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A linguistic framework for studying voices and positions in the climate debate

Abstract: The public debate on the highly contested issue of climate change is characterized by a multitude of voices as well as position taking by the social actors involved. Studies involving the climate issue have emanated from many fields, notably media science. To date, few linguistics-based studies on climate-related newspaper texts have been undertaken. This paper presents a theoretical framework – the Scandinavian theory of linguistic polyphony – which we argue is particularly well suited to analyze contested issues. To demonstrate how the theory can be operationalized, we present a case study involving four texts from *The Guardian*. Linguistic polyphony rests on the assumption that all texts are multivoiced. The case study focuses on the interaction of the journalist's voice and external voices, and considers the extent to which implicit (hidden) voices are present in the analyzed texts. The analysis reveals a complex inter-action of different voices, integrated in the journalist's own argumentation and positioning.

Keywords: climate discourse, media discourse, journalism, polyphony, voices, position taking

1 Introduction

The present paper presents a theoretical framework – the Scandinavian theory of linguistic polyphony – which we will argue is particularly well suited to analyze texts dealing with highly contested issues. One such issue is climate change.[1] The

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1 Other current highly contested issues relate to, e.g., nanotechnology and biotechnology (e.g., Lorenzoni et al. 2007).

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debate (in a very general sense of this word) on climate change is characterized by the presence of a multitude of *voices*. The issue is approached from different perspectives by social actors with different backgrounds, world views, interests, values, and beliefs (Hulme 2009), a situation which implies *position taking*. Thus, both voices and positions become important objects of study in order to understand the complexity of the debate.

Studies involving the climate debate have in recent years emanated from the fields of media and communication science, political science, sociology, and psychology (e.g., Boykoff and Boykoff 2004; Carvalho 2005, 2007; Carvalho and Burgess 2005; Krosnick et al. 2006; Kurz et al. 2010; Nisbet 2009; Leiserowitz 2006; Norgaard 2006; Schuldt et al. 2011; Weber 2006). Within media science, framing analysis and content analysis are common analytical approaches, both of which are well suited to bring out important aspects of written and spoken accounts of the debate (see, e.g., Boykoff and Boykoff 2007; Eide et al. 2010; Nisbet 2009; Trumbo 1996). However, we believe that the discipline of linguistics, with its foundation in the study of language, can contribute to a richer understanding of the function of the various voices and the positions they take with regard to the climate issue in media texts (for a discussion of linguistic approaches to news discourse, see Bednarek and Caple 2012).

To date, few linguistics-based studies on climate texts have been carried out. Rare exceptions are the studies by Koteyko and colleagues, involving what they call "creative carbon compounds" and metaphors in RSS-retrieved texts from the web (Koteyko et al. 2010) and in British newspapers (Koteyko 2012), as well as a few studies involving the present authors (e.g., Fløttum 2012; Fløttum and Dahl 2012). However, to our knowledge no broader linguistics-based studies have been undertaken on media texts on the climate issue. This paper will present a framework for how such a study may be undertaken. The theoretical foundation that we propose for analyzing particularly multivoiced discourse is ScaPoLine, a theory of linguistic polyphony (Nølke et al. 2004). ScaPoLine is short for *La theorie scandinave de polyphonie linguistique*, or the Scandinavian theory of linguistic polyphony. This approach is based on a conception of language as fundamentally dialogic, presenting itself as an alternative to the idea of the uniqueness of the speaking subject. The main idea is that in one single utterance there may be several voices or points of view present, in addition to the one of the speaker/writer. The analytical framework we present here is based on a simplified version of the ScaPoLine theory. To demonstrate how this framework may be operationalized, we undertake a case study of four texts involving the climate issue from the British newspaper *The Guardian*. Our overall research question can be formulated as follows: To what extent is the theoretical framework of linguistic polyphony suited to analyze texts dealing with highly contested issues?

In Section 2 we establish a context for our study, providing an account of media representations related to the climate issue and a brief presentation of three basic stands taken with regard to the scientific phenomenon of climate change: belief, skepticism, and denial. Section 3 provides an account of the ScaPoLine theory. The illustrative case study based on this framework is described in Section 4. Section 5 sums up and draws some conclusions regarding the potential of this linguistic approach in the analysis of media representations of contested issues such as climate change.

