Approaches to the analysis of metadiscourse features in political discourse

Ana Albalat-Mascarell[1]

Abstract. Metadiscourse features play a decisive role in the attainment of persuasion in different discourse domains and genres. Political genres, generally linked to the formal expression of viewpoints by national and international leaders, displays a vast amount of metadiscourse features aimed at persuading large audiences. This article offers a critical review of some important approaches to the study of metadiscourse traits in political discourse. The paper is organized as follows: (1) an introduction to the concept of metadiscourse and its potential as an analytical framework for the study of persuasion; (2) a description of contemporary political discourse, highlighting some characteristics of present-day political genres; (3) a discussion of the main approaches to the examination of political genres from a metadiscoursal perspective; and (4) conclusions on the strengths and shortcomings of the abovementioned approaches regarding the exploration of persuasive aspects in contemporary political talk.
Keywords: Metadiscourse; political discourse; persuasion; political genres.

[es] Aproximaciones al análisis de los rasgos metadiscursivos en el discurso político

Resumen. Los rasgos metadiscursivos juegan un papel clave en lo que respecta a la dimensión persuasiva de diferentes ámbitos y géneros discursivos. Los géneros políticos, generalmente vinculados a la expresión formal de opiniones por parte de líderes nacionales e internacionales, muestran una cantidad considerable de elementos metadiscursivos encaminados a atraer grandes audiencias. Este artículo es una revisión de los enfoques más importantes en lo que se refiere al análisis de los rasgos metadiscursivos en géneros políticos. El trabajo consta de los siguientes apartados: (1) una introducción al concepto de metadiscurso y especialmente a su potencial como marco analítico de elementos discursivos persuasivos; (2) una descripción del discurso político contemporáneo, centrándonos en algunas de las características propias de los géneros políticos actuales; (3) una reflexión actualizada sobre los principales enfoques usados para el análisis de géneros políticos desde una perspectiva metadiscursiva; y (4) conclusiones sobre las ventajas e inconvenientes de los enfoques mencionados en lo que concierne al estudio de los elementos persuasivos presentes en el discurso político actual.
Palabras clave: Metadiscurso; discurso político; persuasión; géneros políticos.

Contents. 1. Introduction. 2. Political discourse. 3. Main approaches to the analysis of metadiscourse features in political genres. 4. Concluding remarks.

1. Introduction[2]

In 1959, the term *metadiscourse* was coined by Zelig Harris to refer to the linguistic resources deployed by speakers and writers to guide audiences' perception of their discourse. Yet it was not until the early 1980s that the concept started gaining momentum with the contributions of applied linguists Williams (1981), Vande Kopple (1985), and Crismore (1989). Defying earlier views of discourse which favored propositional and expository uses of language,

[1] Departament de Lingüística Aplicada, Universitat Politècnica de València.
ORCID: 0000-0002-9086-0623
Email address: analmas@idm.upv.es

what these authors did was to devote their attention to the material characterized as "discourse about discourse" or "talk about talk" (Hyland 2005: 16). Metadiscourse therefore grew out of the notion that language can also be used to refer to itself, with linguistic devices helping audiences organize and assess what is being stated.

This deceptively simple conceptualization of metadiscourse has been interpreted in various ways. Some researchers have attempted to restrict the term to the textual organization level, confining metadiscourse research to discourse elements signaling either its direction or structure. This has resulted in the distinction between what have been labelled *narrow* and *broad* approaches to metadiscourse (Mauranen 1993; Ädel 2006). In the narrow approach (also called *non-integrative* (Mauranen 1993) or the *reflexive model* (Ädel 2010)), metadiscourse is regarded as a textual phenomenon. Reflexivity in language is thus taken to be the starting point for the category, as illustrated by this excerpt from a university lecture:

(1)   So *we're going to discuss* the most common charges that they have. (Ädel 2010: 78)

It is obvious that the expression *we're going to discuss* is reflexive because it refers to the internal world of discourse. Consequently, it qualifies as an example of metadiscourse that guides the listeners' understanding and assessment of the argument in a text-centered fashion. Nonetheless, some authors have expressed their disagreement with such a rigid delimitation of metadiscourse. Hyland and Tse (2004), for instance, claim that textual aspects of discourse can also be seen as interpersonal in that they always take the audience into account in some way or another, hence blurring the distinction between narrow and broad definitions of the concept. Consider another example from Ädel's (2010) corpus of university lectures:

(2)   *I don't know exactly how to put it* but… (Ädel 2010: 84)

As in (1), the expression *I don't know exactly how to put it* also involves doing something communicative. Both examples refer to activities that are discourse-internal and help guide the listeners through the text, therefore qualifying as metadiscourse in narrow descriptions of the category. Yet what these excerpts have also in common is their explicit reference to the people involved in the communicative situation. (1) includes a reference to the interlocutors involved, whereas (2) explicitly addresses the presence of the speaker in the discourse. This undoubtedly contributes to the development of a relationship between speakers and listeners in some manner, hence crossing the limits of a purely textual understanding of these elements. In Hyland's (2015) view, text-referential features are certainly part of the addressers' efforts to create a bond with addressees, helping authors align with the processing needs and expectations of their imagined audiences:

> The broader idea of metadiscourse is the author's rhetorical manifestation in the text, an intervention to refer to the discourse organization and the expressive implications of what is being talked about. This takes the 'textual' features of the reflective model to be part of a more extensive effort of the speaker or writer to connect with an audience and bring it to agreement […] Thus, features than explicitly link ideas or label text stages help facilitate coherence by spelling matters out more clearly and signaling the author's assessment of the audience's needs (Hyland 2015: 997).

