

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF A U.K. BROADSHEET PAPER ON THE RATIFICATION OF THE KYOTO PROTOCOL IN 2005

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Abstract

Through a critical discourse analysis of an article in a UK quality newspaper (*The Independent*) dealing with the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in February 2005 and the discursive context in which the paper was embedded, an examination has been undertaken of how the Kyoto Protocol in particular, and the issues directly linked to climate change in general, have been addressed within this medium. In light of Fairclough's (1995, 2003) Dialectical Relational approach and Theo van Leeuwen's (1996) linguistically-oriented conceptual framework, the possible patterns in representing different social actors have been unveiled, especially via the analysis of the such categories as passivation, impersonalization, nominalization, metaphors, and the adjectives, adverbs and nouns that convey the attitudes of social actors toward the ratification of the Protocol. The findings have revealed the UK standpoint on the ideological values attached to the UK's role in leading Europe and the world in the adoption of the Protocol and in the elimination of the adverse effects of climate change. Another significant finding from the analysis is the strategic persuasion for the U.S. to engage in the aforementioned tasks, so as to promote globally concerted efforts in meeting the challenge of climate change.

I. Introduction

Through a critical discourse analysis of a news report in a UK quality newspaper in the dealing with the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in February 2005 and the discursive context in which the paper was embedded, an examination has been undertaken of how the Kyoto Protocol in particular, and the issues directly linked to climate

change in general, have been addressed within this medium. In light of Fairclough's (1995, 2003) Dialectical Relational approach and Theo van Leeuwen's (1996) linguistically-oriented conceptual framework, the possible patterns in representing different social actors have been unveiled, especially via the analysis of the such categories as passivation, impersonalization, nominalization, metaphors, and the adjectives, adverbs and nouns that convey the attitudes of social actors toward the ratification of the Protocol. The findings have revealed the UK standpoint on the ideological values attached to the U.K.'s role in leading Europe and the world in the adoption of the Protocol and in the elimination of the adverse effects of climate change. Another significant finding from the analysis is the strategic persuasion for the U.S. to engage in the aforementioned tasks, so as to promote globally concerted efforts in meeting the challenge of climate change.

2. Theoretical Background

Critical Discourse Analysis differs itself from (general) linguistics since it is committed to laying bare how "language and discourse are used to achieve social goals" (Bloor et al, 2007: 2) and do not assign neutral and ideologically innocent role to discourse. Instead, they choose to approach discourse as symbolic human interaction loaded with ideological overtones and involved in power nexus.

There are diverse methods and theoretical orientation in CDA (see Wodak & Meyer, 2012 for an overview). They all focus on the dialectical relationship between language and society, but differ in terms of social aggregation (i.e., agency versus structure) and in their linguistic depth. Hence, CDA benefits from myriad tools and techniques in uncovering the creeping ideologies and asymmetry in texts, as well as pursuing other goals it tries to achieve. What unites critical discourse analysts is neither the methodology nor theoretical orthodoxy, but their common cause of understanding and making understood to the public the plight "of those who suffer most from dominance and inequality" and targeting "the

power elites that enact, sustain, legitimate, condone or ignore social inequality and injustice,” (van Dijk, 1993: 252) many incidences of which are from the injudicious use of language or other forms of communication.

Newspaper discourses have used a variety of techniques to shape and reshape people’s understanding of state of affairs and how it imbues people with attitudinal views toward people and their practices, and legitimize or delegitimize certain social practices. This paper is an attempt to critically examine the way the newspaper controller(s) (*The Independent*) use different syntactic categories in representing the U.K., the U.S, the developing countries, businesses and other social actors in the process of ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, an important agreement in dealing with the adverse impacts of climate change. The official enforcement of the Kyoto Protocol in February 2005, seven years after the Protocol was formally adopted, aroused various interests from a multitude of social actors, whose stances were represented differently in different discourses, especially in broadsheet papers. The news coming from the U.K. seems to have a tendency of foregrounding the U.K.’s role and position in this sphere of the global arena.

In the present study, Fairclough’s (1995, 2003) Dialectical Relational approach and Theo van Leeuwen’s (1996) linguistically-oriented conceptual framework were adopted and adapted in the analysis of the data gleaned from a U.K. quality paper so as to uncover the possible patterns in representing different social actors, especially via the analysis of the such categories as passivation, impersonalization, nominalization, metaphors, and the adjectives, adverbs and nouns that convey the attitudes of social actors toward the ratification of the Protocol.

3. Procedures for Data Collection and Data Analysis Framework

3.1 Data collection

The article entitled “Kyoto is not enough to tackle climate change”, written by Stephen Byers in *The Independent* on Wednesday, 16th February 2005 is chosen to be analysed in this study. The Kyoto Protocol is an important document that

legally binds industrialized countries around the globe in the cause against adverse effects of climate change. It was ratified only after seven years of negotiations, with the U.S. still pulling out and Australia deciding to stay out of it.

The reason for the choice of the article in *The Independent* is that because of the vast number of readers all over the world, it is highly influential in the lives and understanding of millions of people and even provides the local networks or small networks across the globe with ostensible 'objective' reports and stories. The reports, stories, and editorials in this newspaper are cited or translated or commented upon far more than other papers. Furthermore, because of the political concerns, the newspapers coming out in the U.K. (as well as the U.S., even though U.S. news reports on the event are not discussed in this current analysis) are more liable to be ideologically loaded.