2 Climate change and media representations

Even if new media are growing in importance, traditional outlets like the newspaper (both hard copy and online) still represent important sources for the mediation of discourses on contested topics in local, national, or international contexts (Eide et al. 2010) and thus may be important in forming public opinion. Climate change has in recent years moved from being considered predominantly as a physical phenomenon, belonging in the sphere of science, to also being considered as a social, cultural, political, and ethical phenomenon (Cameron 2011; Hulme 2009). Perhaps not surprisingly, the complexity of the issue has given rise to disagreement related to a number of aspects. There is, for instance, to some extent a lack of agreement regarding the notion of climate change as such, but, to a much greater extent, a lack of agreement regarding the choice of political, economic, and social measures needed to deal with it. In this complex situation, the journalist acts as a mediator of the various viewpoints. Even though the mainstream climate science community is quite univocal in their belief that climate change is an extremely serious threat and that human activity is contributing to it, there are also scientists and other social actors who take other positions on the phenomenon itself. This situation has given rise to labels such as *believers*, *skeptics*, and *deniers*. The believer label fits those who align themselves with the mainstream climate science community. As for the skeptics category, Poortinga et al. (2011) distinguish between *trend* skeptics (there is no global warming), *attribution* skeptics (human activity is not contributing to climate change), and *impact* skeptics (the change will not have detrimental impact). In contrast to *skeptic*, *denier* is a label which people will usually not use about themselves; rather, it is used by others about a group or an individual whom they disagree with. The two labels may thus in fact refer to the same groups or individuals, but *denier* seems primarily to overlap with the *trend skeptic* category (for a discussion of the two labels, see Hobson and Niemeyer 2013). Particularly in the United States, skeptic and denier voices are heard in the public sphere on a regular basis (e.g., Antilla

2005; Boykoff and Boykoff 2004). In fact, in a media context, a recent comparative study of climate skeptic voices in print media from an international perspective found that this is primarily an Anglo-Saxon phenomenon; such voices are more common in newspapers in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia than in Brazil, China, and France (Painter 2011).

Newspapers, representing the fourth estate and thus themselves social actors, are typically associated with specific values, ideologies, and political preferences (Carvalho 2007; Ho and Quinn 2008). The newspaper's editorial line provides an outer frame in which the individual journalist presents his or her take on the situation. Depending on the nature of the mediating textual representation – *news* (reported event/issue) or *commentary* (commented event/issue; Charaudeau 1997; Van Dijk 1988) – readers can (ideally at least) expect either factual and neutral mediation (news) or argumentative and evaluative mediation (commentary), with the latter sometimes involving overt position taking by the author (see, e.g., White [2000] for a discussion of the notion of objectivity in media).

Journalists often make use of sources related to the event or issue reported or commented on. They also frequently introduce quotes from sources (spoken or written), produced in other contexts (Catenaccio et al. 2011; Smirnova 2012; White 1998). Such embedding (Bell 1991) may involve a subtle and complex staging of voices and positions through various forms of attributed and unattributed reported speech in the form of whole passages or just fragments in the shape of isolated words or word groups. The various sources quoted by a journalist may serve the function of complying with the norm of balance in news reporting (Boykoff 2011; White 1998, 2000).

3 Theoretical framework

As already mentioned in the introduction, the theoretical framework we argue for here is known as the Scandinavian theory of linguistic polyphony, or ScaPoLine for short (Nølke et al. 2004). This theory seeks to describe in detail the semantic complexity of linguistic polyphony or multivoicedness; its analytical apparatus therefore lends itself more easily to short text segments than to whole texts. However, the ScaPoLine theory also aims to bridge the gap between micro-linguistic analyses at word or sentence level and the textual level. It can thus be complementary to more discourse- or dialogically oriented approaches (see Bres and Nowakowska 2006; Gjerstad 2011). In the present paper, we situate our linguistic analyses in this "bridging perspective," claiming that the ScaPoLine theory allows us to reach an interpretation which links the linguistic to the discourse- or context-related level. However, for reasons of space, we opt for a simplified

approach, in terms of both the theoretical notions involved, and the level of linguistic detail that we take into account (for more developed analyses, see Fløttum 2005; Fløttum and Dahl 2012; Didriksen and Gjesdal 2013; Gjerstad 2013).

