interjections	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
Directives	2.55	1.81	1.69	1.10	0.90
Questions	0.17	0.07	0.34	0.25	0.11

Table 5
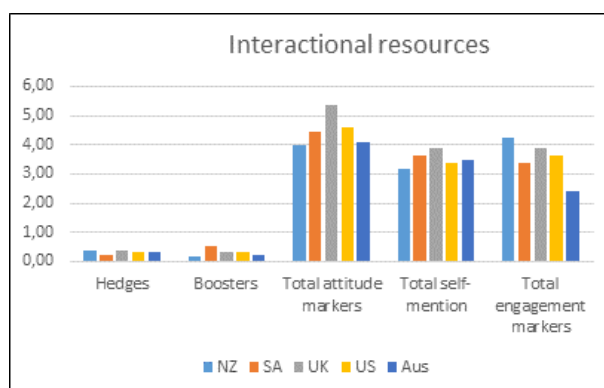Percentage counts of Attitude, Self-mention and Engagement markers, by type.

Chart 2
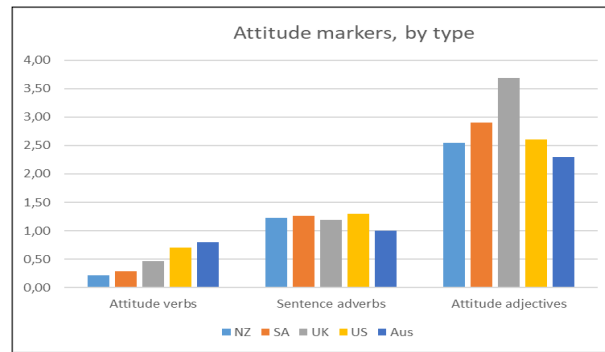Interactional resources, by type.

Wine promotion on Facebook. A linguistic comparison of posts by producers from English-speaking countries

259
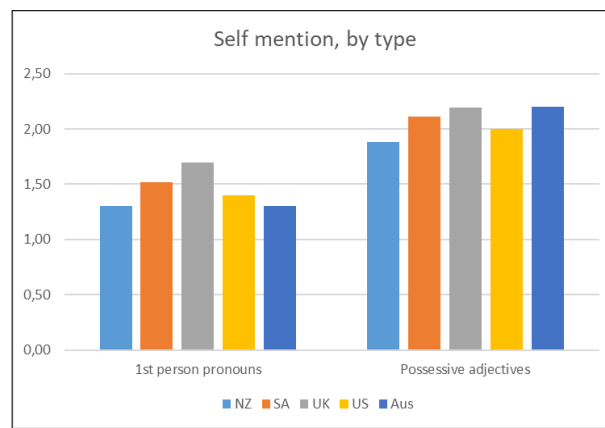
Chart 2a
Attitude markers, by type.
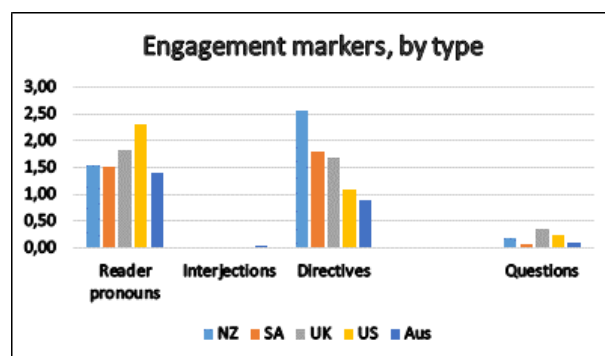
Chart 2b
Self-mention, by type.

Chart 2c
Engagement markers, by type.

Once again, the general picture is characterised by similar trends across the five corpora (Chart 2). Hedges and boosters are infrequent. Of the other types of markers, attitude markers are the most frequent category in all corpora except the New Zealand one, where it is just below engagement markers. Self-mentions exceed engagement markers in the posts of South African and

Australian wineries, while the opposite is true for New Zealand and US producers.

A close-up view on attitude markers (Chart 2a) and self-mention markers (Chart 2b) shows a picture common to all the corpora. In all posts, attitude is conveyed primarily through adjectives, while sentence adverbs are less frequently used, and verbs are rarely used. Self-mentions appear in the form of both first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives, with a neat preference for the latter in all corpora.