3.2 Data analysis framework

CDA regards the roles, nexuses, and identities of discourse participants within a discourse community to be constituted and negotiated by means of texts. As such, texts are embedded in wider socio-economic and political contexts. CDA addresses how the content and the linguistic features of texts influence, and are in turn influenced by the contexts of text production, distribution, reception and adaptation, and by the wider socio-economic context in which texts are embedded (Fairclough 1995). This dialectical relationship between language and society is operationalized by Fairclough in three levels of analysis, namely (1) the micro-level analysis of the text, (2) the meso-level analysis of the context of producing, distributing, receiving and possibly adapting the text within a discourse community, and (3) the macro-level analysis of the socio-economic context in which the discourse community can be located.

Furthermore, on analysis, the main social actors in the event were identified and the evaluations of them were dealt with.

3.2.1 Micro-level analysis

At this level, analysis focuses on the specific linguistic features of particular importance for the text under study. Subject to the objectives of the research, the genre of the text, the audience at which the text is aimed, the present study analyses the syntactic categories of impersonalization and evaluation. Impersonalization obfuscates social agency, thus representing processes in a more abstract, factual manner. Impersonalization is accomplished by such grammatical categories as referential vagueness, passivation, grammatical metaphor, conceptual metaphor and metonymy. By contrast, evaluation serves to make value statements regarding the desirability, importance, or usefulness of social actors, events, or ideas (Fairclough 2003: 172). Evaluation is linguistically realized in the form of attributive adjectives, adverbs, verbs and nouns with particular denotative and connotative meanings. Figure 1 outlines the aims, the underlying grammatical categories, the examples and effects of the grammatical devices mentioned above. In line with the suggested grammatical categories above, van Leeuwen's (1996) socio-semantic inventory of the ways to represent social actors enables the critical enquirer to bring to light systematic omissions and distortions in representations. His model consisting of such morpho-syntactic categories as (1) inclusion/exclusion, (2) activation/passivation, (3) individualization/assimilation, (4) association/dissociation, (5) personalization/impersonalization, is partially incorporated into the framework of data analysis in Figure 1 below. For a detailed explanation of van Leeuwen's inventory, please refer to van Leeuwen 1996.

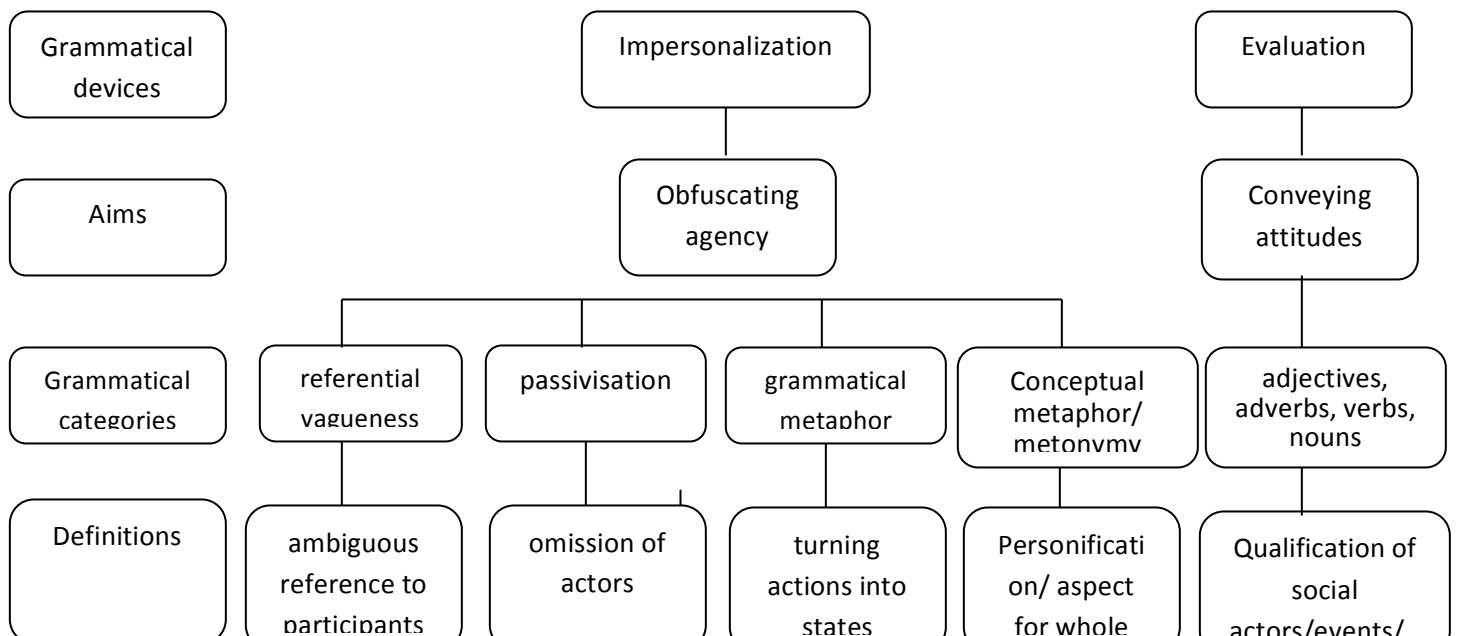


Figure 1. The grammatical devices of impersonalization and evaluation

What follows is a brief description of the grammatical devices outlined in Figure 1.

3.1.1 Impersonalization

There are four common linguistic means of impersonalization in English, as follows:

3.1.1.1 Referential vagueness is realized by a shifting referential range in the use of the first person plural (i.e. *I, we, our, us*) so that it is vague who 'we' stand for. The effect of this referential vagueness is the actions being assigned to an incompletely defined collective social actor.

