# The Paris Climate Agreement in online media: what comes to the fore?

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# Abstract

The thesis examines media discussions after the adoption of the Paris Climate Agreement on 12 December 2015. Discourse analysis of media texts is based on Dryzek's approach to classification of environmental discourses. Three discourses are identified and investigated with respect to the means of their creation based on the analysis of the following components: tone and atmosphere, entities and their relationships, main agents, rhetoric devices. The analysis reveals how discourses create their regularities and what they might lead to when producing the climate change image. The research shows different approaches to the perception of climate change, and accordingly, towards the actions that should be taken. Beck's world risk society is used as a theoretical anchor for addressing questions about the role of discourses in the formation of climate change meanings. It is argued that language and discourses influence social orders of society, and are capable of introducing new meanings of old concepts as well as new concepts.

*Keywords:* climate change, discourse analysis, world risk society, the Paris Climate Agreement, media, communication

# Acknowledgment

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# Abbreviations

NGOs Non-governmental organisations

# 1 Introduction

The study aims at understanding the relationship between language and social changes. An interest to media portrayal of climate change comes to the focus as the way media speak about environmental issues influences how they are perceived, and climate change is one of the hottest issues now. Furthermore, the way something is understood has direct effects on how it is treated. The Paris Climate Agreement is chosen as a reference point due to its importance and relevance in time. The focus of the study is on the language and its role in formation of discourses, and on the capability of the discourses to introduce changes into society.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change announced that there is evidence that climate changed occurred mostly due to human-made activities. However, since the climate change issue was first raised, there has been not much change in the approaches and not many goals have been achieved.

The Paris Agreement is viewed as a big step towards possible changes and a beginning of new era of green technologies and clean energy. The analysis of media will aim at understanding what is in the focus of media discussions in the context of the adoption of the Agreement.

There has been no studies found on the media interpretation of the international policy in the field of climate change from different, national and international, perspectives.

# 2 Literature Review

## 2.1 Understanding media

For the purpose of the present work it is necessary to overview media in a globalised society, their role in addressing environmental issues. For the last decades there have been a lot of transformations in mass media and communication not least due to the development of new advanced technologies, the Internet in the first place, that made time and distance factors less significant. Initially functions of the media in a democratic society are seen as to provide facts and reflect public opinion remaining independent from those who are in power (Habermas, 1989). Thus, ideally, media is to be a platform for a dialogue between the public and the state, accordingly, on a global scale, media should reflect voices of the global public and bring up their interests. However, some media globalisation sceptics argue that it is the global media that tries to control the public opinion from outside (Hjarvard, 2001: 20).

   Some scholars argue that appearance of international agenda in all news lead to the decrease in interest to it due to its complexity and overwhelmingness (Biltereyst, 2001). Worldwide news agencies that in many cases serve as a primary source of information for many smaller press units and provide 'hot' topics and set a tone for many local publications where news pieces are further interpreted in accordance with a newspaper publisher's views. "However, compared to the globalisation of politics, economy, and culture, the public sphere and the formation of public opinion are still very much tied to a national level and oriented to national political institutions" (Hjarvard, 2001: 19). Thus, some differences in presenting information cannot be avoided due to different institutions that stand behind media. However, most media texts represent different opinions and intend to create a vision of an objective picture, so quotations of actors connected the events described in the media is a norm (Fairclough, 2003). This study will focus on online editions of "mainstream media" (Cox, 2010) and "new media", represented by environmental organisations.

## 2.2 Media and environmental communication

Any actions and decisions made in connection with the issue of environment, and climate change in particular, is always big news and covered by all big newspapers and news agencies, not to speak of environmental websites, blogs, etc. Media plays an essential role in informing public about what is going on in politics and in the academic circles with regard to climate change (Cox, 2010), it builds a platform for discussion and interpretation of climate change questions. Previous research revealed that mass media showed, to a different extent, discrepancies in portraying the same events and activities around climate change (Boykoff, 2013). To consider the aforementioned, -media is the most important source of information for society to learn about climate change, and -media presentation is subjective. Consequently, media's *interpretation* of climate change becomes a key element in the formation of the perception of climate change. Furthermore, the way we perceive something has a powerful impact on how we act or do not act towards it (Cox, 2010:2). Thus, the narrative of global environmental issues lacks the connection with everyday issues, which leads to the lack of response and hence action from the public (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005). Moreover, as there is no clear evidence in everyday life that can be directly connected to climate change, in contrast with, for example, an economic crisis, when inflation or unemployment has immediate and direct impact on individuals here and now, the role of media becomes unique as serves as the only landmark of the situation. Thus, media discourse might be also viewed as a starting point, "agenda setting" (Cox, 2010: 35), when forming the perception of climate change and relationship to it.

Another important aspect of climate change is the role of science. When speaking about dangers of climate change, it often refers to distant future and consequences, the proves of which can be provided and understood by none but scientists (Cox, 2010). Thus, this monopoly on the knowledge leads to the increased importance of scholars' opinions, what results in communicating purely technical data and, consequently searching for technical solutions, excluding public participation, hence eliminating deliberative nature of decision-making (Hajer, 1995). In contrast with such a model of communication, which Cox describes as one-way communication from scholars to audience with the aim to 'translate' scientific data, "technical model of risk communication" (2010: 216) there is a "cultural model of risk communication" (2010: 216) which implies including other than scientific agencies and people at potentially 'dangerous' places, when speaking about climate change. Thus, the cultural model includes not only science, but cultural knowledge and social experience. It also makes the narrative more dramatic as involves agencies and people who are often emotionally engaged comparing to scholars, whose aim is to inform society, whilst the former try to alert it (Cox, 2010). The communication of scientific findings is often distorted due to dominated ideologies (Cox, 2010), i.e. media tend to choose those facts and opinions that do not contradict with their ideological orientation, which is defined by the institution that stands behind it. Moreover, scientific data, presented in media is fragmental, as full scientific reports do not fit into media frames, which makes it easier to customise facts according to the purposes of media, to inverse information that it will look attractive for the audience. (Frank, 2014). Although this study will not analyse what influences the construction of media texts, it is important to understand how a media realm is functioning in order to design an appropriate methodological framework. One of the essential components that defines how climate change is framed in media is the choice of agents, whose voices are represented, and the way their statements are incorporated in texts.

Thus, media shapes the perception of climate change that further affects the motivation of the audience to act. The communication of environmental issues in media, in particular the communication of climate change, has a complex nature where the primary focus is on defining what climate change is and what its risks are.


## 2.3   Language and discourse

As previously mentioned, media is the main source from which society learns about climate change, however, it is not objective, each text presents one interpretation, one variant of reality (Cox, 2010). By choosing specific words and syntactic devices media design different variants of the same "truth" - different discourses. Independently on whether this choice made by an author is accidental or intentional from her side, it does construct the reality and is constructed by it, though the author might not be aware of it. Although, it is obviously not only media that contributes to the construction of reality, there exist many different factors. This thesis will focus on different discourses created in media, their role in communicating climate change issues. The study of language and how it constructs reality, its correlation with the order of society goes back to early structuralism and Ferdinand Saussure, who claimed that language shapes views of those who use it (Inglis, 2012). According to Saussure (Inglis, 2012) any language (or Saussure's term 'langue' in contrast to 'parole'- specific utterances made by users of the langue) is a structured system that has signifiers (words, sounds) and signifieds (concepts, ideas). Thus, language implicitly sets rules on what words are to be chosen and how they are to be used in order to create meaningful statements, thus, different languages, which later structuralist would refer to as discourses, construct different realities in such a manner that people think that words they use are neutral and natural, whilst they are shaped by discourses (Inglis, 2012). For example, the 'environment' did not exist as a concept anywhere until 1960 (Dryzek, 2005:5), on the one hand, there might have been no need for the concept as it did not appear to be a big issue, on the other hand, not existing as a concept might not have allowed to

raise any issues around it. This illustrates a double nature of language (Fairclough, 2003) and its impact on the emergence of new concepts, new social practices.

