

## SELF-MENTIONS IN CLIMATE CHANGE DISCOURSE BY KING CHARLES III

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Climate change discourse provides a fertile ground for research in communication, linguistics, and discourse studies (Grist 2008; Isopp 2024; Nerlich et al. 2010). Anchored in a quantitative linguistic paradigm, the article presents a mixed-methods study on the use of self-mentions (for instance, *I*, *we*, etc.) in a corpus of speeches on the topic of climate change delivered by King Charles III. The study aims at establishing the frequencies of the occurrence of self-mentions and learning about their pragmatic roles in the corpus. To that end, the corpus of King Charles III's speeches on climate change was collected and analysed. The results of the corpus analysis indicated that *I* was the most frequent self-mention, which King Charles III utilised in order to impart a personalised dimension to his discourse on climate change. The findings and their discussion are further presented in the article.

**Keywords:** a corpus-assisted study, climate change discourse, King Charles III, self-mentions.

## САМОУПАТУВАЊАТА ВО ДИСКУРСОТ ЗА КЛИМАТСКИТЕ ПРОМЕНИ НА КРАЛОТ ЧАРЛС III

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Дискурсот за климатските промени нуди плодна почва за истражувања во полето на комуникацијата, лингвистиката и проучувањата на дискурсот (Grist 2008; Isopp 2024; Nerlich et al. 2010). Низ квантитативно лингвистичка парадигма и користејќи мешани методи, овој труд дава приказ на истражување за употребата на самоупатувањата (на пример, *јас*, *ние* итн.) во корпусот на говори, на тема климатски промени, од кралот Чарлс III. Целта на трудот е да се утврди колку често се појавуваат самоупатувањата и која е нивната прагматичка улога во корпусот. Следствено, беше составен и анализиран корпус на говори од кралот Чарлс III за климатските промени. Резултатите од анализата на корпусот покажуваат дека *јас* е најчесто употребено самоупатување, коешто кралот Чарлс III го користи за да му даде лична димензија на дискурсот за климатските промени. Во трудот се претставени резултатите и дискусијата.

**Клучни зборови:** студија со корпус, дискурс за климатските промени, кралот Чарлс III, самоупатувања.

## 1 Introduction

For more than three decades, research into climate change discourse has produced a substantial bulk of literature that elucidates the issue of climate change from the vantage point of corporate, media, political, and societal actors (Adger et al. 2001; Kapranov 2015, 2023a; Füßel 2007; Gillings and Dayrell 2023). Paraphrasing the title of a seminal publication on climate change discourse by Boykoff (2011), we may contend that political actors who speak for climate change (ibid.) have a substantial say on the issue (Kapranov 2022, 2023b). Among the chorus of political actors, the voice of King Charles III appears to be one of the most recognisable and potent (O'Neill et al. 2013; Rotaru 2023). Whilst King Charles III (further in the article – the King) is not a political actor per se who is directly involved in the system of British government, his stance on climate change, nevertheless, has wide-reaching repercussions in the political world (Betts et al. 2022; Hutcheon 2003). Consequently, it seems highly relevant to carry out research on his climate change discourse and, in particular, on discursive means that help determine and manifest the King's unique voice. Self-mentions can be considered one of the discursive features that articulate the King's distinctive say on the issue of climate change. It should be accentuated that the King's use of self-mentions in the context of climate change discourse has been neither problematised nor researched in the literature.

Self-mentions, which are typically expressed by the first person pronouns *I*, *me*, *my*, *mine*, *we*, *us*, *our*, and *ours*, are considered to be “the most visible and powerful way of indicating authorial presence” (Dontcheva-Navratilova 2023: 1). In other words, self-mentions communicate the presence of the writer or author explicitly (Hyland 2005: 178). Harkening back to Foucault (1988), Ivanič (1998), and Hyland (2001), the pragmatic use and frequencies of self-mentions have been amply researched in discourse studies, in particular in scientific discourse and academic writing (Afsari and Kuhi 2016; Bozkurt 2021; Hyland 2001; Hyland and Jiang 2017; Junnier 2020; Kapranov 2020; Maňáková 2021), whereas the pragma-communicative roles of self-mentions in climate change discourse are not adequately illuminated (Kapranov 2023c; Wang and Hu 2023). An apparent lack of scholarly attention to the frequency of the occurrence and the pragmatic uses of self-mentions in climate change discourse is quite astounding, given that, for instance, a frequent use of the self-mention *we* may impart a discursive piece a certain sense of community and communal engagement, as exemplified by sentences (a) and (b) below.

