



***Speech Presentation and Summary in the
BBC News Online Coverage of a Russian
TV Interview with Vladimir Putin***

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Abstract

This article is interested in discourse presentation which, prototypically, refers to the presentation of speech, writing or thought from an anterior discourse in a posterior discourse. More specifically, the focus here is on the presentation of spoken discourse in a BBC website news story about the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, during an interview on Russian television in 2015. The main concern of the article is the way in which the BBC news website presents Vladimir Putin's speech in the interview and whether it is faithful to the original. Our analysis shows that the discourse presentation includes/reflects the subjective view of the reporter which at times obscures the original discourse, and affects the way in which the Russian president is represented.

Key words: Critical stylistics, discourse presentation, BBC News, Putin, bias

1. Introduction

In this article we analyse the presentation of Vladimir Putin's speech, in a BBC News Online report of an interview given by Putin on Russian Television (commonly referred to as Russia-1). Our analysis, which uses two models of speech presentation, compares the discourse presentation in the news report (the posterior discourse) with an English translation of the original interview (the anterior discourse) to ascertain the accuracy, or otherwise, of the BBC reporting. This sort of comparative analysis is fairly unusual (although see Ikeo 2009, 2012) especially with regard to discourse summary. Part of our concern here is whether the presentation of Putin's speech in the news article constructs his identity in a particular way. Our analysis investigates both the presentation of speech and indications of the reporter's attitude toward the speaker (Thompson 1996), often found in reporting clauses, since both can affect the representation of a person.

Criticism of the BBC has been growing steadily in recent years (Anderson and Egglestone 2012: 926) and this article fits into a growing body of work that discusses BBC bias in its news reporting (see, for example, Gabor et al. 2009; Hermida 2009; Kay and Salter 2014; Wilson of Dinton 2005, also Piazza and Lashmar this issue). By analysing a news report covering an important event, our intention here is to investigate BBC news writing practice. As Pander Maat and de Jong (2012: 350) note, ‘more needs to be known about how input texts are actually used’ in journalistic report writing. Using models for discourse presentation (Semino and Short 2004; Short 2012) and discourse summary (Short 1988, 2012), both defined below, we assess the faithfulness to the original discourse in the BBC coverage, and discuss where mismatches with the original could be seen as misrepresentation and possibly bias. Our analysis reveals important differences between the original and reported discourse not only in terms of formal aspects, such as lexis and structures, but also in depicting intensities of illocutionary forces of utterances and attitudes toward the matters and people being discussed. These differences relate to the use of discourse summary which is prevalent throughout the news story, and is likely to be a common journalistic practice for reasons of time and space constraints. However, as we show, such summarizing can widen the gap between original and reported discourse and open an evaluative space (Thompson 1996: 522), which could prompt accusations of bias. Our case study thus demonstrates how the application of models for speech presentation and speech summary to news data can be helpful in approaching the issues of possible impartiality, misrepresentation and bias. As such this article also adds to research into the language of BBC News Online, which is currently limited (Al-Hejin 2015: 20).

2. Socio-Political Background

In May 2014 pro-Russian separatists in the south-east of Ukraine proclaimed two republics – the Donetsk People’s Republic (DPR), and the Lugansk People’s Republic (LPR) which led to armed conflict between Ukrainian government forces and separatists. The Ukrainian government insists that the separatists are backed by Russia and receive continuous Russian military aid; Russia, however, denies any such accusations.

In September 2014, peace negotiations between Ukrainian government forces and the separatists led to an agreement, known as Minsk-1, or Minsk protocol. The ceasefire did not hold and by January 2015 the fighting had intensified again. Another agreement aimed at ending the renewed hostilities – Minsk-II – was negotiated by the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, France and Germany in February 2014.

Following Minsk-II, Putin was interviewed by Vladimir Solovyov, a pro-Kremlin journalist. This eight minute interview (Kremlin 2015a) was aired on February 25th 2015 on Russian TV (RTV) – a state-owned nationwide Russian TV channel. The interview made headline news internationally, including on BBC and Channel 4 news (on UK TV). The story was also repeated on these channels’ websites, and these reports are still available at the time of writing (August 2017).

3. The Data Used for this Research

Our data is the BBC News Online report of the interview given by Putin (BBC 2015). We compare the speech presentation in the news report with a translated transcription of the interview. The BBC did not provide a complete translation of the interview, so we use a translated transcription available on the official Kremlin website (Kremlin 2015b). This translation was verified by one of the research team, who is a native Russian speaker. The translation was judged to be an accurate representation of the interview, with only minor inaccuracies, which were noted. The BBC news report presents some of the translated words of Putin and contains, in particular, four translated direct quotations from the interview – two complete sentences and two phrases. We do not know the source of the partial translation used by the BBC. It is not our aim here to discuss the inherent problems of translation and we therefore only comment on differences between the translated speech in the BBC report and that of the verified Kremlin translation when we consider them to be relevant to the representation of Putin.