Thus, discourse can be defined as "a particular way of talking about and understanding the world" (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002: 1). Discourses are studied in order to reveal hidden manipulations and critically assess regularities that they produce.

Discourses are immersed in their languages and based on the common sense of values, which influences roles of characters involved in the narrative and their relationships. Discourse analysis is capable of showing the importance of language and its role in constructing realities with regard to climate change, as well as of revealing mechanisms of creating particular concepts within these realities. Analytical approach chosen for this work zooms in all central components that are of primary concern in the context of climate change and the Agreement, i.e. agencies that take part in the discussions, their beliefs and standards of behaviour, which are inbuilt into particular linguistic frames.

## 2.4   The Paris Climate Agreement

The Paris Climate Agreement, signed 12 December 2015, might be seen as a result of negotiations around climate change that started in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit when the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate change was adopted, the convention acknowledged the existence of the climate change problem and indicated developed countries as being responsible for taking measures (unfccc.int). The adoption of Kyoto protocol in 1997 was the next attempt in addressing the problem, the protocol specified particular targets for gas emissions reduction, however it was not ratified by US and later in 2011 Canada withdrew from it. Starting from 2007 regular meetings within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate change took place almost every year. One of the most  important, the summit in Copenhagen, was held in 2009 when the delegates came to the common objective to limit the temperature increase to no more than 2 degrees Celsius (unfccc.int). The Paris Climate Agreement became a major turn in a twenty-year road with thorns of denying, postponing and failing, and for the first time, brought all countries to the common accord to start acting on the global scale.

# 3  Research Problem

The Paris Climate Agreement is chosen as a reference point due to its importance and relevance in time. The focus of the study is on the language and its role in formation of discourses, and on the capability of the discourses to introduce changes into society. The Paris Climate Agreement is the latest and currently central document that directs and decides global politics in terms of climate change. And as any policy-defining meetings or agreements which take place on a global scale with regard to environmental issues it got a lot of media attention. The Agreement, as expected, made headlines of media at all levels and of different types. And as it was mentioned in the previous chapter, media serves as a primary source for the public to learn about climate change, and, accordingly, influences the perception of the issue, relations to it and further actions. The goal of the research is to identify main discourses in online media in the context of the Paris Climate Agreement using the discursive approach. The aim of the approach is to explore linguistic regularities and concepts behind them that constitute discourses around the adoption of the Agreement. Further analysis and discussion aim at understanding how identified discourses shape realities and distribute roles within them, and how it might influence approaches to the issue of climate change.

Thus the research aims at analysing coverage of the Paris Climate Agreement in online media, and understanding the influence of the identified discourses on the field of climate change.

The attempt is made to answer the following questions:

- What are main discourses with regard to the adoption of the Paris Climate Agreement?
- How are the identified discourses constructed? What are their similarities and differences?
- How do the identified discourses produce particular meanings on climate change?

# 4 Reserach Problem and Theory

Since the question of climate change was first raised, there has been a lot of speculations in media whether it is real or fake, in case if it is fake, who has made it up (Beck, 2013; Dryzek, 2005). As time went by and arguments for climate change became irresistible, media debates have been concentrating on the climate change itself, actions to be taken to prevent it and possible consequences, on both global and local scales. The Paris Conference resulted in adoption of the Agreement that, speaking in general terms, aims at preventing the global climate change catastrophe by means of uniting the world and regulating and facilitating coordinated actions with the goal to decrease greenhouse gas emissions. To analyse what was highlighted in media, how it was done with regard to the Paris Climate Agreement and how it contributed to the portrayal of climate change, it is important to investigate what is paid attention to, what actors step forward and what actions are prioritised, and, furthermore, in what context the climate change issue and the Agreement are placed. Thus, in order to investigate this context it is necessary to find out where climate change questions stand in society and public sphere and how they fit into the existing world order.

As mentioned in previous chapters, the perception of and approaches to climate change are changing as well as institutions are adjusting and evaluating in order to prevent the climate change catastrophe. Environmental risks and metamorphoses in societal and institutional structures lie at the core of the world risk society theory. The theory identifies a new phase in the world development when humans cannot longer control effects and consequences of their own actions, thus, many activities, especially those based on high technologies, which first manage to find answers, later create harder tasks with many unknown variables and unpredictable outcomes (Beck, 1992). Human logics based on the pride of domination is falling apart, fixation on individualism, economic prosperity and hi-tech world is no longer a perfect solution.

Beck (1992, 1999, 2013) pays much attention to different stages of acknowledgment of new circumstances and further dealing with them. Thus, he describes three stages of the reaction to new risks: denial, fatalism, and new beginnings, and underlines their importance as they, in line with attitudes, provide different strategies for actions (Beck, 2013). The world risk society theory argues that there is a new era of the society where old concepts and approaches are no longer capable of grasping appearing situations, and, consequently, that the world structure as it has been known should be reconsidered in order to cope with new facets (Beck, 2002). The world structure is centred around institutions which are designed in line with the present segregation of society, and these institutions are responsible for decision-making. But when problems lie outside this established model of society the institutions produce inefficient decisions and measures. The system starts failing its tasks and is not functioning properly which leads to the institutional crisis.

The theory underlines that consequences of technological and economic development cannot be managed by means of existing approaches, and that damages and risks will far outweigh the benefits of the system as it is now (Beck, 2002). The theory addresses, amongst others, questions of globalisation, climate change, construction of reality (Beck, 2002, 2009, 2013), which directly correspond with the raised in the present work issues. Thus, the world risk society theory provides an analytical basis for the discussion of climate change discourses created in media. Risk society addresses questions of 'national', 'international' and 'cosmopolitan', explains their correlation with climate change and offers a direction for further investigation. The theory also raises issues of uncertainty, interpretation, formation of discourses and the role of media in conceptualising main entities in the field of environment (Beck, 2009, 2014). Thus, the world risk society approach gives a theoretical framework to answer the questions addressed in the study by looking at the connections between society, climate change and risks, boundaries between politics, media and science, and their role in constructing and communicating risks.

# 5  World Risk Society

The world risk society theory describes a state of the world development when results of human activities become unpredictable and uncontrollable in such a manner that it cannot be known what time, where and how the consequences of any action will appear (Beck, 2002). Accumulation of risks appear due to fast development of new high technologies, an extensive amount of data and an accelerated pace of life, when decisions have to be made fast and eliminate problems immediately (Beck, 2002). Thus, solutions are introduced without a possibility to calculate potential risks they can cause in the future, decisions made might be able to solve a problem in the present but later trigger other, bigger, dangers. Ulrich Beck (2002) outlines three main dimensions of risk in the modern society: environmental, economic and of terror. In this work the focus will be on environmental issues, and climate change in particular.

## 5.1  Construction of environmental risks and their language

Beck (2007) initiates debates between a realist and a constructionist approach with regard to risk society, and environmental risks, in particular, where he argues for both sides, however, as his theoretical and epistemological position is described as "weak constructionism" (Beck; 2007: 88), he finds more arguments in favour of a constructionist view. This study will focus on the constructionist approach to world risk society.

