



**PROBING INTERPERSONAL METADISCOURSE
IN PARLIAMENTARY GENRES; A SURVEY OF KENYAN
PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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Abstract:

Parliamentary deliberations rely on using language in order to convince or persuade. They involve purposeful and strategic manipulation of language to achieve communication goals. Metadiscourse is crucial to the art of persuasion and may be viewed in two ways: textual and interpersonal metadiscourse. This article focuses on interpersonal metadiscourse which involves interactional and inclusive aspects of the author. This study analysis aspects of interpersonal metadiscourse used in selected Kenyan parliamentary committee reports so as to achieve the genre's communicative purpose. The findings offer insights into the interplay between parliamentary discourse styles and interpersonal metadiscourse as well as contribute to the pool of knowledge on parliamentary discourse and rhetorical analysis. The framework for analysis was based on Hyland's (1998, 2005) model of metadiscourse. A descriptive research design was used with corpora being generated from fifteen parliamentary committee reports sampled from the National Assembly, county assemblies and the Senate of Kenya. Findings from the study indicate that diverse aspects of interpersonal metadiscourse including engagement markers, personal markers, hedges, and boosters are melded together; geared at guiding legislators through the reports and influencing their understanding, maintaining contact, providing perspective for interpretation, as well as convincing and persuading. Successful writing depends on how writers establish their stance, conduct interpersonal negotiations with readers and balance their claims through rhetorical choices. In the end, interpersonal metadiscourse in parliamentary reports serves to convey author's presence, credibility, readers' engagement, commitment to the message and organizes reports to ease interpretation, evaluation of information given and spark appropriate responses.

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1. Introduction

According to Coffin (2003), genre analysis is used to analyse and describe the rhetorical structure and stylistic features of texts. Usually, individuals make rhetorical and linguistic choices guided by the principles of the institution to which they belong. Parliament is one such institution. Parliamentary discourses whether written or spoken exhibit a linguistic structure that is meant to enhance their communicative potential. The interaction that takes place in parliamentary can be regarded as a form of cognitive and rhetoric process that reflects both institutional and non-institutional discursive conventions (Ilie, 2006).

According to Ilie (2006), the word parliament is derived from the old French *parlement*, originally from *parler* which means to speak. Nonetheless, it is used in this study as a generic term for legislative assemblies both at the county and national level. Parliamentary discourse belongs to the deliberative genre of political rhetoric which is defined as an oratorical discourse targeting an audience that is expected to make a decision by evaluating the argument made (Ilie, 2003). It is a convention-based form of institutionalized communication between institutional agents (parliamentarians) for the benefit of the citizens concerned.

Fairclough (1995) argues that texts are battlefields where writers and speakers use language to put forward their views and push their agenda. Therefore, from a rhetorical perspective, parliamentary discourse can be regarded as a political discourse genre embedding norm-regulated interactions that take place among politically elected or nominated legislators for deliberative and decision-making purposes. These deliberations usually display recurring institutionalized communication patterns and distinct rhetorical strategies.

This article delves into the use of interpersonal metadiscourse in PCR. Interpersonal metadiscourse which is also referred to as interactional is used to embody the relationship between the participants in the discourse and functions to help the reader into the text and make it more interactional.

2. Literature Review

According to Minsun (2020), the ways writers use language to express their opinions and interact with their readers have long been recognized as an important feature of language. To account for these linguistic resources, different terms have been used: Evaluation (Hunston & Thompson, 2000), attitude (Halliday, 1994), epistemic modality (Hyland, 1998), stance (Hyland, 1999), meta-discourse (Hyland and Tse, 2004), and interaction (Hyland, 2005) are several examples.

Metadiscourse is distinct from propositional aspects of discourse and refers to aspects of the text that embody writer-reader interactions or those relations that are only internal to the discourse (Hyland, 2005). Halliday (1978, 2006) argues that language is a form of socialization; influencing how individuals get socialized and carry out significant actions within contexts of situations. SFL upholds that language structure is intimately interconnected to social purpose and context.

Halliday (1994, 2006) further contends that people use language in an attempt to give expressions to their experience, interacting with the audience and organizing their expressions cohesively hence the three metafunctions of language, namely, ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The metafunctions help in enhancing the communicative purpose of a text. In this view, the ideational function of language corresponds to the concept of propositional content and is used to present experiences and ideas while the interpersonal purpose corresponds to the aspect of expressing, evaluating, and understanding feelings. The textual function, on the other hand, uses language to organise the text itself and corresponds to what is said about the subject and the reader(s).

According to Kopple (2002), metadiscourse brings out features of a text that relate to its organization and stance towards either its subject or audience. It allows the writers and audience to interact and relationships within the text, negotiate, and make decisions (Hyland & Tse, 2004). This is critical in PCRs where members' contributions and feedback are paramount in the adoption of the reports. The use of interpersonal metadiscourse in PCRs is grounded on the premise that PCRs are an engagement in which the committees project themselves to signal their commitments, engagements, and attitudes.

According to Ilie (2015), if we are to understand the role of parliamentary discourse practices in identifying, defining, and articulating the citizens' concerns and interests, we need to explore the recurring linguistic patterns and rhetorical strategies used by legislators that help to reveal their ideological commitments, hidden agendas, and argumentation tactics.