- (a) *We* are adapting to climate change.  
(Berrang-Ford et al. 2011: 25)
- (b) *People* show adapting behaviour to climate change.  
(Grothmann and Patt 2005: 199)

In (a), *we* presupposes inclusion (i.e., the so-called “inclusive we”) and the involvement of the community, whereas in (b) the word *people* also denotes the general idea of humanity, yet with a less personalised reference. Additionally, it can be argued that a more distant and even aloof tonality in (b) manifests an instance of academic style, which is characterised by a subdued authorial voice, whereas in (a) it is clearly marked by the self-mention *we*. Hence, it can be posited that the pragma-communicative use of self-mentions facilitates the creation of a more personalised discursive space in contrast to the stretches of discourse without self-mentions, as in (b). Having illustrated the pragma-communicative value of self-mentions, the present article introduces and discusses a mixed-methods study that aims to shed light on the

frequency of the occurrence and pragma-communicative roles of self-mentions in a corpus of speeches, delivered by the King, on the issue of climate change. Specifically, the study addresses the following research questions (RQs):

- RQ 1:** What is the frequency of the occurrence of self-mentions in the corpus of speeches on climate change delivered by the King?
- RQ 2:** What pragmatic roles are associated with the most frequent self-mentions in the corpus?

Prior to providing answers to the RQs, a literature review on self-mention in discourse is outlined in Section 2. Thereafter, the study is presented and discussed in conjunction with the RQs. Finally, the article concludes with the summary of the findings, the limitations of the study and directions for future research.

## 1 Self-mention: A literature review

As already mentioned in the introduction, research on self-mentions in the context of climate change discourse is rather limited. However, there is abundant literature on the frequency and pragma-communicative roles of self-mentions in academic writing, scientific and political discourse, respectively (Ädel 2023; Albalat-Mascarell 2023; Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor 2019; Chen and Nassaji 2015; Harwood 2005; Hryniuk 2018; Hyland 2001, 2005, 2008, 2015, 2020; Hyland and Jiang 2017; Ivanič 1998; Kapranov 2021a; Karahan 2013; Trepczyńska 2016; Vučićević and Rakić 2023). Let us briefly outline the literature that focuses on self-mentions in the aforementioned discursive spaces.

Judging from the literature, there is a canonical view of self-mention as a marker of authorial presence and identity in academic writing and scientific discourse (Hyland 2001, 2005, 2008; Hyland and Jiang 2017; Ivanič 1998). However, the authorial presence, which is explicated by self-mentions (for instance, *I*, *we*, etc.), encompasses not only the so-called mechanical one-off stamp on the text performed by the author, but irradiates the author's identity throughout the text (Ivanič 1998). Put differently, the use of self-mentions in academic texts serves as the author's invitation to the dialogue with the readers and opens the communication channel to liaise with them (Hyland 2001, 2005; Ivanič 1998). It should be emphasised that the view of self-mentions through the lenses of authorial presence and identity is evocative of the ideas of Foucault (1972, 1988), who alludes to the role of authorial presence in discursive formations that are conceptualised as socio-culturally and historically embedded stretches of discourse (Foucault 1972), in which the authors mark their presence explicitly as a part of discursive practices.

Speaking of discursive practices, the literature is replete with empirical studies that explore the role of self-mentions in academic writing (Ädel 2023; Harwood 2005; Hryniuk 2018; Hyland 2015, 2020; Kapranov 2020, 2021a, 2021b; Trepczyńska 2016). One of the prominent foci that this line of research offers involves an emphasis on the frequency and use of self-mentions by the cohort of academic writers whose first language (L1) is English and their counterparts, who are speakers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The literature posits what whilst the former cohort of academic writers typically utilises self-mentions rather generously, thus contributing to the visibility of their authorial voices (Hyland 2001, 2005, 2015, 2020), the latter group, in general, resorts to the use of self-mentions sparingly (Dong et al. 2024; Hryniuk 2018; Kapranov 2021a; Karahan 2013; Trepczyńska 2016; Vučićević and Rakić 2023). It is inferred from the literature that the explicit marking of authorial presence, which appears natural and accepted in the English L1 academic community (Ädel 2023; Harwood 2005; Hyland 2001), is

much less common in academic writing produced by EFL writers, especially on the intermediate level of EFL proficiency (Kapranov 2021b; Karahan 2013; Trepczyńska 2016). Given that novice EFL writers as well as EFL undergraduates have been taught to use the authorial *we* quite often, they appear to employ other forms of self-mention less frequently in contrast to the cohorts of English L1 academic writers (Kapranov 2020; Karahan 2013; Trepczyńska 2016). So far, we may summarise the literature on self-mentions in academic writing and scientific discourse by positing that the use and frequencies of self-mentions are subject to the writers' English L1 or EFL backgrounds as well as the associated cultural variables, i.e. Anglophone versus non-Anglophone cultural contexts which the scientific text is written in (Diani and Freddi 2023; Dontcheva-Navratilova 2016; Galaidin and Bednárová-Gibová 2023; Hůlková et al. 2019; Kapranov 2020; Olmos-Lopez et al. 2022; Sanz 2011).

