

## **Discourse Markers in King Charles III’s Speeches on Climate Change**

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**Abstract:** *The present article introduces and discusses a quantitative study that examines the use and the frequency of discourse markers (further – DMs), which are utilised in speeches on the issue of climate change by the current British monarch, King Charles III (thereafter – the King). The study involved a corpus of the King’s speeches on climate change from 2005, when the King was still referred to as His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, to 2023, i.e. one year after his coronation. The corpus was examined in the software program AntConc (Anthony) for the presence of DMs, whose frequency was computed and subsequently processed in the statistical package SPSS (IBM). The results of the qualitative analysis revealed that the King’s speeches on the issue of climate change were characterised by such frequently used DMs, as and, as, but, and if. These findings are further discussed and illustrated in the article, which concludes with the summary of the major findings, their implications, limitations and direction for future research.*

**Keywords:** *Climate change discourse, discourse markers (DMs), King Charles III, speeches on climate change*

### **1. Introduction**

To-date, the issue of climate change is one of the most severe ecological and societal problems (Dietz et al. 135; Kapranov “International Corporations” 306), which has attracted attention of politicians (Jaspal and Nerlich 122), scholars (Porter and Dessai 9), the public at large (Clements 183), as well as celebrities (Kapranov “The syntax of climate change” 15) and royal figures (Ji et al. 1). As far as the royal figures are concerned, the current British monarch, King Charles III, is known as an avid supporter of climate change mitigation (Hewison 41; Kim et al. A5). King Charles III (further in the article – the King) is renowned for his outspoken views on climate change (Gunster et al. 1), having expressed his opinions on the matter at various occasions both domestically, in the United Kingdom (the UK), and abroad (Hewison 41). In particular, he has delivered numerous public speeches on climate change in the UK and international venues (Carpenter 313). In this regard, it should be emphasised that his speeches on climate change, inclusive of their official transcripts, have been collected and systematised on the official website of the British Royal Family at <https://www.royal.uk/>.

Despite their availability and high impact on the public at large, the King’s speeches on the issue of climate change appear to be dramatically under-researched in discourse studies, media and communication research,

and linguistics (Kapranov “Conceptual metaphors associated with climate change” 51). Seeking to fill the current gap in the literature, the present article introduces and discusses a quantitative study, whose aim is to identify and analyse discourse markers (thereafter – DMs) in the King’s speeches on the issue of climate change. Specifically, the study seeks to establish the use and the frequency of DMs (for instance, *however*, *therefore*, etc.) in a corpus of the King’s speeches on climate change, delivered from 2005 to 2023. It should be noted that the research interest in DMs, which in our case are used in the King’s speeches on climate change, is accounted by the view of DMs as a discursive means that plays a variety of important pragmatic roles (Schourup 227).

Given that the study focuses on DMs in the corpus of the King’s speeches, the theoretical premises of the present investigation are grounded in Schiffrin’s (40) approach to DMs in oral discourse in English. In line with Schiffrin (40), DMs are regarded as sequentially dependent linguistic elements that bracket oral discursive units in order to signal relations between them by means of syntactic and semantic properties. Building upon the definition of DMs proposed by Schiffrin (40), Maschler and Schiffrin (189) specify that DMs fulfil a range of pragmatic purposes and partake in genre-specific conventions, which are mandated by the peculiarity of a socio-communicative situation. For example, whilst the DM *however* may occur in a variety of oral discourses, inclusive of informal, neutral and scientific ones, the DM *thereupon* seems to pertain to a more formal style (Kapranov “Discourse markers in the genre of formal letters” 74; “Discourse markers in peer reviews” 55). Informed by Schiffrin’s (40) view of DMs and their pragmatic functions, we assume that the King’s speeches on climate change might, perhaps, be characterised by a number of frequently occurring DMs that are typically associated with the formal register of English. Alternatively, however, we may consider that the King’s speeches on the issue of climate change would manifest a range of frequently used DMs that are typically found in neutral or even informal registers of English (e.g., *well*, *you know*, etc.). With these considerations in mind, the study seeks to answer the following research question (RQ):

**RQ:** What are the most frequently occurring DMs in the corpus of the King’s speeches on climate change and what register of English are they associated with?

