

## INTERPERSONAL METADISOURSE MARKERS USED IN MICHELLE OBAMA'S SPEECH

Aryati Meiga Sari

English Study Program, Faculty of Humanities, Dian Nuswantoro University

### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to find out the types and to explain the functions of interpersonal metadiscourse markers used in Michelle Obama's Speech. The researchers used descriptive qualitative method to describe the types and the function interpersonal metadiscourse markers used in Michelle Obama's speech. This study starts by reading the data, identifying data, classifying the data, describing data and drawing the conclusion. The result shows that there are two categories of interpersonal metadiscourse markers used in Michelle Obama's Speech; those are interactive and interactional metadiscourse. Kinds of interactive metadiscourse found in Michelle Obama's Speech are transitional, frame marker and evidentials. Transitional became the highest percentage, because transitional is conjunction that functions to relate one sentence with other sentences. Meanwhile, kinds of interactional metadiscourse found in Michelle Obama's Speech are hedges, boosters, attitude marker, self mention and engagement marker. In the interactional category, selfmention is the dominant, because when Michelle Obama speaks about her opinion, she gives statement to audience who became author for the audience.*

**Keywords:** *interpersonal metadiscourse, interactional metadiscourse, interactive metadiscourse, metadiscourse, Michelle Obama's Speech.*

### INTRODUCTION

Language is an important of communication for humans, because with language we can find out the information that we need, and we can convey our ideas and ideas through language. Therefore, we should be able to master the language and elements such as vocabulary, structure and so forth. Language also very important tole in human life, especially to communicate; it is a means to convey the ideas of thought, concepts, and also one's feelings. Humans can't live alone without the help of others. They always communicate to be able to sustain their lives.

Communication itself can be done in two ways, verbal and non-verbal. Verbal communication is communication directly, that sometimes also need the media, like communicating by telephone, by way of meet, or talk with others. While non-verbal communication is communication do not see each other or face to face, such as sending messages via email or by phone, letter and so on.

In terms of communication, the use of language is very important to communicate and obtain information in human life. There are two ways of communication those are the written language and spoken language. Written language is the language in written form like text, magazines, books, journals, newspapers, etc. Some examples of the written language are the Short Message Service (SMS), mail, news or advertisement in magazine and many others.

Spoken language is a language that is given orally. Spoken language also means form of communication from one person to another where the language is generated by organs of the human voice and is released through the mouth so as to produce a series of the word; they are arranged systematically, called the speech. One example of the spoken language forms is a face to face conversation with the people around us like public speaking.

Public Speaking is an oral presentation or oral communication which a speaker addresses an audience (*Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*, 2001). Public speaking is the act or process of making a speech in public. To speak effectively, we need to define what we will talk about, think about who will be in our audience (as it influences the tone and language of your speech), gather information,

read and organize your research, choose tools to aid your delivery, prepare notes or a written copy of your speech, and practice the speech.

Speech is an utterance with a good arrangement to be delivered to the crowd. The speech also means the activities carried out in the presence of someone with a lot of people rely on the ability of language as a tool. Addressing is essentially an activity of expressing thoughts in the form of words (verbal) addressed to the crowd in a forum.

Speech is usually done in front of the masses, for instance speech from Michelle Obama's. She is one of famous people in America and she is also President Barack Obama's wife. She is one of the first African - American First Lady of the United States. Throughout 2007 and 2008, she helped campaign for her husband's presidential bid. And then, in 2013 she gave her speech about violence between youth. She delivered the keynote address at the Hilton Chicago on Tuesday to address ways to combat youth violence.

In this study researcher chose Michelle Obama's speech as the data, because in her speeches she always gave inspiration to other people. Like when delivering her speech about youth violence, Michelle Obama asks that we young people must be avoid violence and we have to be better future. She also asked for everyone to go forward and come together, to stand with people who can be trusted to build better things. She and her husband are always striving to improve their welfare.

Speech from Michele Obama above is also one of the examples of direct communication which consists of intent, topic and the goal that she wants to convey to the public. In the delivery of the speech, there are several things to note, as the topic, the purpose and content of the speech and most of all can be learned in element of linguistics that is discourse analysis.