A look at engagement markers by type (Chart 2c) shows the absence of interjections in all posts. On the other hand, reader pronouns and directives are both largely used in the five corpora, though with some frequency differences: while New Zealand and South African wineries seem to show some preference for directives over reader pronouns, the opposite is true for American, Australian and UK wineries. Finally, questions also appear, but in small percentages.

5.3. Discussion of the quantitative findings

As we have seen in the previous sections, in all the five corpora the transition category is dominated by additive markers, attitude is conveyed primarily through adjectives, and self-mentions are principally represented by possessive adjectives. These features depict a generalised, culture-independent tendency of wineries towards creating Facebook posts containing text with descriptive rather than argumentative or narrative purposes. Furthermore, the very limited presence of evidentials and code glosses could be due – as Manca (2021) suggests – to a high level of shared knowledge between the posts' authors and their readers.

The relatively significant presence of attitude markers, self-mention markers and engagement markers can all be interpreted in the light of the fact that, more or less directly, these posts promote products or services. Key elements in this form of self-promotion are attitude adjectives, first-person pronouns and first-person possessive adjectives. In fact, as Manca (2021, p. 129) points out: "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".

Finally, as expected in social media communication, some level of reader involvement is always present, which the wineries achieve by addressing the readers directly – through reader pronouns, directives and questions – and by including links in their posts. However, qualitative analyses of these features will offer greater insight into the kind of dialogue that is established between writers and readers. This will be illustrated in the

Wine promotion on Facebook. A linguistic comparison of posts by producers from English-speaking countries

261

next section.

5.4. Qualitative analyses of selected features

Analysis of the relation between post and link, when such endophoric marker is present, suggests that most of these texts are self-standing (example 1), even when links to external pages are present (example 2).

(1) We're honoured to announce that our Vicar's Choice 2020 Bright Light Rosé has been awarded the Viinisuositus Rosé of the Year 2021 title [NZealWiFaC]

(2) A refreshing and lively wine, our Vicar's Choice Sparkling Sauvignon Blanc has an elegant mineral note enhanced by an effervescent sparkle, that is perfectly balanced by the creaminess of a camembert cheese. The higher acidity in this wine and acts as a cleanser when enjoying this rich and creamy style of cheese. Pick up yours for next weekend's wine and cheese night. bit.ly/3BIsKo7 [NZealWiFaC]

In a few other cases, the external pages to which the endophoric reference leads complements the main self-standing text with additional, more detailed information (example 3). These links are most frequently introduced by an imperative form that explicitly invites the reader to access the link (e.g. *Visit bit.ly/SWE_Wine to…*) or explains the presence of the link. In the latter case, specific phraseology can be observed: imperative verb [direct object] [adverb of time] [adverb of place] (e.g.: *Read the full article here: bit.ly/ESW21*; *Order today - https://hushheath.com/balfour-pink-fizz/*; *Read the article below and get planning. https://www.thetimes.co.uk/...*; *Order yours now at www.hushheath.com/shop*). Less frequently, links are introduced indirectly, and lexically marked by adverbs *here* and *below* (e.g. *They can all be viewed and booked here: https://hushheath.com/visit/).* Finally, sometimes the reason for the presence of a link is found away from the link itself. This is the case of example (4), where readers should use the link (set at the end of the post) to "sign up […] and write a personal message" (written at the very beginning of the post).

(3) Our Wairau Reserve Sauvignon Blanc was grown in the lower Wairau Valley, where the proximity to the ocean sees stronger maritime influences on the vines, in the lower Wairau Valley where the fruit for the Daytime temperatures are warm, facilitating ripening, while the night temperatures are typically cooler, promoting flavour development. Find out more about this highly awarded wine here: bit.ly/3rNmrdQ [NZealWiFaC]

(4) Sign up now and write a personalised message, and our very own winery cupid will get it delivered in time for Valentine's Day. Free to the first 100 entries - https://hushheath.com/balfour-pink-fizz/ [UKWiFaC]

Prompting readers to open a link is certainly a form of interaction with users ('hypertextual interactivity'; Manca 2021). However, it does not evolve into a real form of dialogue.