4. Discourse Presentation, Discourse Summary and Reporter Attitude

Discourse presentation refers, prototypically, to the presentation of speech, writing or thought from an anterior discourse in a posterior discourse. One of the most comprehensive model of discourse presentation is that introduced by Leech and Short (1981 [2007]). This has been developed and extensively researched over a number of years through corpus-based research projects at Lancaster University (see Semino and Short 2004). The model provides a framework for the analysis of discourse presentation that has been successfully applied to both written data (see, for example, Semino and Short 2004), spoken data (see McIntyre et al. 2004), and historical data (McIntyre and Walker 2011, 2012; Walker and McIntyre 2015). The model, which has been developed with a view to making as complete an account as possible of how we quote others in English texts, presents a series of three parallel clines for speech, thought and writing. For this study, we focus on speech presentation, the categories for which are shown in Table 1.

Discourse Presentation Category	Example
Direct Speech (DS)	'You should shut up!' she said.
Free Indirect Speech (FIS)	He should shut up!
Indirect Speech (IS)	She said that he should shut up.
Narrator's Presentation of Speech Act (NPSA)	She demanded an end to his talking.
Narrator's Presentation of Voice (NPV)	She spoke to him in a raised voice.

Table 1: Speech presentation model based on the description in Short 2012

The discourse presentation model presents a cline of presentation forms that range from (apparent) verbatim rendering of the propositional content of the original discourse, to minimal forms that merely indicate that discourse occurred. Direct Speech (DS) expresses the exact words of the original utterance enclosed in quotation marks and includes a reporting clause.¹

Indirect Speech (IS) presents the propositional content of the original utterance in an indirect form, where: (i) the original speaker's words are subjected to a backshift in tense, and contained within a subordinate clause and (ii) any pronouns are changed to be appropriate to the presenter. Free Indirect Speech (FIS) sits in between DS and IS and typically blends aspects of the indirect form (e.g. backshift in tense; changed pronouns) with a flavour of the original speaker's utterance (e.g. sequencing of information; lexis; punctuation). Narrator's Presentation of Speech Act (NPSA) presents the speech act, or illocutionary force, of the original utterance and optionally an indication of the topic, but none of the propositional content, so typically the anterior discourse cannot be reconstructed. Semino and Short (2004: 52-3) found that often, particularly in news texts, the indications of topic could be fairly lengthy, forming detailed summaries of what was said. We will return to NPSA and the notion of speech summary shortly. Finally, Narrator's Presentation of Voice (NPV) indicates only that speech occurred.

In the version of the model summarised in Table 1, the term *presentation* is used in the speech category names in preference to *report* or *representation* (see Short 2012; Short et al. 2002: 336), which are both terms that have been used in earlier versions of the model² (e.g. Leech and Short 1981 [2007]; Short 1996). Short et al. (2002) note a distinction between the terms 'presentation', 'report', and 'representation', which are sometimes used interchangeably. According to Short (2012: 19), discourse report assumes 'a *match* between the lexis, deixis and grammar in the anterior and posterior discourses', when the direct forms are used, whereas discourse representation 'assumes a *mismatch*'. Discourse presentation refers only to the posterior discourse and does not necessarily link back to an anterior discourse. This is because hypothetical discourse presentation (including that predicted to happen in the future) does not involve the report or representation of something already said, written or thought, and within fiction there is no anterior discourse because it is all made up. So, 'presentation' is the preferred term in the model because (i) it makes no prior assumptions about the existence of or any match/mismatch between the anterior discourse, and (ii) discourse report and representation must include some form of discourse presentation. Where there is an anterior discourse that is accessible and available for scrutiny, the analyst can assess whether the discourse presentation in the posterior discourse is re-presentation or report.

Each of the discourse presentation categories comes with a prototypical set of assumptions concerning faithfulness to the original discourse which Short (2012: 21) calls 'proposition-domain faithfulness assumptions' (see also Short 2007; Short et al. 2002). As we move from DS to NPV, faithfulness claims relating to the original propositional content of the anterior discourse diminish, and we are gradually distanced from the original words that were uttered (and the viewpoint of the person who uttered them) and brought closer to the viewpoint of the person presenting the discourse, and their

rendering of it. From this we can see that, prototypically, DS is supposed to be the discourse presentation category most likely to report verbatim (i.e. using the same words and structures) the propositional content of the original utterance (assuming that there is an anterior discourse), whereas other categories are more likely to involve re-presentation of the original to some extent and to varying degrees.

Another important feature of discourse presentation is the use of clausal and non-clausal structures to introduce discourse presentation. Thompson (1996: 524) refers to such structures as ‘signals’, and while these can take different forms (see Thompson 1996: 524 for a full inventory), traditionally these are reporting clauses such as *she said*. These discourse presentation signals can provide additional information about the ‘attitude’ of the person presenting the discourse toward ‘the message or the original speaker’ (Thompson 1996: 507) by the choice of reporting verb, or attitudinal adverbs. For example, instead of using the neutral reporting clause *she said* in the example of DS in Table 1, we could have chosen *she blustered* or *she said furiously*, which suggests a more negative attitude toward the speaker. Such evaluative choices can be important, since they have ‘a privileged role in guiding the reader’s evaluation of characters in a narrative’ (Thompson 1996: 522) or of the original speaker whose discourse is being presented.

