

Presupposition and ‘taking-for-granted’ in mass communicated political argument

An illustration from British, Flemish and Swedish
political colloquy

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The aim of this paper is to examine to what extent taken-for-grantedness is used as a strategy in political media language as a genre across cultures, and whether it is characterised by similar choices at the interpersonal level. The data are taken from British, Flemish and Swedish radio and television interviews and debates.

Starting from a close analysis of the use of the marker of expectation *of course* and its equivalents, the study shows that this adverb is part of a much wider range of frequently used explicit and implicit markers of presupposed common knowledge. Second, we show that various markers of presupposition are typically used in the three cultures examined for the same purposes. This indicates that the genre of political media debate is to a large extent conventionalised at the interpersonal level and that the conventionalisation operates in similar ways in the three cultures.

Introduction

Recent linguistic research on media political language, whether the concern is with the written or the spoken media, can roughly be divided into three groups of studies. In one type of studies the focus is on ways in which language reflects explicit or implicit ideologies. Typically these studies have aimed at laying bare the means by which speakers/writers convey political opinions regarding crucial societal issues such as class, gender or race relations. The linguistic framework within which most of these studies are carried out is critical discourse analysis in

the broadest sense. The ultimate goal of this type of research is to raise awareness of language as an instrument of power and thereby to attempt to have an impact on power relations, to contribute to lifting inequality. These studies hence have a clear ideological starting-point and purpose. Examples are work by and inspired by leading linguists such as van Dijk (1998a, 1998b), Fairclough (1995, 2001), Wodak et al. (2000), Blommaert and Bulcaen (1997), and many articles in the journal *Discourse & Society*.

The second group of studies on media political language focus on the mechanisms of interaction and ways in which participants engage in talk. These studies are not so much interested in the ideologies of the speakers as in the way media interaction develops in different genres such as radio or television interviews and debates. The linguistic framework within which these studies are to be situated is typically conversation analysis in some variant. Examples of such work are Greatbatch (1992) and Clayman and Heritage (2002).

The third group comprises studies which take a functional approach to discourse in a broad sense and concentrate on the linguistic means, lexical and grammatical, of persuasion. The focus is on participants' rhetorical strategies by means of which they attempt to get their points across and reach their goals as political speakers. This type of research shares with the first group of studies its interest in the power of linguistic choices and with the second group its interest in the way speakers deal with the demands made by the various genres in which they are involved – for example how is it that speaker answer face-threatening questions, deny accusations or strengthen their own arguments. This type of research tends to go into detailed analyses of linguistic choices as rhetorical devices employed by political speakers to reach certain goals which are crucial in the presentation of themselves in the media. Examples are Harris's study (1991) on answering questions, Simon-Vandenberg (1996, 1997) on image building, Lauerbach (2004) on political interviews as a hybrid genre.

The present article is to be situated within the third group. Its aim is to study strategic uses of lexicogrammatical means in an attempt to persuade. More specifically the focus is on the use of a set of resources which we see as construing 'taken-for-grantedness' – certain formulations by which propositions are treated as generally known or agreed upon, and hence as uncontentious and not at stake argumentatively. Our specific focus will be upon two modes of taken-for-grantedness – that associated with what the literature terms presupposition (see e.g. Bertuccelli Papi 1997; Caffi 1998; Lambrecht 1994) and that associated with meta-discursive locutions such as *of course* and its Dutch and Swedish equivalents *natuurlijk* and *ju* respectively. The research elaborates on previous work on the use of modality and evidentiality in British political discourse (especially Simon-Van-

denbergen 1992) and on cross-linguistic research in this area (especially Simon-Vandenberg and Aijmer 2005; Lewis 2004). Our goal is threefold.

The first aim is to look at taken-for-grantedness as a persuasive strategy in political TV debates. This paper builds on Sbisà (1999) and takes the argumentation further in the direction of finding an answer to the question why speakers find it useful to treat certain propositions as generally known or agreed upon or otherwise not at issue. It is often assumed that such formulations are used with the aim of making propositions unarguable, or at least with the aim of making them less accessible to argumentation. For instance, Caffi (1998) writes:

Obviously, it is more difficult to question something that is communicated only implicitly rather than something which is communicated openly, if only because what is implicit must be recognized before being attacked. This is proved by the highly polemical and aggressive value underlying any attack to presuppositions; such an attack is seriously face-threatening. (1998: 753)

However, in the type of media data examined in this paper the taken-for-granted material does, at least with some regularity, get challenged. This finding forces us to look beyond some simple notion of unarguability in seeking to identify the rhetorical purposes which may be served by these formulations in the mass communicated political arguments which constitute our current data set.

The second aim of this paper is of a more general linguistic nature. Starting from the system of engagement as developed by Martin (1997, 2000) and elaborated by White (1998, 2000, 2002, 2003) we want to argue that presupposition deserves a place in that framework as one of the options. While a consideration of presupposition is absent in the model presented in White (2003), both White (2006) and Martin and White (2005) do discuss what is termed 'taken-for-grantedness' and in this context consider the potential intersubjective and rhetorical effects associated with the use of presupposing formulations. The account in this paper is generally supportive of the approach taken by White and by Martin and White but seeks to consider the rhetorical function of taken-for-grantedness in greater depth, and in the context of cross-linguistic comparisons

Thirdly, the data are taken from political debates in three closely related cultural contexts, the British, Flemish and Swedish ones. We believe that by studying closely linguistic choices in similar data in different languages and cultures the resources which are exploited surface more visibly. Furthermore, if it appears that the choices are similar we can hypothesise that political discourse in these cultures relies on the same tactics. However, in order to reach this third goal of studying strategies from an intercultural point of view much more research is called for, on a larger amount of data from more widely different cultures. We therefore see this third goal as mainly exploratory in nature.

First we briefly introduce the framework we are using and its relevance for the data under consideration (Section 1). Section 2 discusses the data. We then outline our view of the rhetorical effect of ‘taken-for-grantedness’ as it operates in connection with the discourse marker *of course* and its Flemish and Swedish equivalents (Section 3). The use of presupposing constructions across the British, Flemish and Swedish data is dealt with in Section 4. Section 5 gives the discussion of and conclusions from the findings.

The system of engagement (White 2003; Martin & White 2005)

Various authors working within a functional approach to language have argued for a view of modality which goes beyond the formal categories of modal auxiliaries and epistemic adverbs to include a wide range of lexical and grammatical expressions of speakers’ attitudes towards the truth value of their propositions (especially Stubbs 1986). In such encompassing definitions of modality various systems which are kept apart in more formal approaches are brought together in that they serve similar aims in positioning the speaker vis-à-vis their utterances. These systems form a heterogeneous group including evidentials, hedges, concession, negation and others. From a rhetorical perspective it makes indeed good sense to treat choices from these different systems as working together to create semantic prosodies such as confidence and authority (Simon-Vandenberg 1992, 1996, 1997). White (2003) and Martin and White (2005), elaborating the system of engagement as introduced by Martin (1997), accommodate these different types of expressions in an encompassing system of choices which all express the ways in which “the textual voice engages with alternative voices and positions” (White 2003: 261). White’s and Martin and White’s contribution to the research on the functionality of modal and evidential expressions has been to draw attention to the fact that a primary functionality of these resources is to enable the speaker/writer to expand or contract the dialogic space available to alternative positions. In developing this argument, they have demonstrated that commitment to the truth-value of the propositions is to be seen as one factor but not the only one and often not even the most important one.

Within the model (White 1998; White 2003; Martin & White 2005) the main choice is between monoglossic and heteroglossic utterances, the former being bare statements whereby propositions are declared absolutely. For example,

- (1) Two years on, the British government has betrayed the most fundamental responsibility that any government assumes – the duty to protect the rule of

law. It is a collusion in an international experiment in inhumanity, which is being repeated and expanded around the world.

[*The Guardian*, January 10, 2004, leader pages – 24]

Such utterances are seen as undialogic in that they ignore the backdrop of alternative viewpoints and other voices against which such utterances always operate, offering no recognition of these alternative points of view. In this they contrast with formulations which do recognize the communicative context as heteroglossic in that the speaker/writer is presented as responding to prior utterances, as positioning him- or herself with respect to other viewpoints, or as anticipating the responses of those to whom the utterance is addressed. This is achieved through modalisation, attribution and a range of additional metadiscursive qualifiers including negation, concession and the *of course* locutions which are our current concern. White claims that the contexts in which the barely asserted 'monoglossic' option is typically found are either those in which knowledge is established and therefore need not be argued for, or contexts in which the textual voice "constructs itself as being in solidarity with a readership which holds the same (...) views" (2003:264). In Martin and White (2005), the model is further developed to allow for a difference between bare assertions such as those just listed and those which involve presupposition, as the term has been defined in the literature. Presuppositions, of course, are those formulations in which the proposition survives even under negation. For example, the proposition that the Canadian government has betrayed its promises is presupposed in the following.

- (2) After nine years of **the government's betrayal of the promised progressive agenda**, Canadians have a gut feeling that their country is slipping away from them.

[Canadian Hansard, www.parl.gc.ca/37/2/parlbus/chambus/house/debates/002_2002-10-01/han002_1215-E.htm]

Martin and White contend that un-presupposing bare assertions of the type listed earlier present the proposition as still in play argumentatively in some way, while the presupposing formulation presents it as a 'given' which puts nothing at stake argumentatively. (See Martin & White 2005: Chapter 3.) It is precisely this latter rhetorical effect that we are interested in in this article and we shall come back to this monoglossic option in Section 3.

In contrast with the monoglossic utterance, the heteroglossic one is dialogic in the sense that, as just indicated, it engages with alternative positions (White 2003:265). It can do so in two main ways, i.e. by expanding or contracting the space for other voices and alternative positions. The expansive options actively recognize alternative positions or allow for their possibility and hence lower the

interpersonal cost for any who might advance such a viewpoint. For example, in the following two extracts, *it's possible*, *would*, *I believe* and *will* are dialogically expansive in actively allowing for alternative dialogic possibilities.

- (3) **it's possible that** a severe shake-up **would** bring your husband to realize how much you really mean.

The sad aspect of all this is that by giving support to this invasion Blair will be destroying the UN and **I believe will** have betrayed the British people.

In contrast, the contractive options operate to challenge, head off, deny or exclude dialogic alternatives, even while in some way allowing for, or engaging with these alternatives. Thus negation is the archetypal dialogically contractive option in that, in denying some proposition, it necessarily invokes and hence allows for that contrary position, even while asserting that the denied proposition is unsustainable. The locution which is our current concern, *of course*, is included among these dialogically contractive options in that it (a) presents the speaker/writer as dialogically engaged with the putative addressee in anticipating that the proposition is something which will already be known or agreed upon, and (b) construes any contrary proposition as going against common sense or common knowledge. Under White's engagement framework, it is classified as an instance of 'concurrency' in that it presents the addressee as inevitably sharing this piece of information or this viewpoint with the speaker/writer.