Metadiscourse offers a way of understanding the interpersonal strategies of a writer to uncover rhetorical and social distinctiveness which writers use to organise their text and manifest their attitudes towards the text and their audience. Hyland & Tse (2004) maintain that interpersonal metadiscourse stimulates writers to interact with readers; helps create their genre and convey their outlook. In PCRs, metadiscourse is used in facilitating arguments, supporting propositions, and interacting with the audience. It serves as the linguistic strategy used to organise the structure of the PCR or the stance towards either its content or the audience.

Ilie (2015) argues that parliaments are the most dynamic political institutions of democratic societies meant for political deliberations, problem-solving, and decision-making. The genre of parliamentary discourse includes various sub-genres such as motions, bills, statements, plenary debates, questions, petitions, and committee reports. For instance, parliamentary statements are sought by legislators from the executive to provide specific information about government policies, projects, or any other action undertaken or to be undertaken by the government (Gichohi, 2009). Parliamentary

debates/speeches, on the other hand, are formal deliberations on a particular topic that take place at the plenary and are strictly controlled by parliamentary standing orders and presided over by the speaker. Parliamentary committee reports (PCRs) on their part are a result of close inquiry and deliberation by members of a particular parliamentary committee and are meant for debate and endorsement at the plenary.

Studies in parliamentary genre and parliamentary discourse such as those by Ilie (2000, 2003, 2006, 2015); Bayley (2004), Van Dijk (2000, 2004), Steiner (2004), Wodak and Van Dijk (2000), and Treimane (2011) focus on parliamentary debates and little on the committees of parliaments. The focus of this article is the analysis of interpersonal metadiscourse features used in selected Kenyan parliamentary committee reports so as to achieve the genre's communicative purpose.

3. Method

In this study, analysis of metadiscourse is based largely on Hyland's (1998, 2005) description of metadiscourse and its use to enhance communicative potential in a text. In this way, metadiscourse may be viewed in two ways: textual metadiscourse and interpersonal metadiscourse. Textual metadiscourse helps to bring out rhetorical strategies in a coherent way while interpersonal metadiscourse involves interactional and inclusive aspects of the author and may convey his/her attitude to the subject.

The study adopted a descriptive research design. Descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events and leads to organizing, tabulating, depicting, and explaining outcomes (Glass & Hopkins, 1984). It employs both descriptive and inferential statistics that describe the object as they are and determines cause and effect.

The sample for the study consisted of fifteen reports taken from the County Assemblies, the National Assembly, and the Senate of Kenya. The number was considered representative because we noted minimal variation was noted within the genre being studied.

Hyland (2002) observes that a text classified as an instance of a particular genre is a reproduction of that genre's conventions, thus large samples may not be necessary for genre surveys because they tend to be redundant. Moreover, according to Van Dijk (2004), parliamentary committee reports are characterized by fixed, recurrent communication patterns that both shape and restrict their distinct form and therefore the sample size was thought as adequate to provide data to describe the rhetorical strategies and infer their communicative significance.

The researcher highlighted the various metadiscursive features used in parliamentary committee reports and explained the rationale for their use based on the framework in Table 1.

Table 1: Aspects of Metadiscourse Proposed by Hyland (1998, p. 442)

Interpersonal Metadiscourse	Function	Example
Hedges	Withhold writer's full commitment to statements	Might/perhaps/it is possible/about, Suggest/appear/ to some extent.
Boosters	Emphasize force or writer's certainty in message	In fact, /it is clear/obvious, must/ have to /will/have/should
Attitude markers	Express writer's attitude to propositional content	Surprisingly/I agree/X claims, we feel/ we believe/ we think
Engagement markers	Explicitly refer to or build relationship with reader	Note that/you can see/honourable members/ mr. speaker.
Personal markers	Refer to the writer	I/we/my/mine/our/the committee

Subsequently, a breakdown was done to establish the distribution of different metadiscoursal features as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Data on Metadiscourse in PCRs

Interpersonal Metadiscourse	Prevalence in Rhetorical Moves in different Level of Parliament (County Assembly, National Assembly and Senate)									
	Preface		Introduction		Method		Result		Recommendation	
	<i>f</i> %	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	
Hedges										
Boosters										
Attitude Markers										
Relational Markers										
Personal Markers										
Total										

4. Findings

An analysis was done on the prevalence of various aspects of metadiscourse within different moves of PCR based on the Preface, Introduction, Method, Results, and Recommendation (PIMRaR) move structure described in the larger study. From the analysis of County Assembly (CA) reports the distribution of aspects of interpersonal metadiscursive was most prevalent in the Introduction move at 27%, followed by the Preface at 25%, Method at 23%, Recommendation at 16%, and Results at 11%. The prevalence of each aspect of metadiscourse in various moves is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of Interpersonal metadiscourse in various Moves of CA Reports

Type of Metadiscourse	Prevalence in Rhetorical Moves								
	Preface	Introduction		Method		Result		Recommendation	
Hedges	4 16	6	24	7	28	5	20	3	12
Boosters	19 21	20	23	10	11	12	13	28	32
Attitude Markers	6 16	12	32	8	22	6	16	5	14
Relational Markers	48 29	52	31	36	21	18	11	14	8
Personal Markers	28 26	26	24	36	33	10	9	8	8
Total	105 25	116	27	99	23	49	11	58	14

Interpersonal metadiscursive strategies on the other hand were most prevalent in the Recommendation move at 27%, followed by Introduction at 20%, the Preface at 19%, Method at 18%, and Results at 16% in National Assembly (NA) reports as presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Prevalence of Interpersonal metadiscourse in various Moves of NA Reports