The notion of polyphony has its origin in music, referring to a technique where the different voices are equal and striving for independent status. Mikhail Bakhtin extended the notion of polyphony to the study of language, in particular to the interpretation of Dostoevsky's novels, where each character (and thereby voice) is of equal rank (for an English translation of this work from 1929, see Bakhtin 1963). This literary polyphony is totally different from linguistic polyphony as developed by the French linguist Oswald Ducrot (1984). Ducrot considers the relation between the voices (or points of view) which may manifest themselves within one and the same utterance as hierarchical: the speaker is at the top of the hierarchy, playing around with other voices. The Ducrotian orientation is the one which has inspired ScaPoLine the most.

However, considering language as fundamentally polyphonic, i.e., expressing a plurality of interacting voices, ScaPoLine can be said to be related to the Bakthinian notion of dialogism (Bres and Nowakowska 2006), claiming that language is dialogic by nature, and where every utterance is embedding past utterances or directed toward future ones.

ScaPoLine starts from the hypothesis that different linguistic and argumentative markers signal the presence of points of view, or voices, other than that of the speaker at the time of the utterance. The speaking subject is not unique, in the sense that he/she/they can include other voices in one and the same utterance. One obvious marker of polyphony is reported speech. However, the advantage of the ScaPoLine approach is that it helps to reveal or unpack not only explicit voices, such as in reported speech, but also implicit voices, in a more or less hidden interaction through devices such as pronouns, sentence connectives, modal expressions, adverbs, negation, and presupposition. When the polyphonic structure is identified, this opens up for possible interpretations, but also imposes interpretative constraints on the polyphonic configuration developed in a text. One aspect which relates to this configuration is the relation between the different points of view, in particular the position that the speaker takes vis-à-vis the other voices present (e.g., agreement, concession, refutation). In the identification of the various positions involved in the discourse, we also pay attention to evaluative expressions – another aspect of the argumentative dimension of language.

For illustrative purposes, we will now show in a simplified way how the theory can be applied, by considering a few examples from the four texts to be further analyzed in Section 4. The first example, from text A2 (see Section 4 for details of the texts), is a case of an external voice being included *explicitly* in the journalist's own voice:

(1) "I regret Canada's withdrawal and am surprised over its timing", said the UN climate chief Christina Figueres.

An obvious example of *implicit* polyphony is polemic negation by *not* (with refutative meaning). Here is an example from text B1, where the journalist discusses a blog post by a converted climate skeptic:

(2) For me, though, the far more compelling component of his post was *not* the revelation of his conversion per se, but his thoughtful advice to [. . .].

In the first clause of this passage, there are two points of view (pov): one stating that "the far more compelling component of his post was the revelation of his conversion per se" (pov1), and another (pov2) qualifying this as not valid through the negation *not*. While the journalist is responsible for pov2, the isolated utterance does not indicate who is the source of pov1, which is refuted by the journalist, a refutation which is further supported by the contrast through the following clause introduced by *but*. The source might or might not be identified through contextualization. Thus, in the interpretation of an utterance with implicit polyphony, it is important first to determine the various points of view which are manifested, and then to try to identify their sources, be it the speaker, another person or group of persons, more or less defined, or some general opinion. Furthermore, it is important for the analyst to determine the relation between the point of view of the speaker and the other integrated ones. This also contributes to the identification of the different positions taken toward the issue in question.

We will now provide a third example of points of view, this time involving the polyphonic marker *but*, in its contrastive and concessive capacity. A construction with *but* can be characterized as consisting of two arguments in contrast – *p but q* – where *p* represents the concession and *q* the argument that the speaker identifies with. In the polyphonic analysis these are treated as points of view. The following example, the lead of text B1, constitutes an illustration:

(3) The climate debate rages on without progress, *but* a 'meeting of moderate minds' might be the answer.

This can be linguistically analyzed as follows, in four povs:
pov1: the climate debate rages on without progress
pov2: pov1 is an argument in favor of the conclusion *r*
pov3: a "meeting of moderate minds" might be the answer
pov4: pov3 is an argument in favor of the conclusion *non-r*.

Pov2 could also be represented as "if pov1 then *r*," and pov4 as "if pov3 then *non-r*." The letter *r* symbolizes a conclusion which is to be searched for in the interpretation phase of the analysis, i.e., related to the context. In everyday language, the interpretation of this example could be formulated as follows: The journalist accepts (concedes) that "the climate debate rages on without progress". Implicitly, this pov also orients the discourse toward a conclusion (*r*) that there is "no point to engage in it". However, by the connective *but*, what matters to the journalist here and now is that a "meeting of moderate minds" might be the answer, with an implicit conclusion (*non-r*) saying "we should engage in the climate debate!" – thus assuming a clear position on this question.