   In the context of climate change, Beck (2007) points out the importance of creating global public arena, where catastrophic changes should be made visible by means of mediation and placing them on the public agenda in order to motivate people to act. This underpins the necessity of emergence of international public sphere in parallel to the emergence of international political and economic areas. Beck (2007: 86) underlines that ecological images and symbols are "…culturally perceived, constructed and mediatized; they are part of the social knowledge 'fabric' with all of its contradictions and conflicts". According to Beck (2007), one of the critical points that contributed to the development of global environmental discourses is Rio Earth Summit, where discourses were first reshaped and began a new era, not least due to the fact of appearance of new international actors and new environmental institutions. The domination of science was not absolute anymore, the counter- arguments of possible risks came into the picture with a tendency to dramatise when describing stances. Beck (2007) raises the question whether discourses create 'knowledge' and mediate actions, or whether 'reality' reproduces itself in discourses, i.e. if discourses become institutionalised they become more real and obtain real power in decision-making.

   Beck (2002, 2007, 2014) describes another important constituent of world risk society, which is the use of language and different concepts which lie behind. He underlines that even when concepts that exist and have been in use for a long time might be understood in different ways, e.g. 'nature' might stand for different ideas depending on an institution or an individual that uses it. Thus, when talking about something that does not yet happen or cannot be explained within existing concepts, how should it be named? " …what happens in the world risk society is that we enter a world of uncontrollable risking we don't even have a language to describe what we are facing" (Beck, 2002: 41). This stresses the importance of the contextual meaning of words and their influence on the perception of the expressed ideas.

## 5.2  Challenging traditions

According to Beck (2007) environmental risks, that unintentionally emerged from the era of  industrialisation and scientific progress, underlies the transformation of the society from

industrial modernity to risk society. Developed industrialised countries are the ones that, at the time, contributed the most to the concentration of greenhouse gases, while the effects of climate change might be seen anywhere, and those who will suffer the most are socially vulnerable societies. Thus, premises for risks were constructed in the modern society, but the institutions of this society cannot process these risks. As Beck (1992, 2007) argues these political institutions that were designed with the aim to make decisions and to have control over power distribution, now have to consider other institutions which have not been political before. The existing society constantly faces crisis when it comes to environmental risks as they go beyond familiar concepts. Furthermore, Beck (2007, 2013) underlines the necessity of understanding a phenomenon of a new society with different roles of technology and science, since the linear dynamics of 'cause' and 'consequences' as it has existed before cannot capture ongoing processes which extended in all dimensions. Beck (1992, 2007) also questions the approach to knowledge within frames of scientific or non-scientific, where all decisions are based on the scientific validity, even though climate change has direct impact on and contact with individuals, they remain uninvolved into the decision-making. Knowledge has become the main pillar of policy-making concerning climate change (Beck, 1992), and, accordingly, the instrument of power, however, it is not unanimous and causes debate on what should be considered as the highest authority in the academic circles. Since expertise is diverse, it might be interpreted and used by different political groups for their convenience in social and political debates. Climate change risk is immeasurable, which leads to unavoidable interconnection between all societies, moreover, it is difficult to predict, thus, state-based environmental politics do not manage to keep up with all these complications. All the above considered, Beck (1992, 2007) points out that the attention should be paid to the processes behind the definition and formation of risks.

   Thus, the world risk society theory tackles questions that constitute this study: the theory looks at processes behind the formation of risks and emphasises the importance of the language that is main pillars of discourses, i.e. how discourses set frames by means of linguistic manipulations. The theory addresses the issue of correlation between discourses and institutional crisis, which is directly connected with the question of how discourses affect the perception of climate change and concepts behind it. And last, but not least, one of the central dimensions of world risk society is climate change.

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# 6  Research Design and Methodology

This part will validate the choice of the method - discourse analysis and explain its applicability to the present research.

## 6.1  Discourse

When developing a research design it is important to explain its vocabulary and main concepts that provides guidelines for the analysis and main elements to consider. There are a lot of different descriptions of discourses and approaches to their analysis. The study rests on Dryzek's viewpoint on discourses which, in its turn, intertwines with the Foucault's approach to discourses (Dryzek, 2005; Foucault, 1990).

 A generalised definition that points out its main characteristics, introduced by Dryzek (2005: 9), views discourse "as shared way of apprehending the world", which defines relationships and establishes shared meanings, through which discourses create common concepts and legitimate knowledge. Discourses are constructed around basic terms that derive from common assumptions and judgments, unless this shared language exists, it would be difficult to build any discussion or come to any solution, as with no shared understanding narrative can be neither logical nor reasonable (Dryzek, 2005). Thus, those who subscribe to different discourses might have difficulties when making sense of other than theirs discourses. On the one hand, discourses are formed by those who take part in them, but, on the other hand, they shape perceptions, thus have control over and determine values, which brings forward some interests and suppress  other  (Barker, 1998). Thus, understanding this repressive operation of power within discourses can help to reconsider power and further to change the model of discourses to the non-repressive (Barker, 1998). Correspondingly, being capable of changing power distribution, discourses are tightly connected to political power and, furthermore, viewed as those that can bring structural modifications into society (Dryzek, 2005).

 Moreover, according to Foucault (1990), power is tightly related to knowledge and truth, where power produces both objects and subjects of knowledge, and 'truth' is the result of power relations and is constructed within a particular society. One of the aspects that Foucault suggested to consider when understanding the process of formation of 'truth' is to learn political apparatuses that control the production of 'truth', which is, amongst others, media. This implies that media is one of the institutions that contributes to shaping realities. Furthermore, when studying discourses, Foucault emphasises the importance of looking at the effects they produce (Barker, 1998), which is directly related to the research questions. According to Foucault (1990) there are different types of discourses in one realm that compete in constructing meanings that would dominate, considered as taken for granted, and, in doing so, restraining legitimacy of other discourses.

## 6.2  Discourse Analysis

The term discourse analysis is used to describe different methodologies (methods, theories, approaches, etc.) of studying discourses. Discourse analysis is a paradigm of different approaches that are united by common principles, such as interdisciplinarity and eclecticism, furthermore, all approaches aim at unmasking ideologies and power through the analysis of semiotic data (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). The commonality for all discourse analysis approaches is a critical view on taken-for-granted knowledge, thus, the scholars' goal is to uncover unconscious repressions that are repeatedly created in discourses (Dryzek, 2005; Jorgensen & Philips, 2002; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Different approaches choose different strategies to investigate discourses, which, amongst others, vary in their extent to which they focus on a linguistic aspect or theory-related perspectives.

Discourse analysis approaches are flexible in terms of adopting different models and combining methodologies (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002). Although it is possible to create one's own framework of discourse analysis, it is important to remember that discourse analysis is a methodological whole, thus, the basic philosophical premises, i.e. the role of language in the social construction of the world, should be accepted in order to use discourse analysis as an empirical method (Wodak & Meyer, 2009; Jorgensen & Philips, 2002).