3.1.1.2 Passivation (or agentless passive voice as termed by van Leeuwen, 1996) entails using a passive construction to either background or remove the social actor involved in an activity or action.

3.1.1.3 Grammatical metaphor (nominalization) involves the rewording of processes and properties as nouns (Halliday, 1995) by transforming a verb or adjective into a noun by means of nominalization, which turns actions and attributes into states.

3.1.1.4 Conceptual metaphor and metonymy are used for lexical underspecification which involves social actors being referred to at various levels of generality and abstractness. Conceptual metaphor involves a cross-domain mapping where an (usually abstract) entity is conceptualized in terms of another

(usually more concrete) entity. This current study focuses on personification, a special case of conceptual metaphor, and on the related phenomena of people-replaced-by-a-place, events-replaced-by-the-date-on-which-these-events-occurred, a-country-or-state-replaced-by-people metonymies.

3.1.2 Evaluation entails the qualities attributed to social actors, entities, and social events. By making evaluative statements, authors can either explicitly or implicitly commit themselves to specific values (Fairclough 2003:171). Evaluation can be positive or negative, explicit or implicit, as illustrated in the two examples below:

Example 1: (explicitly positive): in a strong position (line 47)

Example 2: (explicitly negative): refusal...to sign up (line 5)

Example 3: (implicitly positive): *issue of energy security has moved rapidly up the political agenda* (line 51-2)

Example 4: (implicitly negative): Bush administration as a lost cause (line 49)

Other than in the special case of irony and sarcasm, implicit evaluation is expressed by adjectives, adverbs, verbs or nouns that do not express positivity or negativity. Their evaluative meaning is therefore often subject to the discourse practice context, for example, the communicative purpose of the text, or on the linguistic co-text, for instance the words with which they typically co-occur.

3.2.2 Meso-level analysis

This level of analysis explains the representation strategies in the text by recourse to the discourse practice context which includes the production, distribution, reception and possible adaptation of the text. The focus here is on the roles of the members of a discourse community and the relationship between them.

3.2.3 Macro-level analysis

At this level, the wider socio-economic context is taken into consideration in order to interpret the findings from the micro-level analysis. Macro-level analysis aims at explaining why social actors are represented in the way they are in the text. The focus of analysis varies according to the text under study, and may be on historical, economic, political, or cultural formations or on a combination of them.

4. Discourse Analysis of *The Independent's* news report on the enforcement of the Kyoto Protocol in February 2005

The text of the news report by Stephen Byers in *The Independent* on Wednesday, 16th February 2005, is reproduced in Appendix I and is 3,204 words in length. The text is analysed on a line-by-line basis (63 lines in all), as shown in Appendix II. Such a line-by-line analysis facilitates the discussion of the detailed findings that follow. This text is chosen since it was distributed by *The Independent* one day after the official enforcement of the Kyoto Protocol, and was deemed to express the U.K.'s voice on this event.

4.1 Micro-level analysis

4.1.1 Impersonalization

As can be seen from the annotated version of the text under study in Appendix II, impersonalization is prevalent. Our analysis focuses on the strategic use of impersonalization as a means of achieving social, economic, and political goals.

4.1.1.1 Referential vagueness

In the article *Kyoto is not enough to tackle climate change*, referential vagueness is effected through the use of the first person plural pronoun, that is, *we*, *our*, *us*, as summarized in Figure 2 below.

