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Exploring the metadiscursive realisation of incivility in TV news discourse

Jamie McKeown & Hans J Ladegaard

Abstract

The present paper examines the use of metadiscourse in the realisation of incivility in TV news discourse. We take empirical data from a UK Channel 4 News interview between TV journalist and author Cathy Newman and clinical psychologist and author Professor Jordan Peterson. Adopting a discourse analytic approach, five aspects of incivility are presented: intolerant response; ideological entrenchment; low oppositional literacy; the need to win; and, change of opinion condemnation. We show how metadiscourse is used to manifest incivility in a number of ways including to prioritise the current speaker's foci over those of the interlocutor; to express metalingual commentary which negatively characterises the interlocutor's discourse; and, to express discourse norms which undermine the open exchange of ideas. We conclude by suggesting recommendations for future research.

Keywords

Incivility; Civil Discourse; Metadiscourse; Metadiscursive Targets; TV News

1. Introduction

On 16th January 2018, as part of its nightly evening show, UK broadcaster Channel 4 News televised a short edited segment of a non-live interview (Ekström and Fitzgerald, 2013: 85), featuring lead female anchor and, self-described feminist[1], author Cathty Newman (CN) and clinical psychologist and, self-described traditionalist[2], author Professor Jordan Peterson (JP). JP was in the UK promoting his best-selling book (Peterson, 2018) the contents of which he sat down to discuss with CN as part of a factual entertainment feature for the main news show. Channel 4 News also released the full unedited exchange (which comprises the data we use in the present paper) via their

[1] See Iqbal (2018)
[2] See Mance (2018)

YouTube channel. The undedited interview caused an online and offline furore, with high profile thinkers from the left (Žižek, 2018) and right (Murray, 2018) voicing opinions. In the first four weeks of release, the unedited interview received over 7 million views on YouTube. At the time of writing, it has received over 18 million views and attracted 130,000+ comments. Although the interlocutors discuss contentious issues such as the crisis of masculinity, gender equality, and, identity politics, much of the reactive commentary on the interview concerned the discourse style of the two, i.e. what we would call incivlity.

Whether online or analogue, exposure to incivility has been shown to have deleterious effects including increased perceptions of societal polarisation (York, 2013: 111); decreased open-mindedness (Borah 2014: 814); and, causing greater incivility amongst general populations (Gervais, 2014: 575). Reflecting societal concerns with regards to increasing incivility, such research has intensified interest in the development of a civil model of discourse. At the same time, some researchers have questioned the supposed rampant incivility plaguing political and media discourse (Papacharissi, 2004; Groshek and Cutino, 2016) whilst others have drawn attention to some of the problematic aspects of civility. For instance, White (2006: 445) discusses the ambivalent nature of civility and draws attention to its potential to act as a conservative force. Zerilli (2014: 117) rejects the notion of civility as reflecting elitist conceptions of democracy and as a means whereby marginalised groups have been denied rights of participation in the public sphere. Whist notions of civility may have been used for such invidious purposes in the past, the conception of (in)civility we explore, i.e. one which attempts to capture the discursive conditions in which the necessary space for all interlocutors to speak and be heard is granted or denied, actually contains the potential to enroll disenfranchised groups and marginalised perspectives.

Despite significant scholarly interest and an established body of literature, Culpeper (2018) notes that the concept of (in)civility may not 'ring many bells with linguists' (2018: 809). This is in part due to the preference for the umbrella term 'impoliteness' amongst linguists and pragmaticians to catch similar phenomenon investigated under the label of 'incivility' by communication scholars and sociologists. In the present paper, we do not treat (im)politeness and (in)civility as near-synonyms. Instead, we build on research traditions which consider the two distinct, albeit interrelated, concepts (e.g. Papacharissi, 2004).

As the traditional divide between objective, watchdog, and opinion lead journalism has blurred, news programming has been identified as an abundant source of incivility (Sobieraj & Berry, 2011). Scholarly attention has particularly focused on interviews involving politicians (Tolson, 2012). The CN and JP interview represents another integral part of news programming, i.e. the factual entertainment interview – a sub-genre that has not, unlike interviews featuring politicians, been identified as a prominent site of incivility. Regardless of interview type, the interview format forms a staple part of our media diet (Huls and Varwijk, 2011: 50) so much so that lay individuals have firm expectations with regards to the etiquette, format and purpose of such interactions (Clayman and Heritage, 2002). When things go askew in media interviews, the subsequent material produced often comes to be added to the popular canon of 'spectacular media events' (Ekström and Fitzgerald, 2013: 85). We see the CN and JP interview as such a spectacular media event, not as it has been represented in countless online memes, videos, and podcasts (i.e. as a decisive victory in a supposed culture war of one partisan group over another) but as an illustrative case of incivility in TV news discourse.

In applying a discourse analytic approach, we will focus on the use of metadiscourse (Ädel, 2006; 2010; 2017) in the realisation of (in)civility. Metadiscourse is a resource which allows speakers to explicitly refer to themselves, their interlocutors or the ongoing discourse (Ädel, 2006). The use of metadiscourse has been associated with antagonistic communication (Smart, 2016: 205)and conversational dominance (Mauranen 2001: 170). Mauranen (2001) details how the use of discourse reflexivity (a close kin of metadiscourse) allows a speaker to impose authority on discourse (e.g. by explicitly directing the current interaction) and that it is 'natural to assume that it is used by dominant speakers in abundance' (2001: 176). In a similar vein, metalanguage itself has been noted as an ultimate attempt by producers to 'dominate the signifying effects' of language (Žižek, 2008: 171). We build upon such observations by exploring the use of the phenomenon in the realisation of incivility. We should also note that spoken data is rather neglected when compared to written data in studies of metadiscourse (Mauranen, 2012: 169). The present paper furthers the exploration of the phenomenon by applying the concept to interactive spoken data in a media context.