Discourse analysis is part of applied linguistics that consists of several elements, and one of them is metadiscourse. Metadiscourse is a new concept in field discourse analysis that have relationship between the speaker and audience and aimed to help the speaker express her idea and involve the audience to receive the information from the speaker.

Metadiscourse consists of two type, those are textual and interpersonal metadiscourse. But, in this study, the researcher focus on interpersonal metadiscourse markers because this is a new discussion, beside that the data is appropriate with the source of theory, so the researcher wants to know more about metadiscourse especially interpersonal metadiscourse.

Interpersonal metadiscourse is interactional relations between the participants of the communication act. This may include how the writer refers to them self, how they refer to the reader, and how they refer to third persons, for instance, their colleagues. On the other hand, interpersonal metadiscourse deals with the subjective attitude of the writer to the content of the proposition.

This study is aimed to learn more about metadiscourse markers, especially interpersonal metadiscourse used by Michelle Obama's speech both types and their functions. Metadiscourse analysis is usually only for text discourse or article text. However, in this study, researcher tried to analyze the metadiscourse in a speech text. There are several reasons the researcher wants to analyze the speech by using metadiscourse analysis. First, researcher would like to discuss about metadiscourse, which is also one element of the discourse that have different types and functions, particularly interpersonal metadiscourse. The second, the researcher wants to know the use of interpersonal metadiscourse in a speech. Third, researchers attempt to elucidate the function of each category.

## **METHOD**

This study used the qualitative research, because kind of the data is indeed supposed to be qualitative, rather than quantitative. Qualitative research does not give the numeral or statistics but it depends on how is the knowledge of the researcher in analyzing the data. In this study, the researcher used qualitative method, because the data gave description of a problem. This research used qualitative descriptive method which is aimed at finding out of the types the metadiscourse markers and the function used in Michelle Obama's Speech.

The source of data this research is Michelle Obama speech transcription. The script of the speech was taken on 20 March 2014 from [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-04-10/news/chi-michelle-obama-chicago-speech-20130410\\_1\\_youth-violence-applause-michelle-obama](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-04-10/news/chi-michelle-obama-chicago-speech-20130410_1_youth-violence-applause-michelle-obama).

The unit of analysis is every sentence in transcript of Michelle Obama's speech at Hilton Chicago about youth violence. The researcher focuses on sentences that use types of Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers.

The data of this research were taken from transcript of Michelle Obama's speech. So, the data of this study were obtained by doing the following steps; First, browsing Michelle Obama's Speech and then choosing one of Michelle Obama Speeches.

The researcher analyzed the data through some steps. First, Reading transcript of Michelle Obama's speech. Second, identifying the interpersonal metadiscourse markers used by Michelle Obama's speech. Third, classifying interpersonal metadiscourse markers used by Michelle Obama's speech based on Hayland's theory (2005). Fourth, describing the function of interpersonal metadiscourse markers and then interpreting the data and drawing conclusion.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Interpersonal Metadiscourse markers used in Michelle Obama's speech can be presented in the following table.

Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers  
Found the transcript of Michelle Obama's Speech

| No. | Types                | Σ          | %          |
|-----|----------------------|------------|------------|
|     | <b>Interactive</b>   |            |            |
| 1.  | Transitional         | 145        | 38,9       |
| 2.  | Frame Markers        | 9          | 2,5        |
| 3.  | Endophoric Markers   | -          | -          |
| 4.  | Evidentials          | 4          | 1,1        |
| 5.  | Code Glosses         | -          | -          |
|     | <b>Interactional</b> |            |            |
| 6.  | Hedges               | 40         | 10,7       |
| 7.  | Boosters             | 8          | 2,1        |
| 8.  | Attitude Markers     | 2          | 0,5        |
| 9.  | Self Mentions        | 135        | 36         |
| 10. | Engagement Markers   | 31         | 8,2        |
|     | <b>Total</b>         | <b>374</b> | <b>100</b> |