A type of resource which is expected to trigger dialogue is questions. However, a closer look at the types of questions present in these corpora shows that, overall, they are very frequently (and for some wineries exclusively) rhetorical, and their aims are limited, as illustrated in the examples below; in fact, they are typically used to attract the reader's attention on a specific topic (discussed in the lines immediately following the question; see example 5) or to suggest products (example 6).

(5)   What happens when our NZ Winemaker of the Year teams up with one of New Zealand's top chefs? An incredible winemaker's dinner at Otahuna Lodge, of course! And - best of all – there's just a handful of spaces left for the incredible evening event, held this Saturday 27th February. Nab yourself a table before they disappear: https://www.otahuna.co.nz/.../Winemaker-s-Dinner-Series [NZealWiFaC]

(6)   Searching for a well balanced, silky and elegant Chardonnay? We've got you. Our 2018 Omaka Reserve Chardonnay was sourced primarily from Saint Clair's vineyards in Marlborough's Omaka Valley where a combination of warm days, cool nights and clay-based soils contribute to greater retention of fruit flavours. Learn more about this drop: bit.ly/3nQApIJ [NZealWiFaC]

A few interesting exceptions to this pattern exist. In one of the UK wineries and in the US corpus (equally distributed across wineries), about 40% of the questions are real questions where the wineries ask their readers to post a picture or write a comment (example 7).

(7)   The news you've been waiting to hear! Tours at Balfour Winery are available NEXT WEEK! Whether you have been on a tour before or you have been wanting to visit for the first time, a tour at Balfour Winery is the perfect way to relax. We have a range of tours to choose from. They can all be seen viewed and booked here: https://hushheath.com/visit/. Will we see you on one of tours soon? Let us know in the comments! [UKWiFaC]

Hedges and boosters are exclusively used in the corpora under investigation to withhold commitment and emphasize certainty, respectively; in fact, they all appear in sentence-central position. As was the case with the US and Australian wineries (Manca 2021), this study identifies the following hedges in the new corpora: *would*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *almost*, *approximately*, *little*, *possible*, *in general*, *perhaps*, *seems*, and *sometimes*. Boosters, too, appear exclusively in sentence-central position. They include the following items: *certainly*, *really*, *absolutely*, *fully*, *highly*, *strongly*, *hotly*, *thoroughly*, *beautifully*, *unmistakeably*, *definitely*, *perfectly*, *gloriously*, *truly*. Thus, these two types of resources do not contribute to the creation of dialogue between

writers and readers.

Finally, an analysis of the co-text of personal pronouns and adjectives will tell us how these wineries perceive themselves and their customers.

The pronoun *we* prevalently appears as the subject of euphorical feelings (45.7%) and as a descriptor of products, services, or procedures (26.6%). Examples of these roles are provided in instances 8-10 and 11-13, respectively. The remaining occurrences (27.7%) include the following roles, each weighing less than 2%: retelling events, announcing events, inviting customers to events, describing the winery's policy, giving suggestions, thanking, sharing the customers' opinions or feelings, other.

(8) We adore this gorgeous #TravelTuesday inspiration from local glamping site Camp Quaives. [UKWiFaC]
(9) we are delighted to lend our expertise & pioneering sparkling wines to their curated portfolio of […] [UKWiFaC]
(10) Happy Women's Day to all the exceptional wine-loving women we are privileged to be surrounded with! [SAfWiFaC]
(11) we have Gewurtztraminer, Pinot Gris and Sauvignon Blanc [NZealWiFaC]
(12) we are offering free shipping within South Africa when ordering six bottles or more of our […] [SAfWiFaC]
(13) We have eliminated all glyphosate and other herbicides from the vineyard as of this year 2021 [UKWiFaC]

The collocates of the possessive adjective *our* clarify that these wineries portray themselves primarily as providers of products and services (48.7% in total), which include wine (37.3%; example 14), special packs and gift boxes (6.4%; example 15), food (4.4%; example 16) and other services (0.6%; example 17). They also depict themselves as possessors of specific structures and grounds (10.46%; example 18), vineyards (3.75%; example 19) and qualified staff (9.6%; example 20), for a total of 23.8%. About one third of these instances are accompanied by euphoric adjectives. Furthermore, wineries show themselves as event organizers (8.3%; example 21), and users of social media or other IT communication channels (6.2%; example 22). Other less frequent roles are also present in our corpus (13%). Of these occurrences, 8.5% depict the wineries as being surrounded by and close to a high number of clients, customers, friends and supporters (3.2%; example 23), being well inserted into the wider wine industry (2.3%; example 24), having special policies and caring about ecological matters (1.8%; example 25), having heritage or stories to tell (0.8%; example 26), and being suggestion givers (0.4%; example 27). The remaining collocates are difficult to classify in terms of roles.

