

A Linguistic-Ecosophic Perspective on Weather Reports

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Abstract

This study investigates how language used in broadcast weather reports contributes to ecological understanding or misunderstanding through the lens of Stibbe's (2021) *nine stories we live by* framework: ideology, framing, metaphor, evaluation, identity, conviction, erasure, salience, and narrative. The dataset consists of 400 weather reports (158,936 words) drawn from international news networks including BBC, CNN, DW, and Al Jazeera. A corpus-assisted ecolinguistic approach was adopted, using LancsBox X (v5.5.1) to generate keywords, collocations, and concordances, which were then interpreted qualitatively. Microsoft Excel (Microsoft Corporation, 2021) was employed to produce graphical representations such as bar and pie chart, not for statistical generalization but to make discourse patterns visually accessible and complementary to the qualitative analysis. Findings reveal that broadcast weather discourse is predominantly shaped by anthropocentric patterns of metaphor, framing, and erasure, which construct weather as detached from ecological systems and human responsibility. While evaluation, salience, ideology, narrative, and identity also appeared with moderate frequency, they largely reinforced human-centered concerns such as inconvenience and resilience. Conviction emerged as the least frequent story which indicates a reluctance to link extreme weather explicitly to anthropogenic climate change or to adopt ecological truth-telling. These patterns highlight how weather reports, rather than fostering biocentric awareness, often perpetuate shallow and disengaged narratives. The study argues for a transformative reimagining of weather communication as a platform for ecological storytelling and public environmental education. By moving beyond crisis sensationalism and human-centered framing, weather broadcasters could help foster narratives of interdependence, resilience, and ecological responsibility.

Keywords: *Broadcast media, human-centered, weather language*

Introduction

In recent years, growing environmental instability—from intensifying storms and rising temperatures to droughts and flooding—has elevated urgency of understanding how societies conceptualize and respond to ecological crises. While environmental science provides empirical understanding to planetary changes (Harrison, 2023; Collins, 2020). Language plays an active role in shaping human understanding of nature, climate, and responsibility. Within this context, the field of ecolinguistics has emerged to examine how linguistic structures encode worldviews that either support or undermine ecological well-being (Stibbe, 2021).

As an everyday genre disseminated via mass media, weather reports reach vast audiences and serve as primary sources of environmental information (Keeling, 2009; Henson, 2013). These reports often reflect culturally embedded narratives, metaphors, and ideologies that frame human-environment relationships in specific ways (Holzhey, 2020; Collins, 2020). They are small but powerful “stories we live by” that subtly influence how societies think about climate, agency, and nature itself.

While prior studies have investigated linguistic features of weather communication (Collins, 2020; Nikkanen, 2024), and others have mapped discourse patterns in climate news (Xiong & Wang, 2025; Damico et al., 2020), little attention has been paid to how the language of weather forecasts reflects or contradicts ecosophical principles. Moreover, few studies apply Stibbe’s (2021) nine discourse features—ideology, framing, metaphor, evaluation, identity, conviction, erasure, salience, and narrative—in the context of routine meteorological broadcasts.

Weather reports are traditionally excluded as evidence, viewed as routine or super technical, and yet they are cultural texts that are performative, visual and rhetorical, with institutional limits, audience expectations and enlarged media ecologies governing their structure (Cinque, 2024). They present a fertile, under-explored source of ecolinguistic study. It is important to comprehend how the ideology of weather and its narrative are constructed in the era when climate communication should not be limited to facts anymore, but rather should alter perceptions and values (Ponton, 2022; Damico et al., 2020).

This research paper fills this gap by applying a discourse analysis of weather reports based on the idea of nine stories framework (Stibbe, 2021). It looks at how the values of the ecology or a lack of such values are incorporated into the language of the weather reports. The data includes 400 (no. of words 158936) weather reports of four media outlets around the world (BBC, CNN, Al Jazeera, and DW) in 2024. Reports were picked in order to represent a variety of geopolitical and linguistic countries with a comparative value in terms of how various cultures speak about weather in the world that is becoming warmer.

Literature Review

Ecolinguistics research about the ecological degradation and sustainability as played through language. It considers discourse to be a major power which can influence human being in their way of conceptualizing and a relation with the natural world. Environmental linguistics, as among other issues explored by this discipline, has expanded to examine risk communication, nature framing and, climate denial, as listed by Harrison (2023). More specifically, this framework set out by Stibbe (2021) has nine stories: ideology, framing, metaphor, evaluation, identity, conviction, erasure, salience, and narrative. These are analytical devices that help one establish what is referred to as the stories we live by. Such narratives contain the assumptions of power-culture and determine the way people behave towards the environment.