It is our proposal in this paper that even while presupposition is 'monoglossic' in Martin and White's terms and locutions such as *of course* are 'heteroglossic', they nonetheless do share one important aspect of their rhetorical functionality. Both formulations, in their different ways, present the proposition as a 'given', as informational or evaluative content which the speaker/writer is presented as taking for granted. In this we are extending Martin and White's notion of taken-for-grantedness, which for them is limited to 'monoglossic' presupposition, to include the heteroglossic concurring option of *of course* (and related formulations.)

In Sections 3 and 4 we look at taken-for-grantedness as construed via formulations such as *of course* and at taken-for-grantedness as construed via presupposition respectively.

The data

The British data used for this study are taken from the programme *Question Time* (BBC1 8 January 2004) and from a corpus comprised of some fifty episodes of the BBC radio program, *Any Questions* (June 2003 – December 2004), the Flem-

ish data¹ are from the programmes *Ter zake Zaterdag* (Canvas, 7 February 2003) and *De Zevende Dag* (Canvas, 8 February 2003). The data cover 6 debates. The Swedish data are from a debate on nuclear energy broadcast on 21 March 1980.² These programmes share a number of features, including that the protagonists are politicians, that the topics are political issues, and hence that these are interactions which all fall under the heading of 'political discourse'. Further, in all cases the interaction is managed by an interviewer or moderator. Thirdly, in all cases these are broadcast programmes, whether on the radio or on television. For the purposes of this study the difference between radio and television programmes is less important. The crucial factor is that the discourse is political, the issues controversial, and the interaction takes place for an audience of viewers or listeners. On the other hand there are some differences between the genres which these data represent that may have an impact on the discursive choices, and thus potentially on the use of presupposition as a tactic. We shall briefly comment on these genres.

The English and the Flemish programmes belong to the genre which Greatbatch (1992) and, following him, Clayman and Heritage (2002) call 'the panel interview'. According to Greatbatch, the advantage of panel interviews over one-to-one interviews is that the former solve the journalist's problem of having to reconcile combative questioning with the preservation of neutrality. By asking questions of two or more interviewees, typically representing different parties and viewpoints, the interviewer can provoke lively debate while maintaining neutrality. The liveliness results from disagreement among the interviewees. The disagreement can be voiced at different places in the turn-taking and can be addressed to the interviewer or to another interviewee. Greatbatch (1992) points out that the strength of disagreement in this genre increases with the abandonment of the expected question-answer format and with the identity of the addressee. The extracts given in the discussion will show that both the English and the Flemish data display the features of this genre. Not infrequently do interviewees address

1. The word *Flemish* is used here to indicate that the programmes were broadcast in Flanders (i.e. on Flemish television) and that they were debates between Flemish politicians. When reference is to the linguistic features we prefer to use the term *Dutch*, a variant of which is spoken in Flanders.

2. The Flemish programmes are weekly debates in which a number of politicians take place and in which various topics are discussed. This explains why the examples from the Flemish data are 'heterogeneous' as far as speakers and topics are concerned. In contrast, all Swedish examples are from one debate, on the topic of nuclear energy. The reason why it is used for illustration, even though it is quite old (1980) is that it was a heated as well as much discussed debate at the time. We do not think that the time gap is relevant to the points we want to illustrate.

each other and in some cases they even deviate from the topic to become personal in an escalation of heated and unmitigated disagreement (see Clayman & Heritage 2002: 313ff. on the escalation from disagreement to confrontation).

The Swedish data are well described in Hirsch (1989). The genre is a formal television debate in which the turn-taking can be characterized as “mechanistic or almost completely predetermined” (1989: 118). The debate in question took place in the last days before the referendum on nuclear energy in Sweden held on 23 March 1980. In this debate, the representatives of the three lines met. The three lines were represented by four speakers, and a well-known news broadcaster acted as moderator or “master of ceremonies”. The primary goal of the activity was to influence the voting behaviour of the home audience. From the interaction point-of-view it is important to mention that the turns were very strictly timed, that claims made by one speaker are answered by another speaker only indirectly, and hence that there is no overlapping talk, no interruptions, no abandonment of “institutionalised footing” (Greatbatch 1992: 287), no escalation of disagreement towards confrontation.

The passages given in the following sections as illustrations follow normal orthographic and punctuation conventions for readability’s sake. We have opted against a detailed CA transcript for the sake of uniformity: while the Flemish data were recorded and transcribed by us, the Swedish data have been transcribed at the Department of Linguistics, Göteborg University and this transcription has been used here (although some conventions have been changed for the sake of consistency with the other data). The *Question Time* data were transcribed by us, while the data from *Any Questions* were collected from the BBC website at www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/anyquestions.shtml

***Of course* and its equivalents in the Flemish and Swedish data**

It has appeared from previous research that the adverb *of course* is extremely frequent in British political discourse. Both Simon-Vandenberg (1992) and Lewis (2004) demonstrate that it fulfils some very useful rhetorical functions in this type of context. It is over-archingly a mechanism by which the speaker/writer announces that the current proposition is so generally known or so generally agreed upon as to be self evident. It is thus a dialogistically anticipatory gesture in that either a state of knowledge or a value position is projected onto the audience. In English, *of course* shares this functionality of announcing self-evidence with a few other locutions, for example, *naturally*, *it goes without saying*, *needless to say*, *as you know* and *obviously*. For the purposes of this paper we have chosen to confine ourselves to *of course* (and its Dutch and Swedish counterparts) because it is over-

whelmingly the most frequently used of these locutions in our data. For example, in our database of transcripts of the *Any Questions* programmes, *of course* occurs in all 55 transcripts at an average of 7 instances per transcript (373 instances in 55 transcripts) while *obviously* occurs 137 times in 48 transcripts and *naturally* only 7 times in 7 transcripts (and only half of those instances construe 'concurrency'). In the Dutch and Swedish data we have looked at *natuurlijk* and *ju* respectively because (a) they too are announcements of self-evidence and (b) as announcers of self-evidence they are the closest to *of course*, and (c) because, like *of course*, they are the most frequently occurring announcers of self-evidence. In the Dutch data *natuurlijk* occurs 24 times in 6 transcripts, i.e. with an average of 4 per transcript. In the Swedish data *ju* occurs 169 times in the 90-minute debate, while *naturligtvis* occurred only twice and the synonymous *förstås* and *givetvis* were not found at all. In a study of the translation equivalents of *of course*, Simon-Vandenberg and Aijmer (2003–4) have found that the word *natuurlijk* was the prototypical equivalent of *of course* in all its functions. In Swedish, it is striking that the most frequent translations of *of course*, *naturligtvis* and *förstås* (as found in Simon-Vandenberg and Aijmer 2003–4) were (almost) absent from the debate, which indicates that they do not have the rhetorical function of *of course*. The frequency of *ju* is accounted for further in this section.

The rhetorical functions served by *of course* can be grouped together under two broad headings. In the first instance it can be seen as having a 'politeness' function. For example,

(4) DIMBLEBY (moderator)

Welcome to Petersfield in Hampshire which is decked out for Christmas and where we're in St. Peter's Church, which is renowned architecturally for its fine Norman tower and socially for its concerts, plays, exhibitions and civic events, as well as being **of course** a place of Christian worship.

In such instances the announcement of self-evidence acts as a form of dialogic apology cum explanation which can be accounted for by reference to the Gricean maxim of 'quantity' (Grice 1975). Since the informational content of the framed proposition is presented as being so widely known as to be self-evident, such formulations involve the speaker saying 'more' than is necessary. They are thus an apparent breach of 'quantity'. The speaker indicates an awareness of the apparent breach, while at the same time signalling that there is some other good reason why he/she needs to announce information which the addressee already knows – for example, in order to foreground a particular piece of information, in order to put together all the steps in a chronology, to ensure that the addressee knows where the speaker is coming from argumentatively, and so on. When used in this

way, then, *of course* can be seen as a signal of discursively necessary redundancy. In such cases, *of course* has *as you know* as its near synonym – i.e.

...we're in St. Peter's Church, which is renowned architecturally for its fine Norman tower and socially for its concerts, plays, exhibitions and civic events, as well as being, **as you know**, a place of Christian worship.

In the above instance, the proposition at issue involved entirely uncontentious and uncontested informational content – that St Peter's Church was a place of Christian worship. Such uses are rare in our data and are not of major interest in the context of this paper's central concern with political argument and conflict. However, we also find this politeness-oriented, apparent redundancy signalling function in connection with evaluative or speculative, and hence potentially more contentious, propositions. Consider by way of example the following two extracts,

- (5) a. If there is to be a war on terror, and perhaps there must be, because **of course** September 11th was an outrage
- b. I think the terrible thing is that you knew from the very first moment that it really didn't matter what anybody said or anybody did this unfortunate man was going to meet the most terrible death. A man obviously not involved in the day-to-day difficulties. And a man who had gone there to do a constructive job. So **of course** you think first of the family.

Here the signalled assumption is that all will share the speaker's view of the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York in 2001, and that all will respond in the same way to the news that Iraqi insurgents had executed the British man they had taken hostage during the US and British invasion of Iraq in 2004. Despite the material being evaluative rather than 'factual', the same apology cum explanation effect applies. Since these are value positions which are presented as self-evidently the case, their expression is, on the face of it, redundant. The speakers signal their awareness of this apparent breach of the maxim of quantity, alerting their listeners that there is, nevertheless, some good communicative reason why they are being told something they already know to be the case. Once again the *of course* functions as a signal of necessary redundancy. The ideological potential of such uses is obvious. Not only do they project particular value positions onto the putative addressee, but they also construe that value position as universally shared, thus positioning any who might dissent from the viewpoint as at odds with what is common knowledge or common sense. In such cases, *of course* has *needless to say/it goes without saying* as a near synonym. For example

If there is to be a war on terror and perhaps there must be because, **it goes without saying**, September 11th was an outrage

In the second instance, in contrast with this solidarity and politeness function, *of course* serves an oppositional function. Here the announcement of self-evidence acts as a dialogic 'put-down' by which the speaker's immediate interlocutor is presented as having dealt inappropriately with informational or evaluative material. They have either shown themselves to be ignorant of, to have overlooked, or to have omitted to mention a point of some significance, or, alternatively, they have made too much out of some point, for example presenting it as argumentatively significant or crucial when, from the current speaker's perspective, it is too well known to have any such rhetorical potential. Consider by way of example the following extract. The current speaker presents the previous speaker's arguments in favour of a ban on fox hunting (then being proposed by the British government) as flawed in that the previous speaker has failed to take into account evidence against the pro-ban position provided by recent experiences in Scotland.

(6) JENKIN

Well I myself would never break the law but you've got a problem where so many people feel that a law is unjust. We've had chief constables speaking publicly about the huge amount of resources that are going to be necessary to police a ban on foxhunting and **of course** they've already tried to ban foxhunting in Scotland and the legislation is a complete nonsense because they carry on foxhunting and they just shoot the foxes at the end instead of catching them by hounds.