In order to elucidate the RQ, the article provides a literature review of DMs in climate change discourse. Thereafter, the present study is introduced and discussed. Finally, the article concludes with the summary of the major findings and discusses their implications. In addition, the conclusions section

of the article briefly outlines the limitations of the study and offers possible directions of future research.

## 2. DMs in climate change discourse: Literature review

Prior to proceeding to the literature on DMs in climate change discourse, it should be noted that DMs seem to be an exceptionally well-researched area of scientific inquiry in applied linguistics (Fraser “What are discourse markers?” 931; Heine 1205), discourse studies (Fløttum 19; Lewis 43), foreign language acquisition (Kapranov “Discourse markers in academic writing” 21, “The use of discourse markers” 197), and psycholinguistics (Fox Tree 64; Kapranov “Discourse markers” 77). Given that DMs have been studied rather extensively in a variety of linguistic subdisciplines, it is, perhaps, quite obvious that currently there are multiple approaches to the definition of DMs (Fraser “Pragmatic markers” 167; Guo 70; Povolná 115). In oral discourse, for instance, Norrick (“Discourse markers” 849) defines DMs as

pragmatic markers which provide a commentary on the following utterance; that is they lead off an utterance and indicate how the speaker intends its basic message to relate to the prior discourse. Hence, DMs signal a sequential discourse relationship.

However, Norrick (“Discourse markers” 297) observes that in addition to signalling sequential discursive relationships, DMs facilitate cohesiveness between the utterances in oral interaction between the interlocutors. As far as the interlocutors’ interaction is concerned, Fox Tree (64) argues that DMs in oral discourse are utilised in turn-taking and floor holding. Furthermore, DMs in oral discourse are thought to be represented by such frequently occurring markers as *well*, *you know*, etc., which pertain to the informal register of the English language (Fox Tree 64; Kapranov “The use of discourse markers in oral discourse” 126).

We will return to the discussion of DMs in oral discourse further in the article, when the methodological premises of the present investigation are presented. Now, however, let us draw our attention to the review of the literature on DMs in climate change discourse. In this regard, it should be, first of all, stated that the current studies of DMs in climate change discourse are not numerous. One of the pioneering publications that investigates the occurrence and pragmatic roles of DMs in climate change discourse belongs to Kjersti Fløttum (19-37). According to Fløttum, DMs are utilised as discursive means that manifest a polyphonic relationship, which eventuates in a climate change narrative, as well as in a scientific report on climate change. Fløttum (47), in particular, describes an example of the DM *but*, which is typically employed in scientific texts on climate change in its contrastive capacity. She argues that the constructions with the DM *but* in climate change

texts provide a polyphonic tonality by means of, at least, implying that there is a point of view A on the issue of climate change that is in contrast to the point of view B, which, in turn, may belong to another speaker who represents a distinct discursive voice. Specifically, in her analysis of the passages taken from the report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (13), in which it is posited that climate change is “projected to occur over millennial time scales, *but* more rapid sea level rise on century time scales cannot be excluded”, Fløttum (49) asserts that the aforementioned passage with the DM *but* is interpreted polyphonically as two contrastive points of view (pov) in the following manner:

The speaker accepts that “such changes [referring to ‘metres of sea level rise’] are projected to occur over millennial time scales”. Implicitly this pov is also orienting the discourse towards a conclusion that there is “no reason to worry now”. However, by the connective *but*, it is emphasised that what counts here and now is that “more rapid sea level rise on century time scales cannot be excluded”, with an implicit conclusion saying “do worry!”.

