Textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in political discourse: A case study

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Abstract: This study explores the use of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in political discourse and their role in persuasion. To this end, the study examines four political speeches delivered by Hillary Clinton, an American politician. The speeches were retrieved from YouTube, transcribed and analysed following Dafouz-Milne’s (2008) model of metadiscourse markers. In addition, Mai’s (2016) taxonomy—which draws on Aristotle’s model of persuasion—was used to identify the persuasive functions of metadiscourse markers. The data were analysed qualitatively. The findings show that Hillary Clinton used a variety of metadiscourse markers; in particular, the interpersonal markers were found more frequently used than the textual markers. Within the interpersonal markers, commentaries with the inclusive “we” was the most frequently used, and within the textual markers, the logical markers with the additive “and” were dominant in her speeches. In terms of persuasion, the study found that Clinton used metadiscourse markers to achieve logical appeal (i.e., logos) more often than affective appeals (i.e., pathos). The results are discussed in light of theories of metadiscourse and political discourse.

Subjects: introductory linguistics; language & power; applied linguistics; discourse analysis; interdisciplinary language studies; language & communication; linguistic theory

Keywords: metadiscourse markers; textual metadiscourse; interpersonal metadiscourse; persuasion

1. Introduction

Skilful communication is a trait of politicians whose job is to persuade followers and gain more support from the audience. As such, political discourse is often described as one of the most carefully constructed forms of discourse where every word counts and contributes to the ultimate message of persuasion (Chilton & Schäffner, 2002; Mansour & Alghazo, 2021). Indeed, language and politics are closely related (Van Dijk, 1997). Thus, politicians intentionally select their language so as not to negatively affect the meaning. They also present their discourse in a discursive manner. This is achieved by means of not only word choice but also metadiscourse markers which are linguistic devices that are used to establish a bond with the audience and to structure the text for a smooth processing on the part of the recipients (Hyland, 2019).

Political speeches are the most prominent and powerful types of political discourse because they are presented in front of the public to persuade them of the personality of the speaker and create a good image of self in the minds of the public (Mai, 2016). To achieve this, politicians resort to the use of a variety of linguistic tools including discourse strategies, word
choice and more importantly metadiscourse markers. Metadiscourse markers are expressions which function to negotiate meaning in interaction by assisting the text producer to express a viewpoint to text receivers (i.e., stance-making) and engage with them (i.e., engagement; Hyland, 2019). Dafouz-Milne (2008) adds that metadiscourse assists the receivers of the text to appropriately decode the message.

The rhetorical value of metadiscourse in both spoken and written texts cannot be disputed. This was evident in the growing interest in analysing the role and functions of these linguistic devices. Moreover, the study of metadiscourse markers has attracted the attention of many researchers all over the world, and they were analysed in a variety of languages (Alghazo et al., 2021a) and in several genres including academic texts (Hyland, 1998b, 2004, 2005), opinion columns (Dafouz-Milne, 2008), and research article abstracts (Alghazo et al., 2021b). Less attention, however, was paid to the use of metadiscourse markers as persuasive tools in political discourse. This study aims to add to research on metadiscourse in political texts by analysing the use and functions of metadiscourse markers in the political speeches of Hillary Clinton, an American politician, during her presidential campaign, and to examine their persuasive power in the construction of discourse following Dafouz-Milne’s (2008) classification of metadiscourse markers. The study answers the following research questions:

1. What are the most commonly used metadiscourse markers in the speeches of Hillary Clinton?
2. To what extent did metadiscourse markers help in the construction and achievement of persuasion?

2. Theoretical background
Metadiscourse refers to the use of linguistic devices to organise the text (spoken or written), express the text producer’s stance towards both the text and the audience, and engage the audience with the text (Hyland, 1998b, 2019). The use of metadiscourse markers is prevalent in both writing and speaking because they fulfil many functions, chief among which is persuasion. Longo (1994) argues that to construct persuasive arguments, “writers call upon . . . metadiscourse, which is the communication that underpins the primary test, that in which the writer provides cues to the reader about understanding the writer’s meaning and participation in the text” (p. 348). Through metadiscourse, we find how text producers guide the text receivers and influence their understanding of and attitudes towards the text. Hyland and Tse (2004) focus on the textual and interpersonal facets of metadiscourse and their link to persuasion. The former type is concerned with the organisation of the text, while the latter reflects the text producer’s stance and engages the text receiver. Hyland (2019) argues that metadiscourse is effectively used to make the text coherent and to achieve the goals of intelligibility and persuasion. Dafouz-Milne (2008) built on a previous taxonomy (Crismore et al., 1993; Hyland, 1998b, 2005) and provided a functional model of metadiscourse markers which enables us to decode not only the textual and interpersonal functions but also the pragmatic use of each marker. In this study, we follow Dafouz-Milne’s (2008) model and relate the analysis to Mai’s (2016) persuasive functions of metadiscourse markers. Dafouz-Milne’s (2008, pp. 98–99) model classifies metadiscourse markers into textual and interpersonal as follows: (Table 1 and 2)
### Table 1. Textual metadiscourse categories

| Macro-category | Subcategory | Examples |
|----------------|-------------|----------|
| Logical markers Express semantic relationships between discourse stretches | Additive | and/furthermore/in addition/ moreover… or/ however/ but… |
| | Adversive | so (as a result)/ therefore/as a consequence |
| | Consecutive | Finally/in any case… |
| | Conclusive | |
| Sequencers Mark particular positions in a series |  | first/second/on the one hand, … on the other… |
| Reminders Refer back to previous sections in the text |  | Let me return to/as was mentioned before… |
| Topicalisers Indicate topic shift |  | in political terms/in the case of the NHS… |
| Code glosses Explain, rephrase or exemplify textual material | Parentheses | When (as with the Tories now)… |
| | Punctuation devices | Tax evasion: it is deployed in others but not in oneself. |
| | Reformulators | in other words/ that is/ to put it simply… for example/ for instance… |
| | Exemplifiers | |
| Ilocutionary markers Explicitly name the act the writer performs |  | I propose/ I hope to persuade… |
| Announcements Refer forwards to future sections in the text |  | there are many good reasons/as we’ll see later… |