With this theoretical account as a backdrop, we formulate the following research questions for our case study, presented in Section 4: How is the interaction with external voices realized? To what extent are implicit (or hidden) voices present? What are the linguistic features indicating the journalist's position taking and interaction with other voices?

4 Illustrative case study

The four texts we analyze are all from *The Guardian*, a British quality newspaper generally promoting the well-known precautionary principle with regard to climate change. It thus supports the view that "[w]hen an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically" (the Wingspread Conference 1998;[2] see also Carvalho 2007). From this it can be assumed that for *The Guardian*, the believer position represents the given, insider position – the *we*, while climate skeptics and deniers represent the outsiders – *they*. An informal study of all the instances of the words *sceptic*[3] and *denier* (in a climate context) in the online version of the newspaper during 2011 revealed that a very clear majority of the occurrences (roughly 80%) referred to skeptics and deniers as a group, either in a generic sense (some 60% of the total number of instances) as in "This argument is a common tactic employed by *sceptics* to create confusion over the role of greenhouse gas emissions in climate change" (3 March 2011; italics added), or as a specific group (roughly 18%), as in "With 14 point fall [sic] in 4 years, one can see why *Republican climate sceptics* feel comfortable rejecting the idea that [. . .]" (30 August 2011; italics added). Only in about 20% of the instances was the reference to a specific individual, as in "'The

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2 http://www.sehn.org/wing.html (accessed 30 May 2013).
3 Since *The Guardian* is a British newspaper, this spelling is found in all instances.

energy tax prevention act stops cap-and-trade regulations from taking effect once and for all,' said *James Inhofe, the Oklahoma Republican who is the Senate's most vocal climate change denier*" (4 March 2011; italics added). The prevalence of the generic group category indicates that climate change skeptics and deniers are primarily included as a phenomenon rather than as specific voices in *The Guardian*.

As indicated in Section 2, newspaper texts may be classified into two basic categories, news and commentary. Different genres may be distinguished within each category, but studies have shown that a neat and stringent classification system is difficult to establish (Bell 1991; White 1998). This seems to be even more the case for online versions of the newspapers, and perhaps particularly among what Russell (2010: 327) describes as "tech savvy news outlets," among which she places *The Guardian*. In addition to the more traditional genres like hard news reports, editorials, and feature articles, newspapers today also contain blog posts and items similar to, e.g., diary entries or timelines for events (see Bednarek and Caple [2012: 2, 5] for variants of online news discourse). The texts we use for this case study – intended to illustrate the potential of the ScaPoLine theory in the analysis of media texts related to the climate change issue – are two news reports (A1 and A2) and two blog posts (B1 and B2). A1 and B1 are written by Leo Hickman; A2 is written by Damian Carrington and Adam Vaughan, and B2 by Damian Carrington. Hickman and Carrington have been writing about the climate issue on a regular basis, in the shape of both news reports and blog posts. Based on assumptions from previous studies of newspaper texts and well-known genre conventions (e.g., Bell 1991), our point of departure is that the journalist's own voice is likely to be less present and thereby less interacting with other voices in news reports than in blog posts. However, media sources – as well as journalists – do take positions on the various issues reported on (White 2009), even though the presence of the journalist's point of view is typically much less overt in factual texts than in commentary ones.

We will now undertake the analysis of the four texts from a polyphonic perspective with a view to investigating the role of voices representing different views and the extent to which they indicate different positions, how these voices are presented by the journalists and the extent to which they are integrated in the journalists' own voice. The texts we investigate are the following:

A1: Cancel Lord Monckton's university lecture, say academics (26 June 2011; 1089 words)

A2: Canada condemned at home and abroad for pulling out of Kyoto treaty (13 December 2011; 849 words)

B1: Could peace talks ever end the 'climate war'? (21 June 2011; 1682 words)

B2: Climate deal: A guarantee our children will be worse off than us (11 December 2011; 709 words)

We start by analyzing A1 and A2, considering first how the journalists bring in external voices, before we focus on the possible presence of traces of the journalists' own position taking. Then we go on to analyze B1 and B2 with the same approach.