The previous paragraph can be traced back to a broad definition of metadiscourse. The broad perspective (also known as *integrative* (Mauranen 1993) or the *interactive model* (Ädel 2010)) regards metadiscourse as a set of discourse features that together contribute to speaker-audience interaction. More importantly, proponents of this tradition argue that metadiscourse is a "fuzzy category" (Hyland 2017: 17), and that the limits between interpersonal and textual aspects of discourse are notoriously difficult to establish. Witness the following:

(3)   Crops accounted for a significant proportion of heavy metals dietary intake. *The reasons are twofold*. *Firstly*, crops are the bottom positions of many food chains and food webs. *Secondly*, vegetables are one of the major dietary components of Hong Kong people. (Hyland 2010: 133)

(4)   There *could* be several explanations for this finding. First, *it is possible* that instead of generating trust, a prior experience between two firms was not successful. Second, companies that have had prior joint ventures together *may* have exhausted what they need from the other, so that a future relationship would not be productive. Finally, as science and technology advance in this industry, there *may* be diminishing returns to partnering again with the same firm. (Mur-Dueñas 2011: 3073)

The paragraph contained in (3) was taken from a doctoral dissertation, while the text in (4) was retrieved from a corpus of research articles. In (3), both the phrase *the reasons are twofold* and connectors *firstly* and *secondly* function as text organizing material by internally ordering the argument presented there. According to a broad categorization of metadiscourse, however, these elements can also be seen as rhetorically motivated, assisting speakers and writers in convincing audiences of the validity of their ideas. As a result, it can be said that these features help achieve persuasiveness in a similar way to more explicit interpersonal features such as the hedging expressions which are highlighted in (4). In this extract, the phrase *it is possible* and the modal auxiliary verbs *could* and *may* contribute to shaping the writer-reader relationship by showing the author's attitude towards the argument, thus qualifying as

metadiscourse strategies from an integrative perspective (Dafouz-Milne 2008). In this regard, it can be stated that reflexive and attitudinal dimensions coexist in the language in some way, helping speakers monitor the interpretations and demands of their interlocutors.

As a result of this overlapping of reflexive and attitudinal aspects in texts, a greater tendency of narrow and broad descriptions of metadiscourse to cooccur has been observed in the literature in recent times (Navarro-Gil 2018; Hyland *et al.* 2022). The fuzzy nature of metadiscourse has increasingly been accepted by the staunchest defenders of reflexive approaches to the term, adding layers of interaction to their text-centered analyses. Furthermore, despite their differing interpretations, both integrative and non-integrative categorizations of metadiscourse offer a rich understanding of discourse and its construction across different domains. This explains the established status of the term within the field of applied linguistics and its enduring attraction. Adopting certain metadiscourse strategies (or abandoning others) is a strong indication that the speaker or writer is familiar with their audience, hence aligning a text with its social and cultural context.

Nevertheless, while useful in revealing something of the rhetorical dynamics of discourse, metadiscourse has mostly been examined in relation to academic writing (Hyland and Tse 2004; Hyland 2005, 2010; Ädel, 2006; Gillaerts and Van de Velde 2010; Del Saz 2011; Kawase 2015; Carrió-Pastor 2016, 2019). Studies on metadiscourse in overtly persuasive domains such as the political domain remain scarce, although their presence has gradually increased in the last few decades (Simons 1994; Ilie 2003; Mai 2016; Albalat-Mascarell 2018; Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor 2019; Etemadfar and Namaziandost 2020: Angraini and Effrianti 2020).

This article attempts to shed light on the most important approaches used to analyze metadiscourse features in political genres. Since politicians appear to be especially inclined to project themselves into their discourse to express their attitudes and viewpoints, we aim to review some of the main metadiscourse taxonomies used to examine the adoption of persuasive strategies in this domain, considering the nature of contemporary political genres.

2. Political discourse

The question of how political discourse can be defined is closely related to the question of what constitutes politics. If the notion of *politics* is restricted to what we commonly call *institutional politics* (e.g., parliamentary debates, party conference speeches by political leaders, political manifestos), then it becomes easier to describe what political discourse is (Chilton and Schäffner 2002). In these cases, political discourse is identified by its authors (i.e., politicians). Indeed, a substantial majority of research into political discourse evolves around the text and talk of professional politicians and political institutions (Van Dijk 1997). Yet recent approaches to the characterization of politics are suggestive of other options: gender relations in the household, professional groups, citizens' initiatives, and the public sphere in general can also be considered political (Faiclough 2006).