One further aspect of discourse presentation we need to introduce is that of discourse summary, first discussed in Short (1988) and later developed in Short (2012). Short (2012: 23) proposes two types of summary: proposition-domain summary and discourse domain summary. The former relates to single propositions, whereas the latter relates to extended sections of (or even a whole) discourse. So, for example, discourse-domain summary relating to an interview might summarise a whole turn, or a series of turns, or the whole interview. Summary can relate to the presentation of both spoken and written discourse, but not thought, since it is difficult to argue for the availability of an original to be summarized (Short 2012: 24). We focus our attention, as before, on speech presentation.

Short (2012: 23) notes that NPSA is usually characterised as being the speech presentation category that summarises, especially when it includes a long topic. However, he goes on to suggest that all discourse presentation categories ‘appear in principle to be usable for presenting discourse-domain summary’ and therefore additional speech and writing discourse-domain summary scales are needed (Short 2012: 25). In the next section we will see how discourse-domain summary is utilised by reporters in the presentation of speech, and that it presents an interesting challenge in terms of discussing faithfulness to the original since the proposition-domain faithfulness no longer applies. As Short (2012: 26) states, ‘the standard speech presentation faithfulness considerations do not apply, the only faithfulness constraint being that the wordings, whatever their style, represent a reasonable summary of what was said overall.’ Our analysis, therefore, often necessarily considers whether a summary is reasonable or not.

5. Analysis and Discussion

In this section, we analyse only the parts of the news report that contain discourse presentation relating to the Putin interview; other sections that give background information about the Ukraine conflict are not dealt with as they are not directly relevant to our research goals. The news report is structured in a conventional way starting with a headline, which is followed by three short, one sentence paragraphs:

- (1)
 Ukraine conflict: Russia's Vladimir Putin says war 'unlikely' [HEADLINE]
 Russian President Vladimir Putin has said war with neighbouring Ukraine is 'unlikely', in an interview for Russian television. [LEAD]
 Mr Putin also stressed his support for the recent Minsk ceasefire deal as the best way to stabilise eastern Ukraine.
 Ukraine says Russian troops have been fighting in Ukraine. Mr Putin repeated denials that this was the case. (BBC 2015)

The headline sets out what the writer of the story considers to be the most important information arising from the interview, that war between Russia and Ukraine is unlikely, and does so using a formal combination of indirect and direct speech presentation. This is then reiterated in the lead paragraph. Both headline and lead apparently quote Putin using his word (albeit translated) 'unlikely', which is presented in quotation marks. With Indirect Speech (IS), the prototypical faithfulness assumption is that it should be possible to reconstruct the propositional content of the original discourse. This faithfulness assumption is increased by the addition of a quoted word from the original (translated) discourse. So, from this IS, the BBC reporter seems to be claiming that Putin said something along the lines of 'war with Ukraine is unlikely'. However, if we refer back to the translation of the interview, we can see that this is not entirely the case. In (2) we can see the translated transcription of Solovyov's opening question, followed by Putin's answer:

- (2)
 SOLOVYOV: What is the current state of Russian-Ukrainian relations? Will we wake up one day to learn we are at war?
 PUTIN: I **think** that this apocalyptic scenario is highly unlikely, and I **hope** that it never comes to that. (Kremlin 2015b; emphasis added).

We can see in (2) that Putin does not use the word 'war' (indeed, he never uses the word throughout the whole interview); it is Solovyov, the interviewer, who asks about war. Putin does not challenge the word (from which we might assume that he accepts it), but instead rephrases it as 'apocalyptic scenario', which is more abstract than 'war'. The headline, therefore, is not entirely faithful to the original discourse and appears to offer a discourse summary of the question and answer interaction between Solovyov and Putin – shown in (2) – at the start of the interview. As we will see, this trend is repeated throughout the news story, which at best offers the gist of what was said in the interview, and at worst obscures the origins of the words (i.e. who said them). Another important difference in the BBC's presentation is that it omits the hedges 'I think', and 'I hope'. These modal forms express Putin's wishes

(rather than predict war will not happen) and also suggest that he is not the only person who will decide whether or not Russia goes to war with Ukraine.

