



An Analysis of Metadiscourse and Pragmatic Hedges in Fred Rogers' Commencement Speech

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ABSTRACT

The research on metadiscourse formerly examined the language tools used to construct a speech without looking further at the contextual-related resource. This study aims to investigate the textual and interpersonal meanings of Fred Rogers' commencement speech in Hyland's metadiscourse by examining interactive and interactional metadiscourse resources combined with Salager-Meyer's pragmatic hedges categorization. This present qualitative study adopted Bogdan et al. (1975) research design. The data were taken from Marquette University website on April 9th, 2022, and validated through documentation and audit trails. Afterward, they were identified and analyzed using Hyland's metadiscourse and Salager-Meyer pragmatic hedges framework in the interactive data analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The results revealed that self-mentions are the most significant interactional resource, reaching 47.39% of the total metadiscourse found in Fred Rogers' speech, and 30.33% are transition markers from interactive resources. In addition, the most significant hedge categories are shields and approximators that share the same accumulation at 35.29%. It showed that most words represent the speaker's intention to attract the audience's attention and emphasize his message by portraying the speaker's identity, attitude, and personal doubt. These results contribute to an understanding of metadiscourse markers and pragmatic hedges used for involving the speaker as the major constructor of discourse produced through the selection of markers in his utterances. The implications of this study can be a reference in selecting the linguistic markers to build effective communication for engaging the audience through discourse.

Keywords: Interactional Metadiscourse Resources; Interactive Metadiscourse Resources; Interpersonal Meaning; Pragmatic Hedges; Textual Meaning

1. Introduction

The urgency of doing metadiscourse and pragmatic studies arises from its significance in communication and discourse analysis. Understanding these two fields is important to explore and enhance communication effectively, interpret texts by seeing the relationship between language and its contexts of use, and even bridge the gap between different cultures and languages (Hyland, 2017). Metadiscourse is one of the critical characteristics of persuasive writing since it allows writers to lead their readers and present a professional character to convince them (Kuhi & Mojood, 2014). It helps the writers or speakers to establish coherence, guide readers, and convey the writer's or speaker's intentions and attitudes. In a commencement event at Marquette

University, Fred Rogers emphasized that graduates should follow their aspirations and always look for chances to be good people with ethical values through his speech (Borsuk, 2018). Some linguistic tools were employed to reveal the speech's textual and interpersonal communication and pragmatic hedges.

The Systemic Functional approach influences the language analysis of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse (Halliday, 1994). In metadiscourse study, language becomes the most studied comparative analysis aspect (Hyland et al., 2022). The categorization of metadiscourse elements proposed by Hyland is one of the trends of comprehensive diachronic element analysis of metadiscourse which compares the current uses to prior uses in the same journals (Hyland & Tse, 2004). Chueasuai (2017) employed Systemic Functional Linguistics' interpersonal metafunction and translation of power relations theories to expose a difference in how power is represented in *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel's English and Thai versions. Halliday's metafunction analysis was applied to written discourse and piqued the interest of Ekawati and Kurnia (2018). Kristiani et al. (2018) used transitivity analysis to uncover the ideational content in Kahlil Gibran's poetry. Liu and Zhang (2021) explored the distribution patterns of metadiscourse materials employed under corporate press releases to achieve persuasiveness.

Some semiotics and pragmatics studies have been carried out in different kinds of discourse. Plappert (2019) examined epistemological signaling in academic writing using a corpus-driven method that emphasizes the value of the more implicit perspective of implicature. Furthermore, Omo and Destiny (2020) focused on hedges' operations, functions, and arrangement. He focused on nature and pragmatic functions used in six editorials. It points out that no newspaper editorial employed it. Several recorded studies examined varied texts with meta-analysis or transitivity analytical tools. However, the research on hedging strings is quite countable, especially in the study of pragmatics. Pragmatics helps in looking at the contextual meaning, which provides context between the speaker or writer who intends to make a particular statement. This approach aids in dealing with the speaker's intended meaning (Siddiqui, 2018).