### Table 2. Interpersonal metadiscourse markers

| Macro-category | Subcategory | Examples |
|----------------|-------------|----------|
| Hedges Express partial commitment to the truth-value of the text | Epistemic verbs | May/ might / it must be two o’clock |
| | Probability adverbs | Probably / perhaps / maybe |
| | Epistemic expressions | It is likely |
| Certainty markers Express total commitment to the truth-value of the text |  | Undoubtedly/ clearly / certainly |
| Attributors Refer to the source of information | “x” claims that… / As the Prime Minister remarked |
| Attitude markers Express writers’ affective values towards text and readers | Deontic verbs | Have to / we must understand / needs to |
| | Attitudinal adverbs | Unfortunately / remarkably / pathetically |
| | Attitudinal adjectives | It is absurd / it is surprising |
| | Cognitive verbs | I feel / I think / I believe |
| Commentaries Help to establish reader-writer rapport through the text | Rhetorical questions | What is the future of Europe, integration or disintegration? |
| | Direct address to reader | You must understand, dear reader |
| | Inclusive expressions | We all believe/ let us summarise |
| | Personalisations | What the polls are telling me/ I do not want |
| | Adises | Diana (ironically for a Spencer) was not of the Establishment |

As for the persuasive effect of metadiscourse markers, we adopt Mai’s (2016) classification, which is based on Aristotle’s model of persuasion (logos, ethos, and pathos). In this model, logos refers to logical appeal, ethos to credible appeals, and pathos to affective appeal. To relate these types to metadiscourse markers, Mai (2016) presented a classification of the persuasive nature of metadiscourse as follows: (Table 3)
Table 3. Mai’s (2016) classification of the persuasive functions of metadiscourse markers

| Metadiscourse markers contributing to logical appeal (Loges) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Transition markers**: items that make explicit pragmatic connections between steps in an argument. This category comprises additive, contrastive, and consecutive markers. |
| **Frame markers**: items that signal text boundaries or elements of schematic text structure. |
| **Code glosses**: items that are used for explanation and examples. They are used to ensure that the reader or listener is able to recover writer’s intended meaning. |

| Metadiscourse markers contributing to credible appeal (Ethos) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Boosters**: items that emphasize certainty or close dialogue. Boosters suggest that the writer or speaker recognizes potentially diverse positions but has chosen to narrow this diversity and express their certainty in what they say. |
| **Hedges**: items that withhold commitment and open dialogue. They emphasize that the statement is based on the writer or speaker’s reasoning rather than certain knowledge. |
| **Evidentials**: items that indicate the sources of information, which guide the readers’ interpretation and establish an authoritative command of the subject. |
| **Self-mentions**: items that refer to the degree of explicit author presence in the text. They feature self-references and self-citations. |

| Metadiscourse markers contributing to affective appeal (pathos) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Attitude markers**: items that express writer or speaker’s affective evaluation to proposition. |
| **Engagement markers**: items that explicitly address readers, either to focus their attention or include them as discourse participant. |

3. Literature review

Metadiscourse has been the focus of much research in different languages and different types of discourse. In academic discourse, Hyland (2004), for example, examined the use of metadiscourse markers by advanced second language (L2) writers in academic discourse by analysing 240 doctoral and master’s dissertations of students from Hong Kong in six different disciplines. In this research, Hyland (2004) focused on the interpersonal dimension of metadiscourse and divided it into interactive and interactional. The results showed that writers used slightly more interactive resources than interactional ones, and that within the interactional resources, hedges and transitions were the most frequent markers. Within the interactive categories, evidentials were used to persuade readers in academic writing. Finally, the students used more engagement markers and self-mentions to establish a connection with the audience. For more studies on metadiscourse markers in academic discourse, the reader is referred to Duruk (2017) in the Turkish context.

Cross-culturally, Mur-Dueñas (2011) examined the use of metadiscourse markers in research articles written in English and Spanish to find the extent to which different contexts influence the strategic use of metadiscourse markers in research articles written in the area of business management. To achieve this goal, the researcher designed a corpus of 24 research articles (12 in English and 12 in Spanish). The results revealed significant differences in the overall frequency of use of metadiscourse markers in the two sub-corpora. However, more metadiscourse markers were significantly found in English research articles than in the Spanish ones. The results also showed that the interactional markers were more frequently used than the interactive ones to signal the authors’ position and build a bond with readers. As for cross-cultural differences, the study found that American authors used more logical markers and code glosses, and more hedges and self-mentions than the Spanish authors did. For more cross-cultural investigations, see, Alghazo et al. (2021a) between English and Arabic.