The next one-sentence paragraph following the lead is shown again in (3):

(3)

Mr Putin also **stressed** his support for the recent Minsk ceasefire deal as the best way to stabilise eastern Ukraine. (BBC 2015, emphasis added)

Here the discourse presentation is Narrator's Presentation of a Speech Act (NPSA) with an extended topic. This choice of discourse presentation allows for summaries of utterances and, as Semino and Short (2004) point out, is useful for providing details of discourse as concisely as possible. The BBC reporter chooses to use the speech act verb 'stressed' which is followed by details of what he stressed packaged up in an extended noun phrase (NP) in direct object position. As Short (2012: 22) notes, with NPSA 'faithfulness' no longer relates to the form or content of the reported discourse', so the details packaged into the NP are only summaries of propositions, with very weak claims to faithfulness. Nevertheless, because this is news report, we might speculate that the reader will have certain expectations about the content of original discourse due to the propositions that are packaged up in the NP, such as the following:

- Putin supports the recent Minsk ceasefire deal.
- The recent Minsk ceasefire deal is the best way to stabilise eastern Ukraine.

Also, Putin somehow stresses these things. If we return to the translations of the interview, the following extracts show where the Minsk agreement is mentioned by Putin:

(4)

If the Minsk agreements are implemented, I am certain that this will be done.

(5)

If – again, I've said it before and I'll repeat it – if the Minsk agreements are implemented, I am confident that the situation will gradually return to normal.

(6)

And I very much expect that it will be implemented. And if it is implemented, then this is a reliable path toward normalising the situation in this part of Ukraine. (Kremlin 2015b)

Putin repeats three times, with slight variations, the conditional 'if ... then' structure that suggests that implementing the Minsk agreements will return Ukraine to normal. Indeed, the second time he uses the conditional structure, Putin prefaces it by saying: 'I've said it before, and I'll repeat it'. What seems to be happening, then, with the NPSA summary of Putin's spoken discourse is that the BBC reporter is interpreting these repetitions as stressing. However, he never explicitly stresses his support for the Minsk Agreement. Instead, he appears to be stressing his confidence that implementing the Minsk deal will normalize the region, which is interpreted as support. Furthermore, nowhere does Putin say that the Minsk Agreement is the 'best' way to normalise the

region (the BBC reporter uses ‘stabilise’ rather than ‘return to normal’). So there is no such evaluation in the original discourse, and no other (less good) possibilities are mentioned.

Thus, the NPSA turns out to be a summary (and an interpretation) of a number of Putin’s responses to Solovyov’s questions, making it discourse-domain summary. While there are some mismatches between the summary, and what was actually said in the interview, it could be said to be an uncontentious and reasonable re-presentation of the original discourse. The reporter is, nevertheless, making interpretative leaps that represent Putin differently to his self-presentation via his actual linguistic performance both in terms of the propositional content and Putin’s positioning to past events, possible future events and their consequences. The news report suggests that Putin is forthright, but his performance, via conditional constructions, the use of the passive voice (‘if the Minsk agreements are implemented’) and sentences without an obvious doer (‘the situation will gradually return to normal’) suggest that he is more conciliatory and to some extent detached from the situation.

The third one-sentence paragraph at the start of the report is shown again in (7):

- (7)
Ukraine says Russian troops have been fighting in Ukraine. Mr Putin repeated denials that this was the case. (BBC 2015)

The form of speech act verb (‘repeated’) followed by a noun phrase (‘denials that this was the case’) again suggests that the discourse presentation is Narrator Presentation of a Speech Act (NPSA). The choice of speech act verb by the reporter presupposes that there have been denials (which are reified in a noun phrase) by Putin at some stage in the past. However, there is no speech act of denial performed by Putin anywhere in the interview as one might have expected, given the content of the discourse presentation. Indeed, that Russian troops are *not* fighting in Ukraine is only implied (and then taken for granted) by a question by Solovyov, who asks:

- (8)
SOLOVYOV: We say that a civil war is underway. Ukraine says, ‘No, this is a direct intervention by Russia.’ **Why doesn’t the world see the truth?**
PUTIN: It doesn’t want to. First of all, the world is complex and diverse; some people see it, while others don’t want to see it and do not notice it. World media monopoly of our opponents allows them to behave as they do. [...] At the same time, we are aware of the statements made by Ukraine’s top officials, including high-ranking officials in the Ukrainian army. **As** the head of the General Staff said, ‘We are not fighting against the Russian army.’ **What else do you need?** (Kremlin 2015b; emphasis added)

Solovyov’s question implies that ‘the truth’ is the view stated by ‘we’ (Russia): the Ukraine conflict is a civil war. This presupposes that Russian troops are not involved because the war is only within Ukraine. Finally Solovyov’s question does not ask Putin to confirm or deny this state of affairs, merely to comment on the perception held by the rest of the world. Putin’s reply – in (8) – maintains the point of view and presupposition established by Solovyov.

Indeed, his opening response to Solovyov's question aligns him with 'the truth' set out by Solovyov, but nowhere does he explicitly deny that Russian troops are involved. Instead, he directly quotes the then head of the Ukrainian General staff (Mykhailo Kutsyn) and uses his words to re-present the view that Russian troops are not involved in the conflict. Putin's use of 'as' to introduce the quotation appears to suggest his agreement with it, and his rhetorical question at the end of his turn neither confirms nor denies the state of affairs set out by Kutsyn in the quotation, but implies that it is accurate.