Similarly to the current scholarly attention to self-mentions in academic writing and scientific discourse, self-mentions have been quite extensively addressed in a number of studies on political discourse (Abusalim et al. 2022; Albalat-Mascarell 2023; Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor 2019; Kashiha 2022). The literature has established that self-mentions represent an invaluable rhetorical device in political discourse that facilitates the creation of a personalised and authoritative political image (Albalat-Mascarell 2023; Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor 2019). In particular, it has been found that self-mentions contribute to the positive portrayal of the politician's self (Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor 2019) by means of establishing interpersonal rapport with the voters (Abusalim et al. 2022). Furthermore, self-mentions in political discourse are utilised in manifesting the politician's stance and attitude and articulating ideological propositions (Chiluwa 2015; Kashiha 2022).

In summary to the literature on self-mentions in academic, scientific, and political types of discourse, it seems possible to encapsulate the following contention: self-mentions play an important pragmatic role in manifesting a personalised authorial dimension that comes to the fore, first of all, in academic writing and interpersonal communication, and political discourse. Notably, however, little is known about the pragma-communicative roles of self-mentions in climate change discourse. In the subsequent section of the article, I present a corpus-assisted study that addresses the present gap in scholarship by means of investigating self-mentions in the corpus of the King's speeches on climate change.

## 2 The present study

As previously indicated in the introduction, the present study seeks to illuminate the frequency of the occurrence and pragma-communicative roles of self-mentions in the corpus of the King's speeches on climate change (see the RQs in Section 1 of the article) delivered between 2005 and 2023. The study is anchored in the theoretical premises found in Foucault (1972, 1988) that address the role of authorial presence and identity in discursive formations (Foucault 1972), i.e. stretches of discourse that are socio-culturally and historically situated. From the methodological perspective, however, the study follows the methodological guidelines that are proposed and developed in Albalat-Mascarell (2023) as well as Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor (2019), who combine the corpus-assisted methodology with a qualitative component. As far as the qualitative analysis of self-mentions is concerned, Albalat-Mascarell (2023) as well as Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor (2019) posit that self-mentions in political discourse, in particular, orally delivered political speeches, play several pragmatic roles, such as evidential, reflexive, opinion-holding, etc., which are summarised in Table 1 in conjunction with the examples taken from Albalat-Mascarell (2023: 7-8).

**Table 1.** The classification of pragmatic roles of self-mention based upon Albalat-Mascarell (2023) and Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor (2019)

#	Pragmatic Roles	Definitions
1	Evidential	Self-mentions that are associated with the manifestation of the speaker's knowledge of the facts, which may also involve reference to someone else's words, e.g. "And I'm really amazed, Elaine, as I talk to Republican senators, how well they regard and respect Hillary Clinton" (Albalat-Mascarell 2023: 7).
2	Reflexive	Self-mentions that are associated with the manifestation of the speaker's autobiographical self that involves their thoughts, inner reflections, and experiences, e.g. "When I was secretary of state, we actually increased American exports globally 30 percent" (Albalat-Mascarell 2023: 8).
3	The opinion-holder	Self-mentions that allow the speaker to share their opinions and beliefs by means of emphasising their own positions in order to distance themselves from their opponent, e.g. " <i>We</i> truly do believe that law enforcement is not a force for racism or division in our country" (Albalat-Mascarell 2023: 7).
4	The policymaker	Self-mentions that concern the speaker's presentation and discussion of the policies they promise to support when elected, e.g. "And, fifth, <i>we</i> have a tax plan that targets tax relief to middle-class individuals" (Albalat-Mascarell 2023: 7).
5	The situated speaker	Self-mentions that relate to the speaker's awareness of the audience and the need to control, monitor and evaluate the impact of the message on the audience, e.g. "Now, let <i>me</i> say this, it is absolutely the case ..." (Albalat-Mascarell 2023: 7).

In the study, I follow the abovementioned classification of the pragmatic roles of self-mentions with several modifications. Specifically, in light of the fact that the British monarch is not an elected politician, the pragmatic role "the policymaker" is factored out in the corpus analysis in the study. Obviously, the King's views on climate change could be argued to exert a substantial amount of indirect influence both domestically and world-wide. However, let us bear in mind that the category "The policy maker" in Albalat-Mascarell (2023: 7) concerns only elected politicians who follow through on their electoral policies after they have been elected and have assumed office (see Table 1). In contrast, the King is neither an elected politician, nor a policy maker per se who is directly involved in climate change-related legislative acts. Furthermore, it should be specified that the King's coronation took place on 6 May 2023, whereas the present corpus of his speeches involves the period of time from 2005 to 2023, i.e., the period during which he was for the most part referred to as His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales. Consequently, we may argue that as The Prince of Wales he had less political influence in comparison to the reigning monarch at that time, i.e. Queen Elizabeth II. Thus, taking into account the aforementioned arguments, it seems sensible to factor out the category "The policy maker" from the qualitative analysis.