Whereas Fløttum’s (49) analysis of DMs in climate change discourse is, predominantly, qualitative, she, nevertheless, mentions that some DMs, such the DM *but*, appear rather frequently in climate change discourse. Her findings are further supported by the literature (Kapranov “Shell’s image of climate change” 392), which indicates that DMs (e.g., *but*) occur frequently and consistently in climate change reports by the leading international fossil fuel corporations, such as The Royal Dutch Shell and British Petroleum (BP), respectively. In particular, Kapranov (“Corpus analysis of discourse markers” 216) posits that BP’s discourse on climate change, which is found in 2010-2015 annual reports, seems to be consistently marked by the presence of the DM *and*, whose main pragmatic function is involved in the facilitation of the effect of inclusiveness. In this regard, Kapranov (“Corpus analysis of discourse markers” 222) elaborates that the DM *and*

facilitates the effect of BP as a partner, an integral part in the triangle ‘society – energy sector – BP’, which every actor in this triangle being concerned by the challenged posed by climate change.

Analogously to BP, Kapranov (“Corpus analysis of discourse markers” 224) has found that in the climate change sections of annual reports by Shell, a British-Dutch fossil fuel corporation, the frequently used DMs appear to be quite similar to those of BP. Specifically, it has been established that Shell’s annual reports on climate change utilise *and*, *as*, *also*, *such*, *however*, *accordingly*, *furthermore*, *further*, and *therefore* (Kapranov “Corpus analysis of discourse markers” 223).

Concluding the literature review section of the article, it is necessary to reiterate that studies on DMs in climate change research are not numerous. Furthermore, there is no published research that investigates the frequency and use of DMs in climate change discourse by the King. Seeking to address this uncharted area of scientific inquiry, I present and discuss a quantitative study in the following section of the article.

### **3. The present study: Corpus, theoretical premises, and methodology**

The present study is one of the first attempts to shed light on the frequency of DMs and their association with the registers of English in the corpus of the King's speeches on the topic of climate change. To that end, the study employs a quantitative methodology and endeavours to answer the RQ, which is formulated in the introductory part of the article.

The corpus of the study involved the King's speeches on the topic of climate change downloaded from the official website of the British Royal Family [www.royal.uk](http://www.royal.uk). In total, 20 King's speeches on climate change were identified on the aforementioned website. The identification of speeches was enabled by the following keywords: *anthropogenic climate change*, *climate change*, *climate change mitigation*, *extreme weather*, *extreme drought*, *extreme flooding*, *global warming*, *greenhouse gasses*, and *CO2 emissions*. Once all the speeches pertaining to the issue of climate change were identified, they were downloaded and saved as Word files, one file per each speech. Thereafter, the Word files containing the King's speeches were analysed in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20.0 (IBM 2011) in order to compute the total number of words, their mean and standard deviation. The total number of words in the corpus was estimated at 36 272, mean words = 1 813.6, and standard deviation words = 842.1.

The corpus analysis was anchored in the approach towards DMs that was formulated by

Schiffrin (40). As previously explained in the introduction, Schiffrin (40) regarded DMs in oral discourses as sequentially dependent linguistic elements, which could signal relations between oral discursive units by syntactic and semantic means. In line with Schiffrin (40), and Maschler and Schiffrin (189), it was also assumed in the analysis that DMs would be associated with certain registers of the English language, for instance, informal, neutral, and formal, respectively (Kapranov "Discourse markers in the genre of formal letters" 74; "Discourse markers in peer reviews" 55). Whilst the theoretical framework of the study followed Schiffrin (40), and Maschler and Schiffrin (189), the corpus analysis was executed in accordance with the guidelines of DM identification proposed by Fraser ("What are discourse markers?" 938). That was done due to the following consideration. Whereas all the King's speeches were delivered orally, they were, nevertheless, read-aloud speeches, obviously with

some elements of on-site improvisation. Hence, their analysis benefitted from Fraser ("What are discourse markers?" 938), who posited that DMs should be regarded as lexical items belonging to any word class that imposed a discourse-related relationship between two adjacent clauses. The methodological approach based upon Fraser ("What are discourse markers?" 939) could be illustrated by the following occurrences of *and* as a DM in excerpt (1) and *and* as a conjunction in excerpt (2), which were taken from the King's speech at a meeting about Forests and Climate Change at Lancaster House:

(1) Before we begin, though, **and** if you will allow me, I would just like to make three brief observations – the first on C.O.P.21 *and* its significance; the second on the importance of forests *and* land use in the context of C.O.P.21 *and* climate change; **and** the third on the need for new *and* ambitious partnerships for action to tackle deforestation, involving forest nations, donors, civil society *and* the private sector.