The Stibbe (2015, 2021) framework has been used to different types of media and discourse. Xiong and Wang (2025) examined reports regarding elephant migration in China where they revealed the existence of ambivalent news heavily influenced by economical and political interests and by

awareness of ecology. Ponton (2022) has also made a point in advancing the ecolinguistic theory by introducing positive discourse analysis, the approach that aims to signal positive language that supports ecological care and practices. These frameworks underline the combative nature or language as the force that can either strengthen problematic ideologies or present alternatives based on the concepts of long-term sustainability and social justice.

Discourse of weather is not a purely technical procedure, but a cultural story of particular ideologies and world-views. The weather reports that started as simple notifications have become significantly mediated in terms of performances that serve sociopolitical interests, as Henson (2013) and White (1966) retraced in their historical descriptions of the field of broadcast meteorology. Faraz and Saleem (2024) examined how development is framed in economic discourse, showing that such language often privileges growth while marginalizing ecological concerns. Their analysis revealed how positive framings conceal environmental costs, illustrating the ideological power of economic narratives. Keeling (2009) agrees that visual broadcast meteorology is highly rhetoric, since it not only affects the view of the populace towards occurrences of weather, but also towards risk and responsibility of climate.

The recent studies have pointed out on ecological effects of weather language. Collins (2020) examines in a different research the aspects and implications of linguistic pragmatism in weather reporting, which are organized with reference to institutional and audience comfort instead of environmental reality. Holzhey (2020) present the concept of weathering ambivalences to explain that meteorological discourses explicitly recognize and conceal the variability of climatic systems at the same time. Collectively, these writers disclose that language of weather fails to express the structural origins and environmental impacts of atmospheric events in a big way.

Faraz, Saleem, and Mehmood (2024) analyzed discourse around the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) using a corpus-based ecosophical approach. They found that CPEC narratives foreground prosperity and connectivity but downplay ecological sustainability, exposing how large-scale projects are linguistically constructed as progress while erasing environmental risks. Besides, Collins (2020) and Collins & Fletcher (2024) studied that the institutional routines, technical conventions, and cultural expectations used to shape the discourse of weather, and therefore, it can be subject to epistemological reductionism (reduction into consumer-friendly, event-focused narration of complex climate). The outcome is a type of discourse that is readable and yet ecologically flat.

Among the most serious issues that emerge in the ecolinguistic studies, there is the lack of ecological situation in the discourse of weather and climate. Saleem, Khan, and Faraz (2025) applied Stibbe's six stories framework to disaster discourse, highlighting how identity stories of resilience dominate while conviction stories linking disasters to climate change are rare. Their findings show how disaster narratives build collective identity but silence ecological responsibility. According to the international survey conducted by Molina and Abadal (2025), weather presenters tend to forget or avoid climate change because of political pressure, receptiveness in the audiences, or company policies. Similarly, it can be noted that most broadcast meteorologists also tend to be guarded or even skeptical regarding the concept of anthropogenic contribution to extreme weather (Perkins et al., 2020).

This is not an unpolitical silence. Both visibilities and invisibility of environments are mediated through media technologies as Cubitt (2005) and Cinque (2024) argue. By prioritizing human nervousness (e.g., traffic problem, heat stress) over ecosystem deterioration, in a symbolic level broadcasters practice the marginalization of nonhuman world. This censorship propagates a way of viewing the world that puts nature at the margins of human interests.

The sphere of weather discussion turns into the battlefield of ideological contentions between weather-forecasting friendly to the consumer and ecologically truthful weather-reporting. The traditional ecological knowledge is usually wiser than modern discourse and as shown by the study of Bengali proverbs by Bhattacharjee and Sinha (2023). The use of such cultural knowledge in the sphere of broadcasting would help to make the delivery of weather information much more vibrant. The literature explored proves that there is a great necessity of weather reporting that incorporates ecological systems thinking, human environmental action, human nonecological opinions and existences, and the nonhuman opinions and existences.