In the present paper, we neither focus in great detail nor seek to provide commentary on, either participant's representations on the autonomous plane of discourse, i.e. that in which the speakers act as informers by making representations about object reality (Sinclair, 1981). Indeed, we are primarily interested in the actions of each participant on the interactive plane, i.e. the explicit management of the (ongoing) interaction. Thus, we will use a discourse analytic approach to explore the CN and JP interview to reveal how metadiscourse is used in the realisation of incivility. In doing so, we adopt a qualitative approach to identify and explore a number of discursive practices which give rise to incivility in discourse.

In the following two sections, we outline the core analytic components, i.e. (in)civility and metadiscourse. We will then describe the data and approach used in the study, followed by analysis and discussion. Finally, we will conclude with a summary of our findings and directions for future research.

2. Civil discourse and incivility

The U.S. National Institute for Civil Discourse defines civil discourse as 'the free and respectful exchange of different ideas. It entails questioning and disputing, but doing so in a way that respects and affirms all persons, even while critiquing their arguments'[3]. This definition pertains to notions of (in)civility which seek to uphold the discursive conditions under which individuals, in all their diversity, can speak and be heard (Boyd, 2006; Calhoun, 2000; Papacharisi, 2004). Indeed, it is to such a notion of (in)civility we subscribe. Descriptively, researchers have explored the conditions under which such (in)civility typically arises. As described in the literature, (in)civility manifests as a number of salient discursive behaviours and attitudes (e.g. Bush, 2017; Collins, 2019; Fishkin, 1996; Gergen, 2001; Jamieson et al., 2017; Kingwell, 1995; Webb, 2012). Due to constraints on space, in the remainder of this section, we will focus on the manifestations and definitional issues of (in)civility which are relevant to our analysis.

Participants in civil discourse display a willingness to listen to others (Meltzer and Hoover, 2014: 224), including those with strongly opposing views. Interlocutors listen to one another to understand rather than respond (Adler, 1997: 71) and whilst those engaged in civil discourse ideally refrain from excessive persuasion (Gergen, 2001: 71), participants are accorded the right to change their mind (Webb, 2012: 195). Participants enter into an exchange with a degree of open-

[3] https://nicd.arizona.edu/

mindedness and desist from ideologically dominating an interlocutor (Farneth, 2017). Indeed, most definitions of civility point to a model of discourse which 'does not silence or derogate alternative views' (Jamieson et al., 2017: 206). In regards to respect, it is not important whether interlocutors actually respect one another but that they treat one another with enough decorum to allow the conversation to continue (Kingwell, 1995: 247). During deliberation, arguments are judged on their merits and respect given to the ability to marshal evidence in favour of a position (Fishkin, 1996: 191). Caution must be exercised in regards to the latter requirement as it may well function to privilege a narrow model of 'rational fact based debate' (Collins, 2019: 18) which could undermine the enabling potential of civil discourse to enrol disenfranchised groups into public debate and further risks censoring legitimate dissent (Bush, 2017: 92).

Whilst the 'larger incivility construct' (Kenski et al. 2018: 289) involves a broad range of speech and behaviour, we focus on those aspects of incivility which 'shut down ongoing discourse' (Kenski et al., 2018: 289), i.e. strikes at an individual's right to speak and be heard and undermines the open exchange of ideas. Differences exist, in the literature as to the relationship of (im)politeness to (in)civility. Broad definitions of incivility include the notion of impoliteness[4] (Herbst, 2010). Indeed, many of the behaviours identified as incivil, such as ad hominem argumentation, lying accusations, and vulgarity (Coe et al., 2014) can be construed as impolite. As already mentioned above, the two concepts are sometimes treated as synonymous (e.g. Lane, 2017). We do not adopt such an approach for two main reasons. Relying on politeness standards could increase the discriminatory potential of civil discourse (Gergen, 2001: 72), especially for groups whose language use may not adhere to prevailing norms within a given society. Secondly, Coffey notes that 'civility is not just politeness or expressions of goodwill— as welcome as such things may be in public discourse.

[4] And vice-versa (For an extensive review see Sifianou, 2019)

Rather, civility is conduct with broader public purposes of constructive debate' (Coffey et al., 2015: 246). In a similar vein, we believe conceptualisations of (in)civility should attempt to capture the discursive conditions whereby individuals are granted or denied their basic rights to speak and be heard (irrespective of politeness concerns).

Narrow definitions attempt to delimit, as far as possible, impoliteness from the remit of incivility. Papacharissi (2004: 262) argues that discursive behaviour, which is regarded as impolite, may not be incivil. For instance, explicit, bold disagreement can be construed as impolite, but not incivil. Oz et al. (2018: 3415) report that impassioned conversation often involves the co-occurrence of impoliteness markers (e.g. swearing) with civil forms of communication (e.g. deliberative speech). In decoupling (in)civility and (im)politeness, we treat the two concepts as occupying different areas of enquiry. We construe questions of (im)politeness as concerned with threats to, and maintenance of, social harmony; we construe (in)civility as concerned with threats to, and maintenance of, the ongoing, open, exchange of ideas. It is the latter line of enquiry which we pursue in the present paper.

