

Discourse and Power: Persuasive Language in Indonesian Media

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A B S T R A C T

The discourse in Indonesia media today has a significant impact on public opinion and attitudes, so it is important to investigate the subtle dynamics of persuasive communication. In order to better understand how the combination of various language structures affects the effectiveness of persuasive verbal contact, this study looks at the idea of synergistic pragmatic effects. This study employs a strong functional-linguistic methodology and uses a corpus of opinion pieces and newspaper articles from both American and British publications. It analyzes linguistic devices like metaphor, irony, comedy, emotionally charged lexemes, hyperbole, interdiscursive references, and rhetorical questions using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The results demonstrate the transformative potential of skillfully applied synergy in accomplishing communication objectives and improving message perception. Different language patterns interact to elicit specific cognitive and affective responses from audiences, influencing how they understand the information that is being delivered. The area where teaching English as a foreign language for cross-cultural professional communication has the greatest immediate application of this research's practical implications. Through combining components of critical thinking, media literacy, functional-linguistic analysis, and language proficiency, learners are better equipped to recognize and resist speech manipulation in media texts. This study adds to the body of knowledge already available on the subject of language's function in media communication and emphasizes the need for more investigation into the relationship between discourse, language, and persuasion in media.

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Introduction

Within the contexts of language ideologies, political discourse, and propaganda, the study of speech manipulation and persuasion has been widely conducted in the science of linguistics.

The establishment and sustenance of power relations, the reinforcement of social hierarchies, and the swaying of public opinion are acknowledged as outcomes of these practices (Fairclough, 1989) Changes in the communication landscape that can be objectively observed have led to a rise in the popularity of speech manipulation, which has historically been criticized in journalism and socio-political discourse. Speech manipulation, according to Koptina (2007), is the deft use of linguistic tools to subtly affect the addressee's cognitive and behavioral processes. According to Van Dijk (2006), manipulation entails the use of communication techniques by the manipulator to exert influence over the subject, frequently against the subject's desire and interests.

According to Van Dijk (2006), manipulation is linked to mind control, illegitimate dominance, and ideological discourse that highlights advantages and disadvantages. There is a wealth of research on the connections between language, manipulation, power,

and ideology, especially when it comes to political speech and discourse. Although researchers occasionally distinguish between persuasion and manipulation, it's crucial to remember that this distinction is arbitrary and is frequently missed in the literature. According to Mulović (2022) manipulation is defined as a speaker's "negative" aim that is kept secret from the listener, resulting in linguistic content that is compelling yet has layers of hidden meaning. Zhdanko (2022) examines how linguistic research on speech manipulation—which includes both verbal and nonverbal components including intentions, values, and emotions—is becoming more and more popular. Particularly noticeable is the rise of new speech-manipulation strategies in the journalistic, political, and religious spheres.

To comprehend the persuasive power of language in mass media discourse, one must look at the many functional-pragmatic aspects' cooperative synergistic effect. According to Pravikova (2018), creating a distinct "semiotic world" strategically might affect interlocutors' cognitive attitudes and steer them into taking particular positions. The examination of both verbal and nonverbal components, such as emotions, intentions, and values, as well as their influence on the minds of the audience, is necessary for the research of cooperative synergistic effects in persuasive rhetoric.

In conclusion, the study of speech manipulation and persuasion is an important field of research that encompasses a wide range of language techniques, underlying motivations, and complex social contexts. Simultaneously, the implementation of novel techniques is expected to yield further perspectives on the functional-pragmatic mechanisms that serve as the foundation for persuasive discourse. Comprehending the cooperative synergistic effect of persuasive rhetoric in mass media discourse, for example, may reveal the persuasive power of language and its influence on behavioral and cognitive processes.