(2) Ministers, Your Excellencies, Ladies **and** Gentlemen: I am most grateful to you for sparing your very precious time to be here for this meeting today on Forests **and** Climate Change, exactly a month before C.O.P.21 begins in Paris.

In line with Fraser (938), *and* in excerpt (1) in the comment clause “**and** if you will allow me” was treated as a DM in the present analysis. Identically, *and* in excerpt (1) in the clause “**and** the third on the need for new and ambitious partnerships...” was also identified as a DM, since it represented a discursive element that expressed discourse-related relationships between the clauses. However, in excerpt (1), the occurrences of *and* in (i) “the first on C.O.P.21 *and* its significance”, (ii) “the importance of forests *and* land use”, (iii) “the context of C.O.P.21 *and* climate change”, (iv) “the need for new *and* ambitious partnerships”, as well as (v) “civil society *and* the private sector” were classified as conjunctions, since *and* in (i) – (v) did not partook in any particular discursive relationship between the clauses. Hence, only two occurrences of *and* in excerpt (1) were considered DMs and, consequently, were analysed in the statistical analysis, whilst the occurrences of *and* in (i) – (v) were factored out from the analysis. Similarly, the occurrences of *and* in excerpt (2) were treated as conjunctions and were not analysed as DMs.

Each speech in the corpus was analysed along the lines outlined above. I did not start the analysis with a predefined set of DMs to be identified in the corpus. In other words, the analysis did not involve a set of DMs established in advance. Instead, the analysis was data-driven. First, I manually examined each speech, rather, the official transcript of each speech available at [www.royal.uk](http://www.royal.uk) for the presence of DMs that were identified in concord with Fraser (“What are discourse markers?” 939). Once the list of DMs in all the

King’s speeches was established, each speech was examined in the program AntConc version 4.0.11 (Anthony). Thereafter, the frequencies of DMs in the corpus obtained in AntConc were manually re-examined again in order to check for omissions and misclassifications. Following that, the frequency data were processed in SPSS (IBM) in order to compute means (M) and standard deviations (SD) of the DMs in the corpus. Finally, in line with the approach towards DMs in oral discourse found in Schiffrin (40), and Maschler and Schiffrin (189), the most frequently occurring DMs were manually examined for their association with the informal, neutral, and formal registers of English. Specifically, as indicated by Schiffrin (40), and Maschler and Schiffrin (189), the DMs *and, but, so*, etc. were considered to pertain to the neutral register of English, whereas the DMs *well, again*, etc. were deemed to belong to the informal register. Along the lines proposed by Maschler and Schiffrin (189), the DMs *therefore, rather, since*, etc. were thought to refer to the formal register of English. The results of the corpus analysis are further presented and discussed in the subsequent section of the article.

### **3.1. Results and discussion**

The quantitative analysis of the corpus has revealed that there are 441 DMs in total (M = 22.1, SD = 8.9, maximum = 47, minimum = 5) in all the King’s speeches. The results of the frequency analysis of individual DMs (inclusive of the total number (N), M and SD) are further presented in Table 1 (in alphabetical order).

Table 1. The Frequency of DMs in the Corpus

#	DM	Total N	M	SD
1	Above all	2	1.0	0
2	According to	3	1.0	0
3	After all	3	1.0	0
4	Again	1	0	0
5	Also	9	1.8	0.7
6	And	91	4.8	2.1
7	As	48	2.8	1.8
8	Because	8	1.3	0.5
9	But	74	3.7	2.1
10	Chiefly	1	0	0
11	Equally	1	0	0
12	Finally	3	1.5	0.5
13	For instance	4	1.0	0
14	Furthermore	1	0	0
15	Hardly	2	1.0	0