From the finding the researcher found 374 interpersonal metadiscourse markers used in Michelle Obama's speech with the kinds of categories; interactive and interactional categories. The interactive categories are transitional, frame marker and evidentials while interactional categories are hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self mentions and engagement markers. The discussion of each interactional metadiscourse markers is as follows:

### 1. Transitional

In every language, transitions play an important role in the organization of a text. Transitions work as a bridge between sentences. In Michelle Obama's Speech transitional words such as *and* are highly used when she talked about youth violence at Hilton Chicago. The examples of transitional words can be seen below:

#### Transitional "and"

##### Excerpt 1

*I want to start by thanking Rahm for that very kind introduction **and** that very powerful statement of what our kids in this city need, **and** also for his outstanding leadership here in this city. (Sentence 2)*

In sentence above, the word *and* are type of interpersonal metadiscourse, the category is interactive dimension and type is transitional markers, because *and* in the sentence above as

conjunction. The function of transitional is to indicate relation between main clause and sub clause. The speaker said *she wants to start thanking for that very kind introduction*, it is main clause and *that very powerful statement of what our kinds in this city need*, is the sub clause. Meanwhile, **and** in the last clause is also conjunction that functions to indicate the previous clause and also as the addition of new information that the speaker is a leadership in there. The sentence above is relevance between the previous clause and the next clause.

- **Transitional “or”**

**Excerpt 2**

*That what it takes to build strong, successful young people isn't genetics, **or** pedigree, **or** good luck. It's opportunity.* (Sentence 74)

The word *or* in sentence above is transitional marker, the category is interactive dimension. It is a conjunction that has the function is to indicate statements that are considered to be different. In the sentence above, the speaker said that there is other word that makes to be different, that is to build strong, successful young people isn't genetics, **or**pedigree, **or**good luck.

- **Transitional “but”**

**Excerpt 3**

*We need to show them -- not just with words, **but** with action -- that they are not alone in this struggle.* (Sentence 127)

The word *but* in sentence above is transitional markers, the category is interactive dimension. It is a conjunction that has the function to indicate phrases that are considered to be different. In the sentence above, the speaker said that there is other phrase that makes to be different. If we can see that, in the sentence to show them that *we need not just with word, **but** we also need with action to show them.*

**2. Frame Markers**

The researcher just found 9 or 2,4 % interpersonal metadiscourse marker used in Michelle Obama Speech with category is interactive and type is frame markers. The examples of frame markers can be seen below.

**Excerpt 4**

***Now**, at first, she thought this was just typical adolescent misbehavior.* (Sentence 48)

In sentence above, there is interpersonal metadiscourse marker, the category is interactive dimension, and the type is Frame marker. The word *now* has function to indicate topic shifts which the topic is adolescent misbehavior. It means, the speaker said that in this time adolescent with many kinds of misbehavior were found but many people do not care about that and they just consider that it is trivial problem, whereas this is a serious problem that must be solved.

**Excerpt 5**

*I had a community that supported me and a neighborhood where I felt safe.* (Sentence 80)

*And **in the end**, that was the difference between growing up and becoming a lawyer, a mother, and First Lady of the United States, and being shot dead at the age of 15.* (Sentence 81)

The word *and in the end* in sentence above is frame markers, the category is interactive dimension. It has the function is to identify or order arguments in the text rather than events in time and indicate topic shifts. Topic shifts can be found by reading or seen the previous sentences. The previous sentence discussed about the speaker had a community that supported her and a neighborhood where she felt safe. So, the word *in the end* is used to indicate topic shifts that there was the difference between growing up and becoming a lawyer, a mother, and First Lady of the United States, and being shot dead at the age of 15.

### **Excerpt 6**

*But **at the end of the day**, if our kids keep waking up in neighborhoods where they don't feel safe on their own front porches, if they're still attending schools with crumbling ceilings and ripped-up textbooks, if there's nowhere safe for them to go when that afternoon bell rings, then nothing speaks louder than that. Nothing.* (Sentence 93)

In sentence above, there is interpersonal metadiscourse marker, the category is interactive dimension, and the type is frame marker. The word *at the end of the day* has function to indicate topic shifts and indicate events in this time. So, began at the end of the day, we have to make kids feel safe.