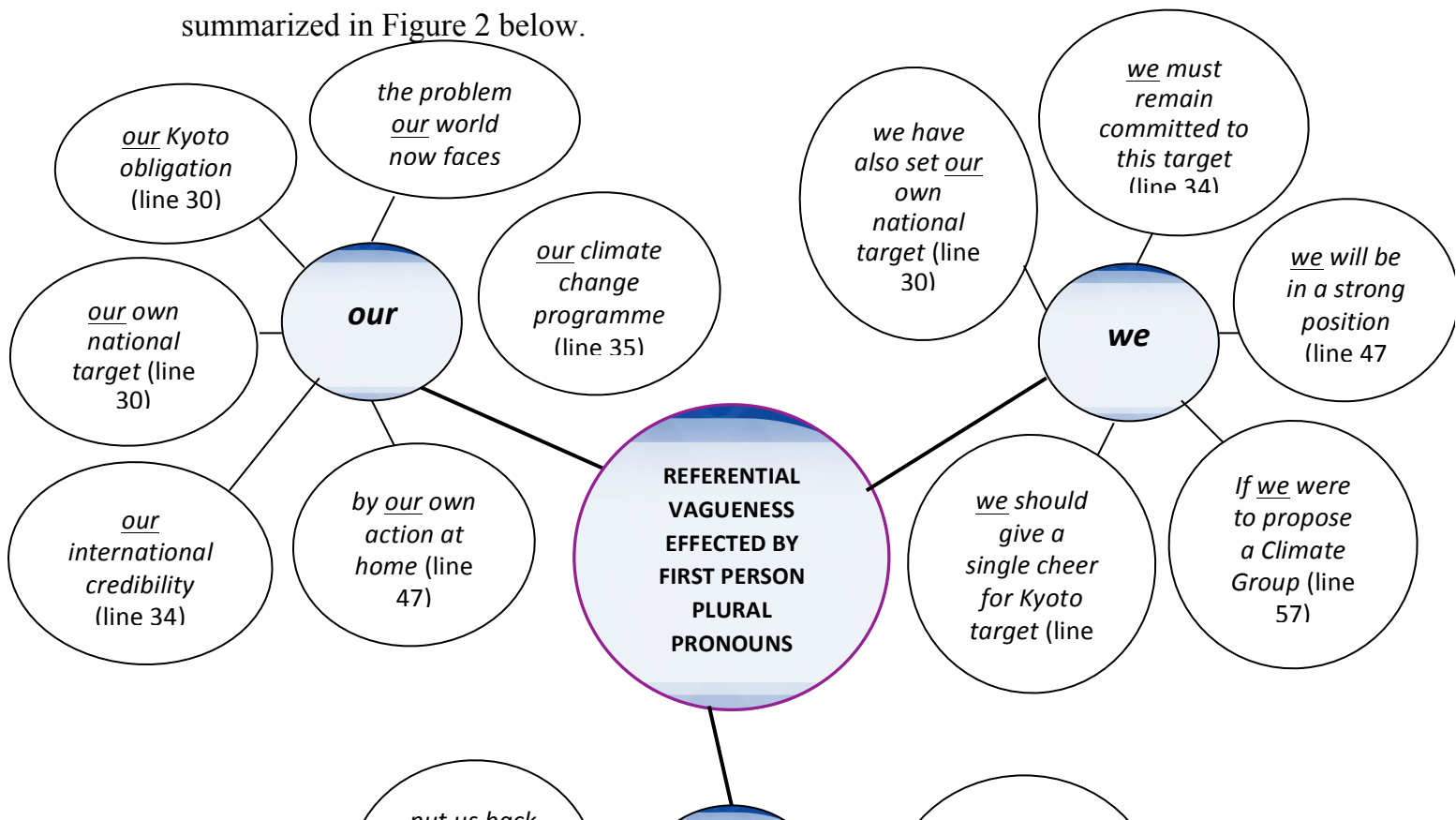


Figure 2. Referential vagueness effected by first person plural pronouns

Except for the use of *our* to refer to *the world* in line 3 of the text, almost all of the other uses of the first person plural pronoun seem to denote the U.K. as a united people - a collective actor, comprising everyone living in, constituting the U.K. with a common interest in and an aggregated effort in support of the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, as a means to eliminating the hurdles of adverse impacts of climate change. The United Kingdom of Britain, with '*our Kyoto obligation,*' '*our own national target,*' '*our climate change programme,*' '*our own action at home*' '*have set our own targets,*' '*must remain committed to this target,*' and '*should give a single cheer for Kyoto*' so that '*we can find a way forward which puts the long term interests of us all first.*' This prevalence of the first person plurals seem to foreground a nationalistic or patriotic ideology. However, in line 46, it is unclear who the pronoun *us* (in *the long term interests of us all first*) refer to: does *us* here refer to the U.K. or the E.U., or both? With such vagueness in reference, there is one question left unresolved as to whether who will *find a way forward* for the *long term interests of us all*.

The author favors the first person plural pronouns *we*, *our* and *us* in the text - the pronouns which play their significant role in creating a sense of unity of the writer/speaker with the audience. *We*, *our* and *us* are employed 6, 2 and 6 times respectively and are, probably, the most often repeated words in the text. The writer, representing the UK's government (Tony Blair's government's) does not distance the government from the U.K. people; instead, everything the government proclaims further seems to be issued by *us* – the people of the U.K. The above

mentioned pronouncements are employed as the inclusive ones throughout the text to share responsibility for everything being said with the audience. As a result, the audience seems to become a co-author of the text, providing that they approve of it. Thus, the text itself speaks on behalf of the U.K. people, who will *find a way forward* for the *long term interests of us all*.

In addition to the use of reference pronouns *we*, *our*, *us*, the article also uses the third person singular *he* to refer to the U.K.'s Prime Minister Tony Blair, confirming his right emphasis on the importance of climate change to the world at large. However, there is no such a *he* used in reference to 'President Bush.' Here, the strategy of naming and referencing to people in news discourse (Richardson, 2007:49) to exert significant impact on the way in which they are viewed is affirmed. The manner in which two equally high-ranking social actors - the head of the United States of America and the head of the United Kingdom of Britain - are named and referred to differently seems to differentiate the status of these two country heads. The formal addressing term *President* that goes with *Bush* can serve a certain psychological, social or political purpose of positioning the president of the United States into a vital role in the global political arena, especially in the then discussion of the Kyoto Protocol and elimination of climate change.

To add more ingredients to this mixture, it is interesting to note that there is no sign of the third person singular *it* in this article to refer to the United States of America. Instead, metonyms are in use (see Section 6.1.1.3 for metonyms of the United States).

Finally, the use of the third person plural *their* and the demonstrative *those* in reference to *China*, *India* as *rapidly developing countries* in lines 6 and 58, as well as the use of *their* in reference to *businesses* in line 39 together distance the developing countries from the leading role in climate change elimination, as developing countries are not considered an integral part of the U.K. or E.U.'s climate group.

All things considered, the referential vagueness and strategic naming technique in the article under investigation have helped to depict the U.K. as the leader, the president of the G8 in July that year, who would take the lead in the E.U. in the fight against climate change negative influences. Also, the article has made an attempt to persuade America to engage in the agreement of the Kyoto Protocol in particular and the climate change in general. In the mean time, there is a calling for collective/joint efforts to eliminate the adverse effects of climate change (“*concerted international action with all countries playing their part*”). This clearly contends that climate change can be solved by international agreements.