This study offers the meaning of each marker in Fred Rogers' speech in more depth from the perspective of interpersonal and interactional metadiscourse with pragmatic hedges categories toward speech text which had not been conducted in previous studies, so it becomes the novelty of this study. Four research questions pilot the current study: (1) What are the interactive and interactional metadiscourse resources in Fred Rogers' commencement speech?; (2) What are the pragmatic hedge categories in Fred Rogers' commencement speech?; (3) What are the textual and interpersonal meanings in Fred Rogers' commencement speech?; and (4) What are pragmatic hedge interpretations in Fred Rogers' commencement speech? This study contributes to elaborating important metadiscourse markers in increasing his influence on the audience through discourse and establishing coherence and cohesion within the speech. This study also helps to understand how pragmatic hedges help speakers protect their positive image while still engaging the audience. It provides insights into the dynamics of communication and the role of linguistic devices in constructing coherent, engaging, and persuasive texts or speeches.

2. Method

This study applies descriptive qualitative research. It offers observable descriptive data in spoken or written language and behavior (Bogdan et al., 1975). The data was collected and validated through documentary and audit trails. They were carried out by security-relevant recording and accounting from the data, which can be traced to their source. So, it offers documentary proof of the actions taken at any time during a certain method or event. Under Kennedy and Judd's theory, it implements the focus of analysis on a specific activity or event as the research object (Kennedy & Judd, 2007).

The research subject is Fred Rogers' Marquette Commencement Speech taken from <https://www.marquette.edu/> on April 9th, 2022 (*Fred Rogers Commencement Speech // University Honors // Marquette University*, n.d.). In 2019, he was influential and positively impacted social interactions with youngsters and adults (Robin Stern, 2019). Besides, he was famous for his moral principles, such as faith, personal excellence, service, and leadership (Borsuk, 2018). Therefore, Fred Rogers's strategy in choosing the words in his speech makes this object interesting to analyze. The researcher draws on data by locating notes and transcripts. This data becomes the characteristic of this study, whose some observed data were applied from the perspective of pragmatic analysis (Astia, 2020). Bougie and Sekaran (2019) added that data in descriptive qualitative research are words generated from observation or the available information gathered from the internet.

The study piloted three data collection stages. The first stage is collecting and selecting data from the data source. Every word in the script was collected based on the non-participant reading observation. The second is identifying data by listing the statements in the speech script. The third is analyzing the data using Hyland's metadiscourse and Salager-Meyer pragmatic hedges framework in the interactive data analysis model introduced by Miles and Huberman (1994). It consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The model fits with the study since the researcher is concerned with how meaning, process, and comprehension are derived from words (Halimatussakdiah et al., 2020). The reference assignment technique was conducted for data reduction by choosing, concentrating, and simplifying data (Murakami & Hashiya, 2014). The researcher chose the statements or words in the speech transcript, then categorized them into a particular table of markers. Data display was essential to present the data analysis in graphics or charts. The last is drawing a conclusion containing the data analysis and interpretation summary.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Interactive and Interactional Metadiscourse Resources in Fred Rogers' Commencement Speech

The Hyland Metadiscourse theory (Hyland, 2005) was geared to categorize the Table 1. The Table shows 76 interactive resources of the total metadiscourse resources in the speech (36.02%). Transitions (30.33%) and frame markers (4.74%) are first and second among all markers, followed by evidentials (0.95%), implying that Fred Rogers effectively structured the content, making it clear and consistent to the audience.

Furthermore, code glosses and evidentials help the speech's cohesiveness and consistency.

Table 1. Interactive and Interactional Hyland's Metadiscourse Resources in Fred Rogers' Commencement Speech

Type of Metadiscourse Resources	Categories	Number of Terms	Total Metadiscourse Resources (%)
Interactive Resources	Transitions	64	30.33
	Frame markers	10	4.74
	Evidentials	2	0.95
Interactional Resources	Self-mentions	100	47.39
	Boosters	6	2.84
	Engagement markers	2	0.95
	Hedges	27	12.8

Meanwhile, 135 interactional resources of the total metadiscourse resources were discovered in the speech. Fred Rogers employed 100 self-mentions throughout his speech, accounting for around 47.39% of all metadiscourse resources. In addition, there are 27 hedges (12.8 %), and six boosters emphasize the need for certainty (2.84 %), followed by engagement markers for 0.95 %. Self-mentions and hedges were the most commonly employed interactional resources, followed by booster and engagement markers. The comparison between interactional and interactive resources can be seen clearly in the bar diagram on Figure 1.