Type of Metadiscourse	Prevalence in Rhetorical Moves								
	Preface	Introduction		Method		Result		Recommendation	
Hedges	4 21	7	37	4	21	2	10.5	2	10.5
Boosters	20 15	20	15	4	3	6	5	80	62
Attitude Markers	10 16	7	11	3	5	40	62	4	6
Relational Markers	25 33	26	34	9	12	10	13	6	8
Personal Markers	16 15	18	18	50	49	6	6	12	12
Total	76 19	77	20	70	18	64	16	104	27

Interpersonal metadiscursive strategies on the other hand were most prevalent in the Introduction section at 23%, followed by the Recommendation move at 22%, Method at 21%, Results at 18%, and Preface at 16% in the Senate reports as presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Prevalence of Interpersonal metadiscourse e in various Moves of Senate Reports

Type of Metadiscourse	Prevalence in Rhetorical Moves								
	Preface	Introduction		Method		Result		Recommendation	
Hedges	8 31	8	31	6	23	4	15	0	0
Boosters	18 14	18	14	6	5	34	27	52	41
Attitude Markers	5 11	6	13	2	4.5	2	4.5	30	67
Relational Markers	48 21	56	25	54	24	44	19	25	11
Personal Markers	21 14	40	27	52	34	21	14	16	11
Total	90 16	128	23	120	21	105	18	123	22

From the study, it was evident that interpersonal metadiscourse was dominated by engagement markers, personal markers, and boosters in all PCRs. The engagement markers are crucial in PCRs as they consist of features that address legislators, focus their attention, and include them as participants in the text. It mostly involves explicitly addressing the speaker and honourable members as a way of involving them in the reports. Personal markers are also a signature of PCRs as they are used frequently to show the committee ownership of the report and the collective nature of parliamentary

discourse. Boosters and hedges in PCRs indicated the level of confidence and focus of the committee. Boosters were employed to show the resolute nature of PCRs and the high commitment of the members. Hedges comprised less than 10% of all the PCRs and are not a common feature of parliamentary reports. Attitude markers were not extensively used in PCRs probably due to the formal nature of PCRs or owing to lack of appraisal of propositional information by the committees. Figure 1.0 summarizes the prevalence of interpersonal metadiscourse in different PCRs.

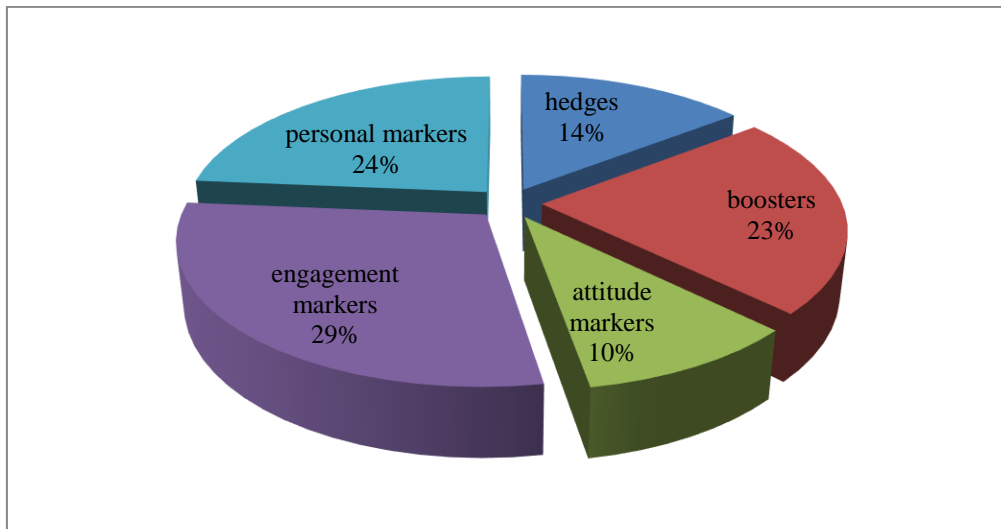


Figure 1: Aspects of Interpersonal Metadiscourse

5. Discussion

As representative bodies, parliaments are democratically constituted forums for political deliberation, problem-solving, and decision-making. Discourses enacted in parliament not only reflect political, social, and cultural configurations in an ever-changing world, but they also contribute to shaping these configurations discursively, cross-rhetorically, and cross-culturally (Ilie, 2015). Metadiscourse offers a way of understanding the interpersonal strategies of a writer to uncover rhetorical and social distinctiveness which writers use to organise their text and manifest their attitudes towards the text and their audience. In this context, interpersonal metadiscourse which is also referred to as interactional is used to embody the relationship between the participants in the discourse and functions to help the reader into the text and make it more interactional as illustrated in Extract 1.

Extract 1: Extract on Metadiscourse from NA Report

“The Committee finds that certain companies were involved in widespread malpractices with the Judiciary. An example is JKUATES Ltd. Which was contracted by the Judiciary as a consultant for various projects. This company was directly sourced under the guide of Government to Government procurement yet its income was privately shared to the tune of 95%.”

The Committee recommends that the Director of Public Prosecutions swiftly institutes investigations and proceedings against those directly linked to financial impropriety and mismanagement as enumerated in the culpability chapter of this report.

The Committee also recommends that those found guilty by a court of law make good the loss attributable to them in accordance with article 226(5) of the Constitution."