In political discourse, Albolat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor (2019) examined the use of self-mention as a metadiscourse marker in the debates between the Democrats and Republicans during the United States presidential election in 2016. The objective was to see how self-mention is constructive in projecting the candidate’s self and persuading the audience of their agendas. To this end, two political debates were analysed to gain a better understanding of the tools politicians use to establish a credible ethos via self-projection. The results showed that the Republican candidates made more use of self-mentions than the Democratic counterparts did. The
study also found that the use of self-mention played a rhetorical role in “convey[ing] authority through the use of exclusive pronouns and self-citations” (p. 86).

In a comparative study of the use of metadiscourse markers in academic and political types of discourse, Kashiha (2022) focused on the use of metadiscourse markers which function as to engage the audience in academic lectures (20 transcriptions) and political speeches (20 transcriptions) following Adel's (2010) taxonomy of metadiscourse. The results indicated that academic lectures contained more frequent use of metadiscourse markers to engage the audience than the political speeches. This was attributed to the nature of each type of discourse: Academic lectures are more dialogic than political speeches. In addition, the study found that there are some variations in the functions of metadiscourse, with some functions being exclusively achieved in academic discourse.

As for the persuasive role of metadiscourse, Crismore and Farnsworth (1989) found that metadiscourse markers help realize ethos, which is one of the most significant factors in the effectiveness and persuasion of discourse. This finding was reached by analysing the frequency of use of code glosses, modality markers, attitude markers and commentary in Darwin’s text. The results showed that metadiscourse is a significant tool that Darwin used to project himself into the text and to persuade readers and that metadiscourse was used to inform, impress, and persuade readers of his text. The results also showed that hedges were used more frequently than other markers to demonstrate commitment and that hedges and emphatics were used to gain credibility and to establish the ethos. It was also found that attitude markers and commentary markers were used less frequently than hedges and emphatics and that these interpersonal markers helped achieve ethos in the text.

In another study, Ho (2016) examined how the Hong Kong government used metadiscourse markers to persuade the people to accept education plans by analysing 12 documents related to the policy reforms of the government. The study adopted Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse and used the Concord function of Wordsmith 6.0 to analyse the corpus for the use of metadiscourse markers. The results show that the government used metadiscourse to appeal to logos, ethos and pathos to persuade Hong Kong people to accept the initiatives. The study found that there was a difference in the frequency of use of interactional and interactive metadiscourse markers and that “the observed differences in the frequency of use of metadiscourse can be a reflection of the writers’ assessment of the need to persuade their readers to agree with or accept their viewpoints or suggestions” (p. 10).

Hyland (1998a) investigated how CEOs persuade and influence their readers in business annual reports by highlighting the role of metadiscourse markers in the “rhetorical presence” of the text producer and in the realisation of “rational, credible, and affective appeals” (p. 224). The data were 137 CEOs’ letters retrieved from a number of companies. It was found that metadiscourse markers help to guide readers on how to process the text and appreciate it, i.e., to persuade the reader of the content of the text. In particular, the study found that code glosses and logical connectors are used to achieve logos; that hedges, emphatics, relational markers, and attributors are used to create ethos; and that attitude markers help reach an affective appeal (i.e., pathos).

In media discourse, Dafouz-Milne (2008) investigated the role of metadiscourse markers in persuasion by analysing two elite newspapers in Britain and Spain. To achieve the objective of the study—the persuasive effect of metadiscourse on the audience—the researcher built a corpus of 40 opinion columns (20 in English and 20 in Spanish). The results showed that textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers are used in both corpora, with some variation in frequency of use. The study revealed that both textual and interpersonal markers are needed to make the text more appealing and persuasive.

In an intercultural analysis of Chinese and American political speeches, Mai (2016) examined the role of metadiscourse markers in persuasion by analysing 60 political speeches (30 for each).
The data were analysed based on Hyland’s (2005) model of metadiscourse and Aristotle’s model of persuasion. The results revealed that metadiscourse markers are significantly more frequently used in the American speeches than in the Chinese ones. Furthermore, the results showed a difference in the use of metadiscourse markers to persuade the audience: The American speakers used metadiscourse markers to achieve ethos, pathos and logos, respectively, while the Chinese speakers used metadiscourse markers to achieve pathos, ethos and logos, respectively.

Based on the foregoing, we notice that the study of metadiscourse markers and their persuasive functions in political discourse is lacking, with only few studies tackling this area. Thus, this study attempts to bridge this gap, and add new insights into the study of metadiscourse markers in political discourse. In particular, the study aims at finding and identifying the dominant metadiscourse markers in Hillary Clinton’s political speeches and the role they play in the construction and achievement of persuasion.

4. Methodology
To achieve the aims of the study and address the research questions, a corpus consisting of four political speeches in English was created, transcribed, and analysed following the frameworks of Dafouz-Milne (2008) and Mai (2016), as discussed above. The speeches were produced by a well-known American political figure: Hillary Clinton who addressed them during her presidential campaign in 2015 and 2016. The speeches were downloaded from YouTube. The corpus consisted of 10,147 words. The speeches were fully transcribed and analysed to find the metadiscourse markers she used so as to draw a conclusion about the most used markers in her political speeches and to see how they are used to create persuasion.

The data of this study are analysed qualitatively. Firstly, the data were analysed by counting the frequencies and percentages of the metadiscourse tokens in the corpus. Secondly, the analysis included examples of metadiscourse markers in their context of use. Thirdly, the use of each marker was analysed for persuasive appeals. Accordingly, two models for analysis in the present study were used: Dafouz-Milne’s (2008) classification of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers and Mai’s (2016) classification of the persuasive appeals attached to metadiscourse markers. It should be mentioned that Mai’s (2016) classification is based on Aristotle’s Rhetoric model of persuasion.

