

Language of Journalism and the Formation of Public Perception: analysis of News Framing on Kompas.Com and Antara.Com

Nurul Intan Pratiwi¹; Lukman²; Mardi Adi Armin²

¹, Universitas Nasional Jakarta, Indonesia

², Hasanuddin University, Indonesia

ABSTRACT: Language of journalism, the specific style of language used in journalism, plays an important role in shaping public perception because language is the main tool for conveying information and forming opinions. Journalistic language, which has special characteristics, is used to communicate news effectively and influence the way people understand an event. This study was formulated with the objectives; 1) to describe the form of responsible journalistic language, and 2) to formulate public perception and perspective on news. This study is based on the framing theory developed by Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki which explains how the mass media shapes public perception of an issue through the way they present the news. By using a descriptive qualitative method, this study will answer the two research objectives as mentioned above. The results of this study indicate that journalists have a responsibility to use language ethically and responsibly. In principle, journalists must avoid using language that can trigger conflict or harm certain parties. Thus, journalists must also ensure that the information they convey is accurate, factual, and accountable. Uncontrolled news language can cause chaos and biased perceptions. Media consumers should read more critically and be able to distinguish between objective and biased information.

Keywords: *Mass Media, News Reporting, Journalistic Language, Public Perception: Framing Analysis*

I. Introduction

The language of journalism emphasizes clarity, precision, and conciseness to convey information efficiently to a wide audience. Journalistic language typically uses short, straightforward sentences in the active voice, yet is sharp and unambiguous, avoiding technical terms or complex expressions that are difficult for a wide readership to understand. Ensuring the accuracy of facts, references, grammar, and spelling is crucial to prevent miscommunication that could create problems for readers. As it develops, a term called online journalism has emerged. This is certainly relevant, as the medium used is online, and the principles of the language of journalism still apply.

Many terms are associated with the definition of online journalism, including journalism, online, internet, and website. Journalism is defined as the process of gathering, writing, and disseminating (true) information or news via mass media. Briefly and practically, journalism can be defined as event notification. Online journalism, like print journalism, does not have a deadline (Newman & Kashmiri, 2021)

The framing theory developed by Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki which explains how the mass media shapes public perception of an issue through the way they present the news. Framing analysis is used in communication to dissect the methods or ideology of the media when constructing facts. This analysis looks at the strategy of selecting, emphasizing, and linking facts in the news to make it more meaningful, interesting, meaningful, or memorable, and to guide the audience's interpretation based on their point of view. In other words, framing is a method used by journalists to determine their perspective or point of view when selecting issues and writing news. (Syarofina, 2019)

In today's digital landscape, the process of shaping public perception has become more complex due to the widespread and massive influence of social media and online platforms. While these platforms expand opportunities for information sharing and public dialogue, they also pose risks such as misinformation and ideological echo chambers. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of how public perception is constructed is crucial for effective communication, policymaking, and fostering an informed citizenry that prioritizes constructive principles.

Public perception the collective beliefs and attitudes of a population emerges through a dynamic combination of factors. These include personal experiences, social environments, media exposure, and institutional influence. Examining these components is key to understanding how public opinion is formed and how it affects societal decisions and change. Because the relative weight of each factor can shift rapidly in response to political events or technological innovations, perception formation remains a fluid and continually evolving process. Recognizing this fluidity is essential for researchers and policymakers who seek to anticipate public reactions and design effective, citizen focused interventions (McCombs, & Shaw, 1972; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

The main factors in shaping public perception include: a) Personal Experience and Personal Interests of the reader Individual perspectives shaped by personal circumstances often influence a person stance on certain issues from what they read in the news media, b) Social and Cultural Norms □ The influence of peers and cultural values helps shape collective attitudes, the influence of the family environment, work environment, involvement in certain organizations, the field of science they are studying, and even on the beliefs they hold, c) Media Exposure □ what is called media exposure is a condition where traditional and digital media play a central role in framing issues and guiding public dialogue, perception and the determination of opinions. d) Institutional Roles □ Government agencies and organizations shape perceptions through planned and systematic policies, messages, and campaigns, e) Framing and Agenda Setting For this one, how certain issues are presented by the media or comments from public figures can determine the perception of the extent of importance of those issues, and finally f) Cognitive Bias □ This is a term to explain the existence of mental shortcuts, such as confirmation bias, and clarification, which will certainly affect how people interpret and store information.

Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki's framing is an analytical model used to examine the reality underlying media discourse. It is an art form that can lead to different conclusions depending on the person being analyzed, even when the case studied is the same. Furthermore, experts have different definitions of framing, which fundamentally share the same underlying principle of media formation and event construction. Therefore, reality will be highlighted so that it is easily recognized by the reading public (Eriyanto, 2005).

Furthermore, the Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki's model assumes that each news article has a frame that functions as the center for organizing ideas. In this case, a device is used, which can be conceptualized into concrete elements of a discourse (Eriyanto, 2005). Journalists can then organize and manipulate it, this is the so-called framing fact and information, and communicate it with communicative awareness. Here the reality can be constructed. This device can be interpreted according to four main structures: syntax, script, theme and rhetoric (Eriyanto, 2005; Lukman et al., 2024). In addition, the media plays a very important role among readers. The press therefore plays a role in expressing information, in order to correlate, explain, interpret and comment on the meaning of an event and information that may influence a person's point of view (McQuail, 2011).

This article review focuses on two major Indonesian news outlets: Kompas.com and Antara.com. Kompas.com, part of the Kompas Gramedia group, is one of the most widely trusted and popular online news sources in Indonesia. Antara.com, by contrast, serves as the official government news agency, delivering coverage across various sectors, including politics, economics, society, culture, and sports.

II. Literature Review

The Language of Journalism

The language of journalism is characterized by its functional purpose to inform, engage, and influence public opinion through clarity, brevity, and factual accuracy. According to Bell (1991), journalistic language is shaped by both institutional constraints and audience expectations, often favoring concise structures and accessible vocabulary to reach a wide readership. Journalists frequently employ the active voice, avoid jargon, and prioritize immediacy to ensure that information is conveyed efficiently (Reah, 2002; Sosrohadi et al., 2024; Faisal et al., 2025.; Jung et al., 2025).

Fowler (1991) argues that journalistic language is not neutral, as choices in vocabulary, syntax, and structure inherently carry ideological meanings. This is reinforced by Fairclough (1995), who applies critical discourse analysis to show how news texts reflect power relations and social hierarchies, particularly through framing and lexical choices. In this context, journalism becomes a form of discourse that not only reports reality but also constructs it. Additionally, the digital era has transformed journalistic practices, as noted by Franklin (2014), who points out that online journalism blends traditional news norms with interactive and multimedia features. Language in digital journalism often incorporates conversational elements, hyperlinks, and multimedia cues to cater to changing reading habits and the demand for real-time updates.

In essence, the language of journalism is a specialized form of communication designed to inform the public effectively and responsibly. It requires a strong command of language, a commitment to accuracy, and a deep understanding of how to convey information clearly and concisely

Previous Studies

Haryatmoko (2020), in his book *Kekuasaan dan Media (Power and Media)*, investigated how language is used as a tool of power in news reporting. Drawing on critical discourse theory and framing theory, he argued that media are not merely conveyors of information but also agents of ideology, shaping public interpretation through selective word choices and narrative structures. Supporting this perspective, Purwaningsih and Wulandari (2021) conducted a framing analysis of COVID-19 coverage in Kompas.com and Detik.com. Using Entmans framing theory, they found that media employed various frames such as conflict and responsibility frames that significantly influenced public perception of the pandemic and government policy.

Masullo and Lu (2022) explored the effects of emotional framing in digital journalism on public trust. Their findings revealed that emotional cues such as fear or hope in news stories could increase reader engagement, yet overly emotional framing might also reduce trust in the media. This insight is highly relevant in the context of competitive online platforms like Kompas.com and Antara.com. Additionally, Mulyana and Suryani (2023) analyzed political language strategies in Indonesian online media using the framing model of Pan and Kosicki. Their research showed that media outlets often used rhetorical tools such as metaphors and repetition to construct favorable portrayals of political figures aligned with the medias ideological orientation. Finally, Pratiwi and Hakim (2024) conducted a comparative framing analysis of government policies in Kompas.com and Detik.com. Applying both framing and agenda-setting theories, they concluded that Kompas.com tended to present government policies more favorably, whereas Detik.com offered more diverse viewpoints.

These five studies demonstrate that news framing in online media involves more than the presentation of facts it reflects deliberate linguistic, emotional, and ideological strategies that shape how the public understands

events. These insights are directly relevant to the current research analyzing news framing on Kompas.com and Antara.com.