The analysis of the empirical material in this thesis is based on the discourse analysis approach introduced by Dryzek (2005), who uses the four-aspect classification in order to study and classify discourses, which are:

| Basic entities whose existence is recognised or constructed | Different discourses recognise the existence of different things in the world and divide it in different categories, which are taken for granted. These categories precondition how climate change phenomena are perceived, thus legitimate some opinions and sources of information, whilst excluding others. |
|---|---|
| Assumptions about natural relationships | Discourses set frames on what is natural in relationships between different entities, thus they define lines of communication. In the context of climate change, these might be relations between human-made and natural components. |
| Agents and their motives | All narratives include main actors, that might be human and non-human, whose actions and speeches show their motives. |
| Key metaphors and other rhetorical devices | The environmental arena crucially depends on metaphors. Diversity of actors, which is typical for climate change discourses, encourages dramatic descriptions, which are characterised by intensive use of metaphors. |

*Figure 1. Dryzek's elements for the analysis of discourses, own figure*

Basic entities are formed from different combinations of two main components: nature and humans. They create concepts which are pillars of discourses, for example, some recognise ecosystem as a separate intelligent system, some see it as a source of recourses for humans, while others might not acknowledge its existence at all (Dryzek, 2005). Consequently, this would precondition three very different discourses, where problem solution would lie in different dimensions. In the present thesis, the entities might be more specific due to more focused than Dryzek's (2005) research. Thus climate change and the Paris Agreement might be identified as basic entities due to their central role in the thesis. As well as basic entities, natural relationships are main elements of discourses, which create hierarchies based on different inequalities, for example, domination of scientific expertise over any other. Different discourses might have the same agents but portray them in different ways (Dryzek, 2005), thus, people might be viewed as consumers who cause environmental problems or as victims of climate change consequences. Rhetorical devices are used in order to present a situation in a particular light, to intensify some qualities or justify actions (Dryzek, 2005). Thus, to soften some negative actions in present, there might be brought evidence from the past, which though is not legitimate as a comparison, however mitigate the negative impression.

The analysis will additionally focus on identifying general tone and atmosphere of the texts, which depends on the order narrative, i.e. structural, syntactic and stylistic components of texts, and their modality (Van Dijk, 1985; Hajer, 1995; Fairclough, 2003), which will serve as a complimentary component to Dryzek's approach in classifying discourses. The order of argumentation and modality of its presentation creates a particular atmosphere of the narrative, which is important for classifying discourses. This will

complement and specify Dryzek's component of key metaphors and rhetorical devices with extra focus on the structural organization of texts, which is specific to media texts and worth a careful comsideration.

Dryzek's approach differs from other approaches, and first of all from Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (2003), as it does not appoint potential problems before the analysis, the analysis is guided by basic components, which equally evaluated in all texts, that makes investigation less subjective. The approach was developed with the intention to classify environmental discourses and related to Foucault's concept of discourse, which bounds discourses and power (Dryzek, 2005). Furthermore, this chosen approach aims at creating a platform for comparative analysis of different environmental discourses.

All selected articles are analysed with regard to the above-described components, identified discourses are further compared and discussed with regard to the world risk society theory.

Even though Dryzek's approach is considered to be less biased by not indicating the problem before the analysis, thus not looking for the evidence of it, however, the interpretation of texts and defining discourses is subjective, the results of which are highly dependent on the researcher (Jorgensen & Philips, 200). However, according to Foucault (1990), when performing discourse analysis the researcher contributes to the revelation of control performed by dominant discourses.

# 7 Data Collection

Data collection was bound to the Paris Climate Conference and the following adoption of the Agreement. Since the event has an international character, it was decided to focus not only on entities directly related to countries but global ones as well.

The Conference gathered representatives of many states with the goal to outline a common scenario of actions, correspondingly, the outcomes represent the perspective of some international unity, while media area is divided into state-based media entities. International organisations, in this case environmental NGOs, might be seen as exceptions and those that are relatively free from any national context, though cannot be considered as mass media in the same sense, as their primary task is not to produce news. However, in the given context serve as an international public sphere, furthermore, online, not printed, versions of newspapers are selected in order to eliminate differences in form and approach of writing in comparison with the electronic editions of news agencies and environmental organisations.

The choice of texts is based on random sampling within specified conditions: - time limits: from 12 December till 15 December, 2015; - the English-language media; - geographical representativeness. Thus, all articles are published in English in online media within the stated time period, all of them contain words 'agreement', 'Paris', 'climate change' and refer to the Paris Climate Change Conference. The time limits are set in order to narrow the scope of the study to the analysis of the articles directly connected to the adoption of the Agreement. Since the development of modern means of communication allow fast spread of information flow, the bigger time limits would grasp more actors and events into the picture which might shift attention from the Paris Climate Agreement to other aspects. The search for texts was conducted with the help of search engines, when texts were found, the source background was analysed.

The one-language texts are chosen in order to avoid translations which might lead the research to a more linguistic direction. The analysis includes media coverage of Paris Climate Agreement by online newspapers and news agencies in the USA, Britain, Australia, Canada, Nigeria and by environmental organisations. They are: *Thomson Reuters/ UK, CNN International/US, The BBC/ UK, Greenpeace International, WWF Global, Friends of the Earth International, the Age/Australia, the Globe and Mail/ Canada, the Guardian/ Nigeria, the Telegraph/ UK, the USA Today/ US, The New York Times/ US.*

# 8 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Three discourses were identified and classified in accordance with their standpoint towards the Agreement and climate change. All analysed articles include, to a different extent, the three identified discourses: of uncertainty, of inevitability of environmental disaster, and of economic inequality, though one discourse tends to dominate in a particular text. Main components of the discourses are discussed below, each review is illustrated with descriptive quotes.

## 8.1 Discourse of uncertainty

Many articles write about the Agreement, its measures and development of climate change in an uncertain way, finding a counter-argument for each argument. The discourse is constructed by means of contradictions, questions, different techniques of contrast; grammatical devices of conjunctive mood.

The doubts are expressed explicitly, where the Agreement is viewed as a good intention that might help to achieve some progress towards the improvement of the climate change situation, however is neither feasible nor contains satisfactory measures:

*Despite the hype, the Paris agreement will fail to deliver (Friends of the Earth International)*

The statement indicates the incapability of the Agreement to implement the agreed measures, this is highlighted by the contradiction based on the words between '*hype*' and '*fail*', moreover, the sentence is categorical, i.e. does not contain any relativity of the opinion, which implies that it is absolute givenness.

Doubts about the competence of the Agreement to fulfil everything it is aimed at is also visible in the following quote:

*The deal [Agreement] alone won't dig us out of the hole we're in, but it makes the sides less steep (Greenpeace).*

The utterance states that the Agreement will not solve the situation, however it indicates that it might improve the situation to some extent "*it makes the sides less steep*". The whole statement is a metaphor, which creates a very distinct and vivid picture of the situation.

*Cynics will say the agreement is unenforceable. They are right (The Age/ Australia).*

The latter does not only contain a direct disbelief "*the agreement is unenforceable*" but it is also constructed in a form of double emphasis, it is divided into two short sentences, where the first one leaves some hope, but the second one completely destroys it and underlines that there is only one scenario, to fail, which makes the whole statement more dramatic, hence more intense. A trace for hope is also stressed by the use of the word *"cynics"*, which is used to describe people who tend not to believe in anything, and has a negative connotation, which implies that it is not a favourable action to agree with them, but there is no choice. Furthermore, statements in a form of short sentences do not leave any space for other opinions, misinterpretation and second thoughts, pointing out that this is just so obvious, no need to elaborate.