### **3. Evidentials**

Evidentials are information taken from other source. In this thesis, the researcher just found 4 (1,1%) excerpt in the Michelle Obama Speech.

### **Excerpt 7**

*As **Rahm said**, I was born and raised in South Shore.* (Sentence 27)

In sentence above, there is interpersonal metadiscourse marker, category is interactional dimension, and with the type is evidentials. The function refers to source information from the text. The statement that speaker said, it was *as Rahm said*, so Rahm said that Michelle Obama born and raised in South Shore. It was the information from other source. The source is Rahm said, and it is to be new information that speaker was born and raised in south shore.

### **Excerpt 8**

*As **he has said**, we can't stop all the violence in the world.* (Sentence 100)

The phrase of *as he has said* is evidentials. The function is refers to source information from the text. The statement that speaker said, *as he has said* refers to source information from *he has said*, so there was other people that said *we can't stop all the violence in the world*. Therefore, the speaker said like that because there are other people that gave his statement before and in this case, the speaker just said about what other people said before.

### **Excerpt 9**

*I think my husband put it best when he spoke to the people of Newtown, Connecticut back in December, and **he said this is -- and this is a quote:** "This is our first task, caring for our children.* (Sentence 112)

This is interpersonal metadiscourse marker, the category is interactional dimension, and with the type is evidentials. The function is refers to source information from the text. Sentence 112, consists of two quote, those are *he said* and *this quote*. The quote is from speaker's husband. Her husband quoted that from his speech *to the people of Newtown, Connecticut back in December* and it has a far-reaching influence on Michelle Obama. So, by using this husband quoted as the motivator and spirit, Michelle Obama asks the audience that we have to caring to our children.

#### 4.2.2. Interactional Dimension

Interactional marker is to express solidarity of the constructed text with the reader. There are four general subcategories for interactional dimension metadiscourse markers found in Michelle Obama Speech. Those are: Hedges, Boosters, Attitude Markers, Self Mentions, and Engagement Markers.

##### 1. Hedges

Hedges are not as very frequently used as other interactional dimension in this speech. In this thesis, the researcher found 40 or 10,7% in the transcript of Michelle Obama Speech. From our point of view, Michelle Obama is main purpose is to convince and persuade, therefore, she would not be so timid but to grasp opportunity to express her viewpoints and tried to affirm her audience. There are some excerpts of hedges that will be explained below while other hedges can be seen in the appendix.

##### Excerpt 10

*And for me, this is personal because my story **would not be possible** without this city.* (Sentence 19)

In sentence 19, there are interactional dimension that are hedges. Hedges in the sentence above have function as information to give an opinion rather than fact. Here, the sentence above is served as an opinion rather than a fact by the usage of *would not* and *possible*. This shows the speaker prudence in statement. She allows for audience own judgment.

##### Excerpt 11

*So the opportunities available to a child growing up in one neighborhood in this city **might** be vastly different than a child growing up just five blocks away.* (Sentence 24)

Based on sentence above, there is an interpersonal metadiscourse markers, interactional dimension of the type is hedges. The used of hedges *might* in the sentence above has the function to give an opinion rather than fact. The speaker has opinion that environmental differences or other factors can be affecting the child development although there is no real fact.

##### Excerpt 12

*Some of them have **probably** never even seen the lake.* (Sentence 43)

In sentence above, there is an interpersonal metadiscourse marker, interactional dimension, and the type is hedges. The function is to give opinion rather than fact. She said that some of them have *probably* never even seen the lake, that means the speaker was not sure about what she said and she didn't know about the fact, if some people have never seen or not.

## 2. Boosters

In this thesis, researcher found 8 or 2, 1% for booster and part of them will be discussed below:

### Excerpt 13

*It is **certainly** a pleasure to be here with all of you today.* (Sentence 1)

*I want to start by thanking Rahm for that very kind introduction and that very powerful statement of what our kids in this city need, and also for his outstanding leadership here in this city.* (Sentence 2)

The excerpt 13 the word **certainly** is booster that is used to strengthen an argument by suggesting the audience to draw the same conclusions as the speaker. Michelle Obama gives the argument that she felt pleased today to give a speech and she has special someone who motivates her.