Result and Discussion

Investigating the power of synergy in discourse within Indonesian media can reveal persuasive language techniques used to influence audiences. Synergy, in this context, refers to the collaborative and coordinated efforts between different elements within media discourse, such as language, visuals, and context, to convey persuasive messages. On the other hand, functional linguistics is a framework within linguistics that focuses on the functions of language, emphasizing how language operates in communication and how linguistic elements contribute to meaning-making in various contexts. The synergies of the functional-pragmatic discursive approach lie in its ability to combine functional linguistic elements with pragmatic considerations to analyze and understand how language functions in discourse. This approach explores how language is used in context, considering both its structural and functional aspects alongside its pragmatic implications.

The power of synergy in mass media discourse is profound, as it amplifies the impact of messages across various platforms and channels. Mass media leverages synergy by integrating different elements to create a cohesive and influential communication strategy. In essence, synergy in mass media discourse harnesses the combined strength of multiple elements to create a more impactful and far-reaching communication strategy. It's a key aspect of contemporary media campaigns, ensuring that messages resonate, engage, and leave a lasting impression on audiences across different channels and platforms. The power of synergy in discourse lies in its ability to create a harmonious and amplified effect by combining various elements to convey a message persuasively, informatively, or emotively. When used effectively, synergy in discourse can

significantly impact how a message is perceived and understood by an audience. Analyzing these elements within Indonesian media discourse can reveal how synergy is harnessed to create persuasive messages. It's essential to consider the socio-cultural context, target audience demographics, and media platforms used, as these factors significantly impact the effectiveness of persuasive language techniques. Additionally, understanding the ethical implications of persuasive discourse in media is crucial to assess its impact responsibly.

In essence, synergy in discourse maximizes the impact of communication by orchestrating various elements in a way that enhances understanding, engagement, and persuasiveness. Whether in advertising, public speaking, journalism, or any form of communication, the effective use of synergy can significantly elevate the effectiveness of the message being conveyed.

Functional Linguistic and Mass Media Discourse

Functional linguistics examines how language functions within different contexts, including mass media discourse. Mass media discourse refers to the language used in various forms of media, such as newspapers, television, radio, and online platforms. Functional linguistics helps analyze how language is used in these media contexts to achieve specific purposes and communicate messages effectively to the audience.

Within mass media discourse, functional linguistics can explore various linguistic elements: **Textual Features:** Analyzing the structure, coherence, and cohesion of media texts. This includes examining how headlines, paragraphs, and sentences are constructed to convey information and capture attention. **Lexical Choices:** Studying the vocabulary used in media discourse to evoke particular emotions, convey specific tones, or persuade the audience. This could involve analyzing the use of certain words or phrases for their connotations or rhetorical effects. **Grammatical Structures:** Understanding how different grammatical structures, such as active/passive voice, tense, modality, and sentence types (declarative, interrogative, imperative), are employed in media texts to influence reader/viewer perception and engagement. **Pragmatics:** Investigating the implied meanings, presuppositions, and implicatures within media language. This involves understanding how context, cultural factors, and shared knowledge affect the interpretation of media messages. **Discourse Strategies:** Examining the strategies used in media discourse, such as framing, agenda-setting, or persuasive techniques, to influence public opinion or shape discourse on specific topics. Functional linguistics helps uncover the underlying patterns and functions of language in mass media, shedding light on how media messages are constructed and how they impact the audience's understanding and interpretation.

Synergy refers to the combined or cooperative interaction of elements that, when working together, produce a greater effect than the sum of their individual effects. In the context of discourse, synergy can significantly contribute to its potency in several ways. **Enhanced Communication:** Synergy within discourse involves the harmonious interaction of various linguistic elements—such as words, tone, context, and non-verbal cues—which collectively enhance the effectiveness of communication. When these elements align cohesively, they reinforce the intended message and make it more impactful. **Increased Persuasiveness:** When different components of discourse, such as language choice, rhetorical devices, and emotional appeal, synergize effectively, they can make the discourse more persuasive. A coherent and well-structured argument supported by compelling evidence can influence opinions and beliefs more effectively. Improved