At the same time, however, the King's role in the political life of the United Kingdom should not be completely ignored. That is why the category "The opinion-holder" in the typology of pragmatic roles proposed by Albalat-Mascarell (2023) has been modified in the study as "The

opinion-holder as an indirect political influencer". The peculiarity of the modified category consists in the pragmatic role of expressing the King's opinions. However, given that the King's opinions on the issue of climate change are indirectly attended to by the British political circles, the category reflects a combination of (i) explicitness of the King's opinions on climate change and (ii) implicitness of his opinions that have the potential to influence British and international politicians. In this role, the King could be referred to as an indirect political influencer. Obviously, it should be remarked that not the entire spectrum of British political actors would be paying attention to the King's opinions on climate change (Anderson 2013). In light of the aforementioned considerations, the following pragmatic roles of self-mentions are used in the qualitative part of this investigation: (i) evidential, (ii) reflexive, (iii) the opinion-holder as an indirect political influencer, and (iv) the situated speaker. In the qualitative examination of the corpus, self-mentions are manually coded in conjunction with the aforementioned pragmatic roles.

Another aspect of the qualitative analysis involves the manual tagging of the corpus for the inclusive and exclusive forms of *we* as well as *us*, *our*, and *ours*. In particular, the inclusive use of *we* and its forms (i.e., *us*, *our*, and *ours*) is deemed to involve instances in which the King refers to himself as a speaker and to his addressees seen together with him as the speaker (hence, the term "inclusive *we*"), whilst the exclusive use pertains to the occasions in which the King refers to himself as a speaker and another individual or group who are not addressees and separates them, i.e., excludes them from the addressees (see, for instance, Scheibman (2004) on inclusive and exclusive patterning of *we* and its forms in English). In other words, the occurrences of *we* and *us*, *our*, and *ours* are examined qualitatively in order to determine whether or not the King includes his addressees or excludes them.

The quantitative part of the analysis involves the processing of the corpus of the King's speeches on climate change in the computer program AntConc (Anthony 2022). Specifically, each of the King's speeches on climate change is computed in AntConc in order to calculate the frequency of the occurrence of the self-mentions *I*, *me*, *my*, *mine*, *myself*, *we*, *us*, *our*, *ours*, and *ourselves*. Thereafter, the frequency of the occurrence of self-mentions is processed in the software program Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 (IBM 2011) in order to establish the respective means (M) and standard deviations (SD) of self-mentions in the corpus.

As already mentioned, the corpus of the study comprises of the King's speeches on climate change whose transcripts are freely available on the official website of the British royal family [www.royal.uk](http://www.royal.uk). In total, 20 speeches on the issue of climate change were identified and downloaded from [www.royal.uk](http://www.royal.uk) (the total number of words 36 272, M words 1 813.6 and SD words 842.1). They were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively as explained above. The results of the analysis are further presented and discussed in Subsection 3.1 of the article.

## 1.1 Results and discussion

As outlined in the introduction, RQ 1 focuses on the quantitative analysis that seeks to establish the frequency of the occurrence of self-mentions in the corpus of speeches on climate change delivered by the King. Guided by RQ 1, it has been ascertained that there are 1462 self-mentions (M 146.2, SD 189.8) in the corpus. The total occurrence of self-mentions in normalised value per 1000 words equals 40.3, which is comparable to similar statistics that are reported in the literature on academic writing and scientific discourse by the Anglophone authors (Ädel 2023; Dong et al. 2024; Harwood 2005; Hyland 2001, 2005, 2015, 2020; Kapranov 2021a, 2021b;

Karahan 2013; Treczyńska 2016; Vučićević and Rakić 2023). This finding lends support to the literature (Diani and Freddi 2023; Dontcheva-Navratilova 2016; Galaidin and Bednárová-Gibová 2023; Hůlková et al., 2019; Kapranov 2020, 2021c; Olmos-Lopez et al., 2022; Sanz 2011) which argues that the adequate presence of self-mentions constitutes an integral part of Anglophone discourse.

The quantitative analysis of the individual self-mentions (i.e., *I*, *me*, *mine*, *my*, *myself*, *we*, *us*, *our*, *ours*, and *ourselves*) has yielded the descriptive statistics that are summarised in Table 2.