4.1.1.2 Activation/Passivation

The activation/passivation pattern in the text, with the former more pervasive than the latter, indicates that the U.K. tends to take an active role in leading the world, or at least the E.U., in engaging the U.S. and the whole world in the enforcement of the Kyoto Protocol and the elimination of climate change adverse effects. The emphasis on the U.K. and U.S.’s governments’ roles as well as the calling to attention of rapidly developing countries serves to locate power and responsibility for the success or failure of implementing the Protocol mostly in the hands of these nations.

In terms of passivation, it constitutes a way of putting the author considers important into subject position. Three types of passivation are employed in the article under study, namely (1) passive voice with grammatical actor, (2) passive voice with no social actor, and (3) past participles with adjectival function, as illustrated in Table 1 below.

Passivation type	Line	Extract	Effect/Ideological standpoint
(1) Passive voice with	16	...the single most important issue <i>faced</i> by the world.	Social collective nouns as <i>the world</i> ,
	7	...the cuts <i>required</i> by the Protocol...	<i>the G8</i> and

Passivation type	Line	Extract	Effect/Ideological standpoint
social and grammatical actors	29-30	...greenhouse gas emissions <i>required</i> under our Kyoto obligation.	grammatical actors <i>the Protocol, our Kyoto obligation ...</i>
	58	...a Climate Group <i>made up of</i> the G8 plus...	
(2) passive voice with no social actor	5-6	...such as China and India, are not <i>required</i> to make cuts in their greenhouse gas emissions.	The agentless passive voice structures here denote
	20-21	...potentially unpopular political decisions need <i>to be taken</i> now...	
	33	...much more will need <i>to be done</i> if this goal is <i>to be achieved</i> .	
(3) past participles with adjectival function	49-50	...regard the Bush administration as a <i>lost</i> cause.	

The absence of explicit agency in the statements in lines 5-6, 20-21, 33 seems to make the discourse more dialogic, and less authoritative. There is no direct statement as of which organizations or bodies are responsible for the requirement to make cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, for the making of the political decisions mentioned, etc. The strategic shift of agency from Tony Blair, Britain to the use of inanimate subjects serves to deflect or reduce the responsibility on the part of the U.K.'s government as the actor. In doing so, the agent of enacting the tasks set forth in the text is shifted to an entity which has yet to be formalized. Could it be the case, depersonalization through the effacement of agency, embedded in a style purporting objectivity and factuality, has the impact of suggesting consensus, and therefore discouraging dissent on the enforcement of the Kyoto Protocol in order

to reduce the negative impacts of climate change, among the audience addressed by the paper.

Overall, the active and the passive voice is used strategically by the author not only to claim responsibility for important strategic roles and actions (active voice) on the part of the deemed most powerful nations in the world, but also to foreground (active voice) or background (passive voice) the information that the author considers important or unimportant. This particular finding reaffirms Richardson's (2004, cited in Richardson 2007:56) conclusion that "there is often social or ideological significance" between the choices of representing events in journalism to as well as Fairclough's (2000, cited in Richardson 2007:56) contention that "transforming an *active* process into a 'state of affairs' can remove important (perhaps uncomfortable) political implications."

4.1.1.3 Grammatical metaphor (nominalization), conceptual metaphor and metonymy

In line with Richardson's (2007:66) contention that "certain types of metaphor are associated with specific genres of journalism," grammatical metaphor in the form of nominalization, conceptual metaphor, and metonymy are detected in the article under investigation. In line 10, the replacement of social actors by grammatical actors, that is using *'the international discussions about the next step to build on the Kyoto'* as the subject of a clause with the verb *'have not gained,'* helps obfuscate who actually discussed that next step that resulted in a failure to reach momentum. Personification is found in such other clauses as *'Kyoto provides a solution to the scale of the problem'* (line 3), *'the political challenges facing Tony Blair'* (line 27), *'trading scheme has huge potential'* (line 38) and *'trading scheme could provide a model'* (line 44). Also, conceptual metaphors like *'fresh injection of political will'* (line 62)...

According to Richardson (2007), "metonymy is a trope in which one word, phrase or object is substituted for another from a semantically related field of reference. Metonymy differs from metaphor, in that metaphors operate through transference

of similar characteristics while metonymy operates through more direct forms of association.” Among a number of metonymic replacements suggested by Reisigl and Wodak (2001, cited in Richardson 2007:68), the people-replaced-by-a-place, events-replaced-by-the-date-on-which-these-events-occurred, a-country-or-state-replaced-by-people metonyms are employed in this article. The most striking examples include the replacement of the U.S.A. by its government ‘*the Bush administration*’ (line 49), its people and organizations ‘*President Bush*’ and ‘*American financial institutions*’ (line 53), its state ‘*Florida*’ (line 56), and events ‘*11 September*’ (line 51). Such metonymies enable the author to add more plausible reasons to the argument mentioned in lines 23-6 of the article that ‘*the United States...must be engaged*’ in a concerted international action to resolve climate change.