16	However	8	1.1	0.3
17	If	68	3.8	2.6
18	In addition	1	0	0
19	Indeed	7	1.2	0.4
20	In fact	5	1.3	0.4
21	Instead	1	0	0
22	Just	2	1.0	0
23	Meanwhile	2	1.0	0
24	Moreover	1	0	0
25	Of course	18	1.6	0.8
26	Perhaps	3	1.0	0
27	Rather	3	1.0	0
28	Since	1	0	0
29	So	29	1.9	1.3
30	Still	2	1.0	0
31	Surely	7	1.4	0.5
32	Then	8	1.3	0.5
33	Therefore	9	1.1	0.3
34	Though	4	1.0	0
35	Well	3	1.0	0
36	Yet	8	1.6	0.5

It is evident from Table 1 that the following DMs occur rather frequently in the corpus, namely *and*, *as*, *but*, and *if*. The frequency of these DMs per 10 000 words is further summarised in Table 2 in alphabetical order. The normalisation of the frequency data per 10 000 words seems to be optimal, given that the total number of words in the corpus equals 36 272.

Table 2. The Frequency of the Most Frequent DMs Normalised per 10 000 Words

#	DMs	Normalised Frequency per 10 000 Words
1	And	25.1
2	As	13.2
3	But	20.4
4	If	18.7

We can observe in Table 2 that the DMs *and* and *but* are the most frequently occurring DMs in the corpus. These findings support the literature (Fløttum 49), which reports that *and* and *but*, respectively, are amongst the most frequent DMs in Anglophone climate change discourse. The presence of the rest of the DMs summarised in Table 2 also lends support to the literature

(Kapranov “Corpus analysis of discourse markers” 224), which demonstrates that BP, just like the King in his speeches on climate change, utilises the DMs *but*, *and*, and *as*. Let us discuss the occurrence of the DMs summarised in Table 2 in more detail.

As already mentioned, the DM *and* is the most frequent marker in the corpus. Its occurrence can be illustrated by excerpts (3) and (4), taken from a speech at a meeting “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 in London on 25 February 2015:

(3) Ladies and Gentlemen, I could not be more pleased that you have been able to join today's meeting. Your deliberations on such critical issues could not be more important, nor more timely, **and** I must express my warmest gratitude to you all for making space in your busy schedules to be here at this meeting convened by my International Sustainability Unit and the World Health Organization.

(4) If, **and** it is a big “if”, we can muster agreement there, we can only pray that our sick planetary patient might be placed on a road to recovery, in the process bringing gains for human wellbeing. Failure to write the prescription, however, might leave us contemplating the death certificate instead...

In (3), the occurrence of the DM *and* emblematises what Fraser (“What are discourse markers?” 939) refers to as the DM that manifests a discourse-related relationship between two adjacent clauses. Indeed, in line with Fraser, we observe in (3) that the DM *and* joins two clauses in “Your deliberations on such critical issues could not be more important, nor more timely, **and** I must express my warmest gratitude to you all”. Specifically, in the aforementioned sentence the DM *and* is utilised by the King to link the coordinate clause “**and** I must express my warmest gratitude to you all” to the previous clause.

In (4), however, the occurrence of the DM *and* seems to be associated with the comment clause “**and** it is a big “if”, which is embedded into the conditional clause. The comment clause is connected to the rest of the conditional clause by the DM *and*. In this regard, it should be noted that the occurrence of the comment clauses that are linked to the adjacent clause by the DM *and* constitutes a recurring, one may even argue, typical feature of the King's speeches on climate change. The typicality of the comment clauses that are introduced by the DM *and* can be accounted by the observation that the majority, if not all, of the King's speeches in the corpus are read-aloud speeches, in which comment clauses might represent the King's impromptu additions. Obviously, it is beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate on the aforementioned contention, since a more comprehensive corpus of the King's speeches would be needed to arrive at a definitive answer to the role of comment clauses and the occurrence of the DM *and* in them.

Following *and*, the DM *but* is the second most frequent marker in the corpus. As mentioned, the literature (Fløttum 49; Kapranov “Corpus analysis of discourse markers” 224) notes that *but* occurs frequently in climate change discourse. In the present corpus, the DM *but* seems to be readily utilised by the King in (i) creating contrast, as shown in excerpt (5) as well as (ii) adding an alternative discursive voice or a point of view to his narrative, as illustrated by excerpt (6). Both (5) and (6) derive from a speech delivered by the King at the Energy and Climate Change Meeting in Campeche in Mexico on 4 November 2014.