3. Metadiscourse

Two distinct schools of metadiscourse exist within the literature. We use a narrow school (Ädel, 2006; 157) conception of metadiscourse and draw upon Ädel's (2006; 2010; 2017) work. In a field notoriously haunted by fuzziness, the principal strength of Ädel's model is the clear identification principles of metadiscourse it sets forth. In keeping with the general premise of the narrow school of metadiscourse, Ädel's model of metadiscourse does not include aspects of intertextuality or evidentiality as do some broad school models (e.g. Hyland, 2005). Instead, her model focuses on explicit references to discourse and discourse producers. Indeed, Ädel (2006; 2010) uses these foci to

divide her taxonomies of metadiscourse into two broad functional categories: *metatext* and *audience interaction*. Metatext essentially performs a taxis function, i.e. it explicitly structures and performs the current discourse. Audience interaction comprises explicit references to discourse participants. According to Ädel (2010: 75), to qualify as metadiscourse, a candidate marker must contain an explicit, metalingual key (i.e. refer to an aspect of the current discourse as discourse or the current discourse participants as discourse participants) and express a discourse internal orientation (e.g. a focus on an aspect of communication). Whilst we principally draw upon Ädel's 2010 taxonomy of spoken metadiscourse, occasionally we refer to her 2006 taxonomy. As in Ädel (2010: 75), in use of such references, we will modify the original nomenclature to reflect a shift from monologic written data to interactive spoken data. We should clarify our approach to mental processes which have traditionally been excluded from reflexive approaches to metadiscourse. Ädel (2006: 61) does allow for 'imagining scenarios' (which often involve mental process verbs, e.g. think and believe). Like Smart (2016), we exclude such references from the ambit of metadiscourse as they are not explicitly reflexive of language or communicative interaction. Indeed, explicit mental processes may be better considered under the discourse category of evidentiality (van Dijk, 2014: 259).

In our analysis, we also draw upon Mauranen's (2001) classification of metadiscourse sub-types developed in relation to spoken data. Mauranen (2001: 171-173) details how, in the use of discourse reflexivity or metadiscourse, a speaker has three basic targets: the speaker's discourse (i.e. monologic orientation); the discourse of another speaker (i.e. dialogic orientation); or the general communicative situation (i.e. interactive orientation). In interactive targeted expressions, the current speaker either elicits a response from the interlocutor and/or manages the current interaction (e.g. explicitly setting the norms of the interaction). In dialogically targeted expressions, the current speaker responds to a specific aspect of the interlocutor's discourse. In monologically targeted

metadiscourse, the primary focus is on the current speaker's discourse. Table 1 below shows the three sub-types of metadiscourse with example markers found in our data.

Sub-type of metadiscourse	Description	Typical Markers
Interactive targeted expressions	Explicit discourse acts in which the current speaker elicits interaction and/or manages the ongoing interaction.	Directives: (a) tell us about the lobsters Clarifying: (b) let me just get this straight you're saying that we should organise our societies along the lines of the lobsters References to the current interaction: (c) I mean look at the conversation we're having right now
Dialogic targeted expressions	Explicit discourse acts in which the current speaker refers and/or responds to the interlocutor's discourse.	Metalingual commentary: (d) that sounds pretty bad (e) well that's quite a segue
Monologic targeted expressions	Explicit discourse acts which refer to the current speaker's own discourse.	Acts of saying: (f) I'm saying that it is inevitable that there will be continuity in the way that animals and human beings organise their structures Exemplifying: (g) Oh there are some barriers yeah <like other> like men for example

Table 1. Metadiscursive targets in spoken discourse

Mauranen claims that the sub-types can be understood as existing on a cline in which increasing space is given over to conversational participants other than the current speaker (2001: 173). Interactive and dialogically targeted expressions contain the possibility for the listener to exercise greater control over the discourse (through response). However, as we will see, this assumption may be subject to further nuance.

4. Data and approach

The actual interview takes place in a television studio in which CN and JP are the only communicative participants (i.e. no studio audience). A verbatim transcript of the interview formed the data set for this study (the transcription scheme can be found in the appendix). As analysts of metadiscourse, we were struck by the constant use of the phenomenon by both CN and JP as well as the way in which the conversation struggles to get out of the interactive plane. The highly conflictual nature of the interaction initially suggested the use of a framework from the field of politeness. However, during the initial coding of the data for metadiscourse we felt that the most interesting line of enquiry was not on the impact of the interaction upon the relationship between CN and JP, but the ongoing, open, exchange of ideas. This informed our identification of (in)civility as a framework with an appropriate explanatory value.

5. Findings and discussion

In the following section, we discuss five manifestations of incivility: *intolerant response*; *low oppositional literacy*; *ideological entrenchment*; *the need to win*; and, *change of opinion condemnation*. The first three reoccur throughout the interview; the last two represent salient flashpoints worthy of analysis. Except for *oppositional literacy* (which we take from Hart, 2016: 66), the labels are ours but based on insights from the literature (e.g. Adler, 1997: 71; Jamieson et al., 2017: 206; Meltzer and Hoover, 2014: 224; Webb, 2012: 195).