4.1.2 Evaluation

The analysis of words used in a newspaper text may help identify the message(s) of the text and frame the story in direct and unavoidable ways. Figure 3 categorizes the instances of evaluation for the main social actors in the text under study according to their desirability (positive or negative) and their directness (explicit or implicit). Most of the instances of evaluation in the text are either explicitly positive or implicitly positive. Only four evaluations are negative, all are about the U.S., and only one of them is explicit. More explicitly positive evaluations are about the U.K. and E.U. than about the U.S. It is interesting to note that positive evaluations about the U.K. can be found throughout the text while those about the U.S. appear later in it. From the evaluations categorized in Figure 3, we can arrive at a text structure in which positive evaluation about the U.K. and E.U. is emphasized at the beginning of the text to convey the author’s positive attitude towards to the U.K. and E.U. in their leading roles as well as the positive attitude towards climate change elimination. To illustrate, the verb and noun phrases ‘*lead,*’ ‘*presidency,*’ ‘*make success,*’ plus the quotation of Tony Blair’s statement about climate change do reaffirm the U.K.’s position in the international

arena on climate change. Then, the emphasis is gradually attenuated and reinforced again near the closing of the text, thus finishing the text on a positive note. With regard to the U.S., there is a gradual move from some sort of silence (*'refusal'* in the second paragraph) to a number of *'lost cause'* in the later half of the text, and a shift to *'be prepared to respond positively'* in the next to last paragraph. Hence, the U.S. is depicted as seemingly moving from being entirely negative to implicitly positive towards the Kyoto Protocol and climate change.

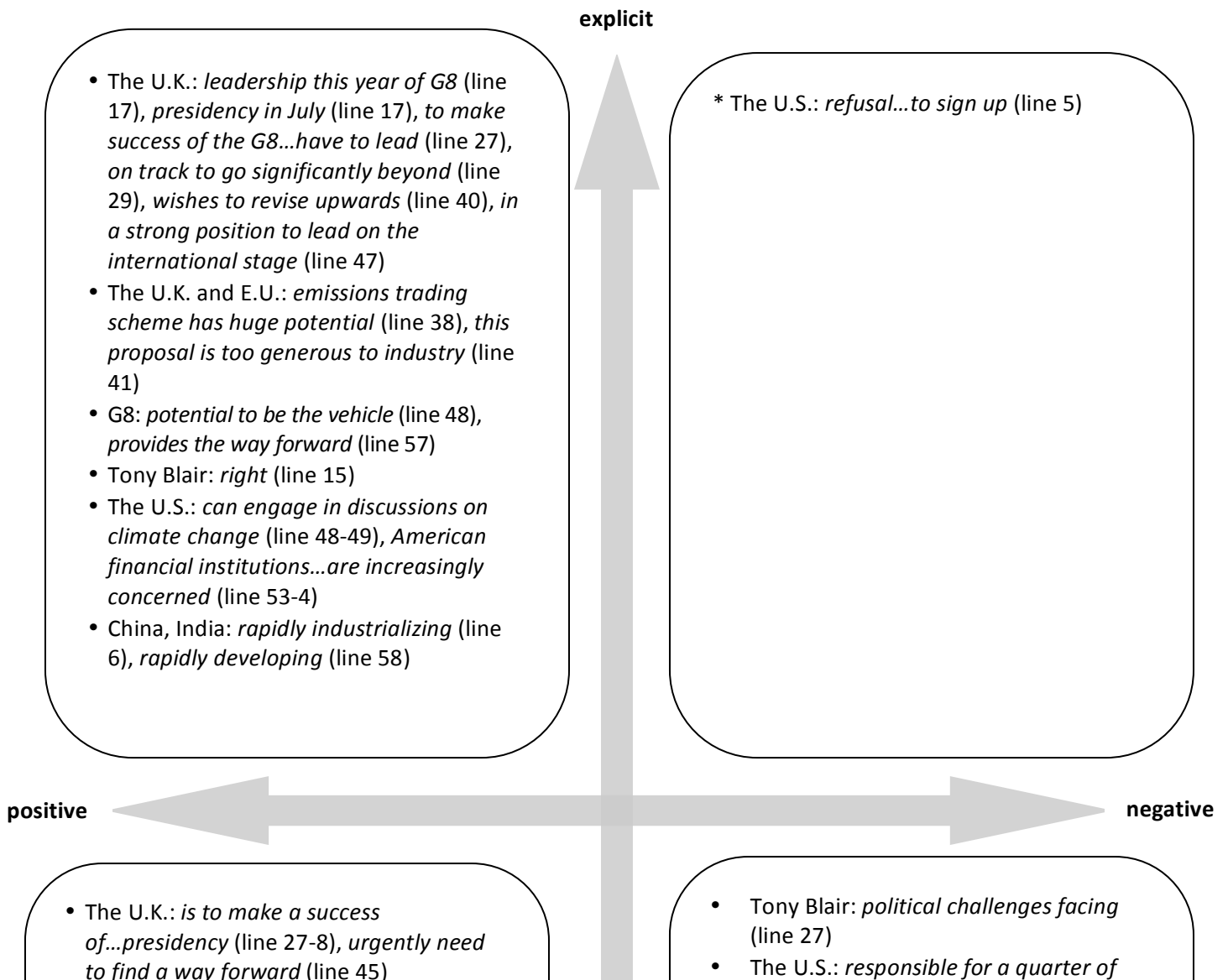


Figure 3. Evaluation in the article

Cohesive devices: A glance at the article can help glean the chain of cohesive devices from the onset to the end of it: *Today - This - Yet - So - Such - First - Secondly - These - The U.K. - The European emissions - This - By our own actions - American - If - Today*. It is noteworthy here that the adverb *Today* both opens and closes the whole discourse. Whatever topical or textual themes are in between the word '*Today*' at the beginning of the first and the last paragraphs, this repetition seems to signify the presence of the Kyoto Protocol in force from today and reconfirm the U.K.'s willingness to the Protocol as well as the current urgency of reaching a new global consensus to meet the challenge of climate change.