This discourse presentation is once again discourse-domain summary since it summarises (i) at least two turns of the interview, and (ii) the words of both Putin and Solovyov. While a denial does not necessarily need to involve the same form of the word 'deny', we might conjecture that Putin utters some form of negation relating to Russian troops fighting in Ukraine, but he does not. Instead, the denials are implied in the following ways:

- That civil war is underway in Ukraine logically (but implicitly) denies that Russia is involved.
- Reporting (repeating) the words of Kutsyn denies (indirectly) that Russian troops are involved.

The BBC discourse presentation, therefore, is rather misleading, because it simplifies the interaction between Putin and Solovyov during the interview, where nothing is explicitly denied, but it is assumed. It is likely that the BBC's use of discourse-domain summary is fairly standard practice, and not particular to this news story, but this story-telling strategy represents Putin as quite straightforward in his act of denial, whereas his performance suggests that he (and Russia) are innocent bystanders in events that are beyond their control, as well of being victims of misrepresentation by the world media.

Following these three opening paragraphs summarizing the interview, the news report provides details of recent events concerning the Ukraine conflict across six one-sentence paragraphs, before returning again to what Putin said in the interview. This (latter) part of the news story is shown in (9) below:

(9)

In his interview - his first extended comments since the ceasefire deal was agreed on 12 February - Mr Putin was asked if there was a real threat of war, given the situation in eastern Ukraine.

'I think that such an apocalyptic scenario is unlikely and I hope this will never happen,' he said.

Mr Putin said that if the Minsk agreement was implemented, eastern Ukraine would 'gradually stabilise'.

'Europe is just as interested in that as Russia. No one wants conflict on the edge of Europe, especially armed conflict,' he said. (BBC 2015)

Some of the commentary repeats the headlines at the start of the article, but with additional information and detail. The main difference in this part of the news report is that Direct and Indirect Speech presentation is used rather than NPSA. The Direct Speech (DS) in (9) mostly matches the verified Kremlin translation we worked from with only minor differences, none of which relate to the representation of Putin. We therefore do not give this section any further analytical attention. However, the next section of the news report, which is titled 'Analysis: Sarah Rainsford, BBC News, Moscow', offers

more interesting data in relation to the presentation of Putin's words. The section begins with the following paragraph:

(10)

This was a confident Vladimir Putin, fielding soft questions on the Ukraine conflict with ease, even smiles. Russia's president said that in his eyes, the way to peace in Ukraine is clear – **the deal struck in Minsk has to be implemented**. (BBC 2015; emphasis added)

Rainsford introduces the discourse in the first sentence with Narrator Presentation of Voice (NPV), giving the reporter the highest level of control over the discourse presentation. This first sentence also contains an explicit evaluative representation of Putin ('confident'). Rainsford continues to exert this control and her evaluative opinion over the rest of the report. She goes on, in the second sentence in (10), to cover ground already dealt with, but uses a different set of lexical choices to re-present Putin's words. The speech presentation Rainsford uses in the second sentence in (10) has a clausal structure and pronoun form ('his') that suggests IS, but because there is no backshift in tense it appears to be Free Indirect Speech (FIS). The clause following the hyphen (highlighted in bold) could also be FIS, but might also be reporter comment. Comparing the IS/FIS with the translated transcription shows that there is a lack of propositional-domain faithfulness to the original. Putin certainly never says 'the way to peace is clear'; indeed he never mentions 'peace', nor does he use the deontic semi-modal phrase 'has to be'. Rainsford's discourse presentation in (10) is therefore IS discourse-domain summary, which appears to summarise the utterance in (11).

(11)

And I very much expect that it [the Minsk agreement] will be implemented. And if it is implemented, then this is a reliable path toward normalising the situation in this part of Ukraine. (Kremlin 2015b)

We have already noted Putin's repeated use of 'if-then' conditional relating to the implementation of the Minsk agreement, which express Putin's opinion that the likely outcome is a return to normal in Ukraine. From this we could surmise that in Putin's mind there is a clear connection between implementing the Minsk agreement and a return to normal. This is the interpretative leap Rainsford seems to be making in her summary. Rainsford also re-presents 'path toward normalising the situation' as 'the way to peace', and inserts 'has to be', which alters expectations of implementation into obligation, making her summary a mixture of Putin's speech and her analysis of his speech in ways that are potentially misleading to the reader. In particular, her use of 'has to be' represents Putin as being more direct and forceful than he is in the interview. Rainsford goes on to say:

(12)

He **underlined** that the agreement had been backed by the UN Security Council – **and that matters to Moscow**. He was also **keen to point out** that it devolves more power to eastern parts of Ukraine, currently controlled by **Russian-backed rebels**. (BBC 2015; emphasis added)

Sentence one and two in (12) involve speech presentation in the form of IS, but are actually further instances of IS discourse-domain summary, which

gives the gist of longer utterances by Putin relating to the Minsk agreements; these are shown in (13) and (14), where the words most relevant to Rainsford's summaries are highlighted in bold.