Interpersonal aspects used in the extract include; boosters such as 'directly' in the expression 'those directly linked to the financial impropriety' which is a certainty adverb used to show the level of confidence and the specific category to be investigated. There is also the use of personal markers which mostly involves the repetition of the nominal phrase, 'the committee' which gives collective ownership of the PCR and establishes commitment, for instance, the expression, 'the committee recommends, the committee finds' show high confidence and certainty in the outcomes and suggestions made. This is vital in PCRs because metadiscourse is integral to the context in which it occurs and is linked to the norms and expectations of a particular discourse community.

Aspects of interpersonal metadiscourse give legislators clues about the committees' commitments toward the proposition made and assist to understand and respond to the report better. It is an evaluative form of discourse that expresses the authors collectively defined, but disciplinarily circumscribed persona (Hyland, 1998). In this sense, PCRs represent one channel of political discourse where legislators have to deliberate and reach one generally accepted product (PCR) binding to all members. Therefore, the use of these strategies in PCRs is an expression of the committee's collective commitments within the constraints of parliamentary language, norms, and rules of expression. Parliamentary activities are actually carried out by means of discussions, consultations, and disputes, which take place both in plenary sessions and in committees (Ilie, 2015). For instance, hedges are used for presenting claims in cautious, modest, and accurate ways. They soften down one's voice so that they can meet listeners' or reader's expectations and gain acceptance from the discourse community.

Moreover, Interactional metadiscourse involves the reader in the argument and consists of rhetorical strategies used in the PCR to express a perspective towards their propositional information and gives legislators clues about their commitment towards the claims made. This eases the understanding of reports and to some extent involves readers collaboratively in textual construction, propositional judgment, and decision making. Interpersonal strategies involve the reader collaboratively in the development of the text by commenting on and evaluating the content through modality and expression of the opinion of the writers and their relationship and interaction with their readers (Hyland, 2010). Therefore, interpersonal metadiscursive strategies help to guide the legislators through the report by engaging them in the PCR in accordance with parliamentary norms and procedures as discussed below.

5.1 Hedges

Hedges are used to express partial commitment to the truth value of the text and show the writer's uncertainty or reluctance to be categorical in the presentation of propositional information. Lakoff (1973) avers that hedges are used to express uncertainty or to soften the speech to be polite. In PCRs therefore, hedges present propositions and arguments as provisional and seek to indulge legislators in their ratification. However, hedges are sparingly used in PCRs since the reports must offer direction and guidance to other members. They therefore include strong convictions and commitments to the propositions made in the text with the aim of persuading others to adopt their views and recommendations. Lexico-grammatical forms such as epistemic modal verbs, lexical verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and nouns were used to bring out the few instances of hedges in PCRs. Hedges constitute a small proportion of interpersonal strategies used in sampled PCR with only 5% in NA reports, 6 % in CA reports, and 5% in Senate reports as shown in Figure 2.

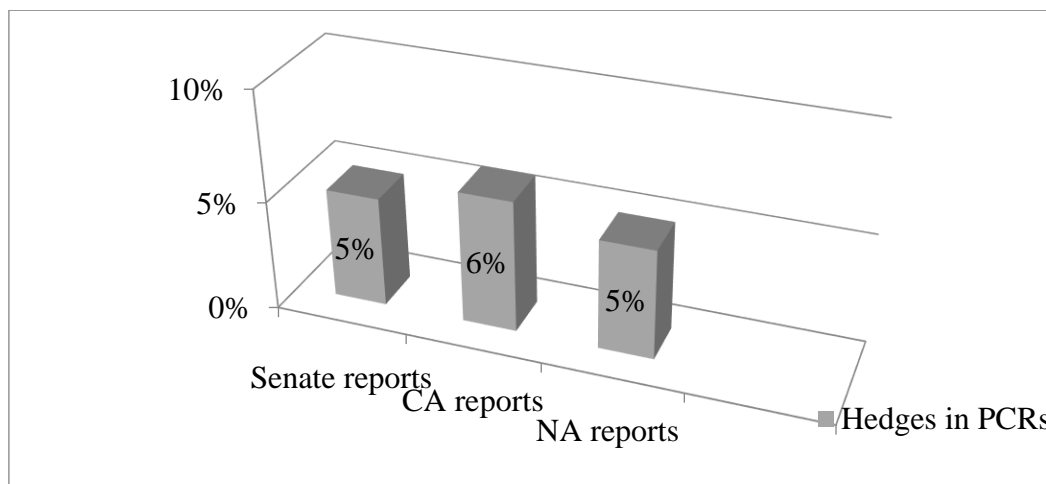


Figure 2: Prevalence of Hedges in PCRs

Furthermore, the frequency of various hedges in PCRs was calculated and the results are summarized in Table 6.

Skelton (1988) argues that the main function of hedges is to convey information in an unobtrusive and unostentatious way. Similarly, Hyland (2005), asserts that hedges function as means of conveying a cautious approach to the statements being made, which might be a strategy used by the legislators to allow debate and contributions from fellow members before the reports are adopted at the plenary. Therefore, hedges may indicate the committee's decision to recognize other voices, viewpoints, or possibilities and their willingness to debate and negotiate with other members to arrive an agreed final outcome. The pragmatically correct use of appropriate types of hedges serves as a natural instrument of language use in PCRs although the Results and Recommendation moves rarely use them preferring to be candid, definitive, and fully committed by using boosters.