The relationship between journalism and public perception is a complex one, with journalists playing a key role in shaping how audiences understand the world. Journalism, through its language and framing, can influence public opinion and behavior. Understanding this relationship requires examining how journalists present information, the language they use, and how audiences interpret that information.

III. Research Methodology

Data in this study were collected through questionnaires and interviews with members of the public and journalists in the Jakarta area. The interviews were not conducted face-to-face but rather via WhatsApp video calls after obtaining prior consent several days in advance. There were no specific criteria regarding age, education level, social or economic status in selecting the respondents/informants; they were chosen because they are readers of either Kompas.com or Antara.com.

The collected data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods by describing the public's perceptions and the framing models applied by the two media outlets. Thus, this study adopts a quan-qual approach. The quantitative method served as the primary approach, while the qualitative method carried out through interviews served as a supporting method to fill in gaps in the quantitative data. Interviews were not conducted with all respondents but were selectively carried out based on the need to complement the questionnaire data.

The questionnaires were distributed via Google Forms in June 2025. The form was sent to a number of listed respondents to answer a set of questions. The respondents' answers were then organized under specific topic headings. A total of 60 respondents participated in the study, 15 of whom were active journalists from either media outlet. The profile of these respondents is presented as follows:

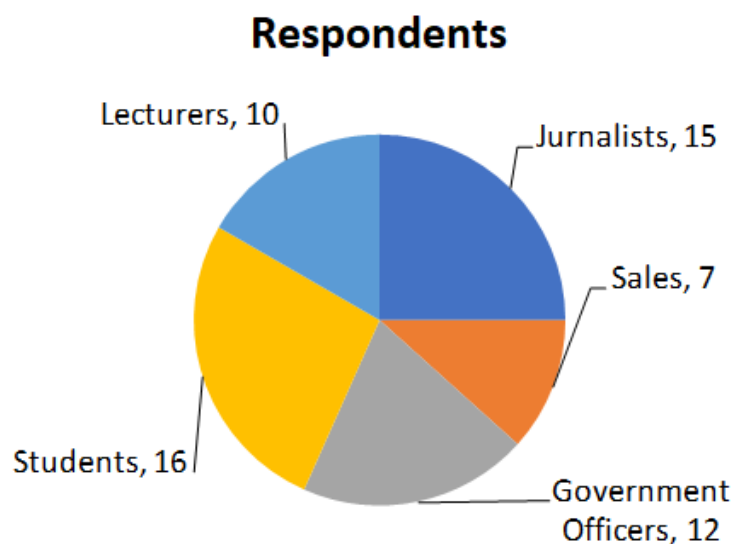


Figure 1.
Respondents

The pie chart illustrates the occupational distribution of the 60 respondents who participated in the study. The largest group consisted of students, totaling 16 individuals, which represents approximately 27% of the sample. Journalists made up the second-largest group with 15 respondents (25%), reflecting the study focus on news media consumption and production. Government officers accounted for 12 participants (20%), offering insights from the public sector. Meanwhile, 10 respondents were lecturers (around 17%), contributing academic

perspectives to the research. The smallest group was composed of sales workers, with 7 respondents (roughly 12%). This diverse composition highlights the variety of social backgrounds involved, enriching the analysis of public perception and media framing in Kompas.com and Antara.com.

The respondents mentioned above are considered to be quite representative of the various elements of Kompas.com and Antara.com media readership. However, this review article does not confirm the differences in views among these groups of respondents, given that the focus of this study is the language of journalism and the formation of public perception: an analysis of news framing on Kompas.com and Antara.com, nor is it intended to compare the two media outlets apple to apple.

IV. Results

In the following, the research data was obtained through a questionnaire with a list of open questions as below. The questionnaire was designed to allow participants to freely express their perspectives without being restricted by predetermined response options. This approach was intended to capture more in-depth insights and uncover themes that might not emerge through closed-ended questions.