(13)

For now, there is no need for any extreme measures because these Minsk agreements are not just a document formulated by four participants in the Minsk process, meaning Ukraine, Russia, France and Germany. **They are enshrined in a United Nations Security Council resolution** and have taken the form of an international legal act, essentially supported and approved by the entire international community. (Kremlin 2015b; emphasis added).

(14)

But what I want to note is what appeared to me as their sincere desire to find compromises that would lead to a final settlement. After all, if you paid attention to the Minsk Protocol, **it talks about decentralisation of power**, and then there is a footnote stating what this implies. The authors of this footnote are our German and French partners. This speaks to their sincere desire to find the compromises I just talked about. (Kremlin 2015; emphasis added).

Rainsford's voice comes to the fore in these summaries intervening between the posterior discourse and the reader, and guiding the reader's perception of Putin's performance in the interview. Her choice of reporting verbs ('underlined' and 'point out') and her choice of adjective to describe Putin's manner ('keen'), suggest her attitude (Thompson 1996) towards Putin, and hint at what she sees as his intentions when making the utterances. The coordinated clause following the hyphen in sentence one ('and that matters to Moscow') is Rainsford's assessment of the content of her summary, but we are not told why she believes this to be true. Her use of the noun phrase 'Russian backed rebels' packages up a series of propositions, including:

- the people wanting to separate from the Ukraine are rebels;
- the people wanting to separate from the Ukraine are backed by Russia.

Rainsford chooses 'rebels' over other naming options, for example 'separatists', and as such adopts a particular, non-neutral, point of view.

Her summary of Putin's words re-presents 'enshrined in a United Nations Security Council resolution' as 'backed by the UN security council'. This is reasonable as both propositions are true – the UN did endorse the Minsk II agreement. Her representation of 'decentralisation of power' as 'devolves more power to eastern parts of Ukraine' is more specific than Putin's words and is actually more of a summary of the footnote in the Minsk II agreement (which Putin also mentions). Rainsford is drawing on and summarising details from a separate discourse (the Minsk II agreement) in order to condense the words of Putin in the interview, which means her summary is not completely faithful to the interview she is reporting on.

The speech summary continues into the next paragraph but becomes more questionable. The discourse presentation form in the first sentence – shown in (15) – is NPSA, where the speech act verb is 'shrugged off'.

(15)

As for Russia invading Ukraine, President Putin once again **shrugged off evidence that he's deployed troops to help the rebels**. (BBC 2015; emphasis added)

Dealing first with the NPSA, we assume for our analysis that 'shrugged off' indicates speech and not some sort of physical action, or silence/non-response. Instead, 'shrugged off' summarizes any amount of speech that cumulatively can be judged to have the illocutionary force of shrugging off. The use of 'shrugged off' as a speech act verb suggests that Putin treats the 'evidence' as unimportant, and represents him as dismissive and perhaps even arrogant. It is thus suggestive of Rainsford's attitude toward Putin. The presence of 'once again' in the Rainsford's report presupposes that this is not the first time Putin has 'shrugged off' evidence. The noun phrase 'evidence that he's deployed troops to help the rebels' presupposes the existence of such evidence (i.e. creates or sustains a worldview that such evidence exists) and packages up a series of propositions, including:

- there is evidence;
- the evidence is that Putin has deployed troops;
- the troops deployed by Putin will help the rebels;
- the people wanting to separate from Ukraine are rebels.

When we look at the interview transcriptions in order to assess whether this a reasonable and accurate summary either at the discourse-domain level, or at the level of a particular response to a question, it is not certain which part of the interview Rainsford is referring to, since there is no mention of evidence, and at no time during the interview is any evidence presented to Putin for him to 'shrug off'. At one point, Solovyov suggests that there is a difference in opinion between Europe and the USA, to which Putin gives a very short reply:

(16)

SOLOVYOV: There has been a break in opinion between the American side of the establishment and the European side. The American side says that Russia directly invaded Debaltsevo, that new sanctions should be imposed against Russia, and John Kerry even accused his European partners of taking a cowardly position. Europe currently does not support this. That is the cause of the break.

PUTIN: Honestly, I have not even heard such assessments. (Kremlin 2015)

This could be construed as *shrugging off*, but Solovyov is not presenting evidence of a Russian invasion; he is presenting the collective speech of the US, and then John Kerry's (the Secretary of State for the US at the time of the interview), that Russia invaded Debaltsevo. However, Putin neither confirms nor denies this. Indeed, whether Russia invaded part of Ukraine is not in question at all; Solovyov's utterance presents a possible situation that exists between the USA and Europe, about which Putin says he has no knowledge.