Another common feature that can be highlighted is such an order of narrative when a statement of a fact is followed by a question which, in its turn, is not followed by an answer, or followed by a critique, that excludes the possibility of successful realisation:

*Now comes the great task of this century. How do we meet this new goal? The measures outlined in Paris simply do not get us there. We have a 1.5 degree wall to climb, but the ladder isn't long enough. The emission targets on the table aren't big enough…*
*(Greenpeace)*

The agents here are *"we",* the pronoun does not divide the world into any entities, putting the responsibility equally on everybody. The statement includes a question, but not in order to make the reader think and get involved into the discussion, but rather to agree and accept the fact, as the question is followed by a decisive answer. This utterance, as well as the previous one, consists of rather short sentences, or short syntactically divided statements. But these meanings do not only point out that there is nothing more to explain, they focus attention on particular facts and do not give any space for alternative views. Moreover, this example is built of a chain of negative statements, which stresses that there is really no way it can be a success, if the reader does not agree with the first evidence, there is a next one, and a next one. This statement also contains several rhetorical devices: *"simply"* serves as an intensifier of this - the only right opinion, which is evident. The extent of the problem, thus, the extent of the failure is emphasised by the metaphor "*the great task of this century"*, which refers to the solution of climate change. The word *"task"* implies that it must be accomplished, it is not voluntarily and it cannot wait, thus, it does not doubt the existence of the problem. The metaphor " *[…] wall to climb, but the ladder isn't long enough [...]" ,* on the one hand, shows in a more emotional way what will happen, if the measures are not improved there will be only one alternative direction - down. On the other hand, it implies that some actions have been made, as the ladder exists, and at least something can be achieved.

Another form of expressing doubts and the lack of faith is positioning two sentences with contradictory facts one after another:

*Ralph Keeling… [...] posed: will daily values at Mauna Loa ever fall below 400 ppm again in our lifetimes? I'm prepared to project they won't… [...] …As delegates of Paris last Friday approached the climax of their negotiations, the Mauna Loa station recorded a carbon concentration of 402 ppm. (the Age/ Australia)*

The statement states the contradiction between the experts' prognoses and what is happening, which implies that experts cannot be trusted, consequently it destroys the euphoria around the Agreement. To emphasise the contradiction, the author uses irony by pointing out that these two events happened simultaneously. Since the Agreement and the measures in it are based on the calculation made by scientist/experts, this narrative puts in question the reliability of all calculations, and consequently the reliability of the Agreement, furthermore it raises concerns around scientific expertise in general. The author does not make any further comments on it and does not explicitly states that science cannot be trusted in their prognoses, he leaves the conclusion to the reader. This indirect characterisation makes the statement more objective, as there is no any explicit personal evaluation in a verbal form, hence makes it more persuasive. The manipulation exists on a structural level, which is not obvious. The message of this speech is empathised by the quantifier *"lifetimes",* used by the expert that implies a long time period, which in this case plays against the speaker and strengthens the effect that destroys the 'illusion' of the scientific monopoly on the truth. By doubting the only authority of scientists the narrative opens space for other sources of knowledge, tries to introduce a deliberative approach. Furthermore, in the context of world risk society the discourse introduces a stance when science monopoly is questioned, thus it goes beyond established schemes which do not work and tries to find new solutions which will not completely rely only on one aspect.

With regard to the aforementioned, it is worth pointing out that statements that contain climate change prognosis often followed by 'as experts say', 'as scientists say'. Indicating that the authors underline that it is not an absolute truth, there might be other opinions.

Next quotation doubts credibility with regard to the support of the Agreement within countries in order to successfully realise it. It is based again on the contrast, the success of the Agreement merge into a failure, in two-step retardation in order to heighten suspense by slowly revealing the reality behind the words.

*One of the most significant things about the Paris agreement is its symbolism: Nearly 200 countries agree* we *must take sweeping actions to address the climate crisis.*
*That type of consensus needs to emerge within those nations as well.*
*It clearly doesn't exist (CNN International/ US)*

The negative sentence has the marker "*clearly*" that excludes any space to disagree. A typical feature for the discourse is praising the fact of the nations united, in this case by an adjective *'the most significant'* which is used in a superlative form expressing the maximum possible approval, the value of the event is underlined by the metaphoric comparison with *"symbolism".* As symbol implies something that does not have any practical meaning, but rather stands for a motive or an idea, this comparison implies that **what** was agreed might not be as powerful as the fact it **was** agreed, thus hesitates the competence of the Agreement as of reliable means of preventing climate change. The rounding number *"nearly 200"* is used to increase the meaning of its symbolism, round numbers look more impressive and easier to remember.

Another feature of the narrative of this discourse is citation of measures stated in the Agreement followed by 'however', 'although', 'though', 'but' and statement that 'it is not binding' or 'no penalty if any country fails commitments'.

The unity of the world in 'fighting' climate change is underlined by the use of many different voices, represented by people from different countries with different backgrounds, who speak about the Agreement.

Discourse of uncertainty sees the Agreement as a positive **attempt** to find a solution to prevent the climate change disaster, rather than a solution. Thus, the discourse refers to the fears of impossibility to implement the Agreement due to the variety of factors and unpredictability of the development of the situation. The dominant view is that nothing can be taken for granted anymore. The texts doubts expertise that presents information, and consequently prognoses, on which the Agreement and its measures are based, nether that they can be implemented nor that they will be enough, possibility to control and evaluate the implementation, the unity of all those involved.

## 8.2   Discourse of inevitability of environmental disaster

Another way to discuss the Agreement and climate change is in terms of the catastrophe that cannot be prevented and that will affect everybody. The discourse is constructed by means of emotionally charged epithets, order narrative that creates drama. As a confirmation of the sad and dangerous picture, the narrative combines present evidence with dark prognoses, furthermore, it makes the discourse more personal appealing directly to the reader. The main actors are experts, the world and people.

The utterance below consists of arguments and quotes of two different experts that express the same thing.

*Even before the Paris agreement, Munich Re, the German reinsurance giant that has been tracking climate disasters, and warning about the dangers of relentlessly rising man-made carbon dioxide emissions, for decades said that Paris would not spare the planet from climate change disasters. Peter Hoeppe, the scientist, who runs the company's Geo Risks/ Corporate Climate Centre, said "… We have to be prepared for the increasingly inevitable and significant consequences of climate change"(The Globe and Mail/ Canada)*

Their double testimony is used to confirm the frames in which the discourse is directed, at the same time it remains objective, as different opinion taken into account, and no direct judgement is produced. The aim is to present experts as a reliable source, this is achieved through using proper nouns, i.e. names of the experts/ expert organisation, and furthermore describing activities they perform. The above mentioned makes their statements, risk and dangers they describe, more real in comparison with those referring to anonymous scientists. The agent "we", the subject of the action, is not divided into categories, thus the emphasis is that it does and will concern everybody. *"The planet"* in this case stands for all people living on it, but unlike *"we",* represents not only human beings but also other living organisms which will be influenced, that, in its turn, widen the scope of the catastrophe. Here also appears the contrast between humans and nature by stressing that this is *"man-made"*.

All epithets and metaphors are tense, they express extreme forms of states and actions, and repeated several times in order to heighten the level of stress: *"climate disasters"* (twice), *"dangers of relentlessly rising", "increasingly inevitable and significant".* The inevitability is also constructed by a grammatical marker, the verb *"have to",* that implies that it does not depend whether we are ready to face it or not, it is at the stage that cannot be changed.

This discourse is characterised by the use of a future form *"will"* when making prognoses with regard to the aggravation of the climate change situation with no reference when or how they might be stopped.