5. Results
5.1. Textual metadiscourse markers
This section provides the results of data analysis which answer the two research questions: What are the most commonly used metadiscourse markers in the speeches of Hillary Clinton? and To what extent did metadiscourse markers help in the construction and achievement of persuasion? Table 4 below presents the frequency and percentage of the occurrence of each textual metadiscourse marker in the corpus.

Table 4 shows the frequencies and percentages of the textual metadiscourse markers in the four speeches of Hillary Clinton alluded to above. It is obvious that all seven textual categories of Dafouz-Milne’s (2008) model occurred in the speeches, with a total of 879 instances. The logical markers were the most frequent and recorded 64.9% of the total number of textual markers. Announcements came second in terms of frequency, with 11.4%; illocutionary markers third, with 10.5%; code glosses fourth, with 4.8%; topicalisers fifth, with 4.6%; sequencers sixth, with 2.5%; and reminders seventh, with only 1.3%. If we turn to a descriptive analysis of each category, we find that of the logical markers “and” was the most frequent additive marker, “but” was the most common adversative marker, “so” was the most frequent consecutive marker, and “finally” and “at last” were the most common conclusive markers. Examples on the use of textual markers are in order.
Table 4. Frequency and percentage of textual metadiscourse markers

| Macro-category       | Subcategory  | Frequency (Percentage) | Frequency/1000 words |
|----------------------|-------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Logical markers      | -Additive   | 419 (47.6%)            | 41.29                |
|                      | -Adversative| 94 (10.6%)             | 9.26                 |
|                      | -Consecutive| 54 (6.1%)              | 5.32                 |
|                      | -Conclusive | 4 (0.45%)              | 0.39                 |
| Total                |             | 571 (64.9%)            | 56.27                |
| Sequencers           |             | 22 (2.5%)              | 2.16                 |
| Reminders            |             | 11 (1.3%)              | 1.08                 |
| Topicalisers         |             | 41 (4.6%)              | 4.04                 |
| Code glosses         | -parentheses| 0 (0%)                 | 0                    |
|                      | -punctuation devices | 0 (0%)     | 0                    |
|                      | -reformulators | 24 (2.7%)            | 2.36                 |
|                      | -exemplifiers  | 18 (2%)               | 1.77                 |
| Total                |             | 42 (4.8%)              | 4.13                 |
| Ilocutionary markers |             | 92 (10.5%)             | 9.06                 |
| Announcements        |             | 100 (11.4%)            | 9.85                 |
| Total                |             | 879 (100%)             | 86.62                |

5.1.1. Logical markers

According to Dafouz-Mline (2008), logical markers are used to express semantic relationships between segments of the discourse. The following examples illustrate how each subcategory of logical markers was used in the corpus.

(a) In addition to the members of my campaign team that Judy mentioned, I also want to recognize Dennis Chang, who is our finance director, and we will be having an event after this and I am very proud and grateful for all of you who are supporting that.

(b) And so, what I have done, not just in this campaign, but going back many years, is to look for ways we can create more jobs, and one of the reasons I wanted to come to Tampa today to talk about creating jobs, is because that is exactly what you are doing, but you need a president, and frankly, you need a Governor who wants to help you create those jobs.

(c) I know about a lot of these problems, and I hear from so many people across our country so, standing here today, it's really a great privilege to be launching this exciting part of my campaign in a place that my mother never forgot

(d) Well, at least we finally got around to doing it, and to doing what we needed to be resilient and mitigate the effects of climate change, but what were those people like Governor Scott and Senator Rubio thinking about?

In these examples, Hillary Clinton used logical markers to join ideas that have semantic relations which helps to organize speech and create cohesion. In Example (a), she uses the additive markers to add new information, organize her talk, and to create cohesion to facilitate the understanding of her propositions on the part of the audience. In Example (b), she uses adversatives to oppose and contrast ideas, or to show unexpected results. She uses them to show the difference between her ideas and her opponents’ to affect the listeners’ thought and beliefs and persuade them of her ideas. In Example (c), the conclusive marker is used to explain reasons and defend her ideologies. In Example (d), the conclusive marker is used to signal a closing of the idea.

5.1.2. Announcement markers

Announcement markers were the second frequent category in the corpus, with a frequency of 100 instances; they are used to declare the future intentions of the speaker. Announcement markers
used in political discourse differ from those used in other types of discourse (e.g., academic texts or opinion columns) where they are mainly used to refer to future sections in the text in order to prepare the reader for following arguments (Dafouz-Milne, 2008). In political discourse, announcements are used to project future plans to persuade the audience and gain support. The use of announcements is illustrated in the following examples:

(e) I will work to expand fee waivers so more people can get a break on the cause. I will increase access to language programs to help more people boost their English proficiency.
(f) I will protect a woman’s right to make her own health care discussions, I will defend Planned Parenthood from the kind of political attack it is under, I will defend marriage equality.

Hillary Clinton used announcement markers to refer to her future intentions, projects and plans. They were used to influence the people of America and to persuade them by gaining their trust to elect her. In Examples (e & f), “will” was used as an announcement marker to express her arguments and persuade her audience.