Examples of the identified roles are provided in instances (14)-(27), one instance per role.

(14) Our celebrated Chalklands Classic Cuvée 2018 reflects […] [UKWiFaC]
(15) […] our carefully curated gift collection. [UKWiFaC]
(16) and a takeaway special of our famous bacon & egg roll with coffee for just
       […] [SAfWiFaC]
(17) our FREE Shuttle* now available [NZealWiFaC]
(18) followed by live music in our barns garden [SAfWiFaC]
(19) our estate's vineyards neighbour the South Downs [UKWiFaC]
(20) This week our amazing team has been working steadfastly [UKWiFaC]
(21) book one of our August events [UKWiFaC]
(22) keep an eye on our social media account [UKWiFaC]
(23) we wouldn't have achieved this without you, our incredible customers
       [SAfWiFaC]
(24) we raise a glass to our fellow producers [UKWiFaC]
(25) we are continuing to make progress with our sustainability goals and
       credentials [UKWiFaC]
(26) learn about our pioneering history, how we craft our award-winning […]
       [UKWiFaC]
(27) discover some of our top tips [UKWiFaC]

Furthermore, collocates of *us* show a wide range of roles, one being particularly prominent (46%; examples 28-29): wineries see and depict themselves as on a par with their readers, friends with whom to spend time (42%). The next most frequent roles in the *us* group see the wineries as interlocutors in virtual conversations (15%; example 30) and addressees of specific communications (10%; example 31), but also managers, workers and producers (13%; example 32). The remaining instances include the following roles, each covering very small percentages: commentators, opinion givers, offerers, living beings in a natural world, other.

(28) keeping cosy? Us too. [UKWiFaC]
(29) come and join us for a long lunch well worth the drive! [NZealWiFaC]
(30) simply tell us which Greystone Wine embodies you the best [NZealWiFaC]
(31) give us a call to book now [NZealWiFaC]
(32) season and harvest were superb and have enabled us to produce a high-quality
       Pinot Noir wine [UKWiFaC]

On the other hand, as collocates of *you* and *your* show, the wineries make a great effort to make their Facebook readers feel they are special and worthy of the greatest attention (*you*: 27.9%; *your*: 45%; examples 33-34). They treat them as interlocutors in virtual conversations (*you*: 19.3%; *your*: 1.6%; examples 35-36), but also clearly and explicitly as clients and buyers of their services and products (*you*: 13.7%; *your*: 14.5%; examples 37-38). Addressees of suggestions (*you*: 8.5%; see example 39), information (*you*: 3.8%; example 40) and invitations (*you*: 1.04%; example 41), customers are sometimes openly spurred to act (*you*: 1.8%; *your*: 0.5%; see example 42-43). Furthermore, they appear as adventurous (*your*: 6.7%; example 44),

Wine promotion on Facebook. A linguistic comparison of posts by producers from English-speaking countries

265

supportive wine lovers (*your*: 8.6%; example 45) and experts (*you*: 6.4%; example 46) whose needs and desires are well known to the wineries (*you*: 6.2%; *your* 2.1%; example 47-48).

(33) We raise our glasses to you [UKWiFaC]
(34) There is nothing we love more than seeing your amazing photos [UKWiFaC]
(35) What will you be reading today? [UKWiFaC]
(36) What is your favourite Nyetimber memory? [UKWiFaC]
(37) You can however, still SHOP our wines ONLINE [NZealWiFaC]
(38) Order your Simpsons' Discovery case at […] [UKWiFaC]
(39) […] July edition of The Balfour Dining Club. You won't want to miss it [UKWiFaC]
(40) We will also try and show you what frost damage looks like [UKWiFaC]
(41) our weekly Balfour Dining Club – and you're invited! [UKWiFaC]
(42) make sure you sign up to our newsletter [UKWiFaC]
(43) this is your ONLY chance to taste these three special wines [NZealWiFaC]
(44) ready to toast your al fresco adventures! [UKWiFaC]
(45) We are so thankful for your ongoing patronage! [SAfWiFaC]
(46) a stunning wine to add to your cellar collection [NZealWiFaC]
(47) Fresh, utterly moreish and so good for you! [UKWiFaC]
(48) YOUR ESTATE FAVOURITES [NZealWiFaC]