Table 6: Distribution of Different Aspects of Hedges in PCRs

Hedges		Level of PCR and frequency					
		CA		NA		Senate	
Category	Examples	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Epistemic modal verbs	May, might, could, can, would	9	36	5	26	8	31
Probability adverbs	Probably, perhaps, maybe, apparently	2	8	4	21	3	11
Lexical verbs	Suggest, appear, claim, assume, doubt, estimate	6	24	6	32	9	35
Epistemic expressions	Likelihood of, possibility of, to some extent, in general, in most cases	8	32	4	21	6	23

5.2 Boosters

Boosters show writers' certainty in propositional information, express commitment, and emphasize the force of propositions. In PCRs boosters are used to stress the argument and emphasize the propositions made by indicating the assurance and confidence of the authors in the veracity of the proposition made. The use of certainty in PCRs boosts the logical persuasions as well as the credibility and acceptability of the report. According to Hyland (1998), appropriate use of boosters in writing not only heightens writers' epistemic stance but also promotes solidarity with the readers. Hyland highlights that boosters are writer-oriented features of interaction, which project the possible accuracy or credibility of a writer's claim. In PCRs, boosters are used to emphasize the action to be taken as a form of recommendation of the report. Their prevalence levels are significantly high with NA reports sampled having a 33%, while CA reports had 21% and Senate reports with 22% as shown in Figure 3.

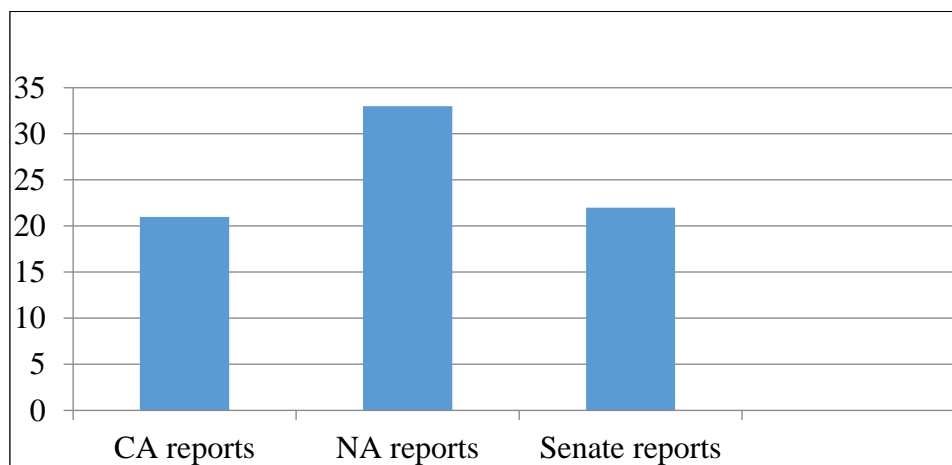


Figure 3: Prevalence of Boosters in PCRs

Boosters allow the writer to anticipate and preclude alternative, conflicting arguments by expressing certainty instead of doubt using expressions such as must, have to, will, have, should, show, demonstrate, prove, reveal, find undoubtedly, clearly, actually, always to show confidence in the claims and the necessity for action

recommended. The data on the frequency of boosters in various PCRs is summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Distribution of Different Aspects of Boosters in PCRs

Boosters		Level of PCR and frequency					
		CA		NA		Senate	
Category	Examples	f	%	f	%	f	%
Epistemic modal verbs	Must, have to, will, have, should	30	34	70	54	40	31
Certainty adverbs	Undoubtedly, clearly, actually, always	15	17	4	3	26	20
Lexical verbs	Show, demonstrate, prove, reveal, find	42	47	48	37	60	47
Emphatic expressions	In fact, without a doubt	2	2	8	6	2	2

According to Hyland & Tse (2004), boosters bring out the author’s stance on a colossal scale by narrowing discursive space and when used in PCR recommendation comes out as more of directives than mere suggestions. Boosters create an emphatic impression in the reader by breathing an aura of certainty, necessity, conviction, and assurance in the observations and/or recommendations of PCRs as shown in the extract below from NA Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) and the Judiciary Special Audit Report of May 2014.

Extract: NA Extract on Boosters

The Committee recommends as follows:

1. *“Henceforth, the Chief Justice **should** annually report as required by Section 5(2)(b) of the Judicial Service Act, 2011; to Parliament on progress towards implementation of the Judiciary Transformation Framework and progress of the Judiciary.”*
2. *“The Chief Justice **should** forthwith refund the leave allowances irregularly drawn from the Judiciary. He **should** henceforth exercise effective general direction and firm control of the Judiciary as provided for under Section 5(2)(c) of the Judicial Service Act, 2011.”*
3. *“For his failure to provide leadership, the Chief Justice **must** take personal responsibility for allowances paid to the Commissioners of the JSC for attending meetings that were not convened with his knowledge and approval. Similarly, an audit of all such meetings **should** be undertaken and the responsible Commissioners surcharged.”*
4. *“For disregarding the Treasury’s written advisory on the management of Public Funds, the Chief Justice **must** take personal responsibility for all payments irregularly made on his instructions.”*
5. *“The Chief Registrar **should** forthwith effect recovery measures on irregularly paid allowances to JTSC Commissioners, members of staff, allowances paid and not already earned as at this date, and improperly accounted for imprest.”*

6. *“The Judicial Service Commission **should** initiate investigations on the staff who benefitted from accelerated promotions, assess them through a job evaluation program and place them within their rightful job cadres.”*
7. *“The Judicial Service Commission **should** forthwith cease from getting involved in operational activities of the Judiciary.”*

5.3 Attitude Markers

Attitude markers express the writer’s opinions, appraisal of propositional information, and attitude towards it by conveying surprise, obligation, agreement, importance, or regret. PCRs employ attitude markers to help persuade legislators by foregrounding shared attitudes, values and by expressing the authors’ affective values towards the report and the audience. Of all interpersonal metadiscursive strategies used in CA reports, 9% are attitude markers, 8% in Senate reports, and 16 % in NA reports as shown in Figure 4.