The 'put-down' effect applies here as this counter evidence is presented as universally known. In failing to take it into consideration, the prior speaker is construed either as grossly ill-informed (he is ignorant of what is commonly known) or as dissembling (he seeks to misrepresent the case at hand by suppressing common knowledge). There is also a further positioning effect by which the wider audience is presented as standing with the current speaker, and against the former speaker, in sharing this view of the significance of the Scottish experience. In such cases, *of course* has *as everyone knows* as its near synonym. For example,

We've had chief constables speaking publicly about the huge amount of resources that are going to be necessary to police a ban on foxhunting and, **as everyone knows**, they've already tried to ban foxhunting in Scotland and the legislation is a complete nonsense because they carry on foxhunting and they just shoot the foxes at the end instead of catching them by hounds.

Alternatively, *of course* is employed as the current speaker presents some key point of the prior speaker's argument as self-evident and hence not relevant or at issue in the current debate. Consider by way of example the following, in which the speakers are Dimpleby (D) and Bryant (B):

- (7) D: What do you make then of the point that Peter Hitchens was making – making, to the effect that the marriage is fundamental to the belief of the church and fundamental to its identity, as he believes it also to be in a coherent civilised society?
- B: **Of course** marriage is absolutely essential to a coherent and a good society and for the vast majority of people it's the way they're going to live their lives but there are some people, like myself, who are gay or are lesbian who are never going to have the opportunity of marriage, who might want to live in long trusting loving relationships and I think the church should be helping people to do that rather than making it more difficult.

Here the current speaker (Bryant) doesn't simply concede the prior speaker's point about the social role of the family, but, via the use of *of course*, construes it as so evidently the case as to be irrelevant to the issues which are actually under consideration. With such uses of *of course*, it is usual for the locution to be followed by some adversative connective such as *but* or *yet*. Once again this is a use of *of course* by which the prior speaker is cast as either foolish (they have overestimated the significance of some argumentative point) or as rhetorically unscrupulous (they have sought to base an argument on a point they know to be irrelevant). And once again there is a positioning effect by which the current speaker is construed as aligned with the wider audience against the prior speaker. However, in this instance it is an assessment of the argumentative significance of some point which the current speaker supposedly shares with the wider audience. In such cases, *of course* has *it goes without saying/needless to say* as its near synonym. For example,

It goes without saying that marriage is absolutely essential to a coherent and a good society....

In summary, then, of this section, we can say that in English all uses of *of course* are announcements by the speaker that they regard the current proposition to be so widely known or so widely agreed upon to be 'self evident'. Within this broader functionality, instances of *of course* may vary according to whether they are serving a solidary or an oppositional function. In the first instance they act as dialogic apologies cum explanations, as the speaker signals a discursively necessary redundancy. In the second instance they act as put-downs by which some prior speaker is indirectly accused of understatement (having ignored or failed to mention some relevant point) or, alternatively of overstatement (having made too much out of some essentially irrelevant point).

In Flemish *natuurlijk* can serve the same functions as *of course* in English as they have been outlined above. That is to say, it is an announcer of self evi-

dence which can be either solidary ('apologetic' signal of necessary redundancy) or oppositional (a 'put-down'), and within the oppositional, it either implies 'understatement' (failure by the dialogic opponent to note some very widely known significant point) or 'overstatement' (making too much argumentatively out of some universally known point).³ Its use is illustrated in the following extract⁴. The politician is Rik Daems (RD).

- (8) I: Well, Mr Daems, what is Mr Van Rossem saying there? He says the executive board was perfectly aware of the plans of the Swiss and apparently the VLD party chairman Karel De Gucht knew about it, too. Do you know about that scenario?
- RD: Not at all. I think that the inquiry committee has revealed a number of things which are important. I think that we regrettably find that we have landed in a party political situation where some people have at particular moments stooped to personal attacks but if you distance yourself from that for a moment then I think that you find in the report a number of aspects ...
- I: Yes
- RD: ...mainly to well financially it was an enterprise in which a number of very bad decisions were taken, mainly under the impulse of the Swiss and what struck me especially is that now a few days ago it appeared from the Ernst & Young report in Switzerland that well in fact there had been premeditated deception
- I: Yes and according to Mr Van Rossem...
- RD: [overlap] which of course doesn't mean...
- I: ...according to Mr Van Rossem the executive board knew about this, some VLD people knew about it and nothing was done, he says.

3. Perhaps a note on the semantic relationship between the cognates Dutch *natuurlijk* and English *naturally* is in order here. We have checked the Dutch equivalents of *naturally* in a translation corpus (Triptic Namur Corpus: debates of the European Parliament and fiction, see Paulussen 1999 for a description). English *naturally* is translated by *natuurlijk* and by *van-zelfsprekend* ('it goes without saying'). It is striking that its frequency in English original data is much below its frequency in English translations from Dutch. As a translation, *naturally* is the equivalent of *natuurlijk* (most frequent), *uiteraard* and occasionally *het ligt voor de hand* ('it is evident'). So *natuurlijk* covers both of *course* and *naturally*.

4. For the sake of readability, all Dutch and Swedish extracts are given in English translation. The original extracts are added in the Appendix. In the transcripts abbreviations stand for the names of political speakers. The letter I stands for 'Interviewer'. In the Dutch transcripts [...] in turn final position indicates that the current speaker is interrupted and [...] in turn initial position indicates that the speaker continues his/her utterance after interruption or overlap. The symbol [.] indicates a slight pause.

- RD: [overlap] Well, Karel De Gucht **of course** hadn't become party chairman by 1997 because that was the time of the purchase of those air buses...
- I: Hmmm
- RD: ...so I think that things are being mixed up and that Mr Van Rossem...
- I: Is he mistaken and talking nonsense, Mr Van Rossem?
- RD: Well I think Mr Van Rossem **of course** now that he wants to become a politician is perhaps a little bit influenced by that but the essence of the story, Mr Belet, is that you have to look at the conclusions of the report because what is important for me is that we have uncovered to some extent where the causes are of such a large company going bankrupt: bad management, wrong financial decisions.

In the above extract Rik Daems (RD), federal Minister of State Enterprises is being interviewed on the bankruptcy of Sabena, the national airline company. The interviewer refers to Mr Van Rossem, one of the senior dismissed Sabena pilots who became the spokesman for the Sabena pilots at the time and accused the government of not having disclosed knowledge of the Swiss plans to stop their financial input. Van Rossem claimed the government had known about it for a long time and should have reacted. RD uses the word *natuurlijk* (the Flemish equivalent of *of course*) twice in this extract. The first time it functions to convey that 'as everybody knows' Karel De Gucht could not have been responsible as he wasn't party chairman at the time, in contrast with what Van Rossem claims. The implication is that the accusation of Van Rossem is therefore clearly unjustified and it is plain for everyone to see that. This usage of *natuurlijk*, then, clearly parallels the use of *of course* as an oppositional 'put-down' in English which we exemplified above. More specifically, it is the first type of 'put-down' where the dialogic opponent is construed as guilty of 'understatement'. They are represented as either ignorant of, or as deceitfully failing to mention, some significant point which is known to the rest of us. As was the case with the equivalent *of course* in English, the adverb builds up a solidary relationship between the current speaker and the audience against the dialogic opponent.

The second occurrence of *of course* (source item *natuurlijk*) occurs in association with the dialogically expansive items *I think* and *perhaps*. The reason is that the interviewee is making a strong statement here about the dishonest intentions of the Sabena pilot but has no evidence for making claims about intentions. Therefore the accusation is hedged even though the word *of course* at the same time closes down the dialogue. Here we see the Flemish equivalent of English *of course* where the functionality is to signal necessary redundancy. That Van Rossem, as a would-be politician, might be expected to distort or misrepresent is

construed as a proposition which is self evident and which, accordingly, wider audience members will already know and take for granted. The speaker 'apologises' for proposing a point of which the audience is supposedly only too well aware, signalling that, despite this apparent redundancy, he still needs to make this point for the purposes of advancing his own argument. The effect, obviously, is highly ideological as the view that would-be politicians are by nature deceitful is projected onto the audience and construed as universally held. The speaker, in his capacity as an established politician, thus implicitly distinguishes between 'real' and 'would-be' politicians.

The above examples show *natuurlijk* as 'put-down' (understatement) and as 'apology' (signalling of necessary redundancy). In the following passage *natuurlijk* functions as 'put-down' (overstatement).

- (9) VR: Yes, **of course** the threat of war is something something terrible and we must do everything to forestall that. It goes without saying. The people want that. Of course we want that, too uhm but we must also have a consistent policy, I think. Uhm . Mr Michel was in New York at the end of January. He was impressed by what he heard there. He asked for an understanding of the American viewpoint. There was even mention of a U-turn. He has . he denied that. Uhm he comes back to Europe and then we adopt a viewpoint that is in fact completely in contradiction with the impression which he gave in New York.

The speaker, MP for the opposition, disagrees with the government's refusal to give defensive support to Turkey, as has been asked by the US. The government spokesperson in this interview argues that Belgium must do everything to avoid a war against Iraq. This is the point where the speaker in the above extract comes in with *of course*, which, while expressing agreement with the government's argument, presents it as an overstatement, which does not detract from the opposition's line of argumentation.

In Swedish political speech the word *ju* is extremely frequent (see Simon-Vandenberg & Aijmer 2005). It clearly differs, however, from *of course* and *natuurlijk* in that it does not cover the same oppositional functions. Its function is mainly to mark self evidence and to construe a relationship of solidarity. As shown in Simon-Vandenberg and Aijmer (2003–4), it can be seen as a rhetorical equivalent of *of course* in that it also functions to announce self evidence and thereby to construe a relationship of solidarity between the speaker and their audience. In contrast with Dutch *natuurlijk*, however, it is not the most frequent translation equivalent of *of course*. However, just like *of course* and *natuurlijk* it represents the proposition as an undisputed truth and hence is used by political speakers as a ploy to create a power imbalance with the opponent. In contrast with English *of*

course and Dutch *natuurlijk*, Swedish *ju* is a modal particle rather than an adverb. This means that it can for instance not be fronted or moved around and is much less salient. It can be said to have a 'sneaked in' character. The following extract illustrates this use of *ju* (translated as *of course*). The speaker is Rune Molin (RM):

- (10) RM: Why do we get such different contradictory messages? Of course it can't be demanding too much that the voters should get information about what is going to happen to the electricity supply, how you are going to ration, how you are going to raise the prices and so on, because that is of course what is going to be the consequence when one is going to lower the electricity supply in the eighties. Dahleus is of course going to leave the scene himself after the 23rd of March I have read in the papers, but could you not before that tell us who will carry out your political message?

In conclusion, it has appeared from recent research that at least in British, Flemish, Swedish and French (Lewis 2004) political discourse the rhetorical mode of 'concurrency' (White's term 2003) is favoured in contexts where speakers wish to contract the dialogue in the sense of making it difficult to challenge the proposition as it is presented as shared knowledge. The use of items indicating shared knowledge typically confirms solidarity in contexts where interactants already share a great deal of common ground and a common outlook (see Holmes 1988). Their use in contexts where very little is actually to be taken for granted, as differences in opinion are the very 'raison d'être' of the genre (political debate), is aimed at construing solidarity with those who need to be persuaded, i.e. the audience, against the opponent.