Solovyov goes on to present the view of Russia and Ukraine via indirect and direct speech:

(17)

SOLOVYOV: We say that a civil war is underway. Ukraine says, 'No, this is a direct intervention by Russia.' Why doesn't the world see **the truth**? (Kremlin 2015; emphasis added)

As we noted before, we assume here that Solovyov is asserting that 'the truth' is that Russia has no involvement; it is a civil war. So, there is an assumption between Solovyov and Putin that is created and maintained during the interview that Russia has no involvement in the Ukraine conflict. Solovyov is therefore not presenting evidence for Putin to 'shrug off', he is presenting the views of other nation states and assuming that they are wrong. The question of whether Russia is involved is never asked, and Putin is never put in the position where he must deny it. The status of the NPSA in (15) as a reasonable discourse-domain summary of Putin's speech in the interview is therefore doubtful. Similarly, it is not a faithful representation (at the level of speech act and topic) of a single response to a question during the interview not least because there is no utterance or set of utterances by Putin for which the speech act of shrugging off clearly applies.

Rainsford continues her analysis with presentation in the form of IS, which embeds further discourse presentation apparently originating from Kiev – see (18).

(18)

He said Kiev was claiming that to hide its humiliation at being defeated by former miners and tractor drivers. (BBC 2015)

The section of the interview that is relevant to the discourse presentation in (18) is Putin's extended reply – which we show in (19) – to Solovyov's question – which was shown in (17).

(19)

PUTIN: It doesn't want to. First of all, the world is complex and diverse; some people see it, while others don't want to see it and do not notice it. The world media monopoly of our opponents allows them to behave as they do. Moreover, I suppose that my **somewhat careless comment** during my visit to Hungary had some effect, when I said that it is disappointing to lose to yesterday's miners and tractor drivers. It is unpleasant to lose to Russia as well, but it's less humiliating somehow. At the same time, we are aware of the statements made by Ukraine's top officials, including high-ranking officials in the Ukrainian army. As the head of the General Staff said, 'We are not fighting against the Russian army.' What else do you need? But in general, all this is very bad: the attempts to justify defeat and attempts to blame it on Russia. The bad thing is that this is fanning the conflict between Ukraine and Russia, or an attempt to fan that conflict. (Kremlin 2015b; emphasis added)

The discourse presentation in (18) is in the form of IS, from which we might assume that Putin said something along the lines of: *Kiev are claiming that Russia has deployed troops to hide its humiliation at being beaten by former coal miners and tractor drivers*. However, we can see from the original – in (19) – that Putin does not say that Kiev is claiming anything. Instead, Putin reports the words of Ukraine's head of general staff using direct quotation, and re-presents his own words from a press conference in Budapest, Hungary, on February 17 2015, where he made comments about coal miners and tractor drivers. The IS Rainsford uses to represent Putin's words is therefore neither

faithful at the propositional-domain level, nor is it a reasonable discourse-domain summary of Putin's turn in the interview. It actually appears to be summarising the apparent illocutionary force of part of a completely different discourse – the speech given by Putin in Hungary

Rainsford continues her analysis with the following sentence:

(20)

He [Putin] was **just as scathing** on the issue of Crimea, which Russia annexed last year, **advising Ukraine's president** to concentrate on **saving** his country's **collapsing** economy, instead of vowing to take back that land. (BBC 2015; emphasis added)

Rainsford's use of 'just as' presupposes that Putin was scathing in previous utterances, which is further evaluative assessment of Putin and his discourse that is suggestive of Rainsford's attitude towards Putin. While the comment about tractor drivers and coal miners might have been scathing when Putin first made them in Hungary, when he refers back to them in this interview he diminishes their force by saying that his comments were 'somewhat careless' (although his intention seems to be to remind the audience that Ukraine lost).

The discourse presentation in (20) has a structure of two non-finite clauses which makes it IS (see Semino and Short 2004: 37-8). However, this is clearly discourse-domain summary of a much larger utterance by Putin at the start of the interview, the relevant part of which is shown in (21). The reporting verb used by Rainsford ('advising') represents the force of the whole utterance as giving advice, which on one hand is true, but on the other is not the complete picture, because – as we can see in (21) – Putin starts by saying that he does not want to give advice:

(21)

In my opinion – and I do not want to give any advice, but still – the current leadership of a large European nation such as Ukraine should first return the country to normal life: fix the economy, the social sector, its relations with the southeast region of the country in a civilised manner, and ensure the lawful rights and interests of the people living in Donbass. If the Minsk agreements are implemented, I am certain that this will be done. (Kremlin 2015)

Certainly, giving advice to another head of state is blatantly undiplomatic and can be perceived as arrogant and confrontational. Putin chooses to mitigate the speech act by firstly prefacing it with 'in my opinion', and then using negation to create a concessive opposition: 'I do not want..., but still'. This marks the speech act as indirect advice, given apparently unwillingly, which could be seen as more acceptable in diplomatic terms. This linguistic manoeuvring, potentially makes Putin look more conciliatory and less aggressive. Furthermore, Rainsford reports that Putin was advising 'Ukraine's president'. However, Putin uses slightly oblique indirect naming, and talks about 'the current leadership of a large European nation such as Ukraine'. While it might be clear to anyone watching the interview (or reading the translation) that Putin is addressing Ukraine's president, he does not do it directly, since 'leadership' could be the government, or a council of Ministers, and include any number of people. Rainsford's representation is more

personal since she singles out Ukraine's president as the recipient of Putin's advice.