In line with this unstable, fluctuating understanding of politics, political discourse can be characterized as integrally related to the following areas: (1) the state political system at a trans-national and national level (e.g., governments, parliaments, political parties, political campaign elections), (2) the extremely diversified sphere of social institutions and grassroots organizations (e.g., businesses, NGOs, educational centers, extraparliamentary campaigns), and (3) the media sphere (Cap and Okulska 2013). As Muntigl (2002) states, a comprehensive description of the political is needed to include not only the settled practices of institutionalized agents and organizations within the state system, but also the emergent practices of social agents and organizations outside the state system in our theoretical and analytical approaches to political discourse:

> Politics is accomplished by individuals, it is a form of life. It is seen as a set of discursive practices that do political work. [...] Much work in discourse analysis tends to neglect any detailed discussion of the political. In most cases, politics is equated with the polity or media reports of politicians' actions – the political being an epiphenomenon of a particular discursive space – or is cast as the construction of differences in terms of 'us' vs. 'them'. Scant mention is given to terms such as politicization, depoliticization, policy, or polity (cf. Palonen 1993a). It is argued here that a political vocabulary is necessary when analyzing the political (Muntigl 2002: 46).

Consequently, it can be claimed that there are many other participants in political discourse. As Wilson (2001: 398) observes, "political media, and political supporters operating in political environments to achieve political goals" are also a vital part of the contemporary political communication framework. Additionally, citizens and potential voters "who watch or listen to a political speech on YouTube" can be seen as active participants in the political process as well (Filardo-Lamas and Boyd 2017: 313). This is due to the gradual emergence of new media in contemporary political discourse, which allows for an increased participation of the audience in current political contexts. Therefore, as Muntigl (2002) argues, any individual that undertakes political work as a producer, sender, or recipient of formal/informal political speeches (by accomplishing tasks aimed at the achievement of a particular political purpose) needs to be incorporated into a present-day definition of what politics (and by extension political discourse) means.

Political genres are undergoing a major transformation as well. Even such canonical genres as parliamentary debates or election speeches are gradually becoming more relatable to other non-political genres in the public sphere. This derives from the so-called process of *mediatization* of political genres, which results in new distinctive features

for each genre when migrating into the media environment (Lauerbach 2013; Mackay 2013; Molek-Kozakowska 2013). The following examples taken from Fairclough (2006: 34) clearly illustrate the *chains* or *networks of genres* accounting for the connections that can currently be made between some non-mediatized and mediatized political genres:

(5) *Policy documents* vs. *political speeches*. A policy document offers details of the author's policy commitments in relation to what needs to be done throughout their term of office, whereas a political speech includes the same material and adapts it to meet the specific requirements of any other (broadcast) speech. Policy documents can be regarded as non-mediatized genres as they belong to the written mode, but political speeches are clearly mediatized as the linguistic material making up the original text can get considerably enhanced by the additional multimodal elements that are part of any other speech when broadcast on television or the Internet (Cap and Okulska 2013).

(6) *Press releases* vs. *news conferences.* A press release is an official statement delivered to members of the news media with the aim of publishing it, while a news conference is a broadcast event in which political actors invite journalists to hear them speak and ask questions. As in (5), the written material contained in the press release gets significantly affected by the multimodal embedding that accompanies the spoken text in the news conference. Thus, press releases do not belong to the mediatized sphere, whereas news conferences do.

(7) *Press releases* vs. *reports in the media*. A report in the media provides the public with information on political matters. As in (6), the original written text included in the press release gets drastically altered by the accompanying multimodal devices in the radio or television report. Therefore, reports in the media are also a straightforward example of mediatized genres in which the original linguistic content is fundamentally transformed to fulfil the requirements of broadcast media.

Likewise, much actual political text and talk is hybrid with respect to genres, combining different generic aspects together (Fairclough 1995; Lauerbach 2006). Election debates are, for instance, normally seen as a hybrid genre that involves aspects of both political interviews and speeches (Halmari 2008; Myers 2008). Boyd (2013) highlights that the hybrid essence of election debates derives from the fact that they are not really debates (since there is little direct interaction between the politicians involved), and points to the shifting nature of the registers adopted by the participants in these televised encounters:

… the registers adopted by the candidates also shift greatly, ranging "from the more formal and serious to the occasional joking, and from statements which [are] more prepared and often reused to responses which were more spontaneous" (Cienki 2005a, 284). Such variation is due to the candidates' conflicting desire to demonstrate their knowledge about the issues on the one hand, and to prove that they can talk "one-to-one to ordinary folk" and treat them with due respect on the other (Myers 2008, 130). Furthermore, for Cienki (2005a, 244) debates represent "the supra-individual level" because many of the issues under discussion have already been framed strategically by the campaign team (Boyd 2013: 300).