**Table 2.** The frequency of the occurrence of self-mentions in the corpus

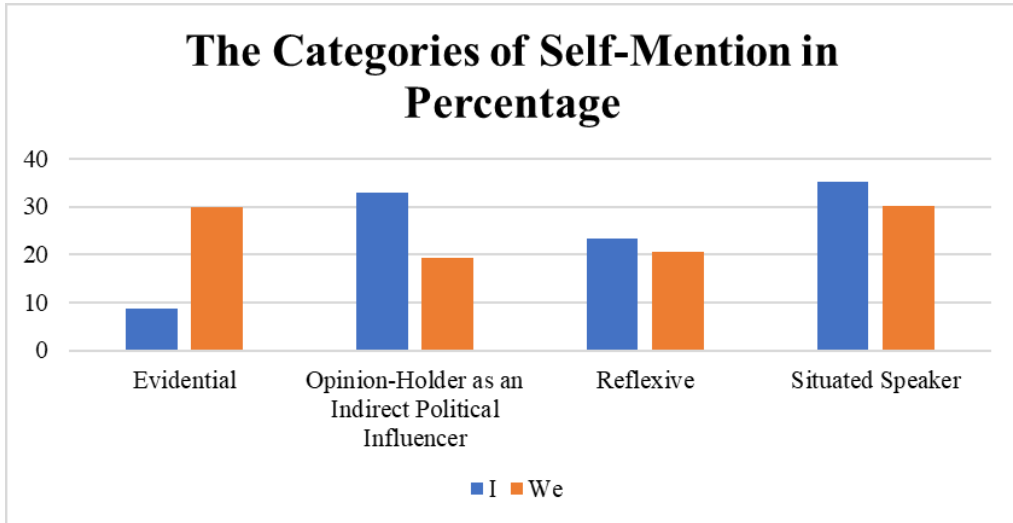
#	Self-Mention	Total N	M	SD	Maximum	Minimum
1	<i>I</i>	558	27.9	13.8	56	4
2	<i>Me</i>	74	3.7	1.9	8	1
3	<i>Mine</i>	2	0	0	1	1
4	<i>My</i>	90	4.5	3.1	12	1
5	<i>Myself</i>	7	1.4	0.8	3	1
6	<i>We</i>	464	23.2	16.8	62	4
7	<i>Us</i>	93	5.2	2.9	12	1
8	<i>Our</i>	158	7.9	5.7	22	2
9	<i>Ours</i>	2	1.0	0	1	1
10	<i>Ourselves</i>	14	1.8	0.7	3	1

It is observed in Table 2 that the frequency of the self-mention *I* is the highest in the corpus. It is rather closely followed by the frequency of the occurrence of *we*. However, the results of the paired sample t-test indicate that the difference between *I* and *we* is not significant at  $p < .05$ ,  $t(38) = 0.144$ ,  $p = .0444$ . This finding is suggestive of a fairly similar distribution of both *I* and *we* in the King's speeches on climate change in the corpus. Moreover, this finding is further supported by the normalised frequencies of the occurrence of *I* and *we* per 1000 words, which are rather similar indeed, namely 15.4 (*I*) and 12.8 (*we*).

Another finding that stems from Table 2 involves a relatively low frequency of the occurrence of the absolute forms *mine* and *ours*, respectively. In addition, the reflexive forms *myself* and *ourselves* are rather infrequent, especially in comparison with the highly frequent *I* and *we*. This finding buttresses the prior studies (Kapranov 2021a, 2021b, 2021c), which have also established that the self-mentions *mine*, *ours* and *ourselves* are not frequent in the contemporaneous Anglophone discourse, in particular, in scientific and academic genres.

Now, let us draw our attention to the discussion of RQ 2 in the study, which seeks to uncover a range of possible pragmatic roles associated with the most frequent self-mentions (i.e., *I* and *we*) in the corpus. Based upon the taxonomy of pragmatic roles provided by Albalat-Mascarell (2023) and Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor (2019), which has been modified by the author of this article (see Section 3), the qualitative analysis of the corpus has resulted in the findings that are emblematised by Figure 1 below. In Figure 1, the pragmatic roles of self-mentions *I* and *we* are plotted as a percentage of the total number of their occurrences. In other words, the total frequency of *I*, which is 558, equals 100% and the pragmatic roles (see Table 1) are represented as a percentage of the total number of *I*. The pragmatic roles of the self-mention *we* are represented in the same way.





**Figure 1.** The pragmatic roles of self-mentions *I* and *we* in percentage

Another remarkable finding that is evident from Figure 1 is associated with the King's proclivity to use self-mentions *I* and *we* in their pragmatic role that the literature refers to as "the situated speaker". It should be reiterated that according to Albalat-Mascarell (2023) and Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor (2019), the pragmatic role "the situated speaker" is associated with the self-mentions that are utilised discursively in order to signal the speaker's awareness of and involvement in the communicative situation on a par with the audience. The King's pragmatic use of self-mentions *I* and *we* as "the situated speaker", coupled together with the absence of the self-mention *we* in "the royal we", is interpreted in the present study as the King's endeavour to establish interpersonal rapport with the audience. Such an interpretation is further supported by multiple instances of the use of *I* and *we*, respectively, in the pragmatic role of "the situated speakers", for instance, (i) "Before *we* begin, though, and if you will allow me, *I* would just like to make three brief observations..." (A speech by The Prince of Wales at a meeting about Forests and Climate Change at Lancaster House on 29.10.2015) and (ii) "*I* could not be more pleased that you have been able to join today's meeting. ... *I* must express my warmest gratitude to you all for making space in your busy schedules to be here" (A speech by The Prince of Wales at a meeting about "Putting Health at the Centre of the Climate Change debate: The Role of the Health community in the Run Up to COP21" at The Royal Society, London, on 25.02. 2015).