We will briefly define these terms and highlight the main impact (in terms of incivility) they have upon the discourse. We will then move on to present our in-depth analysis. We will present the examples in the order in which they appear in the data.

We use the label *intolerant response* to refer to the practice whereby interlocutors display a lack of interest or close down the other's discursive contribution; we use the label *ideological entrenchment* to refer to the practice of attending to an interlocutor's discursive contribution with rigid preconceived notions. Both infringe upon an individual's right to speak and be heard and undermine the ability of interlocutors to realise a communicative situation in which agreement or at least understood disagreement can be achieved. According to Hart (2016), *low oppositional literacy* refers to the inability to engage with and fairly represent the viewpoints of an opponent. As well as undermining the ability to understand how an interlocutor arrived at his or her viewpoint, low oppositional literacy can also create a dynamic whereby interlocutors deliver de facto parallel monologues (i.e. talk at each other and do not engage in a reciprocal, open exchange of ideas). We use the label *the need to win* to refer to an interactional dynamic in which gaining the argumentative upper hand is treated as the goal of the interaction. As interlocutors attempt to gain a superior position (e.g. with the use of sophistry or prevarication), there is a danger that genuine understanding will be sacrificed. Finally, we use the label *change of opinion condemnation* to refer to the practice whereby one interloctur negatively comments on a perceived change of opinion. Such an attitude can encourage entrenchment of arguments and undermine an individual's willingness to be wrong. Furthermore, constraining discursive movement can diminish the potential for discursive exploration, learning from others, and the betterment of ideas.

Although we focus on the use of metadiscourse, we should note that non-metadiscursive incivility is present in the interview. Examples include CN's non-metadiscursive refusal of JP's attempt at exemplification (See Example 1, line 9); and, acts of negative labelling as when CN compares JP to the 'alt-right' (not reported here) or when JP non-metadiscursively refers to CN's discourse as 'silly' (not reported here).

5.1. Intolerant response

The following example highlights the role of metadiscourse in the realisation of an intolerant response, i.e. the display of antipathy towards the presentation of arguments and associated evidence put forward by others. The excerpt begins as JP answers a question from CN as to why women should tolerate the complex variables that produce the gender wage gap.

Example 1

1	JP:	I'm not saying that they <u>should</u> put up with it I'm saying
2		that the <u>claim</u> that the <u>wage</u> gap between men and women
3		is <u>only</u> due to sex is <u>wrong</u> (.) and it <u>is</u> wrong (.)
4		there's no doubt about that (.) the multivariate analyses
5		have been done so **I can give** [**you an example example**]
6	CN:	[//well **you** (x2) **keep on**
7		**talking about multivariate analysis**]
8	JP:	//**Wait a second let me** [**give an example**]
9	CN:	[//no (x5)]
10	CN:	**<u>I'm</u> saying** that a 9% pay gap [exists] that's a gap=
11	JP:	[yeah (x2)]
12	CN:	=between men and women (.) **I'm not saying** <u>why</u> it exists
13		but [it exists now if you're a woman=]
14	JP:	[//but **you <u>have</u> to say** why it exists]
15	CN:	=that seems pretty unfair
16	JP:	**You <u>have</u> to say** why it exists
17	CN:	But **do you agree** that its unfair [if you're a woman=]
18	JP:	[//<u>not</u> necessarily]
19	CN:	=and on average you're getting paid 9% less than a man
20		that's not fair↑ is it?
21	JP:	(.) It depends on why it's happening↑ (.) **I can give you an**
22		**example** (.) okay (.) there's a personality trait known as

23		agreeableness (.) agreeable people are compassionate and polite
24		(.) and agreeable people get paid less than <disa> less agreeable
25		people for the same job (1) women are more agreeable than men
26	CN:	**again a <u>vast</u> generalisation** [some women are not more agreeable than=]
27	JP:	[//**it's not a generalisation**]
28	CN:	=men

In the excerpt above, JP and CN present different conceptions of injustice (Rawls, 1971). It can be argued that CN espouses an end state approach in which disparity is assumed as injustice; JP espouses a procedural approach which promotes enquiry into the underlying causes. Whilst the excerpt is loaded with metadiscourse; we are most concerned with how JP and CN use it as a resource to preference their foci at the expense of each other's preferred line of enquiry.

In a series of overlapping turns, across lines 5-18 metadiscourse is used by both interlocutors to determine the 'space in which the other's perspective can be accepted' (Caffi, 1998: 629). In line 5, JP begins to metadiscursively supply an example in support of his position, i.e. that the gender pay gap is not uni-dimensional. In lines 6-7, CN over-talks JP with the use of a dialogically targeted phoric construction (i.e. 'you keep on talking about multivariate analysis'). Although CN's metadiscursive phoric construction is cut off by JP (line 8), the co-text (lines 10-15) suggest that it is articulated as an attempt to highlight something problematic in JP's discourse. The meaning of the phrasal verb 'keep on' is interesting in this respect. The Collins English Dictionary lists the connotative meaning as talking about something boring or irrelevant. This would fit with CN's wider dismissal of the procedural/casual enquiry put forward by JP.