5.1.3. Illocutionary markers
The third most frequent category in the corpus was illocutionary markers, with 92 instances. This category includes the expressions used by the speaker to directly name the act she is doing all along the text (Dafouz-Milne, 2008). The use of this category can be illustrated in the following examples:

(g) I hope they’ll look back from a position of safety, and a position where they can say, “well, at least we finally got around to doing it,
(h) But I want to spend your taxpayer dollars to send middle-class kids and working families kids and poor kids to college debt free, and I just disagree with my opponent’s idea to give free college to everybody
(i) And to the almost 850,000 people who have contributed what they could, most giving less than $100, I thank each and every one of you.

Hillary Clinton used direct illocutionary markers such as I hope I want, and I thank to perform acts in her discourse; they are used to build an affective appeal with the audience and to show care to the audience throughout her speech.

5.1.4. Code glasses
Code glasses are the fourth category used in the corpus; they are markers used to rephrase or explain the speaker’s statement such as “that is” and “I mean”. In addition, code glasses are used to give examples such as “such as”, “like”, “as”, and “for example”. Clinton used them to extend the propositional content in her speeches and give more illustrations about specific facts, as shown in the following examples:

(j) And we need to combat climate change, which the other party won’t even acknowledge. And the best way to do that is investing in clean, renewable energy which will do so much to lift up our economy.
(k) You know, a high-speed rail system from Tampa to Orlando would be amazing for this area. I mean, that would increase tourism, it would increase commerce, it would increase the opportunity for people to go quickly back and forth.
(l) I mean, you just got to shake your head at that. I mean, that is like the republicans, including your senator that you referenced earlier …
(m) Make the economy work for everyone with good-paying jobs and rising incomes, keeping families safe and our country strong, tackling the problems that keep families up at night like Alzheimer’s or Autism or addiction.
The reformulators “that is” and “I mean” in the examples above are used by Hillary to make her statements clear to her audience by giving explanations, using reformulators and paraphrasing. Also, by using exemplifiers, she is seeking to raise the awareness of the audience to particular things by giving examples. All in all, code glosses are used as a way to reflect on the speaker’s or writer’s expectations; they help to achieve a logical appeal and persuasive effect by supplying the audience with some additional information.

5.1.5. Topicalisers

Topicalisers are markers used by the speaker or writer to indicate a topic shift; it is the fifth most used category of textual metadiscourse markers in the corpus. They were used by Clinton 41 times. There were two expressions: “well” and “now” used by Clinton as a way to follow argumentation in her speech and keep the audience following. Schiffrin (1987) argues that “now” indicates a shift in topic. The following examples illustrate how Hillary Clinton used such devices to move to another idea or topic:

(n) **Now**, California is already a leader, but there are other states that are doing more as well.
(a) When Cheska was a senior in High School, teachers were asking her every day, “what are your college plans?” **Well**, she was in ROTC—she wanted to serve our country.

The above examples show that “now” and “well” are used to shift topic and to control the processing of talk in a way that does not mislead the listener.

5.1.6. Sequencers and reminders

Sequencers (e.g., first, second, after, then) and reminders (e.g., as was mentioned before, let us return back) are the least occurring categories of textual metadiscourse markers in the corpus. The former type is used to indicate a particular position in a text and functions as a guide to the reader or listener, whereas the latter type is used to refer to previous sections or events in a text. The following examples show the use of this marker:

(p) And I want to thank all of the Asian-American and pacific-islander leaders, activists, volunteers and organizers who are here today supporting my campaign, who will be by my side as we go through the primary process and then we bring home a big win in November of 2016.
(q) It comes from the disabled combat veteran from Nebraska who sent in $10. In 70 years of his life he had never donated to a political campaign until now.
(r) Now it might be unusual, as I’ve said before, for a presidential candidate to say this, but I’m going to keep saying it, “I believe what we need in America today is more love and kindness.”

The above examples show that the sequencers “then” and “until now” are used by Hilary Clinton to indicate her positions in relation to a sequence in the speech and the time of the speech. They are used to create an organizational sequence in the talk, to reinforce her argument and to attract the listeners’ attentions to convince them to opt for her and to help her achieve her political objectives. In example (r), she used reminders to refer the listener to a previous point as a way of creating some logical appeals and to reinforce her argument.

5.2. Interpersonal metadiscourse markers

As for the interpersonal metadiscourse markers used in Hillary Clinton’s speeches, **Table 5** below presents the frequencies and percentages of the occurrence of each marker.

**Table 5** above shows the frequencies and percentages of the interpersonal metadiscourse markers found in the corpus. The overall number of interpersonal metadiscourse markers was 1091. Based on the results in the table, it is clear that commentaries were the most occurring category in the corpus, with 69.8% of the total number of interpersonal markers. Attitude markers came second, with 14.9%; hedges third, with 10.6%; and certainty markers fourth, with 4.7%. The
Table 5. Frequency and percentage of interpersonal metadiscourse markers

| Macro-category | Subcategory               | Frequency (Percentage) | Frequency/1000 words |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Hedges         | Epistemic verbs           | 95 (8.7%)              | 9.36                 |
|                | Probability adverbs       | 14 (1.2%)              | 1.37                 |
|                | Epistemic expressions     | 7 (0.64%)              | 0.68                 |
| Total          |                           | 116 (10.6%)            | 11.43                |
| Certainty markers |                           | 51 (4.6%)              | 5.02                 |
| Attributors    |                           | 0 (0%)                 | 0                    |
| Attitude markers |                         | 49 (4.4%)              | 4.82                 |
|                | Deontic verbs             | 9 (0.82%)              | 0.88                 |
|                | Attitudinal adverbs       | 33 (3%)                | 3.25                 |
|                | Attitudinal adjectives    | 71 (6.5%)              | 6.99                 |
| Total          |                           | 162 (14.9%)            | 15.96                |
| Commentaries   | Rhetorical questions      | 23 (2.1%)              | 2.26                 |
|                | Direct address to reader  | 132 (12%)              | 13.00                |
|                | Inclusive expressions     | 349 (31.9%)            | 34.39                |
|                | Personalisations          | 258 (23.6%)            | 25.42                |
|                | Asides                    | 0 (0%)                 | 0                    |
| Total          |                           | 762 (69.8%)            | 75.09                |
| Total          |                           | 1091 (100%)            | 107.51               |