Both (i) and (ii) provide a typical example of how the King rather skilfully utilises the self-mentions *I* and *we* in order to build connections with the audience. Based upon the literature (Abusalim et al. 2022; Albalat-Mascarell 2023; Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor 2019; Chilwa 2015; Kashiha 2022; Kapranov 2021a, 2021b, 2021c), the King's rapport with the audience, which in the present corpus is manifested by the frequently occurring self-mentions *I* and *we*, facilitates a positive portrayal of the King's image in the context of climate change discourse. By using the self-mentions *I* and *we* in the pragmatic role of "the situated speaker" in his speeches on climate change, the King gives a positive impression of being on an equal footing with the audience, to whom the issue of climate change is invariably important.

Notably, the distribution of the self-mentions *I* and *we*, which play the pragmatic role of “the situated speaker” is rather similar, 35.1% (*I*) and 30.1% (*we*). It should be observed that *I* and *we* are also quite similarly distributed in the “reflexive” pragmatic role (20.3% and 20.5%, respectively), which manifests the King’s autobiographical self, inclusive of his thoughts, inner reflections, and experiences (Albalat-Mascarell 2023), as seen in excerpt (1).

- (1) *I* remember giving a lecture at Cambridge some 16 years ago on the subject of Global Security, when *I* was invited to come and talk to a programme they had there in which *I* included similar concerns.  
(A speech at the Third May Day Business Summit on Climate Change on 01.05.2009)

In the present corpus, the “reflexive” pragmatic role of *I* and *we*, respectively, resonates with the literature (Chen and Nassaji 2015; Ivanič 1998; Hyland 2001, 2005, 2008; Hyland and Jiang 2017; Karahan 2013; Vučićević and Rakić 2023), which posits that self-mentions irradiate the authorial identity throughout the text, be it written or oral. In particular, the frequently occurring self-mention *I*, which is used in the “reflexive” pragmatic role, is evocative of the Foucauldian contention (1972, 1988) concerning self-mentions as an explicit marker of authorial presence in discursive formations that are socio-culturally and historically situated. In line with Foucault (1972, 1988), the self-mention *I* in (1) seems to be utilised in its reflexive pragmatic role in order to provide the audience with the social and historic context, which the King shares as the background to his opinion on the issue of climate change.

As far as the expression of the King’s opinion on climate change is concerned, it is evident from Figure 1 that in contrast to *we*, the self-mention *I* is used, preponderantly, in the pragmatic role of “the opinion-holder as an indirect political influencer”. It should be, perhaps, reiterated that the aforementioned role of self-mentions involves the expression of the speaker’s opinions, beliefs, and positions (Albalat-Mascarell 2023) that, potentially, might influence the British political circles and, perhaps, political actors worldwide. For instance, in excerpt (2) below, *I* is utilised in its pragmatic role of “the opinion-holder as an indirect political influencer” in order to introduce the King’s argument on sustainable electricity distribution as a measure to mitigate the negative consequences of the global climate change:

- (2) *I* believe the challenge for the scientific community today is to be at least as creative as it has in the past, but to develop solutions that respect the boundaries defined by sustainability. For instance, there are huge opportunities for intelligent electricity distribution, with decentralized pathways and energy produced close to where it is consumed.  
(A speech at the Nobel Laureates Symposium on Climate Change on 27.05.2009)

Whilst the expression of opinion on climate change seems to be associated with the self-mentions *I* and, less so, with *we* (see Figure 1) in the pragmatic role “the opinion holder as an indirect political influencer”, the opposite is observed in the distribution of self-mentions in the “evidential” pragmatic role, which is largely related to the use of *we* (30%). The “evidential” pragmatic role of *we* is affiliated with the manifestation of the King’s knowledge of the facts and their source, as well as external sources of reliable information (Albalat-Mascarell 2023). It is further illustrated by excerpt (3) below.

- (3) ... as Lord Stern has told us, any difficulties which **we** face today will be as nothing compared to the full effects which global warming will have on the world-wide economy and on the well-being of every man, woman and child on our planet.  
(A speech at the Bali to Poznan Corporate Leaders Group on Climate Change Conference on 16.07.2008)

In (3), the “evidential” pragmatic role of *we* is related to the piece of evidence provided by another speaker (i.e., Lord Stern), which is further incorporated by the King into his narrative about climate change. Presumably, the evidential dimension is utilised by the King in order to impart his speech a more authoritative tonality on the matter. In this regard, it should be emphasised that the literature (Abusalim et al. 2022; Albalat-Mascarell 2023; Albalat-Mascarell and Carrió-Pastor 2019; Kapranov 2021a; Kashiha 2022) points to the “evidential” use of self-mentions as a rhetorical device that assists in creating a positive, reliable, and authoritative image of the speaker.