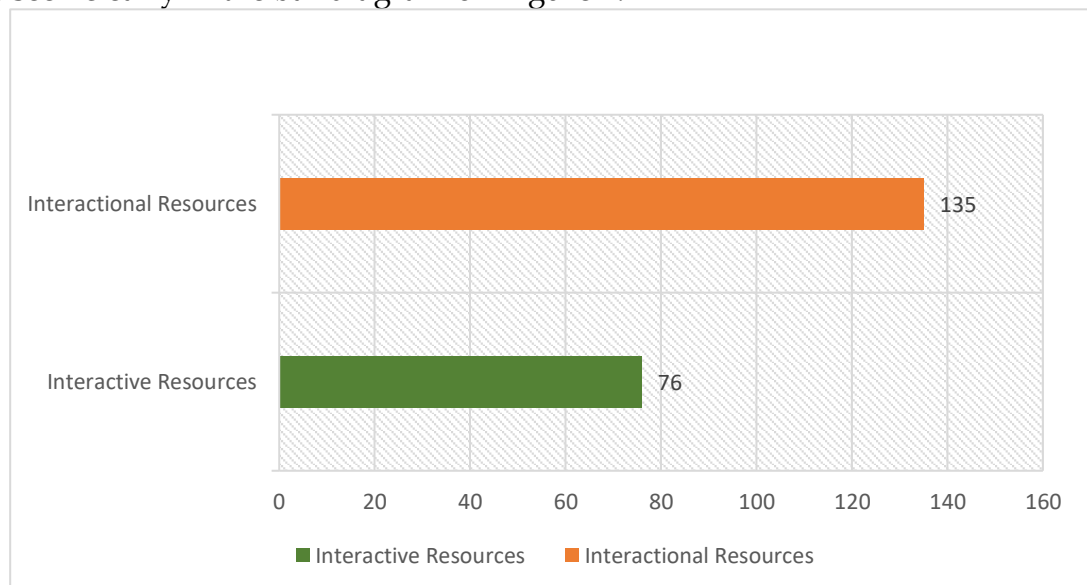


Figure 1. The Data Comparison between Interactive and Interactional Metadiscourse Resources

Based on Figure 1, the most common type of metadiscourse in Fred Rogers' speech is interactional resources. Self-mentions rank first, and transitions rank second among the markers at the top of overall metadiscourse resources. Other metadiscourse markers, such as engagements and attitudes, assisted Fred Rogers in intruding himself

into communication, facilitating connection, expressing his views, establishing his image, and impacting the audience.

3.2. Pragmatic Hedge Categories in Fred Rogers' Commencement Speech

By using Salager-Meyer's hedges categorization (Salager-Meyer, 1994), the following data sets were obtained and categorized into the Table 2.

Table 2. The Table of Hedges in Fred Rogers' Speech

No.	Hedge Categories	Number of Terms	Total Numbers (%)
1.	Shields	6	35.29
2.	Approximators	6	35.29
3.	Expressions	2	11.77
4.	Emotionally-charged intensifiers	3	17.65
	Total	17	100

Table 2 shows that the largest hedge category based on the Salager-Meyer theory are shields and approximators, which share the proportion of 35.29% or a total of 6 hedges, followed by emotionally-charged intensifiers for 17.65% (3 hedges) with the smallest hedge category being used is expressions which only reaches 11.77% (2 hedges) of the total pragmatic hedges found in Fred Rogers' Marquette speech. The speaker used only a few expressions in low numbers since they have a similar function with intensifiers which often relate to feeling and emotion. The comparison of total numbers (%) per hedge category in the speech can be observed in the Figure 2 pie chart.