In addition, a key factor in election debates and, by extension, in other mediatized genres is the plurality of audiences they address. Mediatized genres tend to reach at least three different types of audience: (1) the co-present, primary audience, (2) a secondary audience who is watching or listening to the event via the mass media, and (3) a tertiary audience that watches or listens to a later transmission on the Internet or through the press (Reisigl 2008; Boyd 2011). As politicians in televised debates or interviews are concerned with creating a good rapport with the public and winning over undecided voters, their main addressee is usually the wider public, consisting of secondary and tertiary audiences, rather than the journalist or the political adversary who is confronting them on the television set (Boyd 2013). This results in fundamental changes in the linguistic choices made by politicians participating in mediatized genres, especially in their deployment of reference terms signaling speaker-audience relationships (Murphy 1988; Chilton 2004).

To summarize, political genres, and the conceptual horizon of political discourse in general, are undergoing a major transformation in recent times. Even traditional political genres linked to institutionalized political practices are going through a constant process of mediatization that is changing their original generic features. Consequently, it is the job of discourse analysts to reveal something of the rhetorical strategies adopted by the participants in these mediatized genres, considering that analytical frameworks such as the framework of metadiscourse provide us with a good opportunity to grasp the persuasive working of discourse across many different domains and contexts.

3. Main approaches to the analysis of metadiscourse features in political discourse

As stated in the introduction of this paper, narrow and broad perspectives of metadiscourse have become increasingly co-occurrent in the last few decades (Hyland *et al.* 2022). The fuzziness inherent in the concept of metadiscourse has gradually been welcomed by the leading proponents of reflexive categorizations of the term, incorporating layers of

stance to their text-centered studies. As a matter of fact, the approaches to the analysis of political discourse from a reflexive metadiscoursal viewpoint that will be shown in this section follow this strategy. In this regard, it can be said that we will start by presenting Simons' (1994) and Ilie's (2003) studies of the reflexive and persuasive traits of metadiscourse in broadcast dialogic genres such as televised interviews and parliamentary debates, before moving on to the examination of Mai's (2016), Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor's (2019), and Etemadfar and Namaziandost's (2020)'s research on the presence of attitudinal features in other highly mediatized genres such as political speeches and presidential debates. Some tables with specific categories of metadiscourse markers and examples related to the political genres analyzed will also be included here to help illustrate the main characteristics of the different metadiscoursal approaches to political discourse reviewed in this section.

To begin with, it should be noted that most of the studies dealing with the identification of metadiscourse strategies in political genres adhere to a broad perspective. Yet as claimed above, research on the persuasiveness of some features of discourse reflexivity can also be found in the literature. Thus, building on Goffman's (1981) analysis of reflexive responses in interaction (i.e., those that shift focus from what the speakers say to them saying it in a particular fashion), Simons (1994) considers reflexive replies in the ongoing discourse as an essential part of *going meta*:

> Central to Goffman's general point […] are the notions of frame-altering (including frame-breaking) and reflexive address. If the expectation is that one should reply to situations directly in a given situation, then respondents will have gone meta […] if they elect to step back from the immediacy of a question to question the questioner's motives, or tone, or premises, or right to ask certain questions, or right to ask any questions at all (Simons 1994: 470).

As Husting and Orr (2007: 128) note, Simons' (1994) concept of *going meta* can be traced back to the "analysis of discrete pieces of discursive machinery that reframe interactions." These authors suggest a link between the use of this type of reflexive responses and a discursive *machinery* (or strategy) that, when implemented, can produce a frame shift that challenges the hearer's basic understanding of the questioner's claims. Consequently, Simons' (1994) work proves to be particularly useful when exploring persuasive instances of talk about talk aimed at deflecting questions about corruption and power abuse in mediatized dialogic genres such as broadcast interviews and debates. Political candidates in these genres are especially prone to use reflexive replies to achieve some strategic goals, e.g., sidestep the exploration of evidence, question the questioner's hidden agenda, or shift attention to those parts of the message that can potentially enhance their own public image.

A variation of this reflexive approach to the frame-altering aspects of political genres examines the use of metadiscourse comments that are intended to "emphatically contextualize and overstate/understate the speakers' discursive contributions" in political talk (Ilie 2003: 80). Ilie's (2003) exploration of parliamentary debates shows how rhetorically tailored statements (namely statements which contribute to the rational (*logos*), credible (*ethos*) and affective (*pathos*) appeals that have been permeating persuasive discourse since ancient times) help express the speakers' personal opinions about their, about their interlocutors', and even about others' ongoing talk. Consider the following examples retrieved from Ilie (2003: 81):

(8) Mr. David Ruffley (Con): [...] It is interesting that, on the [Labour] Government's presentation of economic statistics, Bob Worcester of MORI - *who is by no means a Conservative-leaning commentator* - recently said: "It is not being clear, it is not being precise... They are putting spin on-the statistics and that spin is an affront to the British public [...]".