### Excerpt 14

*And that difference can shape their lives and their life prospects from the moment they're born.* (Sentence 25)

*That was **certainly** the case for me.* (Sentence 26)

*As Rahm said, I was born and raised in South Shore.* (Sentence 27)

The word **certainly** in the excerpt above is booster. It has the same function as excerpt that has been discussed before that is to used for strengthen an argument by suggesting the audience to draw the same conclusions as the speaker. It means that the case is for the speaker and the speaker must be thought about that.

### Excerpt 15

*I started out with **exactly** the same aptitude — **exactly** the same intellectual, emotional capabilities — as so many of mypeers.* (Sentence 76)

Based on the sentence above, the speaker gave the argument that she started out with same aptitude, intellectual and soon. The word **exactly** is the sentence above used to strengthen her argument so that the audience can be drawing the same conclusion with the speaker. Hopefully, the audience can understand and belief that speaker will be started *with exactly the same aptitude - — exactly the same intellectual, emotional capabilities — as so many of mypeers.*

### Excerpt 16

*But I started by telling them that Hadiya was **clearly** on her way to doing something truly worthy with her life.* (Sentence 120)

In the sentence above the word **clearly** is booster. It is used to indicate the audience to draw the same important conclusion that the speaker has chosen by using the word **clearly** as a booster interpersonal metadiscourse marker. The speaker told about Hadiya's life to gave an example for audience about youth violence of Hadiya at Chicago.

### 3. Attitude Markers

In this thesis, the researcher just found 2 or 0,5% attitude markers used in Michelle Obama Speech. The attitude markers were explained below:

#### Excerpt 17

*I also want to acknowledge Attorney General Lisa Madigan, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle. You're all looking good. (Sentence 4)*

*And of course, I want to recognize Jim Reynolds as well as Tom Wilson for taking the lead as co-chairs of the Public Safety Action Committee. (Sentence 4)*

The sentence above, there is attitude markers that has function to demonstrate agreement. The speaker said *and of course* that her statement appropriate with the previous sentence which *she wants to start by thanking Rahm for that very introduction and that very powerful statement of what our kids in this city need, and also for his outstanding leadership here in this city and also want to acknowledge Attorney General Lisa Madigan, Cook Country Board President Toni Preckwinkle*. It means that the speaker said thanking to Rahm, Lisa Madigan and Toni Preckwinkle because of their, Michelle Obama can standing there to gave her speech for society of Chicago.

#### Excerpt 18

*We are so very proud of you. (Sentence 5)*

*And most of all, I want to thank all of you for coming here today on behalf of this city's young people. (Sentence 6)*

In the sentence above, *and most of all* is attitude markers, functions to demonstrate surprise. The word *and most of all*, indicates that the speaker said to *thank all of you for coming here* especially to people who outstanding leadership here in this city. It means that the speaker proud can coming here today on behalf of this city's young people because of Jim Reynolds and Tom Wilson for taking the lead as co-chairs of the Public Safety Action Committee.

### 4. Self Mention

Among those interactional resources, self mentions are mostly used. Self mentions show speaker's self-affirmation and help her improve her reliability from audience. In addition, when speaker needs to provide new information, self mentions can prove their originality. On the other hand, because speaker is the principal part of a speech, self mentions assist speaker to find accessible way for audience to comprehend the text. By analyzing Michelle Obama speech, she used 135 or 36% of self mentions.

#### Excerpt 19

*I also want to acknowledge Attorney General Lisa Madigan, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle. You're all looking good. (Sentence 3)*

The excerpt 40, there is an interpersonal metadiscourse marker, interactional dimension and the type is self mention. The Word "*I*" show self mention that has the function is explicit reference to author. It means "*I*" shows reference to the speaker, that is Michelle Obama. She uses reference "*I*" to indicate herself as a speaker. In her speech, exactly in sentence 3, she said that she

also want to acknowledge Attorney General Lisa Madigan, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle.