Clarity and Understanding: Synergy in discourse aids in making complex ideas or information more comprehensible. When language, structure, and context work together seamlessly, they facilitate clearer communication, ensuring that the message is understood as intended. Engagement and Attention: Synergistic elements in discourse can capture and maintain the audience's attention. A combination of engaging language, relevant content, and appropriate delivery can create a discourse that is more captivating and memorable. Reinforcement of Message: When different channels or mediums work in synergy, such as combining verbal discourse with visual aids or multimedia presentations, they reinforce and complement each other, making the message more resonant and memorable. Cultural and Contextual Relevance: Synergy allows discourse to be tailored to specific cultural or contextual nuances. When discourse elements align with the audience's cultural background or current context, it increases the relevance and effectiveness of the message. In essence, synergy in discourse integrates various components to create a more potent and impactful communication experience. It maximizes the potential of each element to work harmoniously towards a common communicative goal, resulting in more effective and influential discourse.

Mass media discourse is inherently intertwined with power dynamics. The media, through its various forms like television, newspapers, social media, and more, holds significant influence over public opinion, societal norms, and political ideologies. Power manifests in several ways within mass media discourse. Agenda Setting: Mass media often sets the agenda by selecting which stories to cover, thereby influencing what topics the public focuses on. This power to decide what is newsworthy shapes public perception and understanding of various issues. Gatekeeping: Media acts as a gatekeeper, controlling the flow of information. Editors, journalists, and media owners decide which information reaches the audience and which doesn't, affecting what perspectives are highlighted or marginalized. Framing: The way a story is presented or framed influences how it is interpreted by the audience. Media has the power to frame issues in particular ways that can sway public opinion and perceptions. Bias and Ideology: Media outlets may have specific biases or ideologies that shape the content they produce. This can lead to the promotion of certain viewpoints while marginalizing others, impacting public discourse. Representation and Stereotyping: Mass media shapes how certain groups or individuals are represented. It can perpetuate stereotypes or contribute to the portrayal of certain communities in a particular light, influencing societal attitudes. Political Influence: Media plays a crucial role in shaping political narratives, influencing elections, and molding public opinion about political figures or policies. Understanding power dynamics within mass media discourse is crucial for recognizing how information is constructed, distributed, and consumed. It enables a critical assessment of media messages, encouraging individuals to seek diverse sources and perspectives while being mindful of the potential biases and agendas within media narratives.

Persuasive Language in Indonesian Media

In Indonesian media, discourse and power are intricately linked, particularly regarding the persuasive use of language. Here's how persuasive language operates within the Indonesian media landscape in relation to power dynamic. Understanding the persuasive use of language in Indonesian media requires a critical lens to discern the underlying power dynamics, ideologies, and intentions behind the messaging. This includes recognizing the influence of political affiliations, cultural contexts, and the strategic framing of information to persuade and shape public opinion. Indonesian media often reflects the influence of political powers. Language is used strategically to support

certain political agendas or candidates during elections, shaping public opinion and swaying perceptions. Media outlets in Indonesia wield power in setting the agenda for public discussions. The language used in headlines, editorials, and news reports can direct attention toward specific issues or viewpoints, influencing what the public considers important. Language in Indonesian media often resonates with cultural values and norms. Persuasive language is employed to align with societal beliefs or to challenge them, depending on the media outlet's stance.