(9) Mr. Garnier (Con): [...] Light engineers, shoe manufacturers and the l firms that make parts that go into shoes and the products that form parts of other products, such as clothing, are - *I have conducted a survey to establish this* - suffering from an excess of regulation and interfering fussiness from the Government.

(10) Mr. Bercow (Con): I am grateful to the Foreign Secretary [Mr. Cook, Lab] for giving way. No sensible person - *from which category one should probably exclude the right hon. Gentleman* - would favour European Union enlargement at any price.

In (8), the metadiscourse comment in italics has a referential function that allows the speaker to establish a common ground of shared assumptions with the hearer. One might argue, as does Ilie (2003), that such a comment promotes rational appeals by reinforcing generally held opinions and beliefs about someone's discourse from the point of view of a given political ideology. In (9), by contrast, the focus is on the reinforcement of the speaker's credibility. By displaying professional competence, as well as a strong connection between words and deeds, the speaker can relate to credible appeals concerning their sense of honesty and integrity. Finally, in (10), the highlighted statement is clearly aimed at attracting the audiences' support and sympathy. By fulfilling the listeners' wish to witness a political *battle of wits*, the speaker mostly addresses affective appeals signaling their respect for the audiences' expectations of sarcasm and entertainment.

In sum, Ilie's (2003) approach to the study of metadiscourse in parliamentary debates is mainly focused on specific comments which are intended to reach the three major means of persuasion identified in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (Kennedy 2003). Her approach to the analysis of metadiscourse traits in political genres is more detailed than the *going meta* theory proposed by Simons (1994). Nevertheless, as Martínez-Guillem (2009: 732) points out, it lacks "an acknowledgment that the 'shared message context' may play a role in argumentation". Although Ilie (2003) ad-

mits that participants in parliamentary debates need to consider each other's distinct representations of the world, she does not "elaborate enough" on how these specific representations (as well as other significant "social factors which allow us to incorporate in our understanding of situations the pertinent elements of what is not communicated") can be inserted into a discussion by means of metadiscourse items (Martínez-Guillem 2009: 732-733).

Similarly, but extending this reflexive view of metadiscourse to include broader, more explicit strategies used by speakers to align themselves with their audiences, we find studies that address speaker-hearer interaction in other unmistakably mediatized political genres. Mai (2016), for example, adopts Hyland's (2005) interpersonal model of metadiscourse (i.e., one of the most productive models belonging to the integrative tradition of metadiscourse) to examine the link between rhetorical appeals and metadiscourse features in (conspicuously mediatized) political speeches. In Mai's (2016) view, the systematic connections between classical rhetoric and interpersonal metadiscourse can be established as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. An interpersonal model of metadiscourse for political speeches (adapted from Mai 2016: 209-217)

Metadiscourse markers contributing to logical appeal (*logos*)		
Category	**Function**	**Examples**
Transition markers	Items that make explicit pragmatic connections between steps in an argument. This category comprises of additive, contrastive, and consecutive markers.	Additive: *and / additionally / likewise / also / moreover* Contrastive: *however / but / yet / rather / instead / though* Consecutive: *thus / therefore / then / so / because*
Frame markers	Items that signal text boundaries or elements of schematic text structure.	Sequencer: *first / firstly / secondly / to begin / finally* Topicalizer: *at this point / now / to conclude / with regard to / in short*
Code glosses	Items that are used for explanation and exemplification. They are used to ensure that the reader or listener can recover writer's intended meaning.	*That is / that means / this means / in other words / namely*
Metadiscourse markers contributing to credible appeal (*ethos*)		
Category	**Function**	**Examples**
Boosters	Items that emphasize certainty or close dialogue. Boosters suggest that the speaker recognizes potentially diverse positions but has chosen to narrow this diversity and express their certainty in what they say.	*Reveal / highlight / particularly / strongly / critical*
Hedges	Items that withhold commitment and open dialogue. They emphasize that the statement is based on the speaker's reasoning rather than certain knowledge.	*About / almost / appear / broadly / certain*
Evidentials	Items that indicate the sources of information, which guide the listener's interpretation and establish an authoritative command of the subject.	*Cite / quote / according to / cited*
Self-mentions	Items that refer to the degree of explicit speaker presence in the text. They feature self-references and self-citations.	*I / me / our / us / our countries*
Metadiscourse markers contributing to affective appeal (*pathos*)		
Category	**Function**	**Examples**
Attitude markers	Items that express the speaker's affective evaluation to proposition.	*Agree / amazing / appropriate / dramatically / prefer*
Engagement markers	Items that explicitly address audiences, either to focus their attention or include them as discourse participants.	Personal pronoun: *We / us / you / your / everybody* Directives: *Let`s / look / must / need to / have to*

The interpersonal model of metadiscourse addressing rhetorical appeals that is included in Table 1 provides a comprehensive framework for the analysis of the persuasive effects achieved through political speeches. Furthermore, it allows for in-depth cross-cultural studies of how these persuasive effects work across different languages and countries. Some major differences between the constructional features of English and Chinese can, for instance, be

identified through the examination of Mai's (2016) proposed transition markers in political speeches belonging to the American and Chinese specific national contexts. Consider these examples taken from Mai (2016: 211):

(11) *Because* "love is love," today –50 years later– two men or two women can walk into the courthouse in that same city of Wilmington and get a marriage license. *And* we won't rest until that freedom to marry is available to any loving, committed couple in this country.