The table also demonstrates the absence of attributors which are used to refer to the source of information. What follows is an illustration of the use of each marker.

5.2.1. Commentaries
As shown in Table 5, commentaries have recorded the highest frequency among the five categories of interpersonal metadiscourse markers, with 762 occurrences. Within commentaries, inclusive markers (e.g., we, us, our) were the most frequent, with 349 instances. The table also indicates that personalisation (e.g., I, me) occurred 258 times, direct address to reader (e.g., you, my dears/my friend) 132 times, and rhetorical questions such as (e.g., Is this the right decision?) 23 times. There were no sides in the corpus. The analysis showed that commentaries are excessively used to build connections with the audience and to establish listener-speaker rapport. The following examples show how commentaries are used in the corpus.

(a) I know we have got a lot of small business owners in this crowd today, right? I want to be the small business President ….
(b) Now it is up to us to make sure we are even greater, and we pass on the opportunities that have been made available to all of us to our children and our grandchildren.
(c) I am running for President to break down all the barriers that stand in the way of anybody fulfilling his or her potential. You see, I think we realize America’s potential when we make it possible for every American to actually achieve his or hers. And there are a lot of barriers, I’m aware of that, I see them, I have been fighting
(d) You can refinance your mortgage and your car payment. You ought to be able to refinance your student debt and safe thousands of dollars.

In Example (a), Clinton used a rhetorical question—there is no intention on the part of the speaker to receive an answer from the audience—to attract the attention of the audience and engage them. She employed rhetorical questions as a persuasive device to reinforce her arguments since they imply that the speaker already knows the answer. In (b), Clinton used inclusive markers (we, us and our) to engage the audience with her speech emotionally and affect their beliefs, thoughts,
and feelings. In (c), Clinton used self-mention markers or personalization such as (I, me) to explicitly show and emphasize her presence all along the speech. In so doing, she attempts to build a confident self-image in front of the audience. Indeed, the use of personalisation helps to achieve the realization of credible appeal which is important as a persuasive factor to convince the audience through her arguments and gain their trust. In (d), Clinton used direct mention of the audience to maintain a rapport with them. In other words, she used direct addresses to the listeners to engage them into the discourse and to persuade them with her argument.

5.2.2. Attitude markers
Attitude markers were the second most frequent interpersonal metadiscourse marker in the corpus, with a frequency of 162 instances. Among attitude markers, cognitive verbs registered the highest frequency, with 71 occurrences; deontic verbs the second, with 49 instances; attitudinal adjectives third, with 33 occurrences; and attitudinal adverbs fourth, with only 9 occurrences. Attitude markers were used by Clinton to express her affective values and to express her personal opinions. According to Mai (2016) attitude markers are used to express the writer’s attitudes such as surprise, frustration, importance, or obligation. The following examples illustrate the use of attitude markers in the corpus:

(e) I believe they can make great contributions to our country. But I need your help to do that.
(f) And we need to combat climate change, which the other party won’t even acknowledge.
(g) but I am excited, I’m confident, I’m optimistic about our country, and I don’t understand the rhetoric coming from the Republicans, because to me, I don’t know, they are living somewhere beside where we are.
(h) Honestly, you know, when I look at these young people back here, you know, every election is about the future and it is much more about theirs and that little baby’s right there.

The above examples show that Clinton used cognitive verbs such as “believe” (example e) to explicitly express her opinion in front of the audience and in order to show her affective values. In (f), Clinton used a deontic expression, “need to”, to express her attitudes towards some political issues in the country by showing obligation and necessity to reinforce her arguments and to build connections with the audience so as to gain their confidence and convince them. In (g & h), the adjectives of attitude (excited, confident, and optimistic) and adverbs of attitude (honestly) were not highly used by Clinton, but whenever used, she used them purposefully to show her personal feelings into her arguments.

5.2.3. Hedges
As shown in Table 5, hedges were the third most frequent category of interpersonal metadiscourse markers, with a frequency of 116 instances. Within hedges, epistemic verbs were the highest in frequency, with 95 instances; probability adverbs came second, with 14 instances; and epistemic expressions third, with only 7 instances. Hedges are used to indicate uncertainty, hesitations, probability, possibility, and lack of commitment. The following examples illustrate how hedges are employed in the corpus:

(i) You know, we could add hundreds of billions of dollars to our gross domestic product by passing a comprehensive immigration reform. We could shore up social security.

(j) I stopped at the over-flow-room before coming in and there are about three-hundred—three-hundred and fifty People there, and I hope they can hear me.

