

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study by presenting the background of the research, which explains the issues and reasons for conducting the study. It also presents the research questions, the objectives of the study, and the significance of the study. Finally, this chapter describes the scope and limitations to clarify the focus and boundaries of the research.

1.1 Background of The Study

In recent years, public figures' speeches at international forums have increasingly attracted global attention. According to Oshin (2017), public speaking aims to prepare students to speak effectively to a global audience, thus requiring both knowledge of speaking principles and an awareness of intercultural differences. This is because speeches not only convey information but also build relationships between speakers and audiences from different cultural backgrounds. Researchers observed that Kim Namjoon's (RM) speech at the APEC CEO Summit was widely shared and discussed on social media, primarily because his language style felt close, inclusive, and easily understood by a global audience. Similarly, Gamble & Gamble (2021) in *Public Speaking in a Global World: Inclusion, Ethics, and Critical Thinking* emphasize as a speaker, one has to know intercultural communication competence include intercultural sensitivity, awareness and effectiveness, which aligns with Kim Namjoon's approach in highlighting K-culture's soft power for global solidarity. This phenomenon suggests that the way speakers interact through language plays a crucial role in the success of an international speech.

Ideally, speakers at international economic forums such as APEC CEO Summit are dominated by political leaders and top corporate executives. However, reality revealed a unique phenomenon in Kim Namjoon's participation. The 2025 APEC CEO Summit Korea in Gyeongju attracted a record 2,224 attendees, including 1,852 representatives from global corporations and leaders from top companies such as Citigroup, AWS, and Johnson & Johnson (Newswire, 2025). As reported by Choi (2025), the event also included 21 APEC economic leaders,

emphasizing its elite economic focus. Amid this dominance of political and corporate figures, Kim Namjoon emerged as the first K-pop artist and the only boy group leader invited to deliver a keynote address. This contrast between the dominant presence of economic leaders and the inclusion of cultural figures highlights a unique communication phenomenon, suggesting that audience engagement at global forums may depend not only on institutional authority but also on how speakers construct interactions through language. Therefore, this situation becomes an important basis for examining how Kim Namjoon's interactional language strategies function in addressing high-level international audiences.

The APEC CEO Summit is recognized as one of the most influential economic and business forums in the Asia-Pacific region. The forum serves as a meeting platform for political leaders, multinational company executives, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and global stakeholders to discuss economic growth, innovation, sustainability, and international cooperation. According to APEC (2023), the summit aims to strengthen collaboration between business sectors and governments in responding to regional and global economic challenges. The event regularly features world leaders, CEOs of multinational corporations, and influential public figures from APEC member economies, demonstrating that the forum requires effective international communication skills to engage highly diverse audiences. Therefore, delivering a speech at the APEC CEO Summit requires not only credibility and expertise but also strong interactional communication strategies to maintain audience engagement in a global context.

This phenomenon highlights the importance of examining how audience engagement is constructed in high-level international forums. Although speakers at economic summits are typically selected based on political or corporate authority, Kim Namjoon's positive reception suggests that effective engagement may also be shaped by interactional language strategies. Public speaking in global contexts is often perceived as formal and one-directional, which can limit audience involvement and reduce communicative impact (Usera, 2025). Therefore, further research is needed to understand how speakers build interactive relationships with audiences, especially when the speaker does not come from a conventional

leadership background (Putra, 2024). Investigating Kim Namjoon's speech becomes important because he successfully delivered social and economic messages to high-level business leaders despite being a cultural figure.

To analyze how engagement is constructed in Kim Namjoon's speech, an appropriate theoretical framework is required. One relevant theory for studying this phenomenon is interactional metadiscourse theory. Interactional metadiscourse is important to study because it helps explain how speakers build interpersonal relationships with audiences through specific language choices, especially in international public communication contexts. Interactional metadiscourse involves those aspects of the text that explicitly organize the discourse and engage the audience, such as hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions, and engagement strategies (Hyland, 2005), while it specifically refers to aspects of the text that relate to the interpersonal relationship between writer/speaker and reader/audience, including pronouns like 'we' and rhetorical questions to build solidarity (Ädel & Mauranen, 2010). The use of expressions such as "we," "I believe," or rhetorical questions in the speeches demonstrates the speaker's attempt to engage the audience directly and reduce distance between speaker and listeners. By examining these linguistic features, researchers can better understand how speakers create inclusiveness, persuade audiences, and maintain audience engagement in global forums. Therefore, interactional metadiscourse theory provides an appropriate framework for analyzing how Kim Namjoon constructs interaction with a high-level international audience.

