

# Review of: "Boring Language Is Constraining the Impact of Climate Science"

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This is not a good research article as it lacks the rigour (as observed by others, any conclusion based on a sample of 5 random papers doesn't stand to scrutiny) or the objectivity that should underpin this kind of publication. The paper is also full of personal references, quotes, and unsubstantiated opinions. This makes the manuscript more of an opinion piece than a research article. On the positive side, whilst not fully original in its approach, the article is nice to read. Even when considered as an opinion piece, I do have a fundamental problem with the key thesis of the authors, though. They seem to make no clear distinction between language as a tool for discussion within a circle of experts in a specific field and language as a way for communicating to the general public or, more generally, to a group of non-experts. This is an important shortcoming of the paper.

Whilst demonstrations, formulae, and other scientific formalisms could appear more or less beautiful (and the importance of aesthetics in the arts is a subject that has not received the attention it deserves), their fundamental role is to convey unambiguously complex thoughts or evidence to a group of experts who are familiar with that technical jargon. In my mind, the role of emotions in scientific articles is limited. Scientists can be fascinated and attracted by well-written papers that turned out to be wrong or not useful. Similarly, they can struggle when reading and digesting papers that provided evidence or results capable of changing the course of science. Whilst I welcome the call to improve our collective ability to write good papers, I think the primary goal of a research article is to be clear, to provide enough evidence to objectively support a new finding or reject one, and allow others to do the same.

Something quite a bit different is the world of communication. Key to effective communication is the ability to engage with the audience through a variety of channels and especially to engage with their emotions. This is what the advertisement industry has done since the dawn of time. As a climate scientist working on communication, I appreciate the call of the authors to use the same tricks that the deniers or other contrarians are using. To some extent, we are using some of these tools already. At the same time, I think there is a catch. The fundamental engine behind any scientific development is the idea that we can change our minds when presented with new evidence. It is reasoning before passion and emotions. Admitting that the only way of convincing people of something is engaging with them emotionally wouldn't be an implicit admission of failure for science?

I really appreciate the call the authors make for using a wider set of expertise and experiences when communicating climate science. Over the years, I worked on a variety of science-arts projects, and in the majority of cases, they delivered well beyond my initial expectations. That said, I think these additional tools at our disposal should be used to reduce the

gap that exists between scientists and society, making more and more clear how science works. Rather than living in a world where the majority of people “believe” in climate change because their favourite influencer on Instagram does, I would prefer to live in a world where artists can help explain that an accepted scientific theory is not just someone's opinion but rather the best model we have to describe the evidence we gather from the world around us.