The use of presupposition as another tactic

The monoglossic statement

It appears from the data in all three languages concerned that the concurrency strategy discussed in the previous section is just one of the more encompassing range of linguistic choices which in political discourse raise the interpersonal stakes for any who might want to question, challenge or reject a proposition being taken-for-granted by the speaker. In White's taxonomy (2003), the dialogic contraction devices, while being heteroglossic in recognising the theoretical possibility of alternative opinion, at the same time close down the dialogue by making challenges difficult. Such dialogic contraction is therefore closer to the monoglossic mode than the dialogic expansion devices. White points out that the monogloss option is also typically used where textual voice and audience either

do share a common outlook or where the textual voice, for persuasive purposes, creates solidarity with a particular readership, who possibly hold an opinion distinct from other sections of the community. In White's taxonomy it is the bare assertion which realises the meaning of the monoglossic mode.

It appears indeed that in the data political speakers do present highly controversial judgements in a monoglossic way by expressing them as bare unmodalised statements. Here is an example from the Flemish data. The speaker is a member of the opposition and criticizing the safety policy of the government. The opposition's viewpoint is that even though a lot of money is being spent on police reform, the result is less safety than before:

- (11) VR: The central theme: safety. And they spend a lot more money to have fewer people who take care of safety. That's an incomprehensible story.

The strength of the argument lies in the juxtaposition of the different propositions. While the government cannot deny that money has been spent on police reform (objective fact), nor that the reforms involve a re-allocation of tasks so that there are fewer policemen on the streets (objective fact), the subjective elements in the utterance are the following: first, the vague quantifier *a lot more* is a subjective assessment; secondly, the presentation of having fewer people who take care of safety as the goal (in the form of a subordinated purpose clause) is the speaker's subjective assessment of the facts; thirdly, the nominal phrase *fewer people who take care of safety* to refer to policemen on the street is strategically chosen because it emphasizes the paradoxical situation. However, it expresses a contestable equation of the class of policemen on the street with the class of people taking care of safety. The evaluative comment *That's an incomprehensible story* merely sums up the argument: the government's policy has been presented by the speaker in a monoglossic way as indeed paradoxical.

However, there is another type of strategy which is at least as common as the bare statement to construe solidarity and to block dialogue. This is the presentation of material as presupposed. We want to argue that within the taxonomy of engagement modes it is the most dialogistically restrictive of all the engagement options, limiting the scope for dialogic alternatives even more thoroughly than bare assertions of the type just exemplified. Under this option, the speaker does not simply decline to offer any recognition that the proposition is in some way problematic or subject to contestation (as is the case with non-presupposing bare assertions). They go beyond this to present the proposition as simply not at issue, as a proposition which can be assumed and hence need not be asserted. While a non-presupposing monoglossic statement presents at least part of the information as new, presupposition structures present the information as known. While monoglossic utterances do not build in the possibility of dialogic alternatives,

they are nevertheless dialogically ‘upfront’ in making a statement which can be affirmed or denied. Presupposed material, on the other hand, is ‘sneaked in’ as it were. Not only does it not open up a dialogue but it definitely shifts attention away from the thus backgrounded material.

Presupposition takes many forms and has been widely discussed in the linguistic literature. It is not our ambition here to give an exhaustive account of the different types as they occur in the data. What we want to do by giving some examples of different manifestations of presupposition is to show that it is an important means of persuasion in political discourse. In the next section we specify the way in which we are using the notion in this paper.

The term *presupposition*

The term *presupposition* covers many different things. One important distinction that has been made is between semantic and pragmatic presupposition. According to Caffi (1998:752) “[t]he concept of semantic presupposition is quite clear”. This is true to the extent that there are clear criteria which allow us to decide under what conditions we can claim that some material is semantically presupposed. Semantic presupposition is defined in terms of truth-conditions, as a sub-type of entailment, in the sense that a proposition which is presupposed remains true under negation and questioning. The following example is from Bertuccelli Papi (1997). The sentence ‘Sue is dancing a macarena’ presupposes that there is a person named Sue and there is a dance which is the macarena. This type of existential presupposition survives even when the sentence is negated or turned into a question: ‘Sue is not dancing a macarena’ and ‘Is Sue dancing a macarena?’. Semantic presupposition manifests itself in various lexical expressions and grammatical structures, and Bertuccelli Papi (1997) gives the following list: definite descriptions (including proper names), factive predicates including epistemic verbs (like *know*, *realize*) and emotive predicates (like *be surprised*, *regret*, *forget*, *deplore*, *resent*), implicative verbs (like *manage*, *remember*), change of state, inchoative and iterative verbs (like *stop*, *start*), verbs of judging (like *accuse*, *blame*, *criticize*), clefting and pseudo-clefting, prosodic emphasis, temporal clauses, non-restrictive relative clauses and counterfactuals. Semantic presupposition is conceptually different from pragmatic presupposition, which is defined in terms of common ground or background knowledge. Lambrecht (1994) gives the following definition of pragmatic presupposition:

The set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes the hearer already knows or is ready to take for granted at the time the sentence is uttered. (1994:52)

While this definition clearly distinguishes pragmatic from semantic presupposition, in practice it appears that the two concepts are hard to keep apart. The same types of lexicogrammatical structures are given for both types. In fact the distinction has, as Lambrecht points out (1994: 61), "been all but abandoned in the literature", and Bertuccelli Papi remarks in the same vein that semantic presuppositions "have to be treated as pragmatic phenomena" (1997: 11). The types of lexicogrammatical structures mentioned above are the ones we shall look for in the data at hand, even though what we are interested in are not the truth-conditions but the fact that these structures evoke situations, events which are presented by the speaker as background knowledge, propositions whose truth the speaker takes for granted. Thus when a speaker says *I regret that you told these lies* we have a case of semantic presupposition (the truth of the main proposition depends on the truth of the subordinated proposition, and the presupposition that 'you told these lies' survives under negation in *I don't regret that you told these lies*). However, what is more interesting from the point of view of interaction is that in uttering *I regret that you told these lies* the proposition 'you told these lies' is presented as common ground, while the assertion which is at stake is that 'I regret this'. Why is this the crucial point in interaction?

There are two reasons. One is that by encoding something as background, shared knowledge, the speaker at the same time presents a proposition as one whose truth is accepted by the hearer. In other words, pragmatically it is not the logical entailment which is of interest in the analysis of verbal interaction as much as the speaker's assumption of what can be taken for granted. Secondly, in terms of information structuring it is important that the presupposed material is backgrounded as old information, while the information in the assertion is foregrounded as new. Presuppositions in this way contribute to the structuring of the discourse, and "determine the point of view from which the text develops" (Bertuccelli Papi 1997: 13). Both these factors play a role in the choices which speakers make with regard to what can be encoded as presupposed material.

The pragmatic view of presuppositions obviously entails that they are not static but are negotiated and interactively construed. But it also entails the possibility of exploitation. Bertuccelli Papi puts it as follows:

It is therefore legitimate to wonder by whom pragmatic presuppositions should be taken for granted and by whom they are granted. The most plausible answer is that speakers treat presuppositions as noncontroversial, even though they may in fact be controversial and not taken for granted by the addressee. (1997: 12–13)

Similarly, Lambrecht (1994: 65) mentions the "conscious or unconscious exploitation of presuppositions for special communicative purposes". The reason why presuppositions are exploitable is that they are harder to challenge. As Lambre-

cht points out, the ‘lie-test’ shows that if the addressee wishes to challenge the ‘old’ information in the presupposition, he/she has to use other strategies than the straightforward ‘That’s not true.’ For example, if the addressee replies *That’s not true* to the utterance *I finally met the woman who moved in downstairs* she is challenging that the speaker met her, not that she moved in downstairs. If the addressee wishes to challenge the taken-for-granted nature of the presupposed proposition she would have to say something like *I didn’t know that you had a new neighbour* or *What are you talking about?* (1994: 52). In such cases Lambrecht demonstrates that presuppositions are based on the assumption of shared knowledge which is not put up for discussion. There is, however, also the cognitive principle of ‘pragmatic accommodation’ (Lambrecht 1994: 66), which means that speakers frequently create a new presuppositional situation which can then be the starting-point for the further development of the conversational exchange. If someone says *My car broke down* this does not necessarily imply that the speaker thinks that the addressee knew that she has a car. Even if the addressee did not have this information she will accommodate to the new situation. Such cases of pragmatic accommodation are, however, to be distinguished from what Lambrecht refers to as “devious” cases of exploitation (1994: 70). The difference lies in the effects aimed at: devious cases are not aimed at conveying information indirectly but at creating “a fictitious presuppositional situation” for certain rhetorical purposes. In this paper we shall examine which types of presuppositions are used by political speakers and for what purposes.

It is important to emphasise that, whatever the pragmatic effect in specific contexts, certain lexicogrammatical expressions by themselves trigger presuppositions. It is these expressions that we will examine. We shall, on the other hand, not be concerned with pragmatic presupposition in the very broad sense in which it has been used by some, to include all knowledge that language users have and which is brought into the production and comprehension of utterances. Kempson (1975: 166ff.), for instance, refers to the ‘Pragmatic Universe of Discourse’, defined as the “body of facts which both speaker and hearer believe they agree on” in a conversation. Mey (1998: 186) claims that a “serious theory of pragmatic presuppositions (...) inquires *metapragmatically* into the ways in which an utterance is understood in the context of the language users’ ‘common ground’”. And Mey further points out that it is then important not only to inquire how people say things but why they say them at all (1998: 187).

In this paper we are focusing on structures that are traditionally subsumed under semantic presupposition, while recognising that they need to be studied from a pragmatic point of view, both in their exploitation and their understanding. We are not concerned with pragmatic presupposition in the broadest sense,

which includes various forms of implicitness such as conversational implicatures (whether particularized or generalized).

Previous research on presupposition for persuasive purposes: Sbisà (1999)

Sbisà (1999) discusses the use of presupposition for persuasive purposes in the Italian daily press. One interesting question she deals with is why presuppositions should ever be persuasive, why there is “a default tendency” in the addressee to take the presupposed information for granted (1999:501). The answer, according to Sbisà, lies in the normative nature of presuppositions: they are to be defined not as shared assumptions but as assumptions that ought to be shared. This entails that speakers violate norms of interaction if they take for granted that information is shared while it is not. If therefore presuppositions are not satisfied, addressees will consider speakers as uncooperative. Thus, ideally, speakers should strive towards producing utterances which trigger presuppositions only when the “objective context” indeed contains those presuppositions. The reason why presuppositions are useful for transmitting ideologies is then that they tend to be left unchallenged, since they are backgrounded. Explication and challenging of presuppositions are options available to the addressee but, as Sbisà points out, dispreferred ones (1999:506).