In line 8, JP uses two metadiscursive directives, i.e. the forceful command (i.e. 'wait a second' which explicitly refers to the current interaction so is therefore regarded as metadiscourse) and the permission seeking request (i.e. 'let me give an example'). We regard the latter as oriented towards

negotiating the conversational space to provide an example (i.e. interactively targeted metadiscourse). CN denies the request with the rapid repetition of 'no' (line 9) and in lines 10-12, uses two monologically targeted devices in a preface to her subsequent question (line 17). The act of clarifying (Ädel, 2006: 60) in lines 12-13 (i.e. 'I'm not saying why it exists, but it exists') explicitly preferences CN's line of enquiry. Clayman and Heritage (2002) note that interviewees rarely respond to prefacing statements on the understanding that a subsequent question will follow. This 'subtle form of collaboration' (2002: 105) breaks down between CN and JP. Indeed, in lines 14 and 16, JP responds to CN's prefacing statements with a deontic assertion of the need to discuss the underlying causes, thus forcing his preferred line of enquiry. We take these instances of metadiscourse as both oriented towards the elicitation of a specific response and as assertions of 'epistemic authority' (van Dijk, 2014: 230) over the conversational space (i.e. interactively targeted metadiscourse).

In line 17, CN uses interactively targeted metadiscourse (i.e. 'But, do you agree') to elicit a specific response from JP on the issue of perception and disparity. Whilst the use of the prefatory 'But' encodes recognition of JP's previous metadiscursive assertions, CN continues her preferred line of enquiry. JP does not coalesce in the view put forward by CN (line 18) and persists in putting forward a procedural understanding of the issue. In lines 21-22, JP successfully and explicitly provides a supporting example. CN responds with a dialogically targeted metalingual comment (Ädel, 2010: 84) (i.e. 'Again a vast generalisation'). We regard the labelling noun, i.e. 'generalisation', as sufficiently explicit of JP's discourse (as discourse) and take the metalingual comment as negatively characterising JP's discourse (i.e. it is an unfounded 'generalisation'). The phoric marker 'Again' refers to an earlier instance in the conversation (not reported here) where CN accuses JP of making generalisations about relationships and further compounds the negative characterisation of JP's discourse (metadiscursively rejected by JP in line 27). As detailed in the example above, the use of

interactively and dialogically targeted metadiscourse, i.e. to constrain discursive space and thus reduce an interlocutor's 'freedom of movement' (Mauranen 2001: 175), is a consistent pattern which emerges throughout our data. Such a use of metadiscourse has obvious implications for the free, open exchange of ideas and thus carries great potential to manifest incivility in discourse.

5.2. Oppositional literacy

According to Hart (2018: 66), oppositional literacy refers to the ability of interlocutors to fairly engage with and represent the arguments of opponents. Before entering into a discussion, oppositional literacy can be increased through background research into the argumentative positions of an interlocutor. Whilst in discussion, oppositional literacy can be increased through episodically summarising the arguments of an interlocutor, and asking questions to further understand the points presented. The excerpt below begins with CN quoting a passage from JP's book concerning equal pay.

Example 2

1	CN:	**Let me put something else to you** from the book (.) you
2		say the introduction of the equal pay for equal work
3		argument immediately complicates even salary comparison
4		beyond [practicality] for one simple reason who decides=
5	JP:	[Um hmm]
6	CN:	=what work is equal (.) it's not possible (.) so the **simple**
7		**question is** (.) do you <u>believe</u> in equal pay?
8	JP:	(2) well I made the argument <u>there</u> it's like it depends on who
9		[defines it]
10	CN:	[//So you don't] believe in equal pay
11	JP:	(laughs) No↑ **I'm not saying** that at <u>all</u>↑

In line 1, CN uses a permission seeking, interactively targeted metadiscursive directive (i.e. 'let me put something else to you') to introduce a new line of enquiry. Quoting published material of her interlocutor suggests that CN (or at least her production team) has engaged in a degree of

oppositional literacy. However, in lines 6-7, the nuanced point in the quoted material is subject to a question that is metadiscursively contextualised (Ädel, 2010: 87) in narrow terms thus reducing JP's potential to influence the discourse. While we recognise that the communicative situation in which the interview occurs (i.e. a 30-minute long non-live interview intended to produce a 4-6 minute segment for a national news programme) is favourable to newsworthy soundbites and short answers (Ekström and Fitzgerald, 2013: 86), constraining the 'agenda for response' (Huls and Varwijk, 2011: 53) negatively impacts the ability of debate participants to express nuance and complexity: a 'simple question' implies a simple answer is all that is required. We should note that the use of the non-metadiscursive, internal connector 'so' with the classifier 'simple' can also be construed as positioning CN's question as a reasonable line of enquiry emerging out of the previous stretch of discourse (i.e. JP's published material).

In line 10, CN provides an interpretive summary of JP's previous answer. Again, she uses an internal connector 'so' to preface her utterance suggesting that it is based on an inference from JP's previous statement, and in utilising the language of consequence (Hyland: 2005: 50) signals a kind of discursive calculus (i.e. you said Y, therefore, X, for a similar case see Example 3, line 1 below). The utterance is interesting in terms of its status as metadiscourse. We do not treat the utterance in line 10 as metadiscursive because it refers to mental processes which, as stated earlier, do not explicitly index the ongoing discourse as language or interaction. Nevertheless, although it lacks the requisite metalingual or metainteractional key, we can still treat it as functioning as a non-metadiscursive, hypothesis about the interlocutor (Ädel, 2006: 61), i.e. JP. Ädel (2006: 77) highlights the fact that such acts are very much concerned with the listener's judgments about the speaker's identity. In other words, in engaging in a speculative act of 'perspective taking' (Kádár and Haugh, 2013: 194) about JP's underlying belief, CN offers up a negative identity position in which JP is arguably

positioned as holding uncaring or mercenary attitudes. CN's '(subjectively understood) gist' (van Dijk, 2009: 147) is rejected by JP (note his metadiscursive monologically targeted device in line 11).