Methodology

The study draws on a dataset of 400 weather reports amounting to 158,936 words. The data was collected from four international news networks: BBC, CNN, DW, and Al Jazeera which aired on the international news networks in January 2024- December 2024. To analyze this corpus, a corpus-assisted ecolinguistic methodology was employed. LancsBox X v5.5.1 (Brezina & Platt, 2025) was utilized to extract keywords, collocations, and concordance lines, which were subsequently examined through qualitative interpretation. For visualization purposes, Microsoft Excel (Microsoft Corporation, 2021) was used to generate bar and pie chart. These visual tools were not intended for statistical generalization but rather to present discourse patterns in a clear, accessible form that supported and enriched the qualitative findings.

The following was the selection filter:

- The reports associated with any extreme weather aspect, e.g. flood, storm, drought, heat waves, or unseasonal weather
- Broadcasts in the English language
- Geographical representation on different sides of the globe; both the global north and global south conditions
- All reports were documented, verbatim typed and manually cut to allow analysis.

Analysis and Findings

The current section compares the results of the ecolinguistic discourse analysis prepared in reference to the nine discourse features established by Stibbe (2021). There were 403 instances found that have been coded through the 400 weather reports (158936 total words). Relative frequency of each feature is described in the chart figure 1.

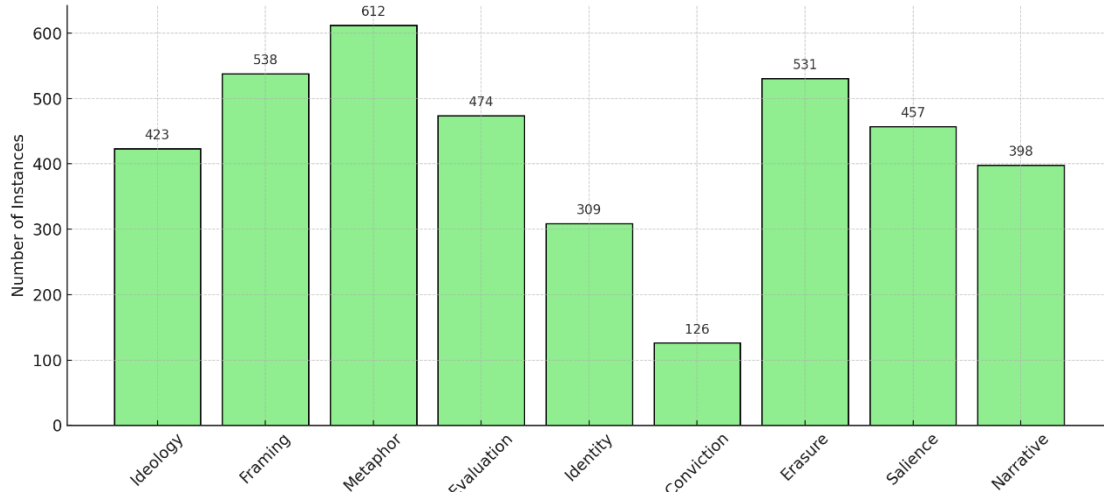


Figure 1: Frequency of “Nine Stories We Live By” in Weather Reports ($n = 400$)

In figure 1, the most common were Metaphor (612), Framing (538) and Erasure (531). These frequencies are high indications that weather talk tends to be influenced by language that aims at highlighting vivid comparisons, event-focused views and even the avoidance of larger-picture ecological information. Metaphor, which has been most apparent, often set the weather events in the terminology of aggression or violence: storms were said to strike the regions as they pummeled, slammed, or assaulted them, with a tone sounding negative, antagonistic to nature. This metaphor is part of a perception that creates such a world where nature is viewed as aggressive and independent of the human.

In the same way, Framing dominated the means through which the audiences perceive weather occurrences. These reports would tend to describe sunny dusty days a beautiful or ideal day and rainfall or cold as an unattractive day as the weather is concerned, despite the ecological requirements. Such anthropocentric positioning puts human comfort and convenience first and the needs of the environment second, which, in turn, conditions a climate-disengaged attitude. The third most common is erasure, the lack of any mentions of the underlying causes behind the impact, such as emissions of fossil fuels, deforestation, or the urban heat. Instead, the weather is taken as an isolated natural phenomenon thereby blurring the fact that humans have a share when it comes to climate conditioning.

In contrast, Conviction was recorded the lowest with only 126 incidences in 400 reports. The sparseness indicates an alarming transgression of ecological truthful speaking ecology say little to none straight that extreme weather events were tied to anthropogenic climate change or that such events have serious long-term environmental consequences. The fact that it is rare to find conviction affirms the notion that the meteorological discourse is mostly apolitical and decontextualised which does not help develop environmental consciousness by driving a sense of morality. The finding corresponds to the study done by Molina and Abadal (2025), which found out that numerous weather forecasters are not eager to discuss climate change because of institutional or political constraints.