(12) 我们双方应该坚持从大处着眼，把握构建新型大国关系总目标，认清两国共同利益远远大于分歧。
'*What is important is that both countries focus on* the larger picture, *focus on* the overall goal of building a new model of major-country relationship. *Both countries fully recognize that* our shared interests far outweigh our differences'.

In (11), the rational relationship between sentences is clearly indicated with the transition markers *because* and *and*. Hypotaxis is common in the English language and so is the use of transitions that help audiences to interpret and evaluate someone's discourse. In (12), on the other hand, and even though there is a parallel and additive relationship between linguistic units, such connection is not clearly signaled. Chinese is a paratactic language comprising far fewer transition markers that facilitate the understanding of discourse. Therefore, it can be said that, according to Mai's (2016) findings, American politicians apparently tend to use more transitions that contribute to logical appeals, devoting more effort to the persuasion of audiences through the signaling of argument structure than their Chinese counterparts. Mai's (2016) interpersonal model of metadiscourse strategies in political speeches indeed succeeds in identifying how speakers achieve similar persuasive goals in different languages and cultural contexts, relying on specific words and expressions as key indicators of such an achievement.

Another study which examines speaker-hearer interaction in clearly mediatized political genres drawing on a broad view of metadiscourse is Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor's (2019) analysis of self-representation in presidential election debates. Again, Hyland's (2005) interpersonal model of metadiscourse is taken as the starting point here, with a focus on self-mentions (i.e., first-person pronouns and possessive determiners such as *I, we* or *ours,* self-citations, and self-referential expressions such as *this ticket* or *the party*). At this point, it is worth noting that the set of criteria developed by Mauranen (1993) and Ädel (2006) to help identify personal metadiscourse markers (namely (a) explicitness towards the ongoing discourse, (b) contextuality or reference to the immediate discourse context, (c) reference to the current discourse, as opposed to real-world reference, and (d) speaker and audience performing their roles as discourse participants) is not relevant here, since self-mentions within the interpersonal framework adopted by Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor (2019) certainly include instances of real-world entities. In fact, combining Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse with what Roitman (2014: 746) calls "the represented I" and "the situated I" of presidential election debates (i.e., uses of the first-person pronoun in which speakers are the topic under discussion, as opposed to uses of the first-person pronoun in which speakers intrude into their speeches to comment on them), Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor (2019) develop the comprehensive classification system for self-mentioning strategies that is presented in Table 2. As can be inferred from this table, the self-mention items included here are systematically ranked according to the level of authority they project onto the discourse.

Table 2. A taxonomy of self-mentions in presidential election debates
(adapted from Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor 2019: 94-97)

Category	Function	Examples
1. I as the situated speaker	Self-mentions that relate to the speaker's awareness of the audience of the debate as well as to their desire to control, monitor and evaluate the impact of their messages during the interaction.	Now, let *me* say this, it is absolutely the case...
2. Evidential I	Self-mentions that allow the speaker to stress their first-hand knowledge of some facts. They also enable them to quote someone else's words, usually bringing the voice of well-respected figures into the debate.	And I'm really amazed, Elaine, as *I* talk to Republican senators, how well they regard and respect Hillary Clinton.
3. I as the opinion-holder	Self-mentions that allow the speaker to share their opinions, beliefs, and attitudes in an overtly rhetorical manner, putting particular emphasis on their own positions (or those of the party ticket they represent) to distance themselves from their opponent.	*We* truly do believe that law enforcement is not a force for racism or division in our country.
4. I as the policymaker	Self-mentions that concern the speaker's presentation and discussion of the policies they promise to support when elected. It represents a further step in the direction of power wielded by the speaker's presence since the politician moves from sharing a view (or attitude) to highlighting what they are going to do based on this attitude.	And, fifth, *we* have a tax plan that targets tax relief to middle- class individuals and small businesses and asks those at the very top who've benefited as we've come out of recession to pay more.

Category	Function	Examples
5. Reflexive I	Self-mentions that draw attention to the speaker's autobiographical self. They can be further divided into two sub-categories: (a) *the individual self*, which is the role the speaker assumes to share their thoughts, feelings, and events from their private, personal life that they feel relevant to the issues raised during the debate; (b) *the political self*, which highlights the speaker's past or present achievements, inner reflections, and experiences as a politician and/or candidate for the election.	*I* was also raised in a wonderful family of faith. It was a church on Sunday morning and grace before dinner. When *I* was secretary of state, *we* actually increased American exports globally 30 percent. *We* increased them to China 50 percent.