5.3. Ideological entrenchment

In civil discourse, an individual attempts to hold his or her worldview in temporary abeyance in order 'to see things from a different point of view' (Bridges, 1994: 25). Unlike an intolerant response in which interlocutors do not attend, or minimally attend, to each other's discourse, ideological entrenchment comprises listening through preconceived notions. The excerpt below demonstrates the influence ideological entrenchment (here CN's belief in patriarchy, but elsewhere in the interview JP's belief in objective science) can have upon the ability to see things from each other's perspective. Metadiscourse is essentially used to force JP's discourse through a certain interpretive lens. Example 3 follows on directly from Example 2.

Example 3

1	CN:	because **a lot of people listening to you will just** (.) **say**
2		**I mean** [are we just going back to the dark ages here]
3	JP:	[//that's cause **they're actually not listening**
4		**you're just projecting** what they think]
5	CN:	//**I'm listening very carefully and I'm hearing you**
6		**basically saying** women just need to accept they're
7		never gonna make it on equal terms equal outcomes is
8		**how you** [**defined it**=]
9	JP:	[//no **I didn't say that I said** equal]
10	CN:	//if I was **a young woman watching** that **I would go** well I
11		might as well just go and play [with my cindy dolls=]
12	JP:	[//**I didn't say** that]
13	CN:	=and give up trying at school because I'm not gonna get↑
14		the top job I want (.) **because there's someone sitting**
15		**there saying** it's not possible or desirable and it's
16		[gonna make you miserable]
17	JP:	[//**I said** equal outcomes] aren't desirable that's
18		**what I said** [it's a bad social goal] **I didn't say**=
19	CN:	[//yeah it's not desirable]
20	JP:	=that women shouldn't be striving for the top or
21		anything like that cause I don't believe that for a

22 second (.)
23 CN: Striving for the top but you're going to put all those
24 hurdles in their way as has been in their way for
25 [centuries and that's fine↑ **you're saying** that's fine=]
26 JP: [(laughs) no (x5)]
28 CN: =the patriarchal system is just fine

Despite metalingual protestations and clarifications by JP throughout, CN interprets JP's discourse as leading to social regression, and as endorsing fatalistic inequality and patriarchy. Indeed, the two seemingly fail to reach a point of stasis, i.e. the point at which interlocutors understand where they agree and disagree on a given issue (Adler, 1997: 102). Across the excerpt, we are particularly interested in the role of metadiscourse to invoke and animate the viewing audience; as well as the way it is used in the negotiation of modal responsibility.

Across lines 1-16, CN engages in the well documented journalistic strategy of 'third party attributions' (Bull, 2019: 8) and presents herself as aligning with the supposed concerns of the public (Clayman, 2002). Putting words into the mouths of the audience furnishes CN's concerns with greater gravitas and negatively characterises JP's discourse. She metadiscursively invokes the future viewing audience in two capacities: as a sub-group (i.e. 'a lot of people listening to you'), and as an individual discursive figure 'a young woman watching'. Ädel (2010) highlights the fact that a metadiscursive audience can be real or imagined as long as the reference is to the 'audience qua audience' (2010:75). In both cases, the issue of 'voice mashing' (Mey, 1999: 211), i.e. what is to be attributed to the speaker (i.e. CN) versus the animated figures is of interest. The use of metadiscursive pronouns across lines 2 to 5 are revealing in terms of pointing to CN as the voice of the invoked audience.

In lines 1-2, CN negatively characterises JP's discourse by raising the prospect of social regression. In line 2, CN interjects the reported speech of the invoked group of 'people listening' with a phrasal clause involving a personal pronoun, i.e. 'I mean'. Interestingly, the phrasal clause occurs after the lineation verb 'say'. Whilst we accept that it is perfectly possible to use first-person pronouns in reported speech, we see the phrasal clause as lending itself to two interesting interpretations. As often occurs in spoken language, the phrasal clause could, of course, constitute a filler device (Mauranen, 2012: 187). A second interpretation could construe the presence of the phrasal clause 'I mean' after the lineation verb as marking a subjectively imagined event, here the doomsday scenario of 'going back to the dark ages', as the intentional object of her higher-level cognition (van Dijk, 2014: 41). In either case, a subjective, reflexive marker bursts through the veil of a stretch of discourse which is supposedly concerned with the (objective) reporting of the concerns of others. JP also refers to CN's subjectivity. In line 3, he uses the exclusive second person pronoun 'you' to explicitly index CN as a current discourse participant (i.e.' you're just projecting what they think'). We take 'just' to carry a depreciatory meaning of 'only'. We take the verb 'projecting' as connoting communication and therefore as borderline metadiscursive. The semantic implications of the verb 'project' are interesting. According to the Collins English Dictionary, 'projecting' involves attribution of one's thoughts and feelings onto another. In short, JP identifies CN as the driving force behind the discursive concerns of the figurative group.