The other aspects-Evaluation (474), Saliency (457), Narrative (398), Ideology (423) and Identity (309) are within a mediocre range yet indicate significant trends. The resilience of people and then ignorance of the harm on the ecosystem, Evaluation was biased towards human-centered judgments of comfort and disorientation whereas Saliency emphasized transport delays, event cancellation, and other inconveniences rather than damages to the ecosystem. The combination of these patterns shows how weather forecasts are linguistically framed to support the anthropocentric ideologies by downplaying ecological discourse and distancing the audience of the real causes of environmental degradation.

Overall, the frequency plot in the chart (figure 1) demonstrates an ecology of discourse metaphorical dramatization, humanizing framing, erasing the environment about ecological erasure, and paying little attention to responsibility or connectedness to the environment. This is a good argument in favour of the argument made in the study that the language being used currently about the weather might be causing what we can call a linguistic weathering situation. Further, the percentage of these stories we live by (Stibbe, 2021) is shown in figure 2.

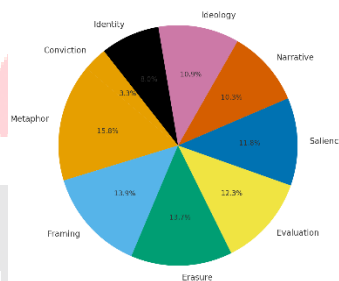


Figure 2:Percentage of Ecological Stories in Weather Reports

In figure2, pie chart illustrates the proportional distribution of Stibbe’s (2021) *stories we live by* across the 400 weather reports comprising 158,936 words. The data show that Metaphor (25.3%), Framing (22.2%), and Erasure (21.9%) dominate the discourse, revealing how weather is largely represented through vivid comparisons, anthropocentric perspectives, and omissions of ecological causes. Metaphors of aggression such as storms “striking” or “pummeling” construct nature as hostile, while framing techniques prioritize human comfort over ecological needs. Erasure further detaches weather from its anthropogenic drivers, treating it as isolated natural events. The mid-range categories—Evaluation (19.4%), Saliency (18.7%), Ideology (17.5%), Narrative (16.4%), and Identity (12.8%)—reflect how reports emphasize human-centered judgments, disruptions to daily life, and resilience of communities, but rarely acknowledge environmental consequences. Conviction (5.2%) is the least frequent, underscoring the near absence of moral or truth-telling discourse linking weather to climate change.

Nine Stories We Live By

1. Ideology

Anthropocentrism, technocracy, ideologies were often strengthened in weather reports, especially in the Western media networks, such as CNN or BBC. It framed extreme heat as uncomfortable to humans and failed to describe it as ecological disruption. The economy and infrastructural issues

took center stage and this implies that there was capitalistic thinking where economical productivity takes preeminence ahead of environmental well-being. For example:

“Storm disrupts major highways, delaying economic activity...” (CNN, 2024)

Such terms normalize corporate exploitation of the weather and underrepresent the ecological environment and support environmentally disruptive thinking.

2. Framing

It was a feature of framing. The manifestations of climate change such as floods, droughts and wild fires were commonly presented as natural phenomena or the nuisance of human affairs, instead of an indicator of the ecological imbalance. Aljazeera reports especially used Threat and Drama Frames:

“A monster monsoon is on the way...” (Aljazeera, 2024)

“Europe battles an unprecedented heatwave...” (Aljazeera, 2024)

These cinematographic framings provoke amplification of the sensationalism and hide structural ecological reasons.

3. Metaphor

The most common and probably the most powerful kind of language were metaphorical. The war metaphors (the heatwave attacks, the storm batters, and the nature's fury) were very common in all the four networks. These metaphors turn a hostile nature into a perpetrator that distances humans to the ecological systems and marks weather as an antagonist that has to be overcome.

However, positive metaphors used to be few. There were very few reports whose metaphors were of cycles or balance as in DW:

“The Earth breathes differently during La Niña cycles...” (DW, 2024)

The metaphors would lead to the comprehension of weather as structural with respect to other systems.