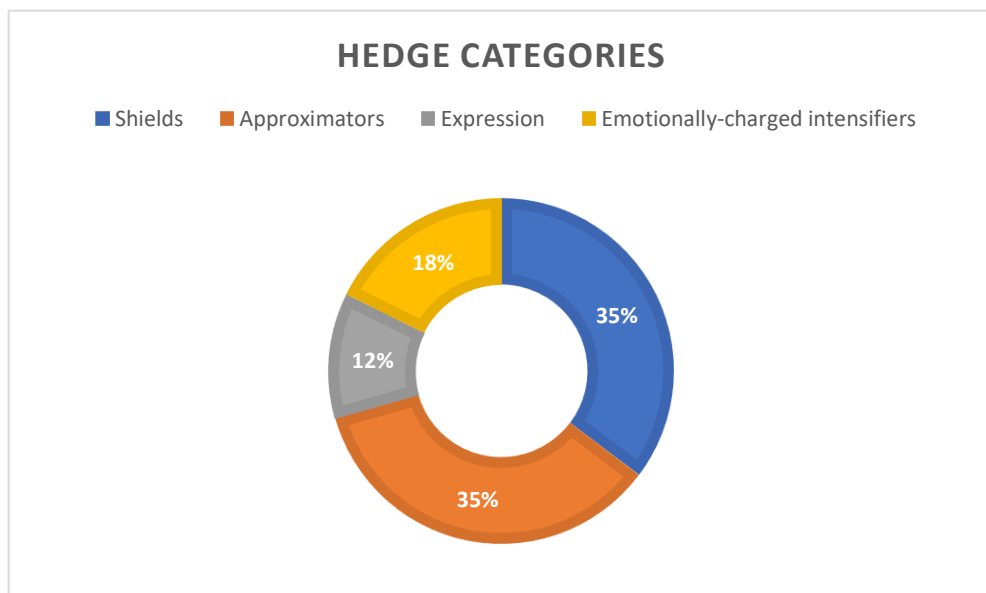


Figure 2. The Data Comparison among Pragmatics Hedges Categories

The use of hedges as part of contextual-related interactional metadiscourse resources and one of the most significant contributors in Fred Rogers' commencement speech represents the speaker's social signs in bridging his need to interact with the audience through the speech. By using shields and approximators mostly in his speech, the speaker showed his efforts to provide as much information and to the audience by transferring his idea in a certain degree of uncertainty to protect his self-

image while influencing the audience's thoughts toward a specific situation following his personal life experience.

3.3. The Textual and Interpersonal Meanings in Fred Rogers' Commencement Speech

3.3.1. *The Textual Meanings Derived from Interactive Metadiscourse Resources*

The construction of the text has a significant impact on whether or not a speech arouses interest. A well-organized, seamlessly connected, and transferred discourse will undoubtedly draw attention. By employing interactive metadiscourse resources, Fred Rogers deftly communicates the textual meanings.

3.3.1.1. Transitions

The usage of transitions is the most common among these interactive materials. Transitions are crucial in arranging a text in any language, including English. Transitions serve as a link between sentences, ensuring that they are well-connected. Additions transitional words like "and" are frequently utilized in Fred Rogers' speech while discussing his many life experiences. The extensive use of transitions demonstrates the sentences' clarity and logic. Meanwhile, these markers reveal the text's underlying linkages and indicate Fred Rogers' great care for the audience's ability to comprehend his ideas.

Datum 1: "Well, nobody else can live the life you live. And even though no human being is perfect, ..."

We can see from this statement that Fred Rogers liked to employ transitions to start a segment. In the statement, Fred Rogers conveyed a series of his life's principles with transition markers "and" in connecting the two facts that one's life cannot be forced to be the same as someone else's, then he added a second principle of life regarding a person's imperfect condition. This marker is beneficial for listeners to follow up with his life's story. It has not been facilitated yet in the analysis of Systemic Functional Linguistics conducted by Yuliana and Imperiani (Yuliana & Imperiani, 2017) that this is part of using words that attract attention and influence the audience through the discourse.

3.3.1.2. Frame Markers

In his speech, Fred Rogers used several frame markers that show off the sequence parts of the text or for indicating topic shifts, explicitly labeling text stages, announcing discourse goals, and internally ordering an argument (Hyland, 2005).

Datum 2: "It's a miracle when we finally discover whom we're best equipped to serve, ..."

Fred Rogers stated his aim for the speech right from the start. Fred Rogers told the sequence of events that have occurred in his life. He used the "finally" marker to express that this statement tells the last part of the story he was telling. It was about his college diploma. He could establish the tone of his speech and deliver the story points. Then, he labeled phases in subsequent passages by presenting a clear speech structure and generating a headline to focus his listeners' attention. The use of

transition is quite the same as the theory employed by Qin and Ucelli (2019) since they found textual structure in their research object for overall writing quality using clear signals. Other transition markers are also shown in this statement.

3.3.1.3. Evidentials

The use of evidentials adds to the speech's cohesiveness and continuity. This marker denotes items that have been cited from another source.

Datum 3: " "Honk, honk, honk" he says when he talks about it."