In response, CN uses dialogically targeted metadiscourse, which explicitly details her act of discourse monitoring. In doing so, she emphatically endorses her interpretation of JP's discourse (line 5). The use of the verbal reporting clause (i.e. '…you basically saying', line 6) makes JP modally responsible for the content of the summary (Muntigl, 2007), i.e. a statement of fatalistic inequality amongst men and women. Again, CN's summary is rejected by JP (see lines 9 and 12). Unlike the earlier figurative

collection, little distance is put between CN and the second figure in her discourse, i.e. the young woman. Indeed, CN and the figure are the same on an imagined existential plane ('If I was a…' lines 9-10). The speech of the discourse figure is explicitly reported in the first person. It should be noted that we regard the use of the verb 'go' (line 10) as colloquial verba dicendi. In lines 14-15 CN's metalingual phoric construction negatively characterises JP's discourse by tying the latter to the hopelessness of the figurative young woman (i.e. 'because there's someone sitting there saying…'). Across lines 17-22 Jordan uses metadiscourse to clarify his position. Interestingly, JP's stated position seems consistent with 'equity feminism' (Pinker, 2000: 341) which suggests that the two parties may share some degree of common ground with regards to the plight of women. This does not seem to register with CN who uses a dialogically targeted metadiscursive, verbal reporting clause (i.e. 'you're saying', line 25) to position JP as approving of patriarchy.

5.4. The need to win

In the following example, metadiscourse is used to evince an attitude which could be construed as indexical of 'ritual combat' (Ong, 1981: 59), i.e. interaction in which interlocutors pursue the need to win. Whilst contestive debate has the ability to highlight weak arguments, there is potential for civility to be undermined as the need to gain a superior position takes primacy over the pursuit of genuine understanding. Examples 4 and 5 occur in a stretch of discourse in which the interlocutors discuss a controversy in which JP was embroiled concerning freedom of speech and the right of trans-people to assert the use of preferred pronouns.

Example 4

1	JP:	you get my point (x2) it's like you're doing what you <u>should</u> do which is
2		digging a bit to see what the hell is going on↑ and that is what
3		[you should do=]
4	CN:	[//so do you]
5	JP:	=you're exercising your freedom of speech to certainly risk offending **me**
6		and that's <u>fine</u>↑ I think more power to <u>you</u>↑ as far as I'm concerned
7	CN:	**except you haven't sat there** and (2) <I'm just trying>, I'm just trying to
8		work that out <**I mean**> (3)
9	JP:	**Ha** (.) **gotcha**
10	CN:	**you <u>have</u> got me** (x2) I'm trying to [work that through in my] head
11	JP:	[//it's about time]
12	CN:	yeah (x2) [it **took a while** (x2)] **took a while**
13	JP:	[//it did (x2)]
14	CN:	(.) you have <voluntary> you have voluntarily come into this studio and
15		agreed to be questioned

Across the excerpt, the participants metadiscursively reflect upon the ongoing interaction. We are particularly interested in the underlying attitude evident in lines 7-12. In lines 1-6, JP refers to the current interaction as an illustrative example of how the exercise of free speech often involves offence. In lines 7-8, CN twice falls into silence. In line 9, JP responds with an exclamation of victory ('Ha gotcha'), i.e. the discursive equivalent of 'checkmate'. In a rare moment of agreement, CN admits to being 'got'. Both utterances index the current interaction (as interaction) and are therefore regarded as metadiscourse. The two interlocutors then engage in an episode of posturing, initiated by JP (in line 11) and continued by CN (line 12), which seemingly mitigate any potential face damage ('it took a while' and 'it did'). Again, we would argue that the short exchange across lines 7-12 is indexical of contestive rhetoric in which the defeat of the opponent becomes the primary goal or 'higher order intention' (Kádár and Haugh, 2013: 220) of the interaction.

5.5. Change of opinion condemnation

Although civil discourse places greater emphasis on the achievement of understanding rather than persuasion (Gergen, 2001: 71), discourse which is conducted under the aegis of civility ensures

participants are granted the opportunity to a change of opinion (Webb, 2012: 195). Indeed, the possibility of a meeting of minds is severely reduced in a discourse environment where a change of opinion is treated as contemptible.

Example 5 follows on from Example 4.

Example 5

1	CN:	a trans-person in your class has come to your class and
2		said they want to be [called she]
3	JP:	[//that's never happened] and I would
4		call them she]
5	CN:	So you <u>would</u> (.) so **you've kind of changed your tune** [on that]
6	JP:	[//no (x2)]

In the short excerpt above, we are most interested in CN's use of the dialogically targeted metadiscursive phoric construction (i.e. 'so you've kind of changed your tune on that'). We take the second person pronoun as referring to JP in his capacity as a participant in the current interaction and the noun 'tune' as a metaphorical metadiscursive reference to the substantive content of his current discourse. The connotative meaning of the idiomatic expression 'changing your tune' is interesting. The Collins English Dictionary details how the phrase connotes criticism for the act of changing opinion, i.e. CN condemns JP for a perceived change of opinion. In relation to the current enquiry, the short dialogically targeted metadiscursive utterance is interesting in two respects. Firstly, we can once again observe the use of a dialogically targeted device to constrain the discursive space within which an interlocutor can potentially respond. Secondly, discourse conducted under such a condition prohibits agreement as no party can change his or her position and concede to the other.