The topic of A1 is a lecture due to be given by the well-known climate skeptic Lord Monckton at the University of Notre Dame in Fremantle, Australia,[4] which has made Australian academics sign a letter requesting the university to cancel his lecture. This situation is partly caused by remarks Monckton has made comparing a climate change adviser to a Nazi. Newspaper headlines, even if typically not created by journalists themselves, are (often) important indicators of both content and possible argumentative orientation (White 1997, 2000). In A1, the headline gives the floor directly to climate change believers:

(4) Cancel Lord Monckton's university lecture, say academics

However, this quote cannot in itself be interpreted as indicating position taking, since the neutral verb *say* is used to introduce the quote without any further argumentative or evaluative marker (see, e.g., Bednarek [2006] and Bednarek and Caple [2012] on the prevalence of neutral reporting expressions in English language print news discourse). In the lead, there are further indications of what roles different voices may get: the external voice of the signatories of the letter opposing Lord Monckton's university lecture is (partly) quoted, through several fragments, inter alia characterizing Lord Monckton as representing *ignorance and superstition*. The verb *say* is again used to introduce the quoted fragment.

A1 gives much space to external voices coming from different sources. As for those opposing Lord Monckton, there is the letter signed by identified academics, a letter which is quoted at substantial length and could thus be interpreted as the journalist taking a position. But these voices are here, too, introduced by neutral verbs such as *say* and *continue*, with no further comments from the journalist.[5] Then Lord Monckton himself is given the floor through short quotes where he

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4 Lord Monckton is number three on the list of skeptics mentioned ten times or more in the ten newspapers investigated by Painter (2011). Monckton is also sometimes referred to as *a denier* (e.g., in a blog post in guardian.co.uk on 15 June 2011).

5 This seems to be in contrast with how reported speech is introduced in French news texts, where there is great variation in the use of reporting verbs (Fløttum 2012). Semino and Short (2004) list reporting verbs for indirect and direct speech presentation found in their corpus of English language news reports (appendix 3 and 4, respectively), but do not provide the number of occurrences for the individual verbs.

apologizes for the remarks he has made. Further, there are different quoted voices on the controversy of letting Lord Monckton give his lecture, and, most noteworthy, voices that argue that Monckton should not be *censored or barred from speaking*. One of these is Professor Ian Chubb, Australia's chief scientist:

(5) "I think that we have to put up with deplorable people if we value our democracy. And we do so. [. . .] He [Lord Monckton] just needs to be exposed for what he is".

Another voice of the same kind and which is given much space is the CEO of Science & Technology Australia, Anna-Maria Arabia. She states that:

(6) "Everyone is entitled to their views, [. . .]. The challenge for Lord Monckton is to have his ideas tested through peer review process".

The journalist lets her elaborate on the value of scientific evidence:

(7) "[. . .]. Critical decisions about making the world we live in a better and safer place must be informed by the best possible information we have, not by fear. The best possible information we have is the peer-reviewed science".

A1 closes by stating that the organizer of Lord Monckton's lecture tour is the Climate Sceptics party, which was set up in 2009 to *"expose the fallacy of anthropogenic climate change"*.

So far we can conclude that A1 focuses on the climate debate, and not the phenomenon of climate change itself. Its strategy, at least on the surface, is to present voices representing divergent views. However, some voices are given more space than others, and the journalist ends by giving the floor to a spokesperson for the importance of scientific evidence, and in particular peer-reviewed science, which is what climate scientists and climate change believers refer to as the only basis for taking an informed stand on the issue. Through this explicit polyphony, the journalist takes a position in mediating a specific stand.

If we look for polyphonic markers indicating an implicit exchange of voices or the explicit presence of the journalist, a few relevant features may be noted. Among these are the connectives *but* and *however* in their contrastive and concessive meaning and some non-neutral reporting verbs, as in example (8):

(8) Chris Doepei, the university's dean of business, has confirmed some invited conference guests have also called for Monckton's speech to be cancelled, *but* he *insisted* the event will go ahead.