Political influence in Indonesian mass media has been a prominent and complex aspect of the country's media landscape. Here are some key points regarding political influence in Indonesian mass media. Historically, media ownership in Indonesia has been concentrated among a few powerful entities, some of which have strong ties to political figures or parties. This ownership structure can influence editorial policies and the coverage of political events. While Indonesia has made strides in press freedom, there have been instances of government regulations or pressures affecting media outlets. This influence might manifest in censorship, selective licensing, or legal actions against dissenting voices, impacting the portrayal of political events. Media outlets in Indonesia often exhibit partisan reporting, aligning themselves with specific political parties or interests. This alignment can affect the tone, framing, and prominence given to certain political viewpoints or personalities. Political powers can influence the media's agenda-setting function. This involves controlling what topics are covered, how they are framed, and the narratives that gain prominence in public discourse. This influence can shape public opinion on political matters. During election periods, media outlets often play a crucial role in shaping public perception of candidates and issues. Political affiliations might lead to biased reporting or favoritism toward specific candidates or parties. The rise of social media has added another dimension to political influence in media. Social platforms are used by political figures and parties to disseminate information, shape narratives, and influence public opinion outside traditional media channels. Understanding the political influence in Indonesian mass media requires a nuanced view of the interactions between political powers, media ownership, journalistic practices, and regulatory frameworks. This complex interplay shapes the information landscape and influences public perception of political events and actors.

Social media has had a profound impact on political discourse in Indonesia, reshaping how information is disseminated, opinions are formed, and political engagement occurs.

Increased Political Participation: Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube have provided avenues for citizens to engage in political discussions, share opinions, and participate in activism. This has led to increased political awareness and participation among Indonesians.

1. **Information Dissemination:** Social media serves as a rapid and extensive channel for the dissemination of political information. It enables the swift spread of news, opinions, and political content, allowing individuals to access a wide range of perspectives.
2. **Influence on Elections:** Social media has become a crucial battleground during election periods. Political candidates and parties leverage these platforms to reach voters directly, share their agendas, and engage with the electorate. Campaigns and political messaging are tailored for social media consumption.

3. Echo Chambers and Polarization: Social media algorithms often create echo chambers, where users are exposed to content that aligns with their existing beliefs. This can lead to polarization, as individuals may be less exposed to diverse viewpoints and more prone to accepting biased or misleading information.
4. Fake News and Misinformation: Indonesia, like many other countries, faces challenges with the spread of fake news and misinformation on social media. False information can easily go viral, influencing public opinion and, in some cases, impacting political discourse and decision-making.
5. Activism and Mobilization: social media has been instrumental in facilitating activism and social movements in Indonesia. Various groups and organizations use these platforms to organize protests, advocate for causes, and raise awareness about social and political issues.
6. Regulation and Challenges: The Indonesian government has introduced regulations to monitor and control content on social media platforms. This includes regulations to combat fake news and regulate online content, which sometimes raises concerns about freedom of expression.

Understanding the impact of social media on political discourse in Indonesia involves recognizing its potential for positive civic engagement while also acknowledging the challenges related to misinformation, polarization, and regulatory issues. The evolving nature of these platforms continues to shape the political landscape in the country.

Conclusion

The exploration into the dynamics of persuasive communication within the Indonesian media landscape holds immense significance due to its sway over public opinion and attitudes. This study delves into the intricate amalgamation of language structures, aiming to comprehend the synergistic pragmatic effects that influence the effectiveness of verbal persuasion. Utilizing a robust functional-linguistic approach and drawing from a corpus of opinion pieces and newspaper articles from American and British publications, the research meticulously dissects linguistic tools such as metaphor, irony, comedy, emotionally charged lexemes, hyperbole, interdiscursive references, and rhetorical questions. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, the findings underscore the profound impact of strategically orchestrated synergy in achieving communication goals and enhancing message reception. The interplay of diverse linguistic patterns evokes specific cognitive and emotional responses in audiences, shaping their comprehension of delivered information. This research holds immediate relevance in the domain of teaching English for cross-cultural professional communication, as it equips learners with the critical tools of recognizing and resisting manipulation within media discourse. By integrating critical thinking, media literacy, functional-linguistic analysis, and language proficiency, this study empowers individuals to navigate and critique media texts effectively. It contributes significantly to the existing knowledge base on language's role in media communication and advocates for further exploration into the intricate interrelationship between discourse, language, and persuasion within the media landscape.

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