4.2 Meso-level analysis

The article at stake was published in the online *The Independent* on Wednesday 16 February 2005, one day after the Kyoto Protocol - an important document that legally binds developed countries to emission reduction targets - was officially enforced, seven years after the Protocol was officially adopted in Kyoto. It appeared in the *Voices* section of the paper, not the most prominent location in the newspaper, but it is not the least noble part either. Its author was Stephen Byers, co-chair of the International Climate Change Task Force.

The article is 5,454 words, a size that is above average, reflecting the valuation the newspaper made of the specific event that the article covers.

The headline and the first few paragraphs highlight the event of the Kyoto Protocol officially coming into force and the role of Britain in the Protocol.

The Independent's representation of the Kyoto Protocol is a powerful legitimization of the U.K.'s diplomacy and of the international politics of climate change.

By positioning the U.K. in the leading role in the adoption of the Protocol, the article constructs an image of international leadership for the U.K.

The dominant framing of Stephen Byers' article is clearly the one advanced by his International Climate Change Task Force and by Tony Blair, the then Prime Minister of the U.K. Tony Blair is quoted as really firm of the importance of the issue of climate change to the world. Stephen Byers' strategy of framing the U.K. as a positive supporter of the Protocol is therefore in line with the Prime Minister's ideology. Tony Blair's, following other Prime Ministers before him, specially Margaret Thatcher, construction of climate change as an international problem to be resolved by concerted international action with all countries playing their part and of the U.S. as the world's prominent nation that must be engaged, is largely promoted by Stephen Byers.

4.3 Macro-level analysis

4.3.1 Comparative-synchronic analysis

On the day Stephen Byers' article appeared in *The Independent*, 16 February 2005, also found in *The Independent* was another article on the Kyoto Protocol entitled 'Can Kyoto really save the world?' (in the Environment section of the newspaper). Simultaneously, *The Guardian* published several articles on this event, one of which ('The Kyoto Protocol by Alison Purdy) explained what the Kyoto Protocol was and why some countries decided to pull out while some joined in. *The New York Times* published an article that expressed the American feeling towards the Protocol, as its title suggests 'Mixed feelings as Treaty on greenhouse gases takes effect' by Mark Landler. These articles represent the ratification of the Kyoto

Protocol in quite different manners (but this current analysis does not attempt to compare these representations in detail for now). A careful analysis of the different newspapers' representations of the event, i.e. an analysis across newspapers, and across authors of articles, can be very useful because it will probably show that alternatives exist in the discursive construction of reality.

4.3.2 Historical-diachronic analysis

Due to time constraints, this section can only list the significant events as background to the enforcement of the Kyoto Protocol as well as the important events after that. There should be an analysis of some of the articles that had been published before the enforcement of the Kyoto Protocol, as they would spell out the prospects and expectations for the event, and give us a wider picture of each newspaper's discourse patterns on climate change.

* Background on the Kyoto Protocol and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: The international response to climate change

In 1992, countries joined an international treaty, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to cooperatively consider what they could do to limit average global temperature increases and the resulting climate change, and to cope with whatever impacts were, by then, inevitable.

By 1995, countries realized that emission reductions provisions in the Convention were inadequate. They launched negotiations to strengthen the global response to climate change, and, two years later, adopted the Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol legally binds developed countries to emission reduction targets. The Protocol's first commitment period started in 2008 and ends in 2012. At COP17 in Durban, governments of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol decided that a second commitment period, from 2013 onwards, would seamlessly follow the end of the first commitment period. The length of the second commitment period is to be determined: it will be either five or eight years long.

Climate change is a complex problem, which, although environmental in nature, has consequences for all spheres of existence on our planet. It either impacts - or is

impacted by - global issues, including poverty, economic development, population growth, sustainable development and resource management.

At the very heart of the response to climate change, however, lies the need to reduce emissions. In 2010, governments agreed that emissions need to be reduced so that global temperature increases are limited to below 2 degrees Celsius.

The time line below details the international response to climate change, providing a contextual entry point to the essential background.

2011: The Durban Platform for Enhanced Action drafted and accepted by the COP, at COP17.

2010: Cancun Agreements drafted and largely accepted by the COP, at COP16.

2009: Copenhagen Accord drafted at COP15 in Copenhagen. This was taken note of by the COP. Countries later submitted emissions reductions pledges or mitigation action pledges, all non-binding.

2007: IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report released. Climate science entered into popular consciousness.

2005: Entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol. The first Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (MOP 1) takes place in Montreal. In accordance with Kyoto Protocol requirements, Parties launched negotiations on the next phase of the KP under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP). What was to become the Nairobi Work Programme on Adaptation (it would receive its name in 2006, one year later) is accepted and agreed on.

2001: Release of IPCC's Third Assessment Report. Bonn Agreements adopted, based on the Buenos Aires Plan of Action of 1998. Marrakesh Accords adopted at COP7, detailing rules for implementation of Kyoto Protocol, setting up new funding and planning instruments for adaptation, and establishing a technology transfer framework.

1997: Kyoto Protocol formally adopted in December at COP3.

1995: The first Conference of the Parties (COP 1) takes place in Berlin.

1994: UNFCCC enters into force.

1992: The INC adopts UNFCCC text. At the Earth Summit in Rio, the UNFCCC is opened for signature along with its sister Rio Conventions, UNCBD and UNCCD.

1991: First meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) takes place.

1990: IPCC's first assessment report released. IPCC and second World Climate Conference call for a global treaty on climate change. United Nations General Assembly negotiations on a framework convention begin.

1988: The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is set up.

1979: The first World Climate Conference (WCC) takes place.