Finally, let us draw attention to another facet of the corpus analysis, namely to the distinction between the inclusive and exclusive uses of *we* and its forms (i.e., *us*, *our*, *ours*, and *ourselves*). The corpus analysis has yielded the findings that are summarised in the form of percentage of the total number of occurrence of *we* and its forms (see Table 3 below).

**Table 3.** The use of exclusive and inclusive *We* and its forms

#	The Self-Mention We and Its Forms	Exclusive	Inclusive
1	We	1.5%	98.5%
2	Us	3.2%	96.8%
3	Our	2.5%	97.5%
4	Ours	-	100%
5	Ourselves	-	100%

It is evident from Table 3 that the self-mention *we* and its forms exhibit a clear tendency to be used in the inclusive form. This finding is novel given that there are no prior studies which report similar results. Remarkably, the overwhelming majority of the occurrences of the self-mention *we* in the corpus is associated with the inclusive form, as illustrated by excerpt (4):

- (4) I don’t want my children and grandchildren saying to me, “Why didn’t you do something when it was possible to make a difference and when you knew what was happening?” And that is why **we** are all here. **We** are doing it for those that come after us. That’s why it really matters and why I have minded for so long. **We** can do it, ladies and gentlemen – just think what they did in the last war.  
(A speech at the May Day Business Summit on Climate Change on 1.05.2007).

It is observed in (4) that the King interacts with the audience by including its members in the fabrics of a discursively inclusive space, in which he is not above the audience, but, on the contrary, is interwoven with it horizontally, cf. “*we* are all”. Also, it should be noted that in (4), the King commences with a deeply personal narrative by referring to his children and grandchildren, and proceeds to incorporate everybody present into the common cause of fighting climate change. In this regard, it should be noted that there are multiple instances identical to

those emblematised by (4), in which the King skilfully utilises the inclusive form of *we* in order to establish rapport with his audience.

Yet, there are several minor instances in the corpus (see Table 3) which are associated with the exclusive form of *we*. This form of *we* is further epitomised by excerpt (5).

- (5) Indeed, as **we** exhaustively tried to emphasize through my Rainforests Project back in 2007, putting an end to deforestation, substantially reducing forest degradation and restoring the world's forests could deliver up to thirty per cent of the greenhouse gas emissions mitigation we need to make if we are to prevent the runaway climate change which would be so utterly detrimental to human development and biodiversity on the planet.

(A speech at International Sustainability Unit's Meeting on Forests, Climate Change and Development on 26.01. 2015)

Two interpretations of the exclusive *we* arise from excerpt (5). The first interpretation, which seems to be the most obvious one, involves the following contention. It is gleaned from (5) that the King narrates about his Rainforests Project and the team involved in its activities. Hence, the exclusive *we* in (5) refers to the King and the Rainforests Project, which are separate (i.e., excluded) from the audience. The second, presumably, less likely, interpretation could be based upon the instance of the so-called "royal *we*" in (5), which, regardless, represents the use of the exclusive *we*. Indeed, such an interpretation would, seemingly, be possible due to the fact that the King's predecessor, the late Queen Elizabeth II, was renowned for a quite frequent use of "the royal *we*" (Davies 2021). Hence, it is not precluded that (5) manifests the use of the exclusive *we* as "the royal *we*", which occurs only once in the entire corpus. Regardless of the aforementioned contentions, the self-mention *we* in (5) is characterised as the exclusive form of *we*.

Similarly to the infrequent occurrence of the exclusive *we* in the corpus, the exclusive use of *our* is also very rare (see Table 3 above). Its occurrence is emblematised by excerpt (6):

- (6) My wife and I are seeing how a diverse range of rural and urban communities are facing up to these challenges during **our** current visits to South Africa and then to Tanzania next week. Cape Town, though, could hardly be a more appropriate location to explore these themes.

(A speech on climate change and the environment at Cape Town University on 5.11.2011)

In (6), the exclusive use of *our* refers to the King himself and his wife, who at the time when the speech in (6) was delivered (i.e., in 2011), had the title of the Duchess of Cornwall. By alluding to himself and his spouse in "*our* current visit to South Africa", the King clearly separates himself and his wife from the audience, i.e. he excludes the audience members by foregrounding the reference to his immediate family. Instances as in (6) are exceptionally rare in this corpus. Instead, the King utilises quite amply the inclusive form of *our*, as seen in excerpt (7).