The data examined in this paper differ from those discussed in Sbisà (1999) in several ways. First, they are spoken instead of written, and there is an interlocutor who has the option of choosing the dispreferred reaction. Studying the reactions of hearers adds an important aspect to the discussion of the motives behind presupposition. Secondly, it will be shown that the dispreferred reaction is not infrequent in this genre. While we notice that in our data there are instances of presupposition where the proposition is not challenged, it is significant that, where the presupposition involves currently contentious material, it was not unusual for the presupposed material to be rejected or otherwise challenged in some way. Here is an example from the British data, an exchange between Dimbleby (D) and May (M):

- (12) D: Theresa May, why dump on returning officers? [presupposes that 'dumping on returning offices' has taken place]
 M: Well I'm not dumping on returning officers.

Presupposition in the data

The following extract from the programme *Question Time* illustrates the type of structures and meanings that we are interested in. The issue of debate is the government's plans to introduce top-up fees for university students, for which they could get a loan. David Willits (W), Shadow Secretary, voices the Conservative party's opposition to this plan. David Dimbleby (D) asks the question:

- (13) D: David Willits, you were asked whether Tories will be voting in the lobbies for this because your position purports to be that you're against top-up fees.
- W: We are against them, we are against them and we're against them because we don't think we want to see our students any other perhaps on the latest proposals 23,000£ of debt when they leave university. I don't think that's the right way to go. And as a Conservative I want to encourage people to save and I hear Ministers in the areas that I debate particularly, pensions, things like that, say they've got to encourage people to save. I **don't see how** getting saddling young people with 23,000 pounds' worth of debt is gonna help them start off in their lives and **we should remember how** we got into this. We got into this **because** the government set a target, an arbitrary target for the expansion of universities, that they should reach this target of 50%. Well, I completely agree with what PhylisJames said, I don't think it's in the best interests of the people in this country, you do need a better education to set such a target, they need [interruption by moderator]

The first instance of a construction which exploits presupposition is 'I don't see how...'. This expression is synonymous to other expressions such as 'I don't understand how'. The proposition in the subordinated interrogative clause, in this case a *how*-clause, is in such structures presented as known information, since the only unknown element, the missing bit is the element in the *wh*-word (i.e. *how*). In this concrete example, the speaker presents as presupposed that the government is going to 'saddle young people with 23,000£ worth of debt'. The term *saddle* is evaluative, which means that the negative judgement is simultaneously absorbed in the message as presupposed and non-negotiable. We have a similar example in the expression 'we should remember', a factive verb. In the above instance, what needs to be remembered is that the government took the wrong decision ('bad for them'), and again an evaluative term, *arbitrary*, is smuggled into the presupposed material.

The next example is from the Swedish nuclear debate. The speaker is Per Unckel (a member of the Conservative Party and in favour of nuclear energy,

line 1). The addressee (Ulla Lindström) is a member of the Social Democratic party and is in favour of line 3 and abolishing nuclear energy.

- (14) if Ulla Lindström does not trust lines one and two I suppose Ulla Lindström anyhow trusts the developing countries themselves **when** they shake their heads and wonder how we in Sweden can think about doing away with nuclear energy/**when** this implies that the pressure on scanty oil resources/ which could be of use to the developing countries becomes still harder

The tactically relevant presupposed material in this passage is in the two *when*-clauses *when they shake their heads (...)* and *when this implies (...)*. The speaker first presents the disapproving attitude of the developing countries towards Sweden's plans to do away with nuclear energy as self evident by putting the proposition in a *when*-clause. Next, at a deeper level of subordination, the proposition that these plans would harm the developing countries by increasing the pressure on resources, is also presented as presupposed in a *when*-clause.

The following extract is also from the Swedish material. The speaker is Per Unckel (line 1):

- (15) the election is about whether **in addition to** the global energy crisis we have already to a large extent been affected by **additional** burdens which may be too heavy for us

What is presupposed in the above utterance is that there is 'a global energy crisis'. Further, the comparative referential term *additional* is relevant here in terms of presupposition, since it presupposes the current existence of a burden (in the form of the 'global energy crisis').

Here follow some more examples of presuppositional structures from the Flemish and Swedish data.

(i) Factive predicates

The presupposition trigger of factive predicates can be illustrated with the following example from the Flemish data, from an interview with Jean-Luc Dehaene (DH), former Prime Minister of Belgium:

- (16) DH: Well I call that continuing the debate after the elections and so I thought that this hype uh was unnecessary uh totally artificial uh and **some people apparently did not see** that they were thereby undermining the verve of the innovation...
- I: Hmm
- DH: ...and and and the campaign that should revolve around the innovation.

What is presented as new information is that some people apparently did not see something. That they were undermining the innovation is presented as to be taken for granted. The verb 'see' is indeed frequently used as an evidential and has a factive meaning: you can only see what is there. Another example from the same interview:

- (17) DH: But **when I see** that this position uh damages my party, that through the way in which they handle this in my party they damage themselves, then I have to stop this.

The following is an example from the Swedish data, with Lennart Dahleus (LD) speaking:

- (18) LD: Yes, **Per Unkel knows of course that** there are more possibilities for serious accidents than those we have discussed, steam explosions, **and that** nuclear power is a dangerous source of energy **and that** it contains enormous risks raging from uranium mining to waste disposal that we probably agree on **and that** there are risks which have no equivalent in other sources of energy.

(ii) Relative clauses

Consider the following extract from the Flemish data:

- (19) RD: This of course doesn't alter the fact that the government has approved an investment plan in the long term, a framework within which the NMBS [National Railways Company] must try to become healthy again, and one thing should certainly not be forgotten and that is a very important thing after all...
- I: [overlap] Yes
- RD: ...in a few months the liberalisation of this goods transport starts and therefore ...
- I: [overlap] Precisely. Uhm.
- RD: ...we must really urgently take a number of measures **which...**
- I: [overlap] Yes
- RD: **...in so many years were not taken** because otherwise competition is going to hit very hard.
- I: [overlap] **Well, Mr Van Rompuy, it's the previous government's fault again.**
- VR: **Yes, well, we're getting used to that.**

On the face of it the relative clause gives information which is quite innocent: there would be no point in taking measures if they had indeed been taken before. The fact that the information is added at all raises the question of why it is added

and why it is added in the form it is. The shared knowledge of the world which we need in order to explain the workings of this utterance is that 'in so many years' is a reference to the previous legislature, when the speaker's party was in the opposition and his opponent in the debate was in the government. This utterance is a way of reversing the tables in holding the opponent responsible for 'what is bad'.

The next extract is an example from the Swedish debate. The speaker is Rune Molin, who represents line 2 in the referendum which was neither clearly for nor against nuclear energy.

- (20) RM: It is self-evident that if we use our nuclear plants, the possibilities will increase considerably for cutting a dependence on oil **which is wrecking the economy of the whole of Swedish society.**

Below is another example from the Swedish debate. The speaker is Per Unckel (line 1):

- (21) PU: In this nuclear debate there has been one feature which I myself have appreciated much// and this is a feature characteristic of many of those who still support line three// **which implies a demand for a more tolerant society with room for more human concern and closeness**/ if it was this that this referendum was actually about/ I think that no one would have any doubts about its outcome.

The relative clause carries the presupposition that people in line three want a more tolerant society with room for human concern and closeness, which is obviously positively evaluated. However, the speaker draws attention to this as already known or old information in order to then foreground that this is not what the referendum is about. His own viewpoint is that this desire for a better society is actually a reason to use nuclear energy not to abolish it. What we have here is a 'put down' of line three's position by presenting its argumentation as an overstatement, something everyone agrees on but which does not solve the problem.

Similarly in the next example from the Swedish data, the addressee is obviously assumed to share the presupposition conveyed in the *which*-clause. The speaker is Per Unckel (line 1) and the addressee Lennar Daleus (line 3):

- (22) PU: yes Lennart Daleus was surprised that I spoke about oil in a referendum about nuclear energy/the reason is of course that we have decided to use our nuclear reactors in order to open up the possibility of us being forced to reduce our dependence on oil, **which is well on the way to getting out of hand**

(iii) Conditional clauses

- (23) VR: Do people feel safer?
 RD: [overlap] **Well of course if** in politics, colleague Van Rompuy, you get important people such as Mr Dehaene is an important man, **who want to create the impression** among the population that unsafety increases...
 VR: **Oh, it's Mr Dehaene?**
 RD: ...then I think that's bad. What m...
 VR: **Oh dear, Mr Dehaene creating unsafety.**
 RD: ...what matters is reality...
 VR: [overlap] **That is that is...**
 RD: ...and I'll give you another example.
 VR: [overlap] **very new to us, that is very new.**
 I: Yes, you must conclude, Mr Daems.
 VR: [overlap] **that is very new.**

By presenting the contestable information in the conditional clause of an *if...then* structure which expresses a general truth that information is backgrounded as given and the focus is on the result, namely the value judgement 'I think that's bad'. It will be noted that the speaker makes use of several closing down strategies at the same time: *of course* (concurrency), subordination in an *if* clause in a general truth statement (presupposition), subordination in a relative clause (presupposition).

The following example is from the Swedish data (the speaker is Per Unckel, line 1):

- (24) But it is clear that /*if* one now decides to demolish nuclear reactors / **which correspond to all the energy that we get from water power**/then this cannot pass without a trace / and line three confirms I suppose also this by claiming that there is no other country which is so dependent on nuclear power as Sweden

What is assumed by the *if*-clause is that nuclear reactors correspond to all the energy we get from water power. The controversial information is placed in an *if*-clause which is factive. Notice also the use of the relative clause which contains presupposed information which is positively evaluated.

(iv) Existential structures

By 'existential structures' we refer in this context to structures with definite noun phrases triggering the presupposition of the existence of their referents. A very

frequent type in political argumentation is an identifying clause with as subject 'the problem'. It is illustrated by the following example:

- (25) RV: The problem of Mr De Winter is that he only...
 DW: It is linked...
 I: [overlap] Yes
 DW: ...to it.
 RV: ...looks at the past. And we want to do something...
 I: [overlap] Okay
 RV: ...about the future and Mr De Winter refuses to discuss that.
 I: No, he has a clear thesis. His future is: full is full.
 DW: [overlap] immigration stop.

The topic of discussion is immigration and Robert Voorhamme (RV, Socialist party) is attacking Filip De Winter (DW, Flemish Bloc) for his thesis that the government policy does not work. He uses the expression 'The problem ...is that...'. In this type of structure two propositions are semantically presupposed, namely the identified and identifying elements. In this case these are firstly that there is a problem which the opponent has (the identified element), and secondly that he only looks at the past (the identifier element). What is new information is thus that the problem is now identified as such. How do we have to understand the workings of this type of utterance? First, 'problem' is a judgement term: whether something is a problem or not is a subjective assessment of a state-of-affairs. Second, 'he only looks at the past' is pragmatically to be understood as a judgement as well, since our knowledge of the world tells us that politicians need to look at the future. This is indeed explicit in the contrast with the speaker's own party ('And we want to do something about the future'). Through this structure a negative judgement (a criticism of the opponent as a politician) is made into presupposed material.