This example brings in the external voice of Chris Doepei, including two points of view, one in the proposition preceding *but* and one in the succeeding ("the event will go ahead"). The journalist assumes a position in marking the point of view succeeding *but* as the most important one. Other clear traces of the presence of the journalist, and of his potential position taking, are non-neutral verbs used to introduce quotes in the text. Cases in point are *condemn, apologize*, and *feel*, used by the journalist to give his personal interpretation of the attitude indicated by the source to the quoted statement. In addition, the journalist quotes various fragments from sources which contain evaluative expressions, such as the already mentioned *"ignorance and superstition"*, as well as *"offensive and grossly inappropriate"*, *"over the top"*, and *"unfortunate"*. These are interesting in a polyphonic perspective: the quotation marks clearly indicate that they are not the journalist's own words, but at the same time he is responsible for selecting these particular words.

We now turn to text A2. The topic here is the debate on the extension of the Kyoto Protocol, taking place at the climate summit COP 17 in Durban,[6] with a focus on Canada's *pulling out of the Kyoto climate treaty*. As in A1, this text integrates a large number of external voices through different forms of reported speech. In this sense, one gets the impression of "balanced" reportage. However, a closer look reveals that the voices critical of Canada's decision are in a majority. Here are three examples, where we notice that in (9) and (10) the journalists include external personal voices, while in (11) the source of the voice is referred to as *China*:

(9) "Canada gave its word to the world and Canada broke its word", said the columnist John Ibbitson in Canada's Globe and Mail.

(10) Canada's decision was "deeply regrettable", he [a UK government spokesman] added.

(11) China, which agreed for the first time to legal limits on its emissions at the summit in Durban, denounced Canada's decision as "preposterous" in its state media [. . .].

The main reporting verb used in the text is again *say*, but other non-neutral verbs also occur, such as *denounce* (see [11]) and *claim*.

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6 Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

So, the journalists bring in different identified voices, setting them up against each other with little argumentative framing and thus little explicit position taking. However, there are also some unidentified voices, introduced through polyphonic markers. The clearest polyphonic – and argumentative – marker is the contrastive and concessive *but*, indicating the point of view that the journalists find the most relevant:

(12) In short, Roberts said: "The Kyoto protocol [. . .]." *But* the UK's secretary of state for energy and climate change, Chris Huhne, said: "They are still bound [. . .]."

This is an example of clear position taking by the journalists, in favor of the point of view expressed by Chris Huhne. In addition, there is a large selection of short quoted fragments representing or containing evaluative expressions, such as *"irresponsible"*, *"reckless"*, *"preposterous"*, and *"shameful"*. These represent different voices criticizing Canada's withdrawal from the Kyoto treaty. The fragments are, however, just that; taken out of their original context, they come across as the journalists' personal interpretation of the situation (see Semino and Short [2004: 55] for a discussion of the function of such quotes).

We will now examine the two blog posts, B1 and B2, representing a genre which is personal and subjective by nature (e.g., Miller and Shepherd 2004; Rettberg 2008). In B1, the general topic is the same as in A1 (by the same author), i.e., the climate debate itself. As indicated in the headline (see above), the journalist presents different means to stop what he calls the *"climate war"* in order to make some progress and to get support for applying the precautionary principle. A quick glance at B1 unsurprisingly reveals that the strategy here is quite different from the one in A1. The headline is in the form of a question, which should be interpreted as a rhetorical one, as linguistically indicated by the word *ever*:

(13) Could peace talks ever end the 'climate war'?

Already at this point the journalist sets up a particular frame for his blog post, through the war/peace metaphor. We note that *climate war* is put within quotation marks,[7] probably indicating that he does not identify himself with this expression (Waugh 1995: 138–139). We saw that the headline of A1 contains an example of explicit external polyphony (i.e., stemming from another source than the

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7 While single quotation marks are used in the headline, double ones are used in the body of the text.

journalist). The headline of B1 is also polyphonic, but in a different way: it does integrate an additional voice through the expression marked as quotation, but without revealing the origin (see Semino and Short [2004: 210–221] for another news text case study involving this phenomenon). It could be the journalist's own expression, and thus an example of internal polyphony. Further, the headline takes the form of a question, but as it is clearly a rhetorical one, it does not open up for interaction with the reader.

The lead of B1, rendered in example (14), is a clear instance of implicit polyphony where the journalist discusses with himself or with some non-identified external voice, through the contrastive *but*, which occurs 15 times in the text (see Bednarek [2006] on the predominance of *but* as a contrastive marker in newspaper texts):

(14) The climate debate rages on without progress, *but* a "meeting of moderate minds" might be the answer.