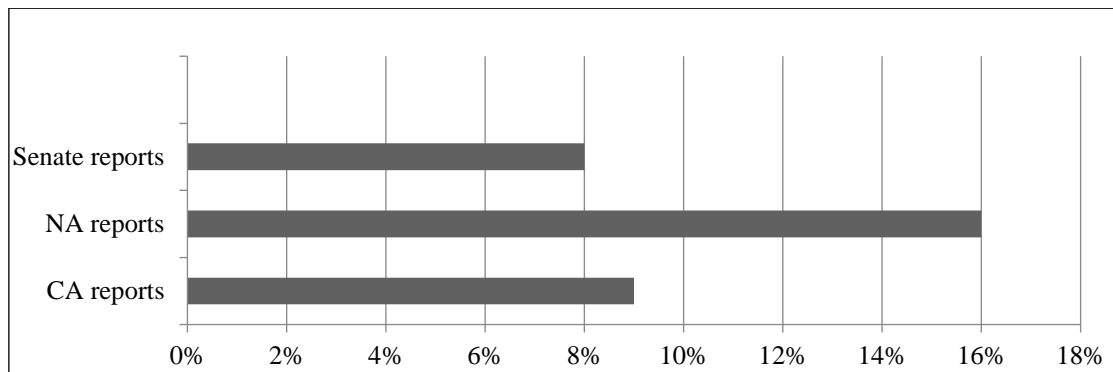


Figure 4: Prevalence of Attitude Markers in PCRs

Attitude markers indicate the writer’s opinion or assessment of a proposition and include deontic modals, attitudinal adjectives, adjectival constructions, and cognitive verbs which are used to mark attitude in PCRs. PCRs are legal documents that mostly use formal language hence the relatively low use of attitudinal adverbs and cognitive verbs. Findings on the frequency of attitude markers in various PCRs are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Frequency of Different Aspects of Attitude Markers in PCRs

Attitude Markers		Level of PCR and frequency					
		CA		NA		Senate	
Category	Examples	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Deontic modal verbs	Have to, must, should	25	68	56	88	33	73
Attitudinal adverbs	Unfortunately, remarkably, preferably	0	0	2	3	0	0
Adjectival constructions	It is surprising, it is alarming, it is necessary, what is important	10	27	4	6	12	27
Cognitive verbs	We feel, we believe, we think	2	5	2	3	0	0

5.4 Engagement Markers

Engagement markers explicitly address readers, by selectively focusing their attention, relating to them, anticipating their possible objections, and including them as participants in the text. Engagement markers show the involvement of legislators in PCRs by addressing them directly through expressions like *Mr. Speaker Sir, Honourable Members*; which are constantly used to involve them in the argument raised in the report. Therefore, they explicitly address readers to draw them into the discourse. Hyland (2005) claims that the use of engagement markers is a text characteristic that is considered as writers' recognition of their potential readers by acknowledging their presence and pulling them along with their arguments, focusing their attention and leading them to the right interpretations. Engagement markers constitute 19% of interactional aspects of metadiscourse in NA reports and 39% in both Senate reports and CA reports as shown in Figure 7.

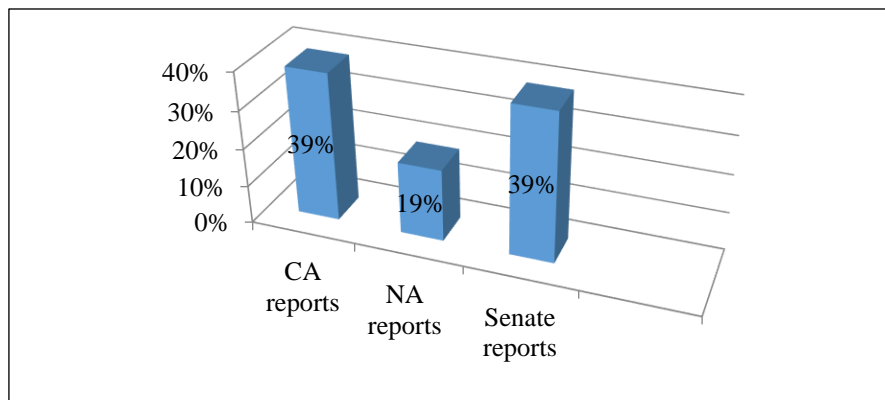


Figure 7: Prevalence of Engagement Markers in PCRs

Moreover, engagement markers establish relationships and focus more on audience participation through the use of strategies such as second-person pronouns, imperatives, question forms, and certain noun phrases. It involves use of questions, directives, imperatives such as *see, note, and consider*, and obligation modals such as *should, must, and have to* as well as references to shared knowledge based on parliamentary rules and procedures. The rhetorical value of engagement strategies is to directly address the readers as text participants and acknowledge the need to adequately meet readers' expectations of inclusion and solidarity. Results on frequency of engagement markers in various PCRs are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8: Distribution of Different Aspects of Engagement Markers in PCRs

Engagement Markers		Level of PCR and frequency					
		CA		NA		Senate	
Category	Description & Examples	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Audience references	Acknowledge audience presence and address them as participants in argumentation	45	45	17	28	71	46
Rhetorical and real questions	Engage readers overtly	3	3	1	2	0	0
Appeals and references to shared context	Position readers within shared discourse community and bring them to agreement with writers' argument	52	52	42	70	84	54

From Table 8, it is evident that appeal and reference to shared context is the most common aspect of engagement markers followed by audience reference. This finding is not surprising because PCRs build credibility by giving a background of the committee, membership, guiding standing orders, and source of mandate. Moreover, there is constant audience reference either through engagement markers or addressing other members of the legislature in order to involve and persuade them. Questions are scarce in PCRs but when they are used, they are meant to provoke the audience to think and act in a certain way as demonstrated in Extract 3.