6. Conclusion

The present article has explored the use of metadiscourse in the realisation of incivility in TV news discourse by focusing on the Cathy Newman and Jordan Peterson interview.

Five main aspects of incivility were presented: *intolerant response*; *low oppositional literacy*; *ideological entrenchment*; *the need to win*; and, *change of opinion condemnation*. In our data, metadiscourse was shown as central to the realisation of such incivility. It functioned in several main ways including to preference the current speaker's foci over those of the interlocutor; to negatively characterise the interlocutor's discourse, and to express discourse norms which undermine the open exchange of ideas. The idea that metadiscursive targets exist on a cline in which increasing space is given over to conversational participants other than the current speaker (Mauranen, 2001: 173) seemingly encodes a certain view of interaction, i.e. cooperative, civil interaction. Indeed, our research has shown that when incivility is in operation, interactive and dialogic metadiscourse can be used to inhibit space and thus reduce the potential discursive influence of an interlocutor.

A limitation of this paper is the fact that it did not consider paralinguistic features of speech. This was a conscious choice as the video data contains blind spots in which it was not possible to see both interlocutors' non-verbal expressions. However, from the visible data, we do not see incongruity between the verbal and non-verbal elements of communication. Future research could further investigate the non-verbal realisation of incivility (e.g. facial expressions, gestures, prosodic features).

As van Dijk notes, media content is often 'embedded by various kinds of citation in other TV programs, or by people in everyday conversation, in increasingly complex forms of interdiscursivity' (2009: 132). A future extension of the present study could involve an examination of the interdiscursive treatment of the interview (e.g. YouTube comments, press articles, or podcast features). Such a study could be illuminating in terms of reactions to the behaviour contained in the

interview by the media commentariat as well as members of the public (i.e. first-order perceptions of the audience).

At this juncture, we should take the opportunity to note the first-order perceptions of the actual participants. JP has stated that he felt attacked, had his work actively misrepresented and was misinterpreted in the actual interview[5]. This interpretation is highly suggestive that at least one party regarded the interaction in a way we would call incivil. Cathy has both claimed to have 'quite enjoyed it'[6] but also recognised that it wasn't her 'finest interview' (see Iqbal, 2018). Future research could investigate perceptions of incivility, amongst media professionals, e.g. to what extent is incivility the goal of TV news? To what extent is such behaviour regarded as problematic (if at all)?

In closing, we will highlight some concerns and issues in need of attention by those wishing to 'facilitate the much-discussed normative goal of reducing incivility' (Kenski et al., 2017: 2).

In an era of alternative facts, conversational deadlock arising from conflicting evidence is a very real possibility: like the deadlock that arose in Example 1 from CN's disparity fact versus JP's multivariate analysis results. In such cases, Adler (1997: 129) recommends shifting the conversation to a discussion of the consequences that flow from believing each set of facts. This supposedly precipitates a shift in focus from *what* participants believe to *why* they believe what they do (i.e. what importance does the position hold for them). It has been claimed that greater agreement can often

[5] 'Jordan Peterson on the Channel 4 Interview' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XyVuxTIxHzY

[6] 'Cathy Newman at the Edinburgh International Book Festival' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IaEVqABCT7I

be found in the discussion of such higher-order principles (Webb, 2012: 207). Researchers could explore the feasibility of such remedies through the use of qualitative methods (e.g. moderated group discussions or interview triads) involving participants with differing views.

Lack of due diligence and conversational effort are causes of *low oppositional literacy* that can be easily remedied. A rational optimist may claim that even genuine misunderstanding is likely to be overcome with enough time dedicated to ongoing communication. The biggest barrier to overcoming the trend in which people 'are either less able or less willing to discuss others' perspectives' (Hart, 2018: 259) may be that of ideological entrenchment. Individuals may well struggle to suspend the belief aspect of ideologies that sustain their daily lives (Žižek, 2008: 45). However, greater objectivity can surely be called for from media professionals, the modelling of which may help viewers cultivate the ability to exercise temperance and open-mindedness. Furthermore, if tolerant listening is practised in a conversation, the chance to see things as others do will also be enhanced (Ladegaard, 2017: 279). More worrying is the possibility that opposition, protest, and struggle may well be embedded in the *being* aspect of ideology, i.e. the unconscious fantasies which structure action within social reality (Žižek, 2008: 30). In other words, there is a worrying possibility that embedded in certain worldviews is a modus operandi of conflict and non-compromise.

We were particularly struck by the potential of the interrelated practices examined in Examples 4 and 5 to negatively impact discourse. When a change of opinion is treated as a thing of scorn or derision, individuals may close their minds to alternative or better ideas. Likewise, discourse which is conducted under the combative conditions in which the goal of the interaction is victory over an interlocutor may refuse to concede a weak position. Both the need to win and the denial of the right

to a change of opinion ultimately undermine the willingness of an individual to be wrong. Further research could be conducted into attitudes towards, and discourse about, being wrong.

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Appendix: Symbols used in the transcription

Transcription Conventions

Underlined = pronounced with stress/emphasis/loudness

(.) = short pause, less than 0.5 second

(2) = pause in seconds

// = interruption

[I didn't say that] = overlapping speech

‘=’ = shows continuous speech where lack of space prevents the presentation of such data on a single line due to overlapping speech of another speaker

? = question/rising intonation

<disa> less agreeable = self-correction

↑ = rising intonation

(x3) = repeated three times