In this example, the status of the quotation marks used for the phrase *"meeting of moderate minds"* is somewhat intriguing, because it is not possible to ascertain whether this phrase is a quote from a book the journalist is discussing in his blog post, whether it represents the journalist's words (but which he does not take full responsibility for; Waugh 1995), or someone else's.

A specific trait of B1 is its personalized style, reflected in numerous explicit markers of own position taking, such as the phrases *for me* and *personally, I see*. In addition, there is a range of evaluative qualifiers coloring the journalist's many comments: *positive, constructive, utterly bizarre, interesting, absolutely essential, eminently sensible stuff*. We also find different voices brought into the text, but not through long quotes as in A1. The fragments taken in from external sources are carefully integrated into the journalist's own comments, as in the following example:

(15) [. . .] we had a blog post by a US blogger called Skeptoid who [. . .] announced that he had "converted" [. . .]. For me, though, the far more compelling component of his post was [. . .] his thoughtful advice to his "friends on the left and right" to reach some shared middle ground. It's well worth a read, but, in summary, what he seems to be saying is, [. . .]. I couldn't agree with him more [. . .].

We note the explicit presence of the author by means of the pronoun *I*, the explicit position taking through the statement *I couldn't agree with him more*, epistemic hesitation through the verb form *seems*, and evaluative qualifiers such as *compelling* and *thoughtful*.

The journalist's reflections, which the passage quoted in example (15) refers to, continue from the comments related to the American blogger to comments related to an event where it was revealed that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had hidden information about the affiliation of one of the authors of their Special Report on Renewable Energy. The journalist then ends by commenting on the conciliatory tone of a book written by the environmental writer Mark Lynas. Here, too, the journalist clearly expresses his opinion:

(16) I don't agree with everything he says in the book, but have found myself nodding in agreement at large parts.

The last part of B1, as we see it, provides a more or less explicit praise of trust-worthy science and scientists, in a very open and inviting style:

(17) Can we risk ignoring what scientists are telling us are looming problems?

And to the question about what could be *shared goals between the two warring parties in the climate debate worth finding "peace" for*, the journalist states:

(18) Personally, I see the most obvious shared goal being [. . .] unimpeachable, transparent, uncorrupted science.

The interactional aspect is also overtly expressed in the last sentence:

(19) I believe it might be time to try something new, but I would be genuinely interested to hear the thoughts of all those within this debate.

We now turn to text B2. The topic is related to the COP 17 summit in Durban, which is the same context as for A2. The focus of B2 is the *pitiful* outcome of the many negotiations undertaken by the world's leaders at COP 17. The conflicts and various divergent interests are clearly presented, in a very direct way with few invitations to any interaction with readers. The journalist's own position is stated without any hedging, as in the following examples containing the verb *to be* (see also the evaluative qualification *pitiful* in [21]):

(20) The world's climate debt *is* soaring [. . .].

(21) If this roadmap [. . .] *is* a triumph, it is a pitiful one.

(22) Moving to fuel-free renewable power *is* the only sustainable path, and the sooner we move the cheaper it is.

The second half of B2 is dominated by harsh criticism of politicians:

(23) The failure to truly act in South Africa shows politicians are only galvanised by crises that crash and burn between elections. Dealing with longer, more difficult crises gets set aside, with only rhetoric to salve them.

B2 is also colored by a large number of evaluative expressions, such as *climate chaos*, *far too little*, *far too slowly*, *catastrophic 4C of warming*, *brutal truth*. In addition, as in B1, we find various voices brought into the text through quoted fragments rather than through long quotes of (more or less) complete utterances.

To sum up this case study of four texts analyzed by means of ScaPoLine, we have seen that texts A1 and A2 both bring in a large number of external voices, in different forms of reported speech, and with both complete passages and isolated fragments. The main verb used to introduce the external voices is *say,* but other more evaluative verbs are also found. A2 seems more biased than A1, giving the floor to mainly pro-Kyoto voices. However, it should be noted that A1, too, seems to mediate a specific position, viz. that of the climate change believer. In both texts, some of the integrated quotations may be regarded as examples of *argumentation par autorité* ('argumentation by authority'), i.e., quotes by authoritative sources used to support one's own argument (Ducrot 1984; Nølke et al. 2004). A case in point here is the letter discussed in A1, first drafted by a postgraduate student but then signed by professors and lecturers across Australia. However, in our view, the numerous occurrences of quotes in A1 and A2 primarily create an effect of dramatization (Fløttum 2012; Tuomarla 1999). The different voices give the impression of characters in a play – but with few "stage directions," i.e., with relatively few guiding and position-taking comments by the authors. Through this dramatization, the journalists also manage to reproduce (some of) the conflicts or diverging opinions which exist in the climate debate. In addition, both A1 and A2 use argumentative and polyphonic connectives such as *but* and *however*, giving space to implicit voices which they concede and may agree with, but which they also mark as less important than their own voice. This is a more subtle and hidden form of interaction than the integration of external voices with identified sources.