In line with what Roiman (2014) labels as *the situated I* of presidential debates, *I as the situated speaker* allows speakers to exert authority by trying to control interaction and dominate discourse in these encounters. However, the authority exerted by means of this type of self-mention marker belongs to a different dimension from that of the rest of self-mentions, associated with self-representation in the world outside discourse (i.e., "the represented I" in Roitman's (2014: 746) terminology). Self-mentions contained in the *reflexive I* category are the ones projecting more authority and trustworthiness onto presidential debates, since they address credible appeals much needed in a profoundly mediatized genre attracting vast audiences with a stereotyped image of the participants in these events. In short, it can be claimed that Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor's (2019) classification system of self-mentions in presidential election debates allows for thorough analyses of the distinct ways in which an authoritative *ethos* is achieved through self-mentions in highly mediatized political genres, highlighting the main differences existing between self-mentioning strategies that are discourse-internal and self-mention resources that are aimed at doing self-promotion in the real world.

A final contribution dealing with a broad perspective of metadiscourse markers applied to overtly mediatized political genres that we wish to include in this section concerns Etemadfar and Namaziandost's (2020) analysis of metadiscourse features in Donald Trump's 2016 campaign speeches. Building on an interactive categorization of metadiscourse, the analytical framework adopted here follows Dafouz-Milne's (2008) taxonomy of interpersonal metadiscourse features, which in turn adopts Crismore, Markkanen and Steffensen's (1993) classification system for interpersonal metadiscourse (i.e., another significant model within the integrative tradition of metadiscourse alongside Hyland's (2005)). Table 3 summarizes the taxonomy of metadiscourse markers proposed by Dafouz-Milne (2008) and used in Etemadfar and Namaziandost's (2020) exploration of speaker-hearer interaction in political speeches.

Table 3. Interpersonal metadiscourse markers (adapted from Dafouz-Milne 2008: 99; Etemadfar and Namaziandost 2020: 122)

Macro-Category	Subcategory	Examples
Hedges: Express partial commitment to the truth-value of the utterance	Epistemic verbs Probability adverbs Epistemic Expressions	*May / might /* it *must* be two o'clock *Probably / perhaps / maybe* *It is likely*
Certainty Markers: Express total commitment to the truth-value of the utterance		*Undoubtedly / clearly / certainly*
Attributors: Refer to the source of information		*'x' claims that. . . / As the Prime Minister remarked*
Attitude Markers: Express the speaker' affective values towards utterances and hearers	Deontic verbs Attitudinal adverbs Attitudinal adjectives Cognitive verbs	*Have to /* we *must* understand / *needs to* *Unfortunately / remarkably / pathetically* *It is absurd / it is surprising* *I feel / I think / I believe*
Commentaries: Help to establish speaker-hearer rapport through the discourse	Rhetorical questions Direct address to audience Inclusive expressions Personalization Asides	*What is the future of Europe, integration or disintegration?* *You* must understand, *dear reader* *We all* believe/let *us* summarise What the polls are telling *me / I* do not want Diana (*ironically for a Spencer*) was not of the Establishment

According to Etemadfar and Namaziandost (2020), the role of attitude markers and commentaries is crucial in developing a good rapport with large audiences through campaign speeches. Attitude markers assist speakers in expressing surprise, importance, agreement, or frustration, whereas commentaries contribute to establishing and maintaining speaker-audience relationships. The following excerpts from Etemadfar and Namaziandost (2020: 124) are a case in point:

(13) Everywhere I look; *I see* the possibilities of what our country *could be*. But we can't solve any of these problems by relying on the politicians who created them. We will never be able to fix a rigged system by counting on the same people who rigged it in the first place.

(14) *We* can't hand over *our* government to someone whose deepest, darkest secrets may be in the hands of our enemies.

In (13), Trump uses the cognitive verb *see* and the deontic expression *could be* as attitude markers assisting him in expressing feelings of pride and patriotism aimed at a large national audience. In (14), nonetheless, audiences are addressed in a more explicit fashion by means of the inclusive pronouns *we* and *our* as commentaries meant to bridge the gap between the candidate and his electorate. Thus, it can be observed that attitude markers and commentaries are key features of interpersonal metadiscourse in political campaign speeches, promoting affective appeals helping candidates align with their listeners' emotions and expectations of inclusion in speeches that are usually broadcast to large audiences. To sum up, it can be said that Etemadfar and Namaziandost (2020)'s taxonomy of interpersonal metadiscourse allows us to identify specific words and expressions employed by political candidates to evoke a *pathos* of patriotism and community in highly mediatized genres, therefore contributing to making the shared interests of politicians and audiences transparent to discourse analysts and political experts alike.