As can be seen from the above examples, Clinton resorted to epistemic verbs (could) to show a partial commitment to the truth values of what she was saying. She resorted to epistemic modal auxiliaries to express her expectation based on making probabilities and possibilities and to achieve credible appeal along the discourse (see example (i) above). Similarly, probability adverbs and some epistemic expressions were used by Clinton to indicate possibility, probability and
uncertainty by using words such as “about” to reduce the strength of her claims by showing her partial commitment to the truth.

5.2.4. Certainty markers

Table 5 above also shows that certainty markers are not widely used by Clinton, with 51 instances only. Certainty markers are those interpersonal metadiscourse markers which are used to show a total commitment to the truth as they denote certainty. Certainty expressions (e.g., of course, absolutely, it is clear) are used to establish a credible appeal, as shown in the following examples:

(k) I had to wonder what they would make of corporations that seem to have absolutely no loyalty to the country that they love so much.
(l) And, of course, Bill and I will do whatever we can to make sure she has the best opportunities in life, but I want to tell you from the bottom of my heart that is not enough.

As for the fifth category (i.e., attributors), we notice that it was not used by Clinton in the corpus. Attributors are a kind of evidential where speakers or writers refer to the source of information. Despite their crucial role in creating persuasion and boosting the arguments, they were not used in the analysed corpus.

5.3. Metadiscourse markers and persuasion

As for the link between metadiscourse markers and persuasion, we follow Mai’s (2016) classification which, as noted above, is based on Aristotle’s model. Table 6 below presents the results related to this part according to the adopted classification.

| Table 6. Classification and statistical description of metadiscourse markers and their persuasive effect |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Markers contributing to logical appeal (logos)** | **Frequency (Percentage)** | **Frequency/1000 words** |
| Logical Markers | 571 (28.9%) | 56.27 |
| Sequencers | 22 (1.1%) | 2.16 |
| Reminders | 11 (0.5%) | 1.08 |
| Topicalisers | 41 (2%) | 4.04 |
| Code Glosses | 42 (2.1%) | 4.13 |
| Announcements | 100 (5%) | 9.85 |
| **Total** | 787 (39.9%) | 77.55 |
| **Markers contributing to credible appeal (Ethos)** | | |
| Hedges | 116 (5.8%) | 11.43 |
| Certainty markers | 51 (2.5%) | 5.02 |
| Personalisations/self-mention | 258 (13.0%) | 25.42 |
| Attributers | 0 (0%) | 0 |
| **Total** | 425 (21.6%) | 41.88 |
| **Markers contributing to effective appeal (Pathos)** | | |
| Commentaries/Engagement | 504 (25.5%) | 49.66 |
| Illocutionary markers | 162 (8.2%) | 15.96 |
| Attitude Markers | 92 (4.6%) | 9.06 |
| **Total** | 758 (38.5%) | 74.70 |
| **Total** | 1970 (100%) | 194.14 |
Table 6 presents a classification of metadiscourse markers according to their persuasive effect. Additionally, the table presents a descriptive analysis of the metadiscourse markers in relation to the three persuasive strategies of logos, ethos, and pathos as developed by Aristotle and classified in Mai (2016). Based on the results in the table, we notice that Clinton used metadiscourse markers mostly to achieve logos, with a percentage of 39.9%; this was followed by pathos (38.5%) and ethos (21.6%), respectively. Thus, Clinton established a logical appeal (logos) through the excessive use of logical markers, announcements by relating the present event to her future intentions, code glosses, topicals, sequencers and reminders, to adjust the arrangement, the length, and evidence of her claims. In other words, these types of argument devices are crucial tools for any persuasive discourse. They are used by Clinton to make her speeches stronger, coherent, understandable, and persuasive. In addition, Clinton used commentaries or engagement markers involving direct addresses to the listeners such as “you” and inclusive markers such as “we” and “us”; attitude markers; and illocutionary markers to engage the listeners emotionally and affectively. These markers are used to promote the listener’s affective feelings and in order to create a kind of an affective appeal and achieve an emotional support on the part of the audience. Furthermore, metadiscourse markers contributing to an affective appeal are used by Clinton to narrow down the psychological distance from her audience as they help her in building a rapport with her listeners and followers and contribute to the achievement of persuasion. Finally, Clinton used hedges, certainty markers, personalisations, and illocutionary markers to realize a credible appeal or ethos, which is another important feature that affects the realization and achievement of persuasive power in her speeches. By using such metadiscourse markers, she is attempting to present herself as honest, trustworthy, and competent. In other words, she uses such markers to build a credible, confident, respectable, and authoritative self-image as one of the well-known political figures in America. Therefore, by preserving her reputation and her good self-image, she is more likely to persuade her audience.

6. Discussion
This study presented a qualitative analysis of the use and persuasive functions of metadiscourse markers in a corpus of Clinton’s presidential campaign speeches. The findings of the study reveal that both textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers are used in the corpus. Of the two major categories of metadiscourse markers, interpersonal markers were more frequently used than textual ones. These findings are attributed to the fact that Clinton wanted to pay more attention to showing and reflecting her position towards the content of her speeches and the audience she was addressing. Furthermore, the study revealed that among the textual markers, logical markers were the most commonly used in the corpus, with “and” being the most prominent among additives; “but” among the adverbials; and “so” among the consecutives. The conclusive markers were very rarely used. Among the interpersonal metadiscourse markers, the most frequently recorded markers were the commentaries, with the marker “we” being the most dominant. This can be justified by the fact that Clinton was attempting to make her speeches fluent, coherent and understandable. In addition, she employed the inclusive “we” to engage her audience so as to convince them into the argumentation process with the aim of getting their trust and support and to achieve her social and political goals. These findings lend support to Ismail’s (2012) findings which showed that the logical marker “and”, and the inclusive “we” were the most dominant in her analysis of Obama’s speeches. Accordingly, she stated that the logical and the personal discourse markers play a key role in the construction of persuasion.