5.5. Discussion of the qualitative findings

These qualitative findings demonstrate that most of the posts analysed are self-standing texts, despite the presence of endophoric markers and questions: endophoric markers are limited to links to information pages; questions are mostly rhetorical, with the exception of a single UK winery and the US wineries, where about 40% of questions are real questions aimed at making readers post a picture or write a comment. Thus, on the whole, the kind of interaction these wineries' posts trigger is relatively limited, and dialogue with readers is largely mono-directional. In this respect, these wineries' posts compare to those of luxury tour operators (Bianchi 2017b) and contrast with posts of non-luxury tour operators, the latter being full of quizzes, direct questions, requests and surveys (Bianchi 2017a, 2017b).

Authors and readers are largely present through self-mention pronouns and reader pronouns. The range of roles described in these posts is wide, but the most prominent ones are those of seller/host vs. buyer/guest. Wineries depict themselves as highly capable and widely recognized providers of excellent products and services, who know the needs and tastes of their readers and give them suggestions. On the other hand, their readers are described as passionate wine-lovers and adventurous tasters, but also supportive friends of the wineries. In this respect, the wineries' posts compare to those of non-luxury tour operators (Bianchi 2017a) and contrast with those of luxury tour operators (Bianchi 2017b).

6. Conclusions

The quantitative analyses in sections 5.1 and 5.2 have shown that the posts of all the wineries considered – based in five different English-speaking countries, namely New Zealand, South Africa, the UK, the US and Australia – share highly similar interactive and interactional profiles. The distribution of interactive and interactional resources suggests a tendency of all wineries to write linear, easily accessible, informal descriptive posts with a promotional aim. In these corpora, all cultures deploy the same interactive and interactional instruments in highly similar patterns. The only exception to this is a slightly greater use of real questions by US wineries to increase reader engagement.

Analyses have also shown that the linguistic resources observed in these wineries' posts are not in themselves different from the ones detected in other Facebook posts with promotional intent, namely those of luxury tour operators and of non-luxury tour operators (Bianchi 2017a, 2017b). However, the flavour of the posts and their degree of interaction show an interesting level of coherence within each market sector, but differ across the three market sectors.

Thus, the deployment of metadiscursive resources on promotional Facebook pages in English appears to depend on the medium, as one would expect, but above all on the market sector. On the other hand, the role of culture appears very limited, when not entirely absent.

Naturally, the analyses in the current study do not exhaust all possible types of investigation on Facebook promotion. Extensions could include users' comments to posts and the study of non-linguistic features in the posts, such as the analysis of visuals based on Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006 [1996]) and Kumpf's (2000) theoretical frameworks. Furthermore, a look at the linguistic resources deployed in posts in other languages (non-English-speaking cultures) would provide an interesting insight into the role of culture in marketing on Facebook.

As a final adjunct, Hyland's metadiscursive framework – once integrated with very few 'new' markers that are specific to the Web as a medium (e.g. links) – has proven to be a useful tool for comparing Facebook posts, despite its being originally developed for the analysis of academic discourse. A possible further step in research in the area of metadiscourse could thus include the formalization of a revised metadiscursive framework specific for Web media and sub-media such as Facebook.

Bionotes: Francesca Bianchi holds a Ph.D. in Linguistics from Lancaster University. She is Associate Professor at the University of Salento, Lecce, Italy. Her primary areas of

research include corpus linguistics, genre analysis, and the use of technology in linguistic research and teaching. On these topics, she has organized international conferences and seminars and published over 60 works, including a monograph titled *Culture, Corpora, and Semantics. Methodological Issues in Using Elicited and Corpus Data for Cultural Comparison*.

Elena Manca is an Associate Professor at the Department of Humanities, University of Salento (Lecce, Italy). She holds a PhD in English Language and Translation from the University of Salento. She teaches English Language and Translation on a BA course in Linguistic Mediation (University of Salento). Her main research interests are Corpus Linguistics and the study of meaning, Corpus Linguistics and Cross-cultural Studies applied to translation and contrastive analysis, special languages with particular attention to the language of tourism and the language of social media.