- (7) It will not surprise you that I remain as convinced as ever that if we can truly protect **our** forests, manage **our** soils and **our** landscapes in a far more ecological and integrated

way and at the same time undertake the large-scale restoration of degraded forests and lands, then we will enormously increase **our** chances of attaining a 2 degree world.

(A speech at a Meeting about Forests and Climate Change at Lancaster House on 29.10.2015)

In (7), by means of using the inclusive form of *our* as a premodifier in the noun phrases “forests”, “soils”, and “landscapes”, the King conceives of them as the common heritage of humanity, which should be protected by lowering the global temperature to the pre-industrial level. In (7), and in many other instances in the corpus, the King avails himself of the chance to emphasise a common responsibility to protect the environment from the negative consequences of climate change as a global challenge, which he shares with the audience and includes the audience in his battle for climate change mitigation. The inclusive *our* facilitates the King’s pragmatic strategy of including the audience into the endeavour of combatting climate change.

Just like the inclusive *our*, the inclusive *us* is also prevalent in the corpus. The inclusive *us* is further exemplified by excerpt (8).

- (8) We need to see real commitment to putting rural communities and forest conservation first, because we have no more time to lose, and because I can’t believe most of **us** would want to earn the condemnation of our grandchildren for our deliberate failure to safeguard their future. With a new grandchild on its way into this increasingly uncertain world, I certainly do not...

(A speech at The Prince of Wales’s International Sustainability Unit’s meeting on Forests, Climate Change and Development on 26.01. 2015)

Again, in (8) we observe inclusivity, which is coupled with the King’s comprehensive approach towards his audience that seeks to reach out beyond the divisive lines. To reiterate, the King resorts to the inclusive forms of *we*, and specifically in (8) to the inclusive *us*, in order to create a sense of togetherness and, perhaps, affinity with the audience. We may even argue that the King’s pragmatic strategy of inclusivity, which is manifested inter alia by the use of self-mentions in their inclusive forms, constitutes an authorial signature of the King, at least as far as climate change discourse is concerned.

The overall inclusive tonality of the King’s speeches on climate change gets sprinkled occasionally by the exclusive form of *us*. For instance, the exclusive *us* is present in excerpt (9) below.

- (9) That’s why I am particularly delighted to welcome Connie Hedegaard here today. As the EU commissioner for Climate Action she has bravely committed to continue to show leadership on climate change despite immense pressures in the wake of the financial crisis, so it is very good of you to join **us** this afternoon.

(A speech at the “Deal or No Deal” Corporate Leaders Group on Climate Change Conference on 14.07. 2010)

In (9), we notice that the King refers to the EU commissioner for Climate Action as an extraneous actor, who joins the audience. We may argue that the exclusive *us* in (9) facilitates the creation of a discursive space in which the King and the audience form one entity, which, subsequently, is joined by another entity that is represented by the EU commissioner.

Having discussed the major findings of the qualitative and quantitative analyses of the corpus, let us proceed to the concluding remarks that synthesise them within the context of climate change discourse. This is done below, in the final section of the article.

### 3 Conclusions

The article has presented a corpus-assisted study whose aim is to provide answers to two RQs that address (i) the frequency of the occurrence of self-mentions and (ii) their pragmatic roles in the corpus of speeches on the issue of climate change delivered by King Charles III. The results of the quantitative analysis indicate that the self-mention *I* is the most frequent in the corpus, which is followed by the self-mention *we*. However, no statistically significant differences have been found between the frequencies of *I* and *we*.

Judging from the findings, it can be concluded that King Charles III utilises self-mentions in his discourse on climate change, in particular *I* and *we*, in a manner that pertains to the typical distribution of them in Anglophone discourse, especially scientific discourse. King Charles III appears to resort to the use of self-mentions in climate change discourse in order to render a personalised dimension to the issue, whose advocate he has been for more than three decades. Indeed, the issue of climate change is one of the foci that has drawn King Charles III's attention since the early 1990s. It can be argued that the issue of climate change resonates deeply with King Charles III. One of the manifestations of King Charles III's personal involvement in the issue of climate change, as the present investigation demonstrates, pertains to the frequent use of the self-mention *I*, which renders a personalised dimension to his speeches on climate change. Furthermore, the use of *I* and *we*, among other discursive means, contributes to the positive image-building of King Charles III (Kapranov 2023d). It is concluded that by capitalising on the inclusive form of *we*, King Charles III creates an impression of being on a par with the audience and portrays himself as a speaker who is situated among the audience and shares the audience's concerns over the issue of climate change.

Whilst the aforementioned findings help to shed light onto King Charles III's discourse on climate change, a substantial limitation of the study involves its modest corpus. This shortcoming should be remedied in future research. Another suggestion for future investigations on the topic involves, arguably, an interview with King Charles III's speechwriters, who should be asked whether the use of self-mentions in the King's discourse on climate change forms part of a conscious strategy or is employed subconsciously as a mark of the King's individual authorial style.

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