(5) I'm not an economist, **but** I do think I have a little bit of common sense! And, if I may, Ladies and Gentlemen, I fear that we will also miss a trick unless we embrace the concept of a circular economy - not a linear one - not least in the utilization of waste and sewage in energy production, something which I know the President is thinking about seriously and which I've been taking seriously for the past 25 years.

(6) Ladies and Gentlemen, I fear it is absolutely vital for ourselves and those who come after us that you do so, because the question of how Mexico resolves her domestic energy challenges will not only have a significant impact on the resilience of your economic growth, **but** will also provide an important template for the many other countries facing the same issues.

In (5), we can treat *but* not only as a DM that introduces the contrast clause “**but** I do think I have a little bit of common sense!” and chains it with the main clause “I'm not an economist”. In line with Fløttum (49), we may regard the DM *but* in (5) as a distinct discursive voice that is in contrast to the discursive voice expressed by the main clause “I'm not an economist”. Presumably, the voice in the main clause in (5) initiates a discursive space, in which the King points to the opinion of an economist, simultaneously emphasising that he is not that actor with the discursive voice A (i.e., that of a “typical” economist), but a lay person with some common sense that is represented by the voice B. In other words, we may contend that the DM *but* in (5) is involved in creating a discursive polyphony that is reflective of two distinct voices A and B.

Unlike in (5), however, a polyphonic pragmatic function of the DM *but* in (6) is not clear. Rather, the DM *but* in (6) seems to be confined to indicating an emphasis that does not necessitate an additional discursive voice. Hence, we observe, at least, two uses of the DM *but* in the corpus, which are related to (i) polyphony, as indicated by Fløttum (49) and (ii) emphasis (coupled with contrast, though).

The DM *if* is the third most frequent marker in the corpus. Its high frequency has also been noted in the prior studies on DMs in climate change discourse (Kapranov “Corpus analysis of discourse markers” 224). In the present data, the DM *if* introduces (i) conditional clauses and (ii) comment

clauses, which are abundantly utilised by the King, as seen in excerpts (7) and (8), extracted from a speech at the Nobel Laureates Symposium on Climate Change at St James's Palace in London on 27 May 2009.

(7) An earlier and much larger study, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, went so far as to say that we might very easily not meet the Millennium Development Goals on poverty alleviation **if** we continue to destroy and degrade natural habitats and ecosystems in the way that we are doing now.

(8) As you set about this task, I would like, **if** I may, to suggest three particular dimensions that you might like to consider and which to me, at least, provide the framework to COP 15.

In (7), we may contend that the DM *if* introduces the conditional clause “**if** we continue to destroy and degrade natural habitats and ecosystems”. Conditional clauses with *if* form one of the recurrent features of the King’s discursive “signature”, i.e., they occur rather often in the corpus, as emblematised by excerpt (7). Presumably, conditional clauses facilitate the King’s narrative about the consequences of climate change, as in (7). In the corpus, conditional clauses that are introduced by the DM *if* may signal a degree of uncertainty and indeterminacy associated with the issue of climate change, whose consequences are often deemed to be unpredictable and lacking clarity, since they involve a host of competing variables that, quite often, eschew quantification and scientific measurement (Dietz et al. 135; Jaspal and Nerlich 122; Ji et al. 1). Unlike the DM *if* in (7), however, *if* in (8) opens an embedded comment clause “**if** I may” and links it to the rest of the main clause “I would like ... to suggest three particular dimensions”. We have already discussed that comment clauses in the King’s speeches are associated with the DM *and*. Judging from the data emblematised by excerpt (8), the DM *if* is also involved in introducing comment clauses, which appear to be added by the King to the read-aloud speech on the spur of the moment. However, more data are needed to corroborate this contention.