#### Excerpt 20

*And of course, I want to recognize Jim Reynolds as well as Tom Wilson for taking the lead as co-chairs of the Public Safety Action Committee. (Sentence 4)*

#### Excerpt 21

*We are so very proud of you. (Sentence 5)*

The word “**I**” and “**we**” in excerpt above are self mentions. In excerpt 45, the word “**I**” as a self mention that used to explicit reference to author. “**I**” is the reference to the speaker that is Michelle Obama who wants to recognize Jim Reynolds and Tom Wilson for taking the lead as co-chairs of the Public Safety Action Committee. Meanwhile, in the excerpt 42, the word “**we**” is self mention. “**We**” indicates that the speaker *Michelle Obama* and the audience.

#### Excerpt 22

*So you in this room know firsthand the impact that **we** can have when this city truly invests in **our** children. (Sentence 10)*

In excerpt 43 above, there is an interpersonal metadiscourse marker, interactional dimension and the type is self mention. The word “**we**” and “**our**” show self mention that have the function is to draw the audience into the speech from the speaker and influence the audience’s position. Like discuss in the previous excerpt, “**we**” indicates Michelle Obama as the speaker and the audience as the hearers. Then “**our**” and “**we**” have similar functions. It means Michelle Obama asked to the society to always care with our children.

### 4. Engagement Markers

The researcher found 31 or 8,2% engagement markers. The engagement markers are explained below:

#### Excerpt 23

*And as business leaders, **you** all know that this city’s young people are **your** future workers, **your** future customers. (Sentence 109)*

Engagement markers found in the excerpt 57. The word are *you* and *your*. It indicates listener’s participation. The use of second person is a face-to-face way to create friendly relations and shorten the distance between the speaker and listeners. It is easier to have a conversation with audience and express speaker’s emotions.

#### Excerpt 24

*But if there is even one thing we can do, even one step we can take to save another child, or another parent from the grief that’s visited families like Hadiya’s and so many others here today, then **don’t we have an obligation to try?** (Sentence 101)*

Engagement marker found in the excerpt 58. In the sentence *don’t we have an obligation to try?* That is engagement marker. The sentence is involving question. By asking the audience, it is a way for the audience to get involved in the speech, and in order to the audience truly understand and also stay focus with what was discussed.

## Excerpt 25

*And that's where I want to start today -- by talking about our city and the neighborhoods that make us who we are. (Sentence 20)*

*As **you** all know, Chicago is truly a city of neighborhoods, separated by parks and boulevards. (Sentence 21)*

The word **you** is engagement marker; it is used to indicate listener's participation. The word **you** in sentence 21 is indicate the audience as listener's. It means that the speaker more explained to the audience that *Chicago is truly a city of neighborhoods, separated by parks and boulevards.*

## CONCLUSION

After analyzing the data, the researcher can be concluded that, there are 374 interpersonal metadiscourse markers which consist of two categories; those are interactive and interactional metadiscourse. There are 158 (42,3%) interactive metadiscourse and 216 (57,7%) interactional metadiscourse. Kinds of interactive metadiscourse are transitional, frame marker, evidentials and code glosses. There are 145 (38,9%) transitional markers has become the highest percentage, because transitional is conjunction that functions to relate one sentence with other sentences, next is 9 (2,4%) frame markers and the function is to indicate topic shift, and the last 4 (1,1%) evidential refers to source of information from the text. Meanwhile, kinds of interactional metadiscourse found in Michelle Obama's Speech are 40 (10,7%) hedges has function to steer the reader toward considering the possibility, then is 8 (2,1%) boosters; it is to indicate certainty or close dialogue, then is 2 (0,5%) attitude markers with the function is demonstrate surprise, agreement and soon, after that 135 (36%) self mentions. Self Mentions is the dominant interactional metadiscourse, because when Michelle Obama speaks about her opinion, she gives statement to audience who became author for the audience and the last for interactional category is 31 (8,2%) engagement marker and the function is to meet the listener's expectation by addressing them as discourse participant.

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