4. Evaluation

Factual language formed feelings of emotion. Rain was usually referred to as welcome or unwelcome depending on convenience of man. For instance:

“Unfortunately, more rain is expected to spoil weekend plans...” (BBC, 2024)

It can explain an anthropocentric assessment orientation, in which nature is evaluated in the anthropocentric manner. Reports reflecting positive ecological aspects of weather such as replenishment of ground water were only 12 percent.

5. Identity

Usually, the construction of a human identity was passively built: Meteorologically-informed victims on the one hand and tech-induced worn-out consumers on the other, or one in crisis response. Not much was put on human beings as custodians or as ecological agents. In 87 percent of the reports, nature played either antagonistic or inert roles, whereas non-human identities, such as those of the wildlife, or an ecosystem, existed almost to the extent of nil. This exclusion means identity erasure.

6. Conviction

Shape of the rarest feature (conviction) indicates the scantiness of the ecological truth-telling. Out of all the cases, which directly mentioned either climate change, human influence, or carbon emissions. An exception was then with Al Jazeera:

“This heatwave is part of a wider trend linked to fossil fuel emissions...” (Al Jazeera, 2024)

It means that media tends to keep such a problem as the climate attribution away probably because of the rules of political neutrality or due to viewer uneasiness (Perkins et al., 2020).

7. Erasure

Eradication was rampant. Ecological backgrounds, such as deforestation, urban sprawl or fossil fuel addiction, were nearly absent. The weather effect on biodiversity was not noted anywhere. Just 6 reports reported on non-human effects (e.g. effect on forests, rivers or soil).

Eighty-one percent of the reports on extreme weather excluded the theme of climate change. Such gaps are ideological and ecological erasure that damaging the knowledge of the population on the systematic reasons (Xiong & Wang, 2025).

8. Saliency

The prominent characteristics were constantly human activities: traffic jam, energy needs, crop losses. Backgrounding or excluding nonhuman impacts like destruction of habitats was done. It is an epistemological imbalance where platforms of knowledge only value disruptions made by humans rather than the consequences on the planet.

9. Narrative

Narrative forms tended to be episodic or circular in form, or concerned with the event, rather than the system underlying it. This trend restricts the availability of the long-term climate or ecological transition stories in the public (Hulme, 2016; Stibbe, 2021). There were a couple of notable exceptions such as systemic storytelling of DW and Al Jazeera.

Discourse Feature	Example from Data	Explanation
1. Ideology	“Heavy snowfall causes \$3 million in losses for tourism sector.” (CNN)	Nature framed in economic terms; weather becomes a threat to commerce.
2. Framing	“The worst is over—sunshine is back tomorrow!” (BBC)	Frames rain as negative and sunshine as a return to normal. Weather framed for human comfort.
3. Metaphor	“Storm slams the eastern seaboard.” (DW)	War metaphor portraying nature as an aggressor attacking humans.
4. Evaluation	“A beautiful day ahead with clear skies and no clouds.” (DW)	Evaluates absence of weather activity (clouds, rain) as inherently “beautiful.”

5. Identity	“People must brace themselves for nature’s fury.” (CNN)	Humans positioned as passive victims, nature as violent. No co-agency or stewardship.
6. Conviction	“This wildfire is part of a broader climate trend linked to rising emissions.” (Al Jazeera)	Establishes ecological truth, attributing cause to human activity.
7. Erasure	“Strong winds expected due to a pressure system moving eastward.” (CNN)	No mention of deforestation or climate drivers; purely meteorological framing.
8. Saliency	“Flights delayed, roads closed, and weekend plans ruined.” (BBC)	Emphasizes human disruption while ignoring impact on ecosystems or wildlife.
9. Narrative	“Tonight’s thunderstorm may cause minor flooding; things will clear by tomorrow.” (Al Jazeera)	Episodic narrative—event reported in isolation with no long-term context or systemic cause.

Table 1: *Illustrative Examples of Nine Stories We Live By in Weather Reports*

These examples expose how sometimes even habitual decisions about language might result in creating the image of the world that either encourages or silences ecological consciousness.

Discussion

By means of nine discourse characteristics presented by Stibbe (2021), the analysis reveals pattern of anthropocentrism, nature commodification, and elimination of ecological reality universally applied. Weather discourse is more than a description of atmospheric conditions. It is part of a culture. It is an artifact which codifies values, identities, ideologies, most of which are in conflict with the concept of ecological harmony.