As for texts B1 and B2, both are clearly polyphonic. Different voices are introduced, but typically in the form of short quoted fragments rather than in the form of long complete passages. What is incorporated from external sources is carefully integrated into the journalists' own comments; the argumentation is overt and supported by evaluative expressions. B1 is characterized by a more interactional style than B2, through a number of questions and epistemically modified expressions such as *a 'meeting of moderate minds' <u>might</u> be the answer*, *what he*

seems to be saying is . . . , [t]here *seemed* to be genuine surprise*. B1 also displays a more personalized style through numerous explicit markers of own position taking, such as *for me* and *personally, I see*, while B2 is much more direct in its argumentation.

Unsurprisingly, the strategies of A1/A2 and B1/B2 are clearly different. In the former, external voices are given most space and are carefully introduced, while in the latter, the personal voice of the journalist dominates (albeit in different ways), mixed with fragments of external voices. The dramatization in the blog posts is, as mentioned above, characterized by many more explicit "stage directions" than in the news reports. In other words, the position taking is more overt and the argumentation openly present. Blogging represents a relatively new means of communication, and the blog by implication is a new genre with few established norms.[8] But as indicated above, subjectivity seems to be a key characteristic of the contributions (e.g., Miller and Shepherd 2004; Rettberg 2008), allowing blogging journalists to freely present their own views, perhaps to a greater extent than in the more traditional commentary genres. According to Rettberg (2008: 92–93), "[b]logs rely on personal authenticity, whereas traditional journalism relies on institutional credibility [. . .] Who the reporter is sometimes matters, but primarily it is the reputation of the media outlet that is important [. . .] Bloggers build trust individually." However, newspaper blogs like the ones we consider here seem to display a mix of the personal "climate credibility" of the journalist and the institutional credibility of the newspaper.

5 Conclusion

In this paper our overarching focus has been the contribution that the discipline of linguistics may bring to the study of media texts. We have argued that the theoretical framework of ScaPoLine in combination with evaluative features may serve as a useful analytical tool in the handling of mediated discourse on contested issues. Through an illustrative case study of four climate change-related texts from *The Guardian* we focused on how interaction with external voices was realized; the extent to which implicit (or hidden) voices were present; and finally, which linguistic features indicated the journalist's position taking and interac-

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8 Whether the blog may be described as one genre may be debated. Lúzon (2012) mentions types of blogs, such as personal, journalistic, and academic blogs, while Rettberg (2008) provides examples of personal, topic-driven, and filter blogs.

tion with other voices. We hope to have demonstrated how the proposed framework makes it possible to identify not only how the journalist integrates external explicit voices, but also how implicit (be they external or internal), more or less hidden, voices contribute to the presentation of the climate debate and not least to the specific position(s) mediated by the journalist. This positioning has been shown to take place to a great extent through the use of short quoted fragments, often evaluative expressions, taken out of their original context and integrated into the news text. The analysis revealed a complex *interaction* between, on the one hand, the voice of the journalist (e.g., through argumentative and polyphonic "stage directions") and, on the other, external voices, with sources which may be identified or non-identified (hidden), and often only as short isolated fragments. Such a linguistic approach, we argue, provides a more elaborate picture of the complexity of climate change-related newspaper texts than an analysis resulting in a survey of quotes with identified sources.

Our case study was based on just a few texts, as its main purpose was to demonstrate the application of the ScaPoLine framework on media texts on contested and therefore by implication multi-voiced and multi-position issues. Future studies involving a larger text base may be able to identify patterns in how journalists set up the interaction of various kinds of voices (external/internal/explicit/implicit) and how the various positions on the issue are mediated. Our small text base included samples of both news and commentary. The rapid development within social media also makes it interesting to compare new and more personalized genres of commentary texts with more traditional commentary ones with respect to the mediation of voices and positions.

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