When Fred Rogers told his third anecdote, he began with a quotation. This statement offered crucial evidence for his argument. He had an unforgettable experience when Jeff talked happily about New York by saying, "Honk,...". With this marker, Fred Rogers obtained certain information from another person, Jeff. It offers a different view from what is done by Ekawati and Kurnia (Ekawati & Kurnia, 2018), who used SFL analysis to reveal the speaker's ideology. This linguistic analytic tool can also be used to know the hidden messages and intentions hidden from each word spoken by the speaker. Hence, we may infer that Fred Rogers' communication is clear and explicit due to his extensive use of interactive resources.

3.3.2. *The Interpersonal Meanings Derived from Interactional Metadiscourse Resources*

Delivering a speech is a common interpersonal activity, and the success or failure of a speech is determined by how the speaker interjects himself into the encounter. The main idea is to figure out how to pique the audience's attention and passion. Fred Rogers used interactional metadiscourse resources to produce interpersonal meanings in his speech.

3.3.2.1. Self-mentions

Self-mentions are the most commonly used in speech. By analyzing Fred Rogers' speech, we found 100 self-mentions. These markers demonstrate the speaker's confidence in himself and assist him in boosting his audience's trustworthiness. Self-mentions can also demonstrate uniqueness when the speaker has to convey new information. It presents a different result from Kristiani's that shows the meaning of transitivity analysis (Kristiani et al., 2018). Self-mentions assist the speaker in finding an approachable manner for the audience to grasp the text. These markers established Fred Rogers' speaker persona by accurately portraying his viewpoints and attitude.

Datum 4: " I wondered why I felt like bowing when people showed their appreciation for the work"

Datum 4 shows the significant use of pronouns that refer to Fred Roger's personality as the main object in attracting the audience's attention. It points out his authorial identity as an individual in conveying his personal's argument. At the same time, he emphasized his opinion about the importance of respecting each other as social creatures. Wang and Zeng (2021) also found that self-mention is primarily used for elaborating arguments. Moreover, Firdaus et al. (2021) examined self-mention's role in constructing and representing authorial identity. An exemplification is also generated as one of the functions of the first person in an argument, and its use becomes the speaker's self-mention instrument and a mechanism for involving him as the central character in the constructed context. This kind of marker can make the

speaker's speech more trustworthy for the audience. From the very beginning, Fred Rogers constructed an apparent text structure for explaining his real goals, making it the new common sense for the audience.

3.3.2.2. Boosters

In addition, six boosters emphasize certainty in Fred Rogers' speech. They reflect his commitment and confidence in delivering the speech. Hyland (2005) described boosters as markers that show the writer's view on the possibility of a wide range of viewpoints to limit and face alternatives with a single and confident voice.

Datum 5: "In fact, the reason we are created in God's image ..."

This sentence part was regarded as a booster to show Fred Rogers' advice to the audience. Here, he emphasized the importance of believing that he and the audience are human beings created by God as God's representatives to protect the world as God takes care of them. By showing his certainty, he encouraged the audience to have particular faith in making a significant change in their lives.

3.3.2.3. Engagements

Fred Rogers utilized engagements to build better communication in this speech by suggesting the audience do the same thing as the speaker did, as shown in the following datum.

Datum 6: "You see, I believe that appreciation is a holy thing ..."

In this speech, the speaker presented his idea over a particular case, then invited them by saying "see" to think about it, too. He facilitated the audience to have their own interpretations and arguments for raising more attention to the speech. In this way, he can create a livelier interaction with the audience. This is in accordance with Hyland's statement that a speaker needs to meet the audience' expectations of inclusion and solidarity adequately, then addressing them as participants in an argument, positioning the audience rhetorically, drawing the audience into the discourse at critical aspects, anticipating possible rejections, and guiding them to the specific interpretations (2005).

3.3.2.4. Hedges

Hedges became one of the important markers in Fred Rogers' discourse delivered at Marquette University. The main goals and intentions played an important role in persuading and convincing the audience since this marker can be used to deliver certainty (Mulatsih, 2008). Fred Rogers could take the chance to project his opinions and transfer his idealism to the audience. This kind of faith cannot be constructed in the absence of confidence.

Datum 7: "What I've come to understand is that we who bow are probably - whether we know it or not -...."