(v) Pseudo-cleft structures

- (26) DW: [overlap] **What you are doing...**
 AD: [overlap] That's not possible, according to the law...
 DW: [overlap] ...by slowing down...
 VR: [overlap] Mr De Winter
 DW: [overlap]...**by slowing down integration...**
 AD: [overlap] human rights...
 DW: [overlap]...**is...**
 AD: [overlap]... says very clearly...
 DW: [overlap] importing...
 I: [overlap] This is incomprehensible. Let's...

DW: [overlap] ... **importing backwardness**. And that is the wrong position.

There is a lot here which is presupposed in Filip De Winter's (DW) statement: that the government is slowing down integration and that there is backwardness associated with the Islam culture. What is presented as new information is that this backwardness is imported. Again, value judgements are thus sneaked in as shared knowledge.

In the following example from Swedish there is a reversed pseudo-cleft summing up what has been presupposed in the preceding context. The speaker is Per Unckel (line 1):

- (27) this is actually so self-evident that even line three ought to be able to agree// we can use nuclear power being certain that in spite of its risks / it is safer than any other alternative which is at our disposal today// **and this is what is most important**

What is presupposed by the pseudo-cleft construction is that nuclear energy is safer than any other alternative type of energy. However the speaker cannot count on the audience's willingness to go along with the assumption that nuclear power is the safest source of energy and with the positive evaluation conveyed by the pseudo-cleft construction.

The expression of disagreement and the challenging of taken-for-grantedness

In general, disagreement is dispreferred in interaction. It has been shown that in ordinary conversation speakers will avoid disagreement and when it does arise they will try to soften it in various ways, including the use of delay devices, prefacing the disagreement with agreement expressions, and hedges (see Pomerantz 1984). In contrast, Clayman and Heritage (2002: 309ff.) have shown that disagreement is characteristic of panel interviews. By bringing together speakers known to represent different viewpoints the genre by definition invites disagreement. Further, the interviewers themselves frequently elicit disagreement by phrasing and rephrasing arguments and confronting interactants with the opposition's viewpoints. Also in contrast with ordinary conversation is the practice in panel interviews of voicing disagreements straightforwardly rather than hedgingly. Mitigating elements are almost always absent. Clayman and Heritage also show that disagreement in that genre may easily shift into confrontation, and that such "escalation" is signaled by a shift from mediated address (through the interviewer) to direct address (Clayman & Heritage 2002: 315). All of these features are indeed found in a very salient way in the Flemish data, which are from panel interviews.

The following extract illustrates such an escalation. The topic is the decision to put the former Prime Minister, Dehaene (Christian Democrats), who is not a candidate in the coming elections, nevertheless on the list because he is expected to attract votes. The exchange becomes heated, with a great deal of overlapping talk, and very personal:

- (28) I: Yes, Mr Daems, this is embarrassing for the Liberal Democrats, isn't it? He is not even on the list and yet he is in the limelight.
- RD: Well let me first say something about that tremendous call for Dehaene. I understand that Mrs Schauvliege has opened a website and she wanted a hundred thousand signatures, well, she's got five thousand. So that's a tremendous call, if you ask me.
- I: Yes, but in one week's time
- RD: [overlap] But apart from that ...
- I: [overlap] That's in one week's time.
- VR: [overlap] If you received five thousand if you received five thousand letters
- RD: [overlap] but apart from that...
- VR: [overlap] ... I would...I think you would...
- RD: [overlap] Oh but...
- VR: [overlap]... be happy with that.
- RD: [overlap] But colleague Van Rompuy...
- VR: [overlap] I think you would be happy with that.
- RD: [overlap] About the internet...
- VR: [overlap] I don't think you have recently received five hundred, have you?
- RD: [overlap] ... about the internet I know...
- VR: [overlap] I don't think you have received five thousand.
- RD: [overlap] You are extremely excited today, I think.

In the Flemish panel interviews disagreement is frequently voiced in very direct terms such as *that's not true*, *that's not correct*, or even *that's a lie*.

A similar situation obtains in the English data, where it is quite common for participants to forthrightly criticise, confront and nay-say each other. In the following extract, by way of example, the speakers, Scotland (S) and Howard (H) directly contradict and attack each other.

- (29) S: But I think I want to add on to what David said because of course one has to acknowledge that schools facing the challenging circumstances with which many do in London are two and a half times better off now than they were. The improvements in the figures coming out now is clear, that they're doing two and a half times better. So those schools

are really moving forward. And just to remind everyone that the Prime Minister does send his child and his children to state comprehensive schools and he hasn't opted out of this system.

H: Before – before Patricia lets her imagination run away with her let's remember that one in three of every child – one in three of our primary school children leave primary school unable to read, write and count properly and under this government the truancy figures.

S: That's not true.

H: . and truancy – oh I'm afraid it's true, I wish it weren't true but I'm afraid it's true, I know it's hard to believe but it's true.

In the Swedish data there is less open disagreement. Only occasionally does the speaker accuse his opponent of not telling the truth:

- (30) and when it is about oil Per Unckel says that it is quite clear that it is possible to replace the dependence on oil by nuclear power but to use your own words in an earlier context it is of course not true you know of course that in order to get rid of the total dependence on oil we would need fifty sixty power plants in this country (LD)

With regard to presuppositions, it has likewise been argued in the literature that interactants tend not to challenge them. Caffi points out that attacking presuppositions is not only difficult (because the implicit meaning must first be recognised before it is attacked) but also “highly polemical and aggressive” (Caffi 1998:753). Mey (1998:188–189) makes the same point in saying that in daily life we do not normally “go presupposition-hunting” and that we tend to take most presuppositions simply for granted. He goes as far as to claim that “metapragmatically questioning an interlocutor's presupposition is a dangerous sport, inasmuch as it may threaten the ‘face’ of my conversational partner” (1998:189). Sbisà (1999), too, ascribes the usefulness of presupposition as a persuasive tactic to the dispreferred nature of explicitation and challenging and hence to the default reaction of acceptance. However, at least one reason why presuppositions are typically left unchallenged may be that speakers violate the norms of discourse if the presupposed propositional content cannot be assumed to be part of the hearer's knowledge. Sbisà puts it as follows:

Moreover, it is among the speaker's responsibilities to issue an utterance containing certain presupposition inducers only if the objective context really contains the presupposition they trigger. Thus we are describing presuppositions as assumptions that the speaker ought to make, or, however, assumptions for which he or she is responsible. (Sbisà 1999:503)

On the other hand, hearers “accommodate” to presuppositions:

If at time *t* something is said that requires presupposition *P* to be acceptable, and if *P* is not presupposed just before *t*, then – ceteris paribus and within certain limits – presupposition *P* comes into existence at *t*. (Lambrecht 1994:67)

This type of accommodation is, however, different from what takes place in the case of what Lambrecht refers to as “devious exploitation of presuppositional structure” (Lambrecht 1994:70). As shown in the above extracts, presenting controversial propositions as to be taken-for granted is a strategy in political discourse. Such expressions are indeed manipulable because speakers use them for presenting non-shared and even highly contested propositions as if they were shared knowledge. The effect is on the one hand that solidarity is confirmed with those who share the speakers’ viewpoint and on the other hand that those who hold alternative opinions are put into a position where more interactive work needs to be done if they want to challenge the speaker’s views. The potential rhetorical usefulness of presupposition has been remarked upon by e.g. Verschueren (1999:157) and Caffi (1998:752). The question remains whether interactants in the types of data under investigation do make the efforts to challenge presuppositions.

It appears indeed that, in contrast with the rules of ‘normal’ interaction (cf. the “normative” nature of presupposition, Sbisà 1999:502) the rules of media political debate do allow for and indeed seem to dictate the challenging of presuppositions. The challengers are the interviewer/moderator as well as the opponent in the debate. In several examples from the Flemish data given in the previous section speakers do challenge the presuppositions. In examples (19) and (23) given above, the challenges are put in bold.

The speakers in the English data demonstrate a similar willingness to challenge presupposed propositions, at least when they involve a point which is significant attitudinally or ideologically. The following exchange is illustrative of this tendency. The speakers, Peter Hitchens (H) and Maude (M) are discussing the recent resignation of the highly influential Conservative Party politician, Michael Portillo.

- (31) H: Well I don’t think it’s a loss to the Conservative Party, in fact I wish he’d said it a long time ago because some years ago I suggested to the electors of Kensington and Chelsea that they should pick me instead because he wasn’t – he wasn’t a Conservative, which I don’t think he is or was at the time. And what’s interesting about Michael Portillo **is this strange journey that he’s been on for some time away from Conservatism ... turning the Conservative Party into New Labour with a blue T-shirt on. ...**

M: ...Peter makes his point, I've heard him make before, about modernisation is all about making us like New Labour, it isn't at all. I mean a Conservative Party has been in existence for 200 years, it is actually, as Michael Howard said the other day, it's the most successful, the longest standing political party in the history of democracy.

Here, via the nominal structure, 'this strange journey ... away from Conservatism ... into New Labour', the first speaker (Hitchens) presupposes that there has been a move, led by Portillo, to make the Conservatives more like the Labour Party. Despite the 'taken-for-grantedness' of the formulation, the second speaker unembarrassedly sets about turning an assumption into an arguable assertion and then forthrightly rejects it. Thus in his reply, he treats what was a presupposition as a 'point' which he asserts the speaker has made before.

The challenging of presuppositions was also frequent in the Swedish data:

(32) RM: [with nuclear power] we would be able to provide forty thousand new beds/ we would be able to get a hundred thousand new day care centre vacancies we would be able to get thirty thousand new jobs in child care we can improve the schools/all this is something we will find it difficult to do during the 80's anyhow/but it will be still more difficult with the rapid winding-up and the costs you impose on the citizens with your policy

LD: **yes I really protest** – the four hundred thousand billion that you mentioned are a sheer fabrication as well as the proportions of the crisis which you say will come about if we get rid of nuclear power

The relative clause in 'the costs you impose on the citizens with your policy' conveys the presupposition that 'the line 3 policy' of winding up nuclear plants will impose costs making reforms possible. This presupposition is challenged by LD (the line 3 adherent) who claims that the costs are imagined.

The occurrence of challenges in this genre can be explained from the nature of the event itself. The rules of interaction in a media political debate are completely different from those in ordinary conversation with regard to norms of politeness and what is considered to be face-threatening (see Simon-Vandenberg 1992; Simon-Vandenberg & Aijmer 2005). These differences follow from more general differences on a number of parameters. Using Hymes's framework for the analysis of communicative events (1968) we can establish major differences along all parameters of the framework: setting and scene, participants, ends, acts, key, instrument, norms and genre. For instance, while conversations in daily life are geared towards creating and preserving solidarity and goodwill (Brown & Levinson 1987), media debates are aimed at winning votes. The interaction is hence highly competitive and polemical. Further, participants in media debates are not

speaking in their own name but as representatives of groups and exclusively acting as 'we' (though ad hominem arguments may for instance change the footing: the Flemish data contain a clear example of this (example (28) above), when one politician says to his opponent in the debate "You are extremely excited today I find"). This means that in Goffman's terms (1981: 147) the speaker as 'principal' is communicating as a member of a political party and /or in a particular role (for instance as a government minister). One of the consequences of this is that the modesty maxim (Leech 1983) does not apply (Simon-Vandenberg & Aijmer 2005). Another consequence is that attacks on the group are not felt as personal attacks. Further, the norms of interaction with regard to turn-taking, interruption and overlap are regulated by the interviewer/moderator but participants in their aim to persuade and score will frequently break them (cf. high frequency of overlapping speech). All such differences create a genre in which presuppositional manipulation is the rule, expected and recognised as such by the opponent. In contrast with conversational partners in daily life, political opponents do go 'presupposition-hunting' as part of the game.