Authors' addresses: francesca.bianchi@unisalento.it; elena.manca@unisalento.it

References

Al-Subhi A.S. 2022, *Metadiscourse in online advertising: Exploring linguistic and visual metadiscourse in social media advertisements*, in "Journal of Pragmatics" 187, pp. 24-40.

Barton D. and Lee C. 2013, *Language Online. Investigating Digital Texts and Practices*, Routledge, New York (NY).

Bax S., Nakatsuhara F. and Waller D. 2019, *Researching L2 writers' use of metadiscourse markers at intermediate and advanced levels*, in "System" 83, pp. 79-95.

Bianchi F. 2017a, *The social tricks of advertising. Discourse strategies of English-speaking tour operators on Facebook*, in "Iperstoria" 10, pp. 3-32.

Bianchi F. 2017b, *Strategie discorsive del mercato turistico del lusso in Facebook*, in "Lingue e Linguaggi" 20, pp. 239-271.

Crystal D. 2004, *A Glossary of Netspeak and Textspeak*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

de Vries L., Gensler S. and Leeflang P.S.H. 2012, *Popularity of brand posts on brand fan pages: An investigation of the effects of social media marketing*, in "Journal of Interactive Marketing" 26 [2], pp. 83-91.

Emrich O., Paul M. and Rudolph T. 2015, *Shopping benefits of multichannel assortment integration and the moderating role of retailer type*, in "Journal of Retailing" 91 [2], pp. 326-342.

Herring S.C. 2007, *A faceted classification scheme for computer-mediated discourse*, in "Language@Internet" 4, https://www.languageatinternet.org/articles/2007/761 (1.4.2022).

Herring S.C. 2012, *Grammar and electronic communication*, in Chapelle C. (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Applied Linguistics*, Wiley-Blackwell, Hoboken, pp. 1-9.

Hyland K. 2005, *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing*, Continuum, London.

Johns R. and Perrott B. 2008, *The impact of internet banking on business-customer relationships (are you being self-served?)*, in "International Journal of Bank Marketing" 26 [7], pp. 465-482.

Kress G. and van Leeuwen T. 2006 [1996], *Reading Images. The Grammar of Visual Design*, Routledge, London.

Kumpf E.P. 2000, *Visual metadiscourse: Designing in considerate text*, in "Technical Communication Quarterly" 9 [4], pp. 401-424.

Manca E. 2016a, *Persuasion in Tourism Discourse: methodologies and models*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Manca E. 2016b, *Official tourist websites and the Cultural Communication Grammar model: Analysing language, visuals, and cultural features*, in "Cultus" 9 [1], pp. 2-22.

Manca E. 2020, *Investigating the language of red wine tasting notes across the US, the Australian and the Italian cultures*, in "Lingue e Linguaggi" 39, pp. 247-269.

Manca E. 2021, *Australian and US wineries on Facebook: Analyzing interactive and interactional resources*, in D'Angelo L. and Consonni S. (eds.), *New Explorations in Digital Metadiscourse*, CERLIS Series, vol. 10, pp. 115-142.

Ramanathan U., Subramanian N. and Parrott G. 2017, *Role of social media in retail network operations and marketing to enhance customer satisfaction*, in "International Journal of Operations & Production Management" 37 [1], pp. 105-123, https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOPM-03-2015-0153 (1.4.2022).

Wine promotion on Facebook. A linguistic comparison of posts by producers from English-speaking countries

269

Rudczuk A. 2017, *Perception of external marketing communication of companies by young customers*, in "Social Communication" 3 [2], pp.14-24.

Sketch Engine: https://www.sketchengine.eu/ (1.4.2022).

Stevanović M. and Gmitrović A. 2015, *Importance and role of internal communication in organizations*, in "Applied Mechanics and Materials" 806, pp. 302-307.

Text Inspector: https://textinspector.com/ (1.4.2022).

Tran T.P. 2017, *Personalized ads on Facebook: An effective marketing tool for online marketers*, in "Journal of Retailing and Consumer Service" 39, pp. 230-242.

Xu D.J. 2006, *The influence of personalization in affecting consumer attitudes toward mobile advertising in China*, in "Journal of Computer Information Systems" 47, pp. 9-19.