In this statement, Fred Rogers invited us to rethink something abstract, following the eternal and true existence within them. He shared his opinion rather than a fact or a certain thing by using "probably." It expresses uncertainty and the speaker's prudence while reducing the information's value. In the same way, he allowed for the audience's own judgment, pointing out the new finding in pragmatics compared with what had been conducted by Surono et al. (2021). They put in-depth

concern in speech acts analysis. Using interactional metadiscourse resources, we know how Fred Rogers connected himself and projected his attitudes/ideas to build a good relationship with the audience.

3.4. Pragmatic Hedge Interpretations in Fred Rogers' Commencement Speech

In the previous discussion, hedges were categorized as part of metadiscourse analysis in the category of interactional resources. Metadiscourse makes hedges the subject of more investigation since they have such broad and ubiquitous applicability in everyday interpersonal communication (J. Liu, 2020). This study incorporates metadiscourse and pragmatics as the new conceptual contribution where hedges were exercised as a part of the linguistic markers concerned with the speaker's choice to use doubt or indecision rather than certainty to save the speaker's face in front of the audience. Ginsburg et al. (2016) stated that pragmatics's politeness theory explains the use of hedges and non-literal language to save face. In this case, hedges play a significant role in the politeness strategy.

Although hedges represent the speaker's doubt and seem to weaken the information, the speaker used hedges to increase their social interaction with the audience while avoiding inaccurate claims; however, the hedges must be conveyed. Salager and Meyer Hedge (1994) introduced hedges as important markers in pragmatic studies. In this pragmatics, speech acts and politeness become the factors that come into play in shaping the meaning of an utterance performed through speech. Understanding the intended speech act is crucial for interpreting the meaning of an utterance, such as greeting, expressing wants, and praising in its context, while still focusing on the social dynamics of communication (Abbas et al., 2021). It involves using language to maintain positive social relationships and minimize face-threatening acts. In addition to the function of hedges as one of the interactional resources that limit the interaction, pragmatics views the role of hedges in protecting the interactants' faces in different social contexts (Mohajer & Jan, 2015). Hedges explain why the speaker needs particular language terms as social signs that limit his interaction. They show his urge for self-defense in transferring the messages. These are the interpretations derived from the pragmatic hedges categories.

3.4.1. Shields

One of the uses of shields is for indicating likelihood in the level of the fact's 'truthfulness.' These resources convey to their audiences what is truthful, factual, and accurate. In this case, hedges can clarify or reveal the speaker's questions and doubts. Fred Rogers performed shields in the Marquette commencement speech through the following lines.

Datum 8: "Some of those people may be right here today."

The word "maybe" lead to less accuracy in the information provided, but they still need to be communicated. This word was generated as a shield for information veracity. This marker shows caution from the speaker, and it serves as his shield for delivering his opinion about the probability of someone who can be used as motivation and an important thing in someone's life. Fred Rogers used hedges to facilitate himself in revealing things that are not necessarily facts but need to be communicated to the audience, which can be regarded as reducing the "thread-to-positive-face" level, and it belongs to the attempt of doing negative politeness (Brown et al., 1987); because the

speaker felt a higher risk of uneasiness/ shame toward the audience while wanting to maintain a social connection with them. This finding is inversely proportional to the results of a study by Erlinda that showed more impoliteness strategies of Culpeper for emphasizing power among the participants to achieve the goal (Erlinda, 2022) and Sari (2020), whose research revealed the practice of power dominance over a prohibited community for influencing and directing public opinion towards a particular ideology. Fred Rogers tried to avoid the possibility of gaining criticism from the audience while stating some claims since blame and disagreements would violate his self-image when they assessed it negatively. The speaker needs to use indirectness to conduct this kind of strategy (Astia, 2020), and hedges have become one of the linguistic tools that can be utilized to implement negative politeness.

Fred Rogers showed his efforts to improve kinship and closer ties with academia at Marquette University by giving advice, reflecting, and spreading his view to the world, which can still be negotiated. This finding is relevant to the research conducted by Trand and Duong (2013) regarding the function of these hedges to provide greater space for other interlocutors to negotiate. This one made a pretty different finding regarding the function of applying hedges to news discourse researched by Omo and Idegbekwe (2020) that the shield hedges conceal and prevent all other possibilities detrimental to the news writer.