A study of the historical context of the Kyoto Protocol contributed to a better understanding of the discourses of different social actors. Powerful countries like the U.K. and the U.S., rapidly developing countries like China and India have their own agenda to climate change and are not all compatible with the Protocol.

5. Conclusions

The present analysis of a U.K. broadsheet paper on the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol in February 2005 has tracked down the selection and representation of social actors, certain aspects of language, and the discursive strategies to uncover the ideological values and attitudes the U.K. news controllers attach to the event in particular and climate change in general. Referential vagueness was employed to create a sense of unity and collective responsibility, passivation to remove important political implications, metaphors and metonymies in persuasion for the U.S. to be engaged in the agreement, evaluation to depict the U.K. as an international leader and the U.S. in its gradual move from almost negative to 'be prepared to respond positively' to climate change. CDA, thanks to its concerns with the notions of power and ideology, its orientation towards change, and its emphasis on contextuality, micro- and macro-level analysis, has helped critically unveil the attendant ideological positions of and power relations between various

parties imbued in the news. A further analysis with more data will shed light on differential representation of the countries in relation to the Kyoto Protocol and climate change.

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Appendix



<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/stephen-byers-kyoto-is-not-enough-to-tackle-climate-change-483551.html?origin=internalSearch>

Wednesday 16 February 2005

Stephen Byers: Kyoto is not enough to tackle climate change

If the mood is changing in the US, then Britain's presidency of the G8 provides the way forward

1 Today, the Kyoto Protocol on climate change comes into effect. It is significant
because it
2 represents agreed international action to tackle global warming. But it would be a
3 dangerous mistake to believe that Kyoto provides a solution to the scale of the problem
our
4 world now faces.
5 This is not due to the refusal of the US to sign up, or the fact that countries which
are
6 rapidly industrialising, such as China and India, are not required to make cuts in
their
7 greenhouse gas emissions. The reality is that the cuts required by the Protocol are
8 inadequate in the rapidly worsening situation. In addition, the focus on Kyoto over
recent
9 years, and whether or not it will come into force, has become an excuse for inaction.
As a
10 result the international discussions about the next step to build on Kyoto have not
gained
11 momentum.
12 Yet the urgency of the issue is clear. Climate change is no longer an abstract
concept.
13 Polar ice caps are melting. Sea levels are rising. The earth's temperature is
undoubtedly
14 climbing. The five hottest years on record have occurred in the last seven years.
15 So, Tony Blair was right when he said last year that in the long term climate change
was
16 the single most important issue faced by the world. No country, however rich and
17 Britain's leadership this year of the G8, and for the UK presidency of the European
Union
18 in July.
19 Such action is not without political risk. There are two main dangers. The first is that
20 potentially unpopular political decisions need to be taken now with the benefit not
being
21 seen for 10 or 20 years. There is a mismatch in timing between the electoral
disadvantage

22 and environmental advantage.

23 Secondly, no nation acting alone can resolve climate change. There has to be
24 concerted
25 international action with all countries playing their part. In particular, this means that
26 somehow the United States, which is responsible for a quarter of the world's carbon
27 emissions, must be engaged.

28 These are the political challenges facing Tony Blair. If Britain is to make a success
29 of the
30 G8 and the EU presidency, then it is going to have to lead by example.

31 The UK is on track to go significantly beyond the cuts in greenhouse gas emissions
32 required under our Kyoto obligations. However, we have also set our own national
33 target
34 relating specifically to carbon dioxide emissions - to reduce them by 20 per cent
35 below
36 1990 levels by 2010.

37 As things presently stand, much more will need to be done if this goal is to be
38 achieved.

39 For the sake of our international credibility we must remain committed to this target
40 and
41 use the present review of our climate change programme to come forward with a
42 package
43 of policies that will put us back on track to meet this ambitious carbon emissions
44 reduction.

45 The European emissions trading scheme has huge potential to change the way
thousands
of businesses think about their energy use. Yet it has got off to a faltering start. The
UK
Government wishes to revise upwards the level of carbon allocations to business.
The EU
believes this proposal is too generous to industry and that as a result those
businesses that
cut emissions, and therefore have carbon allocations to sell, will find few takers,
thus
undermining the whole scheme.

This stand-off is to no one's benefit. The trading scheme could provide a model for
the
rest of the world to follow. The EU and the UK urgently need to find a way forward

46 which puts the long term interests of us all first.
47 By our own actions at home we will be in a strong position to lead on the
international
48 stage. The G8 has the potential to be the vehicle by which the US can engage in
49 discussions on climate change. I know that many regard the Bush administration as a
lost
50 cause. That the Texas oil lobby has a vice-like grip on energy policy. But there are
signs
51 that things are beginning to change. Post 11 September the issue of energy security
has
52 moved rapidly up the political agenda.
53 American financial institutions in general, and the insurance sector in particular, are
54 increasingly concerned about the costs of extreme weather conditions. The insurance
55 industry estimates the cost of claims from last summer's hurricanes in the Gulf of
Mexico
56 will amount to more than \$22bn (£11.6bn) in the Florida alone.
57 If the mood is changing in the US then the G8 provides the way forward. If we were
to
58 propose a Climate Group made up of the G8 plus those rapidly developing countries
such
59 as China and India to look at the action necessary to cut greenhouse gas emissions
there is
60 a chance President Bush may be prepared to respond positively.
61 Today, we should give a single cheer for Kyoto but recognise that there needs to be
a
62 fresh injection of political will if we are to achieve a new global consensus that will
63 provide the world with the means to meet the challenge of climate change.
The writer is co-chair of the International Climate Change Task Force.