*Harmful effects of global warming will continue to influence (USA Today/ US)*
*…studies.. […] … say the cost of inaction will cost us a great deal more… (BBC/ UK)*
*…we will see the worst extremes of global warming… (The Telegraph/ UK)*

Next example illustrates when one statement depicts all possible effects that will arise from climate change, while often words 'danger' and 'catastrophe' are not interpreted in detail, in this case *"catastrophic"* is explained by concrete changes that will take place. It contains words *"people", "the planet", "all of us",* which points out that all agents will be affected. The concentration of the evidence of climate change in one sentence aims at creating a clear warning. It depicts climate change as a global-scale collective problem, where all agents should cooperate. By reciting possible consequences, the statement also offers different motives for the agents to act.

*It would be catastrophic for the planet and for people, wiping low-lying islands off the map as seas continue to rise; pushing many plants and animals towards extinction; increasing the intensity of droughts, floods, heat waves and storms; and costing all of us a lot of money (CNN International/ US)*

The example below highlights main points of the discourse: the Agreement will not work and the catastrophe will come.

*Paris climate agreement: More hot air won't save us from oblivion (The Age/ Australia)*

To describe the Agreement, the author uses the metaphor *"hot air"* which implies "empty talk" in this context. The metaphor has a two-fold meaning, it is ironic as it also refers to the fact that climate is getting warmer, and this *"more hot air"* (empty talk) is not just **non-helping** but also **negatively contributing** to climate change by wasting time on useless actions. Such a construction of the meaning also strengthens that it is clear that the Agreement will not work, as trying to escape hot air by adding *"more hot air"* is an obvious nonsense. "*Oblivion"* adds more drama effect as implies that there will be no recovery. Moreover, 'more empty talk' implies that there has been talks before which apparently did not lead to any improvements.

The focus of this discourse is on the dangerous consequences of climate change which are already present and which will appear. The severe effects are taken for granted, the only that can be done now is to smooth the upcoming catastrophe. It underlines that climate change cannot be ignored and it will cause not only environmental disaster but also a social crisis. Not taking measures in the present and trying to save money on preventing climate change will lead to even worse changes on the planet, which will end up at the situations when much more resources will be required. There is no time for negotiating or celebrating as the world already stands on the edge.

## 8.3  Discourse of economic inequality

Here climate change is discussed in terms of two opposing groups of countries divided due to their stage of financial and industrial development. This discourse is characterised by directly expressed complaints, if the two previous focused on climate change, at the core of this one is finances, and main motives and concerns are national interests, the global interest come to the picture only if it serves as intensifier of the other's fault.

There are three main types of narrative lines of the discourse. The first one: developed/ rich countries are accused of being of forcing the developing countries to sign the agreement under unfavourable terms:

*Developing countries … […]… signing the agreement reached largely according to the dictates of the industrialised countries (Guardian/ Nigeria)*

*Rich countries have moved the goal posts so far that we are left with a sham of a deal in Paris. Through piecemeal pledges and bullying tactics, rich countries have pushed through a very bad deal (Friends of the Earth International)*

In order to make arguments more persuasive some metaphors are used: *"bullying tactics", "sham", "piecemeal pledges", "dictates",* which stress the unequal relationships in this event and unfair methods.

Another type of the relationships between agents is when the developed countries are accused of being the only ones who created the problem, thus should they are the ones to have responsibility:

*[…]…rich countries, which powered their way to prosperity on the back of cheap oil and coal, and the developing countries, which argued convincingly they should not be punished for a problem they did not create. (The Globe and Mail/ Canada)*

The last narrative is when the accent is on the developing countries who asks for money:

*Finance was one of the biggest rows of the talks, with developing nations demanding more cash (The Telegraph/ UK).*

The statement also points out the economic problem, which in spite of the official proclamation of 'global agreement' still was the main constraint of the negotiations, which emphasises that the 'united' world is not that united when it comes to the matter of finances. In addition, the *'developing countries'* are presented as spoiled children who '*demanding more cash',* which casts a negative light on them and entails that, as spoiled children, they got used to getting everything they want, and that they neither appreciate nor deserve it.

Injustice and unequal distribution of responsibilities and profits are in focus of the discourse. The world is dividing into two opposing blocks, the developed/ rich countries and the developing/poor countries. The Agreement is accused of being the arrangement that

will serve only the interest of the richest countries. The developing countries are not content about the situation when the rich countries dictate the rules and insist on reducing carbon dioxide emissions all over the world, while the developing countries underline the historical duty based on the fact that the developed countries grew rich at the expense of accelerating climate change. Thus, on one hand, it is their responsibility now to invest in measures, and, on the other hand, the developing countries face an issue whether to continue the rapid growth of economies based on fossil fuels or introduce more new environmentally friendly technologies. There is a clear tendency to divide agents and motives: into developed and developing countries, into those who signed the agreement and those who should ratify and implement it. Mutual accusation and clear division of agents are main traces of the discourse.

The table below gives a summary of three main identified discourses and their typical characteristics, presenting similarities and differences in terms of the developed framework:

| Discourse | Discourse: Uncertainty, the main message does not suggest any solutions, raises questions and doubts all information. | Discourse: Inevitability of environmental disaster: the focus is on the catastrophic situation. | Discourse: Economic inequality: the focus is on the unequal possibilities, unfair distribution of 'goods' and 'bads' |
|---|---|---|---|
| Basic entities | Climate change is discussed as: <br> - a natural disaster <br> - an economic injustice <br> - a social issue <br><br> The Agreement has good intentions but neither sufficient nor feasible <br><br> The world is united in their wish to do something <br><br> Nature is separated from people, but without a direct opposition | Climate change is discussed as: <br> - a natural disaster <br> - a social issue <br><br><br> The Agreement is not adequate and not capable of embracing the situation <br> The world is united in front of the disaster, it can effect anybody <br> Nature is separated from people; nature is a hero and humans is a villain | Climate change is discussed as: <br> - an economic injustice <br> - a social issue <br><br><br> The Agreement is designed to represent interests of the rich countries <br><br> The world is divided into countries/ nations <br><br> Nature is not in the focus |
| Natural relationship | Cooperation between countries/ governments | Cooperation between humankind and nature <br><br> Conflict between humankind and climate change | Conflict between developed/rich countries and developing/poor countries <br> Conflict/ opposition within countries |
| Agents and their motives | Institutions or their representatives as ones that are directly involved in the adoption of the | Experts: individuals, institutions <br> Primary motives: prove to be right | Institutions or their representatives as ones that are directly involved in the adoption of the |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Agreement or its ratification and implementation: governments, countries, ministries. Primary motives: save the world<br><br>Experts: individuals, institutions Primary motives: save the world, give a hope<br><br>Individuals: I (narrator), you (an author directly addresses a reader/s Primary motives: concern for the planet | Future generations: passive, generate motives for other agents | Agreement or its ratification and implementation: governments, countries, ministries. Primary motives: concern for economic prosperity<br><br>Individuals: I (narrator), you (an author directly addresses to a reader/s Primary motives: self-concern |
| Key metaphors and other rhetoric devices: | Metaphors and epithets:<br>-praising the attempt to unite: *giant shove [the Agreement] in the right direction* (metaphor), *thunderous applause* (epithet)*;*<br>*fighting climate change* (metaphor);<br><br>- raising questions, pointing out discrepancies:<br>*enormous work still lay ahead* (epithet)*;*<br>*ambitious deal* (epithet)*;*<br>*the atmosphere can't read press releases* (personification, irony)*;*<br>*a massive commitment gap* (epithet)*;*<br>*a gamble on technological solutions* (metaphor)*;* | Epithets and metaphors that create drama, emotionally charged:<br>*vulnerable and affected people (epithets);*<br>*catastrophic climate change* (epithet);<br>*nature is sending urgent signals* (personification);<br>*danger zone* (epithet);<br>*they sentence the planet* (metaphor);<br>quantifiers:<br>*millions struggling;*<br>*numerous studies.* | Dead metaphors or ready-made phrases, which lost their expressive value, precondition countries to be treated in certain ways. Here used in order to describe contrasting groups of countries:<br>*extra burden on developing countries;*<br>*rich nations' climate debt (also developed, industrialised countries).*<br><br>Here represent all those who support the Agreement and its terms: *interests of powerful lobbies and corporations.* |