Another question is to whether *of course* and its equivalents in the Dutch and Swedish data trigger any challenging. This would involve the denial by the hearer that the information is to be taken for granted, an explicit rejection of the 'obvious' nature of the statement. As pointed out above, the markers of 'to-be – taken-for-granted' are used in different contexts and with different functions. In most of these functions they are left unchallenged simply because the proposition is indeed not contested. These are cases where *of course* expresses agreement with the interactant or where it signals concession. In the example below, from the Flemish data, the interviewee uses *of course* ('natuurlijk') to convey agreement with the interviewer:

- (33) I: Wouldn't it have been better if Mr Van Rossem had been heard in the commission of inquiry? He could have said it then, I don't know why...
- RD: [overlap] Yes, as far as I'm concerned...
- I: [overlap] ... why
- RD: [overlap] well...
- I: [overlap]... he wasn't heard.
- RD: Yes, as far as I am concerned I wasn't in charge of the workings of the commission so that...
- I: [overlap] Would you ...
- RD: [overlap]... is his own affair.
- I: ... have found it a good thing if he had been heard?
- RD: I certainly wouldn't have had a problem with that.
- I: It's too late now.

RD: Yes, **of course** it's too late now. The commission of inquiry has finished its work but apparently Mr Van Rossem has still found other channels to vent his opinion.

The interesting cases are those where *of course* functions to convey concurrence on contentious issues. In such cases the speaker holding the alternative viewpoint will indeed deny the proposition, as in the example below. The speakers are Filip De Winter (Flemish Bloc) and Robert Voorhamme (Socialist party, which is in the government coalition referred to as 'purple-green'). The topic is immigrant policy:

(34) DW: Indeed, what Fortuyn said: full is full. And I don't think that we need still more new foreigners. No. We need to face the foreigners with the choice: adapt or return. In other words, a policy of integration for those who are here already. May I point out to you that for purple-green this is **of course** a bit of an alibi decree, isn't it? They have allowed 230 thousand foreigners to ...

RV: [overlap] **Not true**

In the Dutch data 5 out of the 24 occurrences of *natuurlijk* get challenged. These are all cases where the proposition qualified by *natuurlijk* contains contextually highly polemical material.

In the English data, speakers also demonstrate a willingness to resist the rhetorical effects associated with *of course* and hence to challenge attempts by other speakers to construe particular propositions as entirely unproblematic and universally agreed-upon. An example of such manoeuvring is provided in the following extract where the speakers, Phillips (P) and Oaten (O) are discussing a decision by the UN to end sanctions against Libya for the Lockerbie bombing, provided that compensation is paid to the victims families.

(35) P: Now to get to the actual question – should Libya, for example, be exempted by paying money? Personally I think no, I think this is blood money and ... I think it's all part of the way the West has over many decades now appeased terror, it's appeased terror by saying to the people who are committing terrorism – because you're committing terrorism we're now going to actually look at the root causes of this, we're going to have you to the UN, we're going to treat you as dignitaries, we're going to pay court to your cause. And that actually has incited more terror. And if one can say to people who have committed murder or have murder committed on their behalf – well all you have to do is pay a bit of money and then we can admit you to the family of nations, I think that is wrong, I think we would not do it, for example, if some body committed murder in our civil society – you wouldn't say pay

money to the family and then we will admit you to the fact – to civilised society, we will expunge it from the record, **of course** we wouldn't. ...

- O: ...if this situation that has emerged has meant that we now have Libya as part of the civilised world then this is a good thing. If this paying of the compensation is Libya's way of acknowledging that what happened was wrong this is a good thing. If it's a way of actually moving Libya forward in a positive way we have to accept this has to be on the whole a better thing than having Libya outside of the family of those civilised nations.

Here the first speaker employs *of course* to construe as 'taken-for-granted' that no-one in 'civilised society' would accept excusing murderers of their crime upon payment of money to the victim's family. The second speaker goes directly against this purportedly agreed-upon proposition as he develops his argument in support of excusing Libya.

Propositions with Swedish *ju* were not challenged to the same extent, probably because of the non-oppositional nature of this modal particle. On the other hand, *ju* itself was typically used to meet a challenge by explaining something as self-evident:

- (36) PU: at last Lennart Daleus you still owe me the answer to the question/what governmental report was it that talked about the burning sun as an illustration of what you mean by nuclear power
- LD: **you know that poetry of course uses a different language** than we do in technical language for in the presentations we have made from the referendum we have prepared from the governmental reports which are the basis for the referendum

Discussion of the results and conclusions

In this article we have shown that 'taken-for-grantedness' is frequently manipulated in media political discourse. In doing this we have adduced further evidence of its importance as a rhetorical strategy. The advantages of the strategy mentioned in the literature are its construal of solidarity with like-minded viewers and the difficulty of challenging by those who hold alternative views. However, it has been shown that this strategy is recognised by the opponent for what it is, i.e. as a rhetorical ploy, and hence that the announcements of self-evidence and the presuppositions do get challenged. The question we can ask then is why speakers go on using the tactic anyway. One reason is of course that the first advantage still holds, viz. that the solidarity with the like-minded is confirmed and strengthened. It is

the like-minded in the first place who are addressed as the electors. Further, there is always the possibility that the yet-to-be persuaded will not recognise the tactic of taking-for-granted tactic as such and accept the implication of general knowledge. Most importantly however, the tactic has value as a rhetorical device which creates a forceful utterance and as such contributes to the image which politicians wish to project for themselves, i.e. that of someone 'in the know' (cf. Simon-Vandenberg 1996). As such, they become ways of making strong value judgements, likely to be challenged but nevertheless giving the speaker a temporary advantage in the battle for scoring with the audience. We may therefore conclude that such tactics are part of the professional discourse, and hence that interpersonal meanings are as much part of the genre as ideational ones.

Secondly, we have suggested that the engagement framework as developed by White (2003) needs to diversify its monoglossic option to more clearly allow for differences in rhetorical effect between presupposing and non-presupposing bare assertions. Our discussion has demonstrated the importance of noting the difference between bare assertions in which some point of contention is presented as new information (the non-presupposing option) and those in which it is presented as background, common knowledge (the presupposing option). As such presupposition has tremendous manipulative potential. White (2006) does introduce the notion "explicit attitudinal assessments" and places these in the framework as "unarguable and monoglossic". Our findings are in agreement with this, but we would argue that the pragmatic context may overrule the default effect of unarguability. The nature of media political debate reshapes presuppositional utterances into strong evaluative statements which cry out for challenging. As such presuppositions are two-faced in this genre. On the one hand, they present as presupposed judgements which the speakers know are not shared by their interlocutors and which they know will get challenged. The rhetorical effect is, however, in the saying itself. On the other hand, the presuppositions will work in the 'normal' way with at least part of the television audience, i.e they will simply be accepted.

Thirdly, we found that similar tactics were used in the British, Flemish and Swedish data. This suggests that the rules of interaction are largely similar in the genre in these cultural contexts. The Swedish data differed from the British and Flemish ones in that the debate was of a more formal and more strictly regulated type, and the rhetorical strategies differed accordingly. The similarities can partly be explained from similar views on linguistic ideologies and on how political debate works, what politicians are supposed to do and how the media handle political discussion. However, this aspect is in need of further study on the basis of more and culturally more varied data.

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Appendix: Examples in the original languages Flemish and Swedish

- (8) I: Ja, mijnheer Daems, wat zegt uh mijnheer Van Rossem daar allemaal? Hij zegt de raad van bestuur was perfect op de hoogte van de plannen van de Zwitsers en blijkbaar wist ook VLD-voorzitter Karel De Gucht daarvan. Um... hebt u weet van dat scenario?
- RD: Helemaal niet. Ik denk dat uh de onderzoekscommissie een aantal zaken heeft blootgelegd die belangrijk zijn. Ik denk dat we spijtig genoeg moeten vaststellen dat we wel in een partijpolitiek vaarwater zijn terechtgekomen waar op een bepaald ogenblik men zelfs uh zich heeft verlaagd tot persoonlijke aanvallen maar als je daar nu even afstand van neemt... dan denk je da je toch in dat rapport een aantal aspecten terugvindt...
- I: Ja.
- RD: ...hoofdzakelijk te weten ja financieel was het een bedrijf waar een aantal zeer slechte beslissingen vooral onder impuls van de Zwitsers zijn genomen en wat mij vooral is opgevallen is dat nu enkele dagen geleden vanuit het Ernst & Young-rapport uit Zwitserland is gebleken dat... ja eigenlijk met voorbedachten rade bedrog is gepleegd vanuit Zwitserland.
- I: Ja, en volgens mijnheer Van Rossem...
- RD: [overlap] Wat natuurlijk niet wegneemt...
- I: [overlap] ...volgens mijnheer van Rossem wist wist de raad van bestuur dat, wisten sommige VLD'ers dat en is er niks tegen gedaan, zegt die.
- RD: [overlap] Ja, Karel De Gucht is natuurlijk nog niet uh partijvoorzitter geworden in 1997 want daar gaat het dan over die die aankoop van die airbussen...
- I: Hmm.
- RD: Dus ik denk dat de dingen door mekaar worden gehaald en dat de heer Van Rossem...
- I: [overlap] Vergist hij zich dan en kletst hij uit zijn nek, mijnheer Van Rossem?
- RD: [overlap] Wel ik denk dat de heer Van Rossem natuurlijk nu hij politicus wil worden misschien daar toch ook wel een beetje door beïnvloed wordt maar de essentie van het verhaal, mijnheer Belet, is dat je de conclusies van dat rapport moet bekijken want wat voor mij belangrijk is, is dat we voor een stuk hebben blootgelegd waar dat de oorzaken liggen van een zo groot bedrijf dat stuk gaat: slecht management, verkeerde financiële beslissingen.
- (9) VR: Ja, natuurlijk is de dreiging van oorlog iets iets verschrikkelijk en we moeten alles doen om dat af te wenden. Dat spreekt vanzelf. Dat vraagt de

bevolking. Dat vragen wij natuurlijk ook. Uh maar we moeten dan ook een consistente politiek hebben vind ik. Uh mijnheer Michel is einde januari in New York geweest. Hij is daar onder de indruk geko men van wat hij daar gehoord heeft. Hij heeft begrip gevraagd voor het Amerikaanse standpunt. Men heeft zelfs van een bocht gesproken. Hij heeft dat . hij heeft dat gelogenstraf. Uh hij komt terug in Europa en dan nemen wij een standpunt in dat eigenlijk ja toch helemaal haaks staat op de indruk die hij in New York heeft gegeven.