The analysis also revealed that announcements and illocutionary markers come in the second and third positions, respectively within the textual metadiscourse markers, and attitude markers and hedges come in the second and third positions within the interpersonal markers. The former are used to link the present state with future expectations and plans of the speaker and to name her future actions explicitly to the audience. The latter are used to more engage the listeners emotionally and build affective connections with them. Also, in the case of hedges, they are used to show uncertainty and to emphasize on parts of the discourse so as to realize a credible appeal and to preserve self-image of authoritative and competent character that people can trust. In
short, this finding is also consistent with what Ismail (2012) found: attitude markers were used in Obama’s speeches to reflect the speaker’s ideas and affective values towards the audiences.

The study also sought to link the use of metadiscourse markers with persuasion. Accordingly, Dafouz-Milne’s (2008) classification of metadiscourse markers is reclassified according to Aristotle’s model of persuasion following the same classification made by Mai (2016). Here, the findings suggest that Clinton used more metadiscourse markers to achieve logos, followed by ethos and finally pathos. Therefore, to achieve a logical appeal or logos, she employed more logical markers, announcements, code glosses, sequencers and topicalisers to construct and organize her speech in a coherent and fluent way, to guide the listeners and boost their understandings, and in order to achieve persuasion. To realize an affective appeal (pathos) Clinton employed more engagement markers, attitude markers and illocutionary markers with the aim of reducing the psychological distance from her audience and promoting their affective values. This was done to persuade them into accepting her arguments and getting their agreement and trustworthiness. She realized a credible appeal (ethos) through using self-mention, hedges and certainty markers. They are used to protect her credible authoritative image by creating a kind of balance between certainty (or authority) and uncertainty (modesty), and by using self-mention, she is seeking to preserve her reputation, respect and authority which are very important to achieve persuasion in political speeches. The findings of the study go hand in hand with Hyland (1999b) who found that code glosses and logical connectors were used to create a relational appeal (logos); that hedges, emphatics, relational markers, and attributors are used to project a credibility appeal (ethos); and that affective appeals (pathos) are created using attitude markers and hedges. Conversely, the findings of this study contrast with what Mai (2016) found: American politicians use metadiscourse markers to achieve ethos, followed by pathos and logos.

7. Conclusion

Through a qualitative analysis of political speeches, this study has provided a description of the most used metadiscourse markers found in Clinton’s political speeches. Also, the study presented a descriptive analysis of the persuasive functions of the metadiscourse markers in political discourse. The findings revealed that Clinton used more interpersonal metadiscourse markers than textual ones and that both types of markers are used in her speech either to create coherence, engage the listeners emotionally, to emphasize on some parts of her speeches and to maintain a positive self-representation which is important for any politician or celebrity in general so as to gain the trust of his or her audience. The reclassification of the metadiscourse markers used by Clinton according to Aristotle’s model of persuasion revealed that the candidate built her arguments using a logical appeal or logos with an excessive use of logical markers, especially “and”, followed by affective appeals and a credibility appeal, respectively. Clinton used such language devices to manipulate, influence and control the audience’s consensus as well as, to realize and achieve a persuasive power into the argument, opinions and expectations she is reporting to the audience. In short, throughout the analysis of the corpus, it is noticed that Clinton’s speeches are mainly characterised by social inclusion.

The present investigation has presented interesting findings. However, it is of paramount importance to point out that the study is limited in some respects. Among the limitations was the corpus itself which is limited only to four speeches taken from Clinton’s presidential campaign. Due to the inability to find complete transcripts of the speeches, the researchers restricted the analysis to four speeches. Another limitation is the inability to include the speeches of other American political figures in order to compare between the metadiscourse markers used in Clinton and others’ speeches to achieve persuasion and provide a gender-based study. In this respect, comparative and gender-based studies and cross-cultural studies are recommended for future research. Furthermore, the results of this study need to be confirmed using a larger corpus and a more detailed analysis of the speech framing like gestures and intonations and pauses as part of code glosses or frame markers. In short, this study provided new insights into the language of politics, which can assist and help future researchers and public speakers to build up knowledge about the different persuasive functions of using metadiscourse markers in any type of discourse.
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Note
1. In this study, we explore only verbal cues of metadiscourse. Although we strongly believe that visual/non-verbal metadiscourse is also important in persuasion and rhetorical communication—particularly in political discourse, we leave such an exploration to future research due to the limited space.

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Appendix (A)
Hillary Clinton attends campaign event in California, January 7th, 2016. [https://youtu.be/Tg2REUOTunI](https://youtu.be/Tg2REUOTunI)

Hillary Clinton’s Super Tuesday Victory Speech, March 1st, 2016. [https://youtu.be/AyvaflqusdQ](https://youtu.be/AyvaflqusdQ)

Hillary Clinton Florida Rally post Univision Democratic Debate, March 10th, 2016. [https://youtu.be/QJKAYWfSN_Q](https://youtu.be/QJKAYWfSN_Q)

Hillary Clinton’s Speech in South Carolina, February 27th, 2016. [https://youtu.be/6PleEfpMjBI](https://youtu.be/6PleEfpMjBI)