3.4.2. *Approximators*

The following hedge type is an approximator. Not all approximators serve to keep things ambiguous. Hedges serve the speaker's knowledge level, preventing him from being more particular or telling unimportant things. The sentences below lead the audience to give a different interpretation. Fred Rogers instructed the audience that the steps to gaining success in life are listening and following our inner voice. This term can be considered appropriate because what Fred Rogers wanted to explain is abstract, which the human senses could not achieve with certainty. In other cases, he implemented another category of hedge seen in the following sentence.

Datum 9: " ..., anyone who has ever been able to sustain a good work has had at least one person - and often many - who believed in him or her."

The marker "often" is one of the terms in the hedge category that shows heed and coyness with the statement said by Salager and Meyer (1994) that they most nearly resemble what one may term science's "institutionalized" language. The approximator frequently assists in communicating the concept of a not-too-specific explanation about a thing. Occasionally, the speaker has an urgency to say things that are impossible to predict a number in a given period. It belongs to the hedging expressions of evasive features to convey the message. The use of this word also represents Fred Rogers' position on something that is explained, that he is on the side of agreeing indirectly toward the proportion. Fred Roger expressed his belief that life's inspiration could come from anyone in this speech. The hedge markers are the linguistic tool in his speech to convey ideological matters as a public figure.

3.4.3. *Emotionally-charged intensifiers*

This marker has a significant role in convincing and influencing the audience to agree with the speakers that humans cannot live alone and need other people to be their inspiration in life. Generating a particular term, such as belief, is quite significant

in reaffirming the speaker's thoughts and opinions on the topic. This kind of category communicates his position on specific subjects. Fred Rogers carried out his tense emotion in the speech. He did not hesitate to use several emotionally-charged intensifiers, such as the words "very" and "so," in conveying his opinions and feelings. One of them is the word "very" in the following words

Datum 10: "..., and I'm very grateful to be with you."

This statement delivered by Fred Rogers shows the deep emotion expressed by the word gratitude. The use of this marker also shows Fred Rogers's humble personality and his happiness in meeting people at Marquette University at the event. At the same time, he intended to establish a typical reaction with the audience by expressing his gratitude to those who had given him a warm welcome.

3.4.4. Emotionally-charged intensifiers

Intensifiers experienced increased repetitions of the emotional levels that Fred Rogers felt, and he shared it with the intent and message in the sentence he spoke to the audience, and they would remember it more subconsciously. The word "so" also shows the degree of emotion possessed by Fred Rogers in the following sentence.

Datum 11: "..., maybe that's why I like fishing so much"

Fred Rogers recounted one of his life journeys. It was when he met someone who thanked him in tears. The intensifier helps the audience know how deep the message and feeling the speaker wants to convey. This marker projects the speaker's respectful reaction toward the audience and builds a more communicative environment for them.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates Hyland's metadiscourse theory by analyzing Fred Rogers' speech for interpersonal and textual meanings, revealing the linguistic expressions used to structure a discourse, and categorizing it according to pragmatic hedges that emphasize how context affects meanings and the way of communication occurred. Based on the analysis, transitions and self-mentions were the most metadiscourse markers found in Fred Rogers' Commencement Speech according to interactive and interactional resources. At the same time, shields and approximators are the speech's most frequently used hedge categories. Textual meaning reflects Fred Rogers's good text arrangement by maintaining continuity and cohesion in his speech, primarily for good clarity and logical order. Interpersonal meaning signals Fred Rogers' intention to convey his brilliant ideas, defend his viewpoint, establish a positive relationship with the audience, and enable reciprocal dialogue by portraying the speaker's identity and advocating his stance. Besides, the most pragmatic hedge markers Fred Rogers showed during his speech were shields and approximators for expressing his reaction to something that he could not predict with certainty to a certain degree as self-image protection. It transfers the speaker's polite claim and acceptable hypothesis to the audience with specific proportions conveyed in the speech. This analysis of metadiscourse and pragmatic hedges provides a valuable tool for linguistic research by systematically examining discourse markers and other linguistic devices. It allows researchers to investigate metadiscourse's frequency, distribution, and functions in different genres, registers, and languages. Therefore, it

helps researchers gain insights into the interaction between writers or speakers and readers or audiences by using self-mention, establishing coherence and cohesion by employing transitions, and negotiating stance as well as personal doubt by carrying out shields into the dynamics of communication. This study opens further research to be developed in different cases and perspectives, such as pragmatics and intercultural communication studies, which focus on the challenges and misunderstandings arising from differences in pragmatic norms for promoting effective communication across cultures between the speaker and audience.

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