Extract 3: NA Extract on Engagement Markers

“The Committee also found that direct procurement was used in the purchase of second-hand furniture. The Committee was not satisfied with the explanation for direct procurement. Mr. Shollei was the accounting officer who sanctioned these awards and payments to PricewaterhouseCoopers to the tune of 59,699492.00.

It seems unbelievably coincidental that this figure is almost the exact same the Judiciary paid Kenya Prisons as DEPOSIT for supply of furniture. This begs the question: were these mere whimsical numbers thrown around by an organization in a rush to spend public funds, or the result of careful and meticulous market research and valuation? It looks more likely these figures were the result of hurried/impulsive spending of public funds.”

In Extract 3 above, the committee engages the readers by asking a question; ‘*were these mere whimsical numbers thrown around by an organization in a rush to spend public funds....*’ In the same vein, the committee provides an answer with the aid of bringing the audience to agree with their argument (that there was a lot of pilferage of public resources at the judiciary). The question may also be seen as meant to arouse pathos appeal by inciting members about the wastage of public funds hence stirring up anger and persuading them to respond in a certain way.

Engagement markers rhetorically position the audience, pulling readers into the discourse at critical points, predicting possible objections, and guiding them to particular interpretations. This is an apt description of engagement markers in PCRs where the members are called upon to scrutinize the report as participants and adopt it. In this way, a collaborative process ensues where they may amend the report, adopt the report, or

even reject it. PCRs address their readers constantly and use engagement markers and evidentials to draw on shared understandings and emphasize solidarity by use of expressions such as ‘Honourable members, Mr. Speaker Sir,’ description of background and citations of parliamentary procedures, standing orders, and the constitution to build credibility and persuade.

4.5 Personal Markers

Personal markers reflect the degree of authors’ presence through the use of first-person pronouns, possessives, and self-mentions (Hyland, 2005) and represent their decision to stand behind assertions or to avoid such commitments. They are realized through first-person pronouns, possessive determiners, and third-person nominal phrases. Through personal markers, PCRs are able to fulfill different interpersonal functions such as discourse organization, marking the committee’s role in the report, and negotiating propositions made to allow deliberations and collective decision-making as suggested by Ilie (2015). The choice of the rhetorical metadiscourse depends on the purpose of the PCR and a variety of metadiscourses. In essence, within the membership of a particular speech community, writers use metadiscourse to bring out their opinions and engage with the audience. 26% of interactional metadiscourse observed in NA reports were personal markers while in CA reports they constituted 25% and 26% in Senate reports as shown in the figure below.

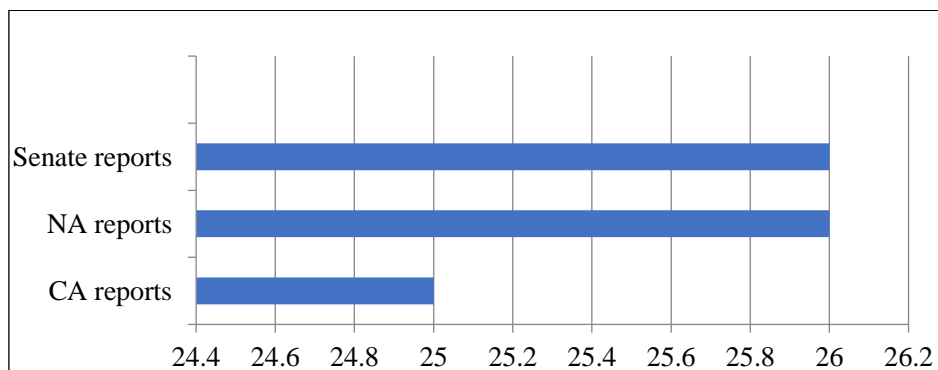


Figure 6: Prevalence of Personal Markers in PCRs

Personal markers function to signal the writers' relationship with the reader and their discourse community. They give ownership to PCRs establish commitment, and credibility, and develop a connection with the audience mostly through repetition of the phrase ‘the committee’ which is abundantly used in all PCRs. Data on the distribution of personal markers in CA reports reveal that 10% represent first-person pronouns such as I and we, 7 % are possessive determiners such as our and my, while 83% are noun phrases especially the expression ‘the committee’ which refers to the crafters of the PCR or the committee originating the report. In NA reports first person pronouns represent 10%, while nominal phrases constitute 82%. From Senate reports first-person pronouns such as I, we, and possessive determiners such as my, our made up 4% of all personal markers

each while nominal phrases such as *'the committee'* constituted 92%. Consequently, it is apparent that the nominal phrases are the most preferred personal markers in PCRs.