Part of the advice given to the Ukraine leadership, according to Rainsford's summary in (20), is 'to concentrate on saving his country's collapsing economy'. The original Russian, *наладить*, is quite close to 'fix', which is used in the translation – see (21) – but is actually slightly milder, and closer to *put back on track*. In Sarah Rainsford's report *наладить* becomes 'saving', which is unduly strong. Also, the addition of 'collapsing' by Rainsford makes Putin sound more critical and confrontational than he actually is. Rainsford's summary is therefore not without issues. Her re-presentation of Putin's words makes him seem more explicitly tactless and quite blunt whereas Putin's linguistic performance makes him appear cautious and self-aware that he might cause offence.

The final paragraph of Rainsford's analysis contains the final piece of discourse presentation in the article, but has low levels of interest in terms of representation and Putin's identity. We include it – in (22) – for completeness, and so the reader can also judge whether or not our assessment is valid. The discourse presentation has the form of IS, but is blended with quoted material.

(22)

The Russian leader also said the Minsk deal had become an 'international legal document' following UN Security Council approval of a Russian-drafted resolution endorsing it. (BBC 2015)

The indirect speech on the one hand serves to summarise a much larger turn by Putin, but on the other is faithful to the propositional meaning. The only slight issue is that the final part of this sentence, after the quoted phrase, is Rainsford's comment and not part of the speech presentation.

This analysis has shown that blending of voices is a feature that occurs throughout the news report, and particularly in Rainsford's analysis, especially when she summarises. These summaries mingle the re-presented speech of Putin (and others) with her own evaluative lexical choices that suggest her attitude towards Putin. So, rather than bringing the reader closer to the original discourse and Putin, the indirect speech presentation actually distances us from it/him, and brings us closer to Rainsford as an expert on Moscow and her opinions and assessment based on her analysis (for discussion of reporters as experts see Piazza and Lashmar, this volume).

6. Conclusion

In this article we analysed a BBC News Online report using an established model of speech presentation, and a newer model for speech summary in order to assess differences between the reported discourse and the original. Our findings show that although Putin's words are inevitably mediated by the reporting voice of the text, this voice is often explicitly subjective and sometimes more prominent than Putin's. The discourse presentation combines the (translated) words of Putin and of the reporter to differing extents, and in ways which are sometimes ambiguous or vague.

We acknowledge that there is always a gap between the original discourse and its presentation. In this news story we found that the gap was at times unnecessarily wide, and that the writer of the story was representing Putin's words rather than reporting them. Here the discourse presentation matched Short's (2012) notion of discourse-domain summary, whereby multiple utterances were summarised by indirect speech forms, which gave the impression of faithfulness to the original, but were not entirely accurate, and contained additional evaluative and subjective content. Where discourse-domain summary is in the form of IS, it is sometimes ambiguous as to whether what is being presented is summary or actual IS. Of course, a reader can only know this if they have access to the original discourse. In the case of this news story, we suggest that salience of faithfulness is high (see Short et al. 2002), meaning that the reader might expect report (rather the representation), and so take the faithfulness to the original for granted.

The mismatch between the original and represented discourse had consequences for the way Putin was represented in the story, compared with his actual linguistic performance in the interview. In general, the story presented Putin as more direct, forthright and discursively powerful than he was in the interview, where he was more indirect. Indeed, Putin's performance in the interview created the impression that he (and Russia) was a powerless onlooker to the events unfolding in Ukraine. The effect was realised through hedging, not placing himself as the subject of active verbs, and through the use of agentless passive constructions. These subtleties were missing from the BBC report (2015), which represented Putin's speech through the evaluative and interpretive filter of the writer.

This article uses Short's (2012) model for discourse summary to analyse news report, and examine the differences between the anterior and posterior discourses. It explores how discourse summaries are created and assesses whether they are reasonable or not. To our knowledge, this has not been done before. We expect that discourse summary is prevalent in news report in general due to a number of constraints including the tight deadlines faced by news reporters. This work demonstrates that Short's (2012) model for discourse summary is an important analytical tool for investigating the presentation of other people's words in news (and other) texts.

Notes

- 1 Direct Speech (DS), without being enclosed in quotation marks or being introduced by a reporting clause, so there is no indication of the presence of the person presenting the speech.
- 2 Narrator's Representation of a Speech Act (NRSA) and Narrator's Report of Voice (NV) used in earlier versions have become Narrator's Presentation of a Speech Act (NPSA) and Narrator's Presentation of Voice (NPV), respectively.

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