|  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | *enormous* chance to take with the planet (epithet)*;*<br>*the <u>gap</u> between hope and reality* (metaphor). |  |  |
| Tone: syntactic and stylistic organisation | Neutral, ironic<br><br>3d person narrator (dominant)-observer, presenting facts and statements of others, often in a form of quotation, the atmosphere is created by means of the order of narration, in a less degree evaluating personal comments<br><br>The narrative presents the Agreement is a puzzle which the author is helping to read<br>Indirect characterisation - authors present facts, shows actions and ask questions, let readers evaluate for themselves | Threatening, warning<br>3d person narrator (dominant)-observer<br><br>1d person narrator and/or direct address to the reader, more informal tone with the aim to make the narrative more personal, appealing to individuals<br><br>Prognoses, impersonal statements which are presented as facts | Accusing, finding the ones to blame<br>3d person narrator (dominant)-observer |
| Modality | The conjunctive mood underlying conditions for something to be accomplished:<br>*<u>if/ whether/would/ could</u> if nations do not commit;*<br>*<u>if</u> the gamble pays off; <u>if</u> nations manage to deliver then it <u>would</u> be;*<br>*a country will not be penalised <u>if</u> it fails to meet them.* | The modality is not a typical characterisation of the discourse | Modal verbs expressing obligation or necessity: must, should:<br>*<u>must</u> be backed by national strategies; governments <u>need;</u> <u>countries must;</u> it <u>must</u> be ratified; rich countries <u>must</u> take their fair; <u>rich nations must</u> give.* |

*Figure 2. Classification of the discourses and their main characteristics, own figure.*

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# 9  Discussion

In the context of the Paris Climate Agreement, this study examined how climate change discourses are formed, and what discourses are identifies, their interrelations and possible impacts on the formation of the climate change picture. The findings of the study can be summarised as follows.

- What are main discourses with regard to the adoption of the Paris Climate Agreement?

Three discourses are identified: discourse of uncertainty, discourses of inevitability of the environmental disaster and of economic inequality. The discourses reflect different directions in the relationships towards the adoption of the Agreement, its possibility to be implemented and to impact climate change. The discourses differ in their assumptions about main divisions in the world and frames they set for the solutions of climate change problems.

- How are the identified discourses constructed? What are their similarities and differences?

The discourses are constructed with the use of specific order narratives, words for describing main entities, agents and actions, which results in creating a particular picture. The use of metaphors and epithets, amongst other rhetoric devices, dramatises narrative, making non-human objects alive. As humans they get voices and human-like reactions on the action towards them, for example, *"nature would appreciate"*, which creates a picture as if it is nature who is speaking, which makes arguments more forcible. Though, nature is represented in first two discourses, it is humans whose future is of primary concern, nature is mentioned with regard to the consequences for people. This leads to the creation of different comprehension of the world and actions that are considered to be done in order to solve climate change. The worldview of the discourses is created by means of basic entities they recognise. Thus, in the discourse of economic injustice, the recognition only of economic and social consequences, leaves out the presence of nature and other than humans creatures. The world is constructed not even around humans, but around countries and their interests, consequently, no actions might be undertaken towards something that is not in the picture. It is remarkable that no discourse views all components: nature, humans, animals as one whole, it is divided into 'planet' and 'people', 'nature' and 'people', 'people' and 'countries'. The latter is worth mentioning as a separate point, as this kind of division implies different interests of these groups, which raises the question whose interest countries present.

   The discourses are similar in not presenting any solutions or answers with regard to future actions, although only the discourse of uncertainty leaves some space for optimism. The discourse of economic inequality is based on the conflictual relationships between unequal with regard to economy entities, it creates a picture where agents are motivated by their economic interests, which is preconditioned by the division, 'developed' and 'developing', which leaves no space but to be in opposition to each other.

   The discourse of uncertainty doubts the possibility of the Agreement to solve the issue, however it cannot be perceived as pessimistic, as there are positive descriptions and affirmative statements connected with the fact that the world is finally united. If there are no divisions in those who should act, their action cannot be divided either. Thus, in the focus of the discourse of uncertainty and inevitability is not on **who** should act, but **what** should be done, when in the former the accent is on the attempt to act together and controversy of opinions, the latter points out that there is no choice left, either the world want or not it is already united when facing the catastrophe. Thus, the discourse of uncertainty and of inevitability uses words that "the world" or "we". They overcame the division and reached the phase, which Beck calls "cosmopolitan empathy" (Beck, 2013: 8),

when there is no 'we' and 'they', only 'we'.  Whilst, the discourse of economic inequality is based on this division, hence constrains metamorphose of the society when 'we' becomes the only agent when addressing climate change.

It is possible to draw parallels between three identified discourses and three possible responses to global risks described by Beck (2013): i) denial, ii) fatalism and iii) new beginnings. Although, Beck (2013) does not name them directly as three steps of evolution, he points out that it is important to live first two stages in order to act adequate at the third one. Thus, the responses might be seen as stages of societal development and its level of readiness to critically evaluate realty and act. Denial, the first reaction to a new risk, implies resistance to acknowledge the problem. Although, there is no direct denial of the existence of climate change and its dangerous consequences identified, the discourse of economic injustice might be compared with denial not that it shares the disbelief in climate change but by focusing on other than climate change issues it results in the same - non-action towards the issue. The next stage is fatalism, when the risk is acknowledged but the catastrophic consequences are viewed as the only possible scenario, and nothing can be done to change it, and the world is doomed to failure. This stage is similar to the discourse of inevitability when the disastrous climate change is seen as the only prognosis, but if fatalism does not pressure for any actions, the discourse of inevitability, by underlining that unavoidable damages will concern everybody, unites people, which is the first step towards the third stage. The third response - new beginnings - implies the stance when the risk is accepted, examined and new possibilities to act are opened. The prevailing discourse of uncertainty might be seen as the stage of preparation for the phase of new beginnings. The discourse of uncertainty contains all three components of the new beginnings phase, they are "knowledge, vision and action" (Beck, 2013: 8). All these components are present in the discourse, *knowledge* from different resources and researches, since the existence of the problem is recognised, it is studied, hence rising possibilities for getting new information appear; *vision* of the problem, the coverage of the Paris Climate Agreement includes different perspectives of understanding the problem, which creates a multi-levelled picture, and proves that the issue is seen by the world; *action* - a positive picture of the Climate Conference and the Agreement testifies that the world wants to act. However, all three components (knowledge, vision, action) are accompanied by doubts due to the absence of one system that could comprise and process all factors. International organisations and institutions grow big in their size, including new members, but the basic principles of functioning remain the same. The qualitative transformations have not occurred yet, and the structures are quantitatively overloaded, which creates an institutional crisis. This, for example, leads to the doubts about the relevance of the measures in the Paris Agreement by the time (if) they will be ratified and implemented.

Thus, the three discourses might be seen as different stages of the evolution of the view of climate change and remedies. And the discourse of uncertainty is a progressive approach to climate change, which will lead to new effective transformations and, eventually, solutions.