4. Concluding remarks

This article has sought to provide a critical overview of how metadiscourse features are analyzed in political discourse. The aim of the article has been to characterize some of the most significant approaches to the study of metadiscourse traits in the political realm, especially considering that political genres have undergone a radical transformation in the last few decades. Even canonical political genres associated with the state system at a national level (parliamentary debates and political speeches would be a case in point) have recently suffered a complicated process of mediatization altering some of their typical generic features (Fairclough 2006; Cap and Okulska 2013). Consequently, it is the job of discourse analysts to have a closer look at the different metadiscoursal ways of revealing the new rhetorical strategies adopted by political discourse participants in recent times, with an emphasis on those strategies aimed at both attracting and persuading vast audiences in overtly mediatized political genres.

According to Mauranen (1993) and Ädel (2006), there are two main traditions in the study of metadiscourse. The first tradition restricts the term to features of discourse organization, limiting metadiscourse research to items indicating its purpose or structure. This is labelled as the *narrow* approach to metadiscourse, as opposed to *broader*, more integrative views of metadiscourse. The latter have been connected to a second metadiscoursal tradition focused on both text organizing material and how speakers intrude into their discourse to establish rapport with audiences. Yet as Hyland (2017) notes, metadiscourse is a fuzzy concept and the boundaries between textual and interpersonal dimensions of discourse are extremely difficult to draw, which results in narrow descriptions of the term adding more and more aspects of attitude and stance to their typically reflexive analyses. Most of the approaches to the analysis of metadiscourse features in political discourse indeed follow this trend. Thus, Simons (1994) focuses on the presence and functions of reflexive responses in common political interaction (namely in the form of TV interviews and debates) and concludes that this kind of text-referential replies can generate a frame shift that ultimately modifies the audiences' broad understanding of the questioner's claims, therefore succeeding in achieving some persuasive goals such as the sidestepping of evidence and the questioning of the opponent's hidden agenda. Likewise, Ilie (2003) analyses the deployment of metadiscourse comments aimed at contextualizing the speaker's discursive contributions in a particular political setting (mainly in parliamentary debates) and shows how these reflexive statements can contribute to the rational (*logos*), credible (*ethos*) and affective (*pathos*) rhetorical appeals permeating persuasive discourse since ancient Greece. Both researchers adopt a textual approach to the analysis of metadiscourse in political talk that results in the detection of basic interpersonal strategies in mediatized political genres captivating big audiences. They differ, nonetheless, in the level of complexity of their respective proposals, being Ilie's (2003) research framework the one that specifies the distinct rhetorical ends achieved by the reflexive comments analyzed more clearly.

Surpassing these narrow views of metadiscourse to include explicit interactional items used by speakers to engage with audiences, Mai (2016) examines the systematic connections between classical rhetoric and metadiscourse features in political speeches, building on Hyland's (2005) interpersonal taxonomy of metadiscourse. Mai's (2016) proposal proves to be successful at identifying how speakers achieve the same persuasive goals in different linguistic and cultural settings, relying on particular words and expressions as leading indicators within each national context. On a similar note, Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor (2019) analyze rhetorical self-representation achieved

through the adoption of self-mention strategies in presidential election debates. Again, Hyland's (2005) interpersonal model of metadiscourse is taken as the starting point, even though Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor (2019) develop a more thorough classification system of self-mentions, ranking them according to the degree of authority they project onto the discourse. It should be emphasized here that Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor (2019) add cases of both discourse-internal and discourse-external self-mentioning items to their analysis, hence abandoning the set of criteria proposed by Mauranen (1993) and Ädel (2006) to help identify personal metadiscourse markers (namely (a) explicitness towards the ongoing discourse, (b) contextuality or reference to the immediate discourse context, (c) reference to the current discourse, as opposed to real-world reference, and (d) speaker and audience performing their roles as discourse participants) which is extensively used in the literature (Noble 2010; Navarro-Gil 2018). Outside Hyland's (2005) theoretical orbit, Etemadfar and Namaziandost (2020) explore metadiscourse features in Donald Trump's 2016 campaign speeches, drawing on Dafouz-Milne's (2008) interpersonal model of metadiscourse. Their study also captures something of the rhetorical working of discourse in a particular political setting, with an emphasis on the metadiscourse strategies that contribute to affective appeals developing a bond between politicians and their audiences. All in all, it can be claimed that these three approaches to the analysis political discourse building on integrative categorizations of metadiscourse are significantly context-bound and culture-sensitive, allowing researchers to get a remarkably good insight into the persuasive essence of discourse in modern political genres with blatantly mediatized features.

To conclude, it can be said that all the approaches to the analysis of metadiscourse features reviewed in this paper reflect a good understanding of the attainment of persuasion in a range of increasingly mediatized genres in the political public sphere. Either from a reflexive perspective incorporating more and more aspects of stance into the analysis of texts or from an attitudinal viewpoint drawing on both textual and interpersonal views of the metadiscoursal phenomena analyzed, what becomes clear is that the detection of metadiscourse strategies in contemporary political talk necessarily involves a thorough exploration of the persuasive aims tracing back to ancient Greece that can still be found in many political genres across different linguistic and sociocultural contexts.

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