In contrast to the aforementioned DMs, i.e., *and*, *but*, and *if*, the DM *as* is used in the corpus, predominantly, with the clauses of manner, as evident from excerpts (9) and (10), taken from a speech at the May Day Business Summit on Climate Change at St James's Palace in London on 1 May 2007:

(9) **As** we also heard earlier, one of the real concerns of the scientists is that climate change will begin to change gear and move ever more rapidly, making it even harder to slow down. But everything we do now will reduce that risk. And all good businesses know about managing risks.

(10) **But as** I said at the beginning, today is not just one event. Tomorrow morning a new website will be launched [www.maydaycompany.org.uk](http://www.maydaycompany.org.uk). On this you will find a report of the whole of today’s proceedings and signposts to practical support from

BITC, the Carbon Trust and our partners. This might help those in the East of England and the North West who identified the importance of commitment from senior management and at board level!

We can posit that both in (9) and (10) the DM *as* is involved in relating the adverbial clauses of manner to the main clauses. Importantly, it can be observed in (9) that the DM *as* is interwoven in the discursive fabric of the King's speech, which facilitates his attempt to find a common ground with the audiences and to liaise with the public by means of including the King's listeners into his narrative, e.g. “**As** we also heard earlier...”.

The DM *as*, as well as *and*, *but*, and *if* can be described as pertaining to the neutral register of English (Schiffrin 40; Maschler and Schiffrin 189). In fact, the majority of the DMs that are utilised by the King in his speeches on climate change belong to the neutral register, for instance, *above all*, *according to*, *also*, *because*, *finally*, *hardly*, *however*, *in addition*, *indeed*, *in fact*, *instead*, *just*, *meanwhile*, *of course*, *perhaps*, *so*, *still*, *surely*, *then*, *though*, and *yet*. Judging from the data, the DMs, which are associated with the formal register, are less numerous, specifically, *furthermore*, *rather*, *since*, and *therefore*. Similarly, the DMs, which are evocative of the informal register of English, are rather limited in the corpus, cf. *again*, *well*, and, perhaps, *chiefly*. In light of these findings, we may conclude the discussion section of the article by summarising that the most frequent DMs in the corpus of the King's speeches on the issue of climate change are represented by *and*, *as*, *but*, and *if*, which belong to the neutral register of the English language.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The present quantitative study has focused on the frequency of DMs and their association with the registers of English in the corpus of speeches on the issue of climate change delivered by the King (i.e., His Royal Majesty King Charles III). The quantitative analysis of the corpus has revealed that the most frequent DMs in the corpus are *and*, *as*, *but*, and *if*, which belong to the neutral register of English. In summary, we may argue that the King exhibits a clear preference for utilising a range of stylistically neutral DMs. Perhaps, the pragmatic reason behind such a use lies in the King's strategy to be perceived by his audiences as a royal figure, who is not snobbish and who is not keen on pontificating and preaching the issue of climate change, which he is actually so passionate about. It is quite feasible that his intentions to come across as a climate change-concerned human being rather than a reigning monarch is reflected in the pragmatic choice of DMs, which, to reiterate again, are, mostly, stylistically neutral.

As far as the present findings are concerned, it should be emphasised that the literature on DMs in Anglophone climate change discourse is

exceptionally limited. Hence, the study and its findings represent a novel, uncharted aspect of a linguistic inquiry into the frequency of DMs in climate change discourse in general and in the King's discourse on climate change in particular. Whilst the study is novel, it, nevertheless, can provide a benchmark for future research that will be focused on the frequency of DMs in climate change discourse in the Anglophone world. Additionally, it would be interesting to compare the King's speeches on climate change with his speeches on other topics in order to see whether or not there would be differences between the DMs utilised in the corpus of the King's speeches on climate change and that of other topics.

Whilst the study is novel, it has several obvious limitations. First of all, it should be noted that the study consists of the rather limited corpus of the King's speeches. Arguably, a more comprehensive corpus that is comprised both of written and oral discourse by the King would provide a more comprehensive account of how he utilises DMs in his climate change discourse. Furthermore, the study is limited in terms of the current speeches by the King, given that his ascension to the throne is fairly recent. Hence, the majority of the speeches in the corpus involve those that were delivered at the time when the current King was referred to as His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

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### **Sources**

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