- (10) (Rune Molin: line 2 postponing nuclear power)
// varför får vi så olika motstridiga besked // det kan ju inte vara för mycket begärt att väljarna ska få besked om / hur det ska gå med elförsörjningen hur ni ska ransonera hur ni ska höja priserna och så vidare / för det är ju det som kommer att bli följderna när man ska dra ner / elförsörjningen under åttioalet
// < daleus > han ska ju själv lämna den här scenen efter den tjugotredje mars har jag läst i tidningarna // men skulle du inte dessförinnan kunna tala om på / vem vem som ska nu genomföra erat politiska budskap
- (11) VR: Het centrale thema: veiligheid. En men geeft massa's geld uit om minder mensen te hebben die voor veiligheid zorgen. Da's een onbegrijpelijk verhaal.
- (14) PU: om < ulla lindström > inte litar på linjerna ett och två så kan väl < ulla lindström > ändå lita på uländerna själva när dom skakar på huvudet och undrar hur vi i sverige kan överväga att avveckla kärnkraften / när detta innebär att trycket på knappa oljeresurser / som skulle kunna komma uländerna till del blir ändå hårdare
- (15) PU: / valet gäller om vi ovanpå den globala energikris vi redan i så hög utsträckning drabbats av / ska lägga ytterligare bördor som kan bli oss övermäktiga /
- (16) DH: [overlap]: Wel dat noem ik de het het debat verder zetten na de verkiezingen uh dus ik ik vond deze hype uh voor niets nodig uh totaal artificeel uh en sommige mensen zagen blijkbaar niet in dat ze daarmee de de de de schwing van de vernieuwing...
I: [overlap]: Hmm.
DH: ...en en en de campagne die rond de vernieuwing moet draaien, dat ze dit eigenlijk aan het ondermijnen waren.
- (17) DH: Maar als ik dan zie dat die stelling uh kwade . kwaad berokkent aan mijn partij, dat door de manier waarop dat men daarmee omgaat in mijn partij men zichzelf beschadigt bah dan moet ik daar paal en perk aan zetten.

- (18) (Lennart Dahleus, line 3)
 ja <per unkel> vet ju att det finns fler möjligheter till stora olyckor än den som vi har diskuterat den här med / ångexplosioner och att kärnkraften / är en farlig energikälla och att den innehåller oerhörda risker allting från / uranbrytningen till avfallshanteringen det är vi nog överens om och att det är risker / som inte har någon motsvarighet i andra energikällor /
- (19) RD: Dit neemt niet weg dat natuurlijk de regering een investeringsplan op lange termijn heeft goedgekeurd, een kader waarbinnen de NMBS moet proberen gezond te worden, en één ding mag men zeker niet vergeten en dat is toch wel een heel belangrijk gegeven...
 I: [overlap] Ja.
 RD: ...binnen enkele maanden gaat die liberalisering van dat goederenvervoer in dus...
 I: [overlap] Precies. Hmm.
 RD: ...we moeten echt dringend hier gaan een aantal maatregelen die in...
 I: [overlap] Ja.
 RD: ...zovele jaren niet gebeurd zijn nemen want anders dan gaat de concurrentie wel hard toeslaan.
 I: [overlap] Ja. Mijnheer van Rompuy. Het is de vorige regering weer geweest.
 VR: Ja ja. 't Is uh we worden dat gewoon.
- (20) Rune Molin (line 2)
 // det säger sig självt att använder vi våra kärnkraftverk ökar möjligheterna väsentligt att pressa ett oljeberoende som håller på att knäcka hela det svenska samhället /
- (21) PU: i den här kärnkraftsdebatten / har det funnits ett drag som / jag själv har uppskattat mycket // och det är ett drag hos många av dom som ändå stöder linje tre // som innebär ett krav på ett mjukare samhälle med utrymme för mera mänsklighet omtanke och närhet / om det var det här som folkomröstningen egentligen handlade om / tror jag ingen skulle behöva tveka om utgången
- (22) PU: ja < lennart daleus > var förvånad över att jag / talade om oljan i en folkomröstningskampanj om kärnkraften / skälet är ju / att vi har bestämt oss för att använda våra kärnkraftverk för att därigenom ge oss möjlighet att pressa ett oljeberoende som är på väg att gå oss alldeles ur händerna

- (23) VR: Voelen ze zich veiliger?
RD: Ja maar natuurlijk als je in de politiek, collega Van Rompuy, belangrijke mensen zoals mijnheer Dehaene een belangrijk man is, krijgt, die de indruk willen wekken bij de bevolking dat het onveiliger wordt...
VR: [overlap] Oh, het is mijnheer Dehaene?
RD: ...dan vind ik het erg. Waar het om g...
VR: [overlap] Olala, mijnheer Dehaene die zorgt voor de onveiligheid.
RD: Waar het om gaat is de realiteit...
VR: [overlap] Dat is dat is...
RD: ...en ik geef u een ander voorbeeld.
VR: [overlap] ...zeer nieuw voor ons, dat is zeer nieuw.
I: [overlap] Ja, u moet afronden, mijnheer Daems.
VR: [overlap] dat is zeer nieuw.
- (24) PU: // men det är klart att / om man nu bestämmer sej för att riva kraftverk / som motsvarar all den energi vi får från vattenkraften / så kan inte detta gå alldeles spårlost förbi / och linje tre bekräftar väl också detta genom att själva hävda att det finns inget så kärnkraftsberoende land som < sverige >
- (25) RV: [overlap] Het probleem van mijnheer Dewinter is dat hij alleen...
DW: [overlap] Het hangt eraan...
I: [overlap] Ja.
DW: ...vast.
RV: ...kijkt naar het verleden. En wij willen iets doen aan...
I: [overlap] OK
RV: ...de toekomst en daar weigert mijnheer Dewinter over te discussiëren.
I: Nee, hij heeft een duidelijke stelling. Zijn toekomst is: vol is vol.
DW: [overlap] immigratiestop.
- (26) DW: [overlap] Wat u doet...
AD: [overlap] ...allez da kan niet. Da kan rechtelijk niet...
DW: [overlap] ...door de integratie
VR: [overlap] Mijnheer Dewinter?
DW: [overlap] ...door de integratie af te remmen...
AD: [overlap] ... de rechten van de mens...
DW: [overlap] is...
AD: [overlap] ...zeggen zeer duidelijk...
DW: [overlap]...de achterstand...
I: [overlap] Dit is onverstaanbaar. Laten we die...
DW: [overlap]...de achterstand importeren. En dat is een foute stelling.

- (27) PU: det är egentligen så självklart att till och med linje tre borde kunna hålla med om det // vi kan använda kärnkraften i förvisningen om att den dess risker till trots / är säkrare än varje annat alternativ som i dag står till vårt förfogande / och det är ju detta som är det viktiga /
- (28) I: [overlap] Ja, mijnheer Daems, wel vervelend voor de VLD hé. Hij staat niet eens op de lijst en toch staat hij centraal in de schijnwerpers.
 RD: Wel ik wil het eerst eens hebben over die roep naar Dehaene. Ik heb begrepen dat mevrouw Schauwvlieghe een website heeft geopend en ze wilde honderdduizend handtekening, ze is al aan vijfduizend. Da's ne geweldige roep als ge 't mij vraagt.
 I: Ja, in één week tijd hé.
 RD: [overlap] Maar los daarvan...
 I: [overlap] Da's in één week tijd hé.
 VR: [overlap] Als ge vijfduizend als ge vijfduizend brieven krijgt...
 RD: [overlap] ... maar los daarvan...
 VR: [overlap] ik zou daar...ik denk dat ge...
 RD: [overlap] Oh maar...
 VR: [overlap] ... content zoudt zijn hé...
 RD: [overlap] Maar collega van Rompuy...
 VR: [overlap] Ik denk dat ge content zoudt zijn.
 RD: [overlap] Van internet...
 VR: [overlap] 'k denk dat ge er de laatste tijd geen vijfhonderd gehad hebt hé...
 RD: [overlap] ... van internet ken ik iets...
 VR: [overlap] Ik denk dat ge er geen vijfduizend gehad hebt.
 RD: [overlap] Ge zijt enorm opgejaagd vind ik vandaag.
- (30) och när det gäller olja så säger Per Unckel att / det är alldeles klart att det går att ersätta oljeberoendet med kärnkraft men för att använda dina egna ord i ett tidigare sammanhang / det är ju inte sant du vet ju att för att göra oss av med hela oljeberoendet skulle det gå åt en femtio sextio reaktorer i det här landet /
- (32) RM: vi skulle kunna skaffa hundratusen nya daghemsplatser vi skulle kunna skaffa trettiotusen nya jobb i barntillsynen vi skulle kunna göra en bättre skola // alltihop det här / är saker och ting som vi / får svårt att göra under åttiotalet under alla förhållanden men det blir ännu svårare med den snabbavveckling och dom kostnader som ni lägger på landets medborgare med er politik
 UL: ja det protesterar jag verkligen mot både de fyrahundratusen mil jorderna som du här drog fram är gripna ur luften / liksom hela hela

den dimension du ger / den kris / som du påstår ska uppkomma / om vi avvecklar kärnkraften /

- (33) I: Was het toch niet beter dat mijnheer Van Rossem gehoord was in de onderzoekscommissie? Dan had hij daar kunnen zeggen. Ik weet niet waarom heeft...

RD: [overlap] Ja, wat mij betreft...

I: [overlap] ...waarom

RD: [overlap] wel...

I: ...hij niet gehoord is.

RD: Ja, wat mij betreft ik heb niet de werking van de onderzoekscommissie gedaan, dus dat...

I: [overlap] Zou u het...

RD: [overlap] ...is een zaak van hemzelf.

I: ...een goede zaak gevonden hebben als hij gehoord zou zijn?

RD: Ik had daar absoluut geen enkel probleem mee gehad hoor.

I: Dat is nu te laat.

RD: Ja dat is natuurlijk te laat. De onderzoekscommissie is voorbij maar de heer Van Rossem heeft blijkbaar nog andere kanalen om zijn mening te ventileren.

- (34) DW: Inderdaad, wat Fortuyn zei: vol is vol. En ik denk niet dat wij nood hebben aan nogmaals meer nieuwe vreemdelingen. Neen. Wij moeten de bestaande vreemdelingen voor de keuze plaatsen: aanpassen of terugkeren. Dus een inburgeringsbeleid voor degenen die er al zijn. Mag ik er toch op wijzen dat dit voor paarsgroen natuurlijk een beetje een alibidecreet is hé. Men heeft tweehonderd en dertigduizend vreemdelingen...

RV: [overlap] Niet juist.

- (36) PU: till slut Lennart Dahleus du är mej fortfarande svaret skyldig på frågan / vilken statlig utredning var det / som hade talat om den brännande solen / så som en illustration till vad kärnkraft egentligen är

LD: du vet att poesin använder ju faktiskt ett annat språk än / vad vi gör i / fackprosa för dom framställningar vi har gjort från folkkampanjen / så har vi utgått ifrån dom statliga utredningar som ligger till underlag för den här folkomröstningen /