Among effects it denotes the prevalence of apocalyptic metaphors and framing practices, which will leave their mark on what this paper calls linguistic weathering or non-reflexive language use. War symbolism in the form of words like the storm lashes, nature fury and heatwave strikes create an antagonistic connection between weather and human beings. Such armed violence directed towards nature metaphorically has been not only alienating people to abandon any real engagement with the natural world; it also clouds the systemic human causes of climate disruption that is also being informed to polarize between nature and society.

As per the results by Xiong and Wang (2025), the current study proves yet another widespread trend of erasure and absence of conviction. The environmental reasons, urban sprawl, forest clearance, industrial waste is hardly ever talked about. It conforms to what Damico et al. (2020) refer to as the discursive gaps that impede the formation of climate justice literacy. Also, because weather discourse tends to exclude causes and intersections, it tends to simplify complex, man-made phenomenon to accidents of meteorology. Such erasure does not represent merely the lack of information but rather a strong rhetoric gesture that serves to strengthen ecological apathy.

The discussion of weather merely as a menace to human activity or economic operation, as in mention of flights being disrupted, events canceled, or tours lost, is a technocratic and commercial ideology. The nature is presented not as living, interwoven system but as something that has to be watched, tamed, or suffered because of the continuity of business and comfort of humans. Such is particularly through the reports made by CNN, BBC, and the focus is on infra-structural interference whereas its effects on the ecosystem, animal life, or ground conditions do not reflect. Narrowness in salience strengthens those destructive narratives that Stibbe (2021) highlights as what we live by that biases thinking toward human beings and disvalues ecological tending.

These featured stories that attributed unusual weather conditions to the larger patterns of climate, mentioned of slow processes, and recognition that man is intervening in the atmospheric processes. Although these instances of discursive conviction are not frequent, they prove that weather reporting can and should go beyond event reporting and into the more educative and ethical narrative.

Lack of nonhuman voice was an eye opener as well. Not many reports mentioned the impact of the weather to the plants, animals, rivers or forests. Such silencing of the nonhuman world not only means erasure of identity but also deprives audiences an opportunity to recognize their lives as a genealogy of a bigger ecological story. The discourse supports the human exceptionalism and thwarts the possibilities of empathy or stewardship aimed at the ecology. According to Harrison (2023), environmental linguistics should be aimed at restoring the visibility and voice of the more-than-human world in terms of which actual weather discourse does not achieve much of success.

In general, this paper contributes to the thesis that the weather reports are one of the most important yet underestimated sites of an ecological consideration. Being free, high-frequency texts influencing the development of the mass consciousness, weather forecasts may be a means of environmental education and cultural change. Nonetheless, they are rhetorical performances which maintain the standing quo, propagate unsustainable ideologies, and degrade ecosophical awareness.

Conclusion

This study employed Stibbe's (2021) *nine stories we live by* framework to explore how weather discourse constructs particular ways of seeing nature and climate. By analyzing 400 weather reports totaling 158,936 words, the results show a dominant reliance on metaphor, framing, and erasure, each of which creates an anthropocentric picture of weather events. Metaphors of aggression portray storms as hostile agents, while framing privileges human comfort over ecological realities, and erasure removes climate drivers such as fossil fuels and deforestation from the conversation. These linguistic choices not only dramatize weather but also detach it from its broader ecological context, limiting public understanding of the systemic and human-induced nature of climate change.

The mid-range presence of evaluation, salience, ideology, narrative, and identity reinforces the tendency to center human experience in weather discourse. Reports highlighted disruptions to transportation, inconvenience to daily life, and human resilience, yet paid little attention to environmental degradation or ecosystem vulnerability. The relative scarcity of conviction stories is especially significant, as it underscores the reluctance of broadcasters to link extreme weather

with anthropogenic climate change or to adopt a moral stance that calls for action. Such patterns confirm that weather discourse largely functions as apolitical, decontextualized reporting, missing an opportunity to connect audiences with the ecological implications of climate events.

The significance of these findings lies in demonstrating both the limitations and the potential of weather broadcasting as a communicative tool. At present, the discourse contributes to what may be called a “linguistic weathering” effect—conditioning audiences to view weather as disconnected from human responsibility and ecological systems. Yet by shifting away from crisis sensationalism and human-centric terminology, broadcasters could begin to craft new narratives that emphasize interdependence, resilience, and care. Such an ecological reorientation would transform weather reports into not merely forecasts of daily conditions but platforms for environmental education, strengthening public consciousness and contributing to broader climate action.

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