It is worthwhile noting that PCRs are usually presented by chairpersons of committees at the plenary on behalf of other members. They move motions (initiate debates) for the adoption of the reports by highlighting the gist of the PCR (which usually involves presenting the Preface). Moreover, including personal pronouns gives the reports a more realistic approach and makes them interactional hence more credible. Self-mentions in PCRs use of the nominal phrase, *the committee*, personal pronouns *I* and *we*, and possessive determiner *my* in PCRs as illustrated in the extract below.

Extract 4: Extract on Personal Markers

"Acknowledgement

Mr. Speaker Sir, on behalf of the Committee, I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to your office and that of the Clerk of the senate for facilitating all the actions that led to the successful visit to Mombasa County on 13th April 2015."

Furthermore, the usage and frequency of metadiscourse across different levels of parliament show minimal dissimilarity. The outcome may be explained by Hyland's (2005) assertion that metadiscourse is used to negotiate meaning in a text, express a viewpoint, and engage readers as members of a particular discourse community. The assertion captures the nature of parliamentary metadiscourse as explained by Ilie (2003) who studied metadiscourse used in parliamentary debates and found out that some of the rhetorically most effective strategies of parliamentary metadiscourse operate simultaneously on several levels of discourse including various manifestations of the participants' cognitive and inter-relational acts aimed at controlling, evaluating, adjusting and negotiating communicative goals. In this regard, though PCRs are viewed as a written genre they embellish multiple oral presentation features since they are presented like speeches in the plenary and they are usually addressed to the speaker.

Ilie (2015) argues that a distinguishing characteristic of parliaments as institutions is that parliamentary work essentially consists of speaking (monologic communication) and debating (dialogic communication). Metadiscursive strategies in PCRs help to articulate particular aspects of author-audience relations, role shifts, discursive scope, multiple-audience targeting, and as expression of stance.

PCRs encompass interactive metadiscourse features which organize the materials with regard to the readers' needs and expectations and interpersonal/interactional metadiscourse features which are intended to unite the writer and the readers together. The minimal variation between aspects of metadiscourse in different levels of Parliament may reinforce the claim by Ilie (2003) that parliamentary discourse is punctuated by various salient features that characterize parliamentary interaction and are constrained by institutional rules, traditions, modes of address, and stance. Effective use of metadiscourse in PCRs promotes coherence, makes texts reader-friendly, and eases their comprehension hence enhancing persuasion.

Moreover, it is evident that PCR's use strategies that help to organise the text, show the attitude toward the subject, and influence members' interpretation as reflected by the use of other interactive and interactional strategies such as boosters, self-mentions, and engagement markers. Metadiscourse is therefore crucial in organizing and producing persuasive PCR's based on the norms and constraints of parliamentary discourse as it relies heavily on evidential markers and appeals to shared context. The choice of metadiscourse is influenced by the structure of the reports, communicative purpose, and the constraints of parliamentary discourse. Therefore, metadiscourse in PCR's establishes a relationship between the committee and the legislators through the report which helps them to negotiate with each other and build a consensus on the outcome of the responses expected.

Finally, the use of metadiscourse to signal the text's organization, evaluate its content, and convey attitude is crucial in PCR's since they are meant for debate and adoption at the plenary hence legislators need to be properly guided so as to participate effectively. Moreover, metadiscourse does not contribute to propositional arguments of PCR's (Hyland, 2010). On the contrary, it serves to convey author's presence, credibility, readers' engagement, and commitment to the message and organizes reports to ease interpretation, and evaluation of information given and spark appropriate responses.

6. Conclusion

The objective of this paper was to highlight and explain the usage of rhetorical metadiscourse in Parliamentary Committee Reports. It has been revealed that interpersonal metadiscourse is used in PCR's to create a coherent text and engage the audience hence enhancing comprehension and persuasion. The use of metadiscourse to signal text organization, evaluate its content, and convey attitude is crucial in PCR's since they are meant for debate and adoption at the plenary. Furthermore, although, PCR's are viewed as a written genre they embellish multiple interactional strategies to facilitate debate at the plenary.

Parliamentary committee reports involve a set of rhetorically structured interactional strategies used to signal, highlight, mitigate, and evaluate texts. It helps to articulate particular aspects of the relationship between the author(s) and the audience following conventionalized norms and patterns of interaction. It may involve the use of parliamentary norms such as modes, acknowledging audience presence, and addressing them as participants in the argumentation. Metadiscourse reveals the writer's awareness of the readers and their need for elaboration, clarification, guidance, and interaction hence their use in PCR's to persuade the members to take a particular view depending on the propositions presented.

Moreover, interpersonal metadiscourse brings out the thinking and writing process of a writer through signal words in the text which inform readers on the development of thought as well as text. Attitudes towards the text and audience are revealed through signal words/phrases such as; the committee prays that we believe, the

committee felt, it is imperative among others. Expressions like Mr. Speaker Sir, I will show, compare, explain, and conclude; bring out the confidence levels and commitment to the propositions.

Undeniably, writing is considered as a social engagement in which writers interact with their readers not only to convey messages but also to help their audience to understand them. It means that writers predict their readers' requirements and expectations, and respond to them. PCRs are a form of parliamentary communication in which the authors inform their colleagues about their findings and persuade them to support them.

Finally, interpersonal metadiscourse reflects the nature of PCRs as an interaction between the committee and other members of the legislature. PCRs are thus drafted with an oral presentation and debate in mind. Consequently, they use interactional features more to engage readers, emphasize ideas, show attitude towards the propositions made, and demonstrate collegial ownership.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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