- • How do the identified discourses produce particular meanings on climate change?

The discourse of uncertainty includes variety of agents that, on the one hand, contributes to the deliberative discussion, on the other, leads to the great diversity of angles that climate change should be looked at, which is followed by the confusion of what should be done and where it might lead. By presenting different voices, the narrative underlines the importance and equality of all agents. This, in terms of risk society, is seen as positive direction of the public sphere development, however, according to Beck (2013), just involving different opinions in discussions of climate change is not enough in order to prevent the catastrophe, as discussions do not lead to systematised actions, but institutions do. Furthermore, when the discourse of uncertainty describes different backgrounds of agents, it motivates society to act and create new networks, as Beck (2013) argues that cultural pluralism facilitates

establishing connections and decreases apathy. Moreover, when the discourse leaves open questions, they invite the audience to participate, and doubt the existence of the entity that knows all the answers and truth.

Doubts around the competence of the Agreement lead to the issue addressed in the world risk society, the incapability of the exiting institutional framework to grasp such issues as climate change. Here comes the question, how new suitable institutions might emerge. According to Beck (2007) intensive discourses on a global scale that involve already exiting institutions might lead to the creation of new institutions, which, in the context of world risk society, should be essentially different from what exists now. Intensive discourse implies repeated discussion with the emphasis on particular notions. In order to process these new dimensions, a new vocabulary should be created (Beck, 2007). Thus, if language evaluates in line with the development of discourses, and formation of new entities, it might produce a positive shift towards a new stage, i.e. new concepts might appear behind already existing vocabulary as it happened to 'environment' in 1960-s (Dryzek, 2005). The fact that all main institutions are involved in the discourse paves the way of the emergence of new entities, as legitimacy of new institutions might be confirmed only by old institutions, which, to some extent, makes a dead circle, as it raises a big question whether based on state-division institutions are capable to produce a revolutionary new system. Here the role of intensive discourse would be essential, with regard to climate change, repeated use of 'vulnerable' and 'most affected' might lead to the creation of new categories. These new divisions and new vocabulary that they comprehend might be seen as first step to creating new structures. On the other hand, if world risk society requires a completely new approach, might it mean that the world should not be divided into any unequal structures, but rather all elements, no matter how affected they are or what group they belong, are equal in participating in all processes concerning the destiny of the world, including decision-making. Thus, for example, when saying that developed countries are to blame for climate change it automatically releases other countries, not included in this group, from any responsibility to get engaged, as whatever happens, they are not the once who caused it. The discourse is setting frames on solution seeking within 'cause-consequences', which does not function any more. Having discussions in this context of devision will always lead to the question 'who is to blame and who should pay', which will create more arguments and more separation.

Unavoidable division into different groups leads to questions raised by Habermas, i.e. "ideal speech situation" (Inglis, 2012) in that way that all should have equal possibilities in expressing their views and being heard, thus influencing decision-making process. But if all elements should be considered equal, there will be no basis for the division, no systems that can comprehend and lead common actions. The world has no choice but to be divided, although it remains unseen what new structures might appear. Thus, a clear division into countries and their different competing interests are observed only in one discourse. Whilst other two discourses underline that this is the issue of climate change requires the united world approach. This aspect of the necessity of reorganisation is seen as relatively positive side-effect of climate change and questions it raises (Beck, 2014), as it pushes the world to evolve, which will further help in solving other problems.

The picture, that the discourse of uncertainty creates, is compatible with the state described by Beck in world risk society that will eventually lead to institutional changes described in it. In the context of climate change 'risk' implies such a state when the situation **can** get worse and the number and intensity of catastrophic consequences will increase until the global disaster has emerged, **if** the world does not transform. Already at the language level, the use of conditional constructions, the similarity of two stances are obvious. The discourse of uncertainty also points out that anything is possible, but what exactly would happen is not clear. This what differs it from the discourse of inevitability of disaster which does not see the very end of the Earth is one of the possible options, but rather is a fact which sooner or later will take place. Thus, the discourse of uncertainty, as risk society, encourages changes in the approaches towards decision-making. The discourse

involves voices of those who already affected or will be first affected by disasters in the discussion by presenting their comments towards the Agreement. And though now those who are affected are not directly included into the process of decision-making, the ambiguity of their decisions and compromised sources on which these decisions are based, enhance introduction of new approaches.

Discourses are controlled by those who take part in them and share their comprehending, but at the same time discourses also control their adherents. Actions towards climate change have been on the stage of intentions for a long time, and only now when climate change is mostly used in the context of 'disaster' and 'catastrophe' some decisions to act have been taken. Maybe due to the fact that the expression 'climate change' does not contain any danger in itself, both words are quite neutral, and 'change' might be even considered as something positive, it has been the reason for such a detached attitude. Everything is changing, why not climate. If the name had expressed some risk or danger, for example, 'climate decline' or 'climate collapse', it would have definitely changed relationships towards it. In this context, in the discourse of inevitability, and to a less degree, in the discourse of uncertainty, dramatisation of the narrative and constant use of words that imply some threat might alter the image of climate change. If climate change begins to be associated with something unnatural and dangerous, that is not just another step of development, then more active involvement form all might be excepted. However, it is important not to cross the line, as it is in the discourse of inevitability, when there is too late for any actions.

# 10 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to classify and analyse media discourses with regard to their construction around the Paris Climate Agreement. As other previous researches of media in the context of climate change, the study showed a great diversity of angles and perspectives that are worth looking at. Due to the fact that discourse analysis is highly dependent on the researcher's position and perspective, the classification might have been developed in a different from the present direction. This is not to say that the identified discourses do not take place, but to emphasise that the classification might have different approaches.

The identified discourses around the Paris Climate Agreement produce different meanings on climate change, hence form in different ways its perception, its place in social and economic dimensions, which further influences what actions can be possibly considered towards climate change. Language of climate change and ideas that lie behind play an important role in forming approaches and finding solutions. By defining one particular division of the world, with specific values and hierarchies, discourses precondition the way climate change will be treated. In this context, climate change might be considered as an important factor that shows that the segregation of the world which aims at growing and gaining prosperity does not work anymore and cannot efficiently solve problems, which is seen from the discourse of uncertainty and of inevitability. They underline the inefficiency of the existing system, which is based on the competitions between different groups in growing and accumulating material wealth. None of them imply any concrete solution, but the former is less demotivating in its description and prognosis for climate change consequences. The discourse of economic inequality, though recognises climate change, aims at finding justice, rather than solutions to environmental issues, and in doing so, redirect the attention from climate change, which is viewed is another stumbling point on the way to cooperation between different groups. Whilst the discourse of uncertainty presents climate change as a strong reason to unite and change goals, not as another excuse for showing power. Being influenced by discourses, climate change has become itself an important mechanism in changing social orders. The three discourses might be seen as reflections of three stages of evaluation of the perception of climate change, the more intensive discourses will embed new concepts where nature is not only to serve humans, the sooner new approaches to the solution of environmental problems will be developed.

The results of the study show a need of further investigation of the development of new concepts, in particular new divisions, in the context of climate change. It would be useful to examine other than English-language resources, where other preconditions for new terms and concepts might exists. It would be valuable to compare the identified discourses and their prognoses with appeared later discourses, with changes in society why/if they have occurred or why they have not. That would show validity of the statement about the interrelation between discourses and social constructions. Furthermore, it would be interesting to compare different classifications of discourses with regard to climate change and see if they evolve in time and what parallel societal changes take place.

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