Academically, various relevant studies have examined interactional metadiscourse in public speeches as objects of linguistic analysis, demonstrating that speeches are a medium rich in interpersonal engagement and rhetorical strategies. These studies show that metadiscourse approaches are effective in uncovering how speakers use linguistic resources to foster audience rapport and persuasion in global contexts. Among the most pertinent studies focusing on interactional metadiscourse markers and their realization are Balog (2022) in "*An Analysis of Queen Elizabeth II's Coronavirus Speech Using Hyland's Metadiscourse Theory*" published in the *International Journal of Arts, Sciences and Education*, which specifically emphasized interactional metadiscourse resources,

particularly engagement markers and self-mentions, to analyze how the speaker established solidarity and emotional connection with audiences during the COVID-19 crisis; and Oktavia & Ekawati (2024) in *“Interactional Metadiscourse Markers in the US House Republican Primary Debate”* (Linguistik, Bahasa, dan Pengajaran (LingPoet)), who narrowed the focus to engagement markers and self-mentions for persuasive impact in political discourse. Furthermore, the phenomenon of metadiscourse in presidential rhetoric is supported by Akbar & Ekawati (2024, p. 2) in *“Interactive Metadiscourse on Joe Biden’s Presidential Addresses”* (Linguistik, Bahasa, dan Pengajaran (LingPoet)), who explored transition and frame markers for coherence and audience persuasion. These three studies share similarities in terms of the object of study—public speeches—and the analytical approach involving interactional metadiscourse dimensions. Therefore, this research builds on those methodological foundations by offering a focused analysis of interactional metadiscourse in Kim Namjoon’s APEC CEO Summit Speech.

Based on the research gap identified, this study offers a solution through an in-depth analysis of interactional metadiscourse in Kim Namjoon’s APEC CEO Summit speech. By identifying the types and functions of interactional metadiscourse used, this study aims to explain how Kim Namjoon builds interaction with the audience in his APEC CEO Summit speech. This analysis is expected to provide an overview of effective communication strategies in global economic forums. The findings of this study may serve as a reference for public speakers, educators, and language researchers in designing more interactive and audience-oriented speeches. Thus, this research contributes to the development of discourse studies and to the improvement of global public communication practices.

To clarify the urgency of this research, it is important to observe how interactional metadiscourse actually operates in Kim Namjoon’s speech at the APEC CEO Summit. The meaning and effectiveness of a speech lie not only in the content of the message, but also in how the speaker builds a relationship with the audience through specific language choices. As an illustration, a statement such as “We believe that the future is built by the choices we make today” not only conveys information but also engages the audience through the use of “we” as an engagement marker and “believe” as a hedge, demonstrating an inclusive attitude

and not imposing claims. The use of these markers creates a sense of togetherness between the speaker and the audience, while simultaneously reducing hierarchical distance in international economic forums. This interaction demonstrates that the meaning of a speech does not stand alone in linguistic propositions, but rather emerges from interpersonal strategies deliberately constructed through interactional metadiscourse. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the types and functions of interactional metadiscourse in Kim Namjoon's speech to explain how these language strategies build interactions with international audiences, as well as to provide theoretical and practical contributions to the study of discourse analysis and to understand global public communication.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What types of interactional metadiscourse are used in Kim Namjoon's speech at the APEC CEO Summit?
2. What functions do the interactional metadiscourse markers serve in building interaction between Kim Namjoon and the audience in the APEC CEO Summit speech?

1.3 Objectives of The Study

1. To identify the types of interactional metadiscourse used in Kim Namjoon's APEC CEO Summit speech.
2. To explain the functions of interactional metadiscourse in building interaction between the speaker and the audience.

1.4 Significance of The Study

This research makes important theoretical and practical contributions to linguistics. Interactional metadiscourse analysis helps understand how language is used to build interpersonal relationships in the context of public speeches. Theoretically, this research enriches discourse analysis studies by presenting the rarely researched speeches of popular cultural figures at global economic forums as the subject of study. Practically, the results of this research can serve as a reference for public speakers, educators, and students in developing more interactive speeches. Therefore, this research is expected to provide tangible benefits for the development of linguistics and public communication practices.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

This study has a limited scope to ensure the analysis remains focused and in-depth. The limitations are necessary to align the research objectives and avoid overly broad discussions. This study only analyzes interactional metadiscourse based on Hyland's theory contained in Kim Namjoon's speech at the APEC CEO Summit, without discussing textual metadiscourse, audience responses, or non-verbal aspects such as intonation and gestures. Therefore, the results of this study are not intended to be generalized to all public speeches, but rather serve as an in-depth study of one specific speech context.