No	Question	Summaries	%
1	What is your view on trending issues and how Kompas.com and Antara.com present the information in their news?	a) Both media have their own distinctive ways of presenting news according to their institutional missions.	35 (59%)
		b) Each media outlet tries to win the audience's favor through framing.	16 (26%)
		c) Each outlet upholds its institutional mission.	9 (15%)
2	Give an example of a news topic that, in your opinion, involves personal, group, or institutional conflict.	a) Fake news about Jokowi, GRIB vs TNI, efforts to oust Vice President Gibran.	42 (70%)
		b) The case of PDIP s Secretary General and Harun Masiku, Bahlils doctoral degree, Yemeni-Habib ancestry.	12 (20%)
		c) Death penalty and impoverishment for corruptors.	6 (10%)
3	Do you think the media provides balanced reporting among conflicting parties?	a) Not at all, the media creates framing and shows bias.	19 (32%)
		b) Sometimes.	17 (28%)
		c) I am not sure. I need more time to investigate.	24 (40%)
4	Have you noticed that the media appears to show partiality in its reporting?	a) Yes, the media always shows bias.	27 (45%)
		b) The media is controlled by certain political interests.	27 (45%)
		c) Sometimes it can distort the facts.	6 (10%)
5	In your opinion, does certain reporting clearly demonstrate	a) It is strongly yes.	23 (38%)
		b) Yes, of course.	19 (32%)

	framing?	c) I think so.	18 (30%)
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Based on the results of the questionnaire and interviews, at least four important points were identified regarding the framing that has occurred so far, closely related to what is known as conflict framing: human interest framing, sociocultural consequence framing, and responsibility attribution framing. Each trending topic can be categorized within one of the existing conflict framings. Alternatively, each trending topic may not fall into just one category but relate to more than one part of the conflict framing mentioned above.

Conflict framing highlights disagreements between two specific parties, typically on an issue, which often triggers or exacerbates conflict with all its potential because it ignores areas of agreement: issues and culture, or what has become a societal convention. This can occur because an interest is not met, either explicitly or implicitly. As a result of this conflict, the term human interest framing emerged, encompassing various elements such as a) political issue conflict, b) citizenship issue framing, c) economic consequence framing, and d) responsibility attribution framing.

a) Human interest framing: Focuses on individual stories and personal experiences (and can also be community-based), which has the potential to evoke empathy and emotional responses. For example, consider the case of Habeeb Nazab in Indonesia, which sparked public outcry. A group of people claimed to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. Many doubted this, and many rejected it by requesting DNA tests. Similarly, the issue of descent from PKI followers was used to discredit individuals, as these descendants were perceived as increasingly vocal and outspoken.

b) Socioeconomic Consequence Framework: Emphasizes the economic impact of an event or policy, potentially influencing public perception of its financial implications. The country's continued rise coincided with rising prices for necessities.

c) Furthermore, there is what is called the Responsibility Attribution Framework. This occurs in the form of assigning blame or credit for an event, potentially influencing public opinion about who is responsible. The maritime fencing issue, for example, can be broken down into this framework.

By understanding how news is framed, one can gain a deeper understanding of the media's role in shaping public opinion and discourse, as well as how various frames can influence how audiences perceive and react to an event. Shaping public opinion and discourse is also determined by the language used in journalism.

The language used in journalism significantly shapes public perception by influencing how events are framed, understood, and discussed. Through word choice, framing, and narrative structure, journalists can highlight certain aspects of a story, downplay others, and ultimately influence the audience's understanding of reality. This process, known as agenda-setting, can prioritize certain issues and perspectives, potentially shape public opinion and even influence policy decisions. Here's a more detailed look at the relationship

1). Language as a tool for framing: Journalists use specific words and phrases to frame events, which can evoke different emotional responses and interpretations. For example, using the term "protestor" versus "rioter" can significantly impact how the public perceives the same event. The selection of adjectives, adverbs, and verbs all contribute to the overall framing of a story,

2). The impact of narrative structure: The way a story is structured □ beginning, middle, and end □ also plays a crucial role in shaping perception. A narrative that emphasizes conflict, for instance, might lead to a more polarized public perception. Conversely, a narrative that focuses on collaboration and common ground can foster a more nuanced understanding, and

3) Agenda-setting and public opinion: a) By choosing which stories to cover and how to present them, media outlets can influence which issues the public considers important, b) This process, known as agenda-setting, can have a significant impact on public discourse and policy debates, and c) For example, if the media consistently reports on crime, it might lead the public to believe that crime is a major problem, even if crime statistics don't necessarily support that view.

4. The importance of authenticity, intentionality, and precision: a) In an era of heightened media scrutiny and skepticism, journalists are encouraged to be mindful of their language choices, b) Using authentic, intentional, and precise language can help build trust with the audience, and c) Tools like the Authentically tool from the

University of Florida aim to help journalists identify potentially biased language and make more informed choices.

5. The journalism-audience relationship: understanding how the audience perceives media messages is crucial for journalists. Factors like media exposure, credibility, and social influence can all affect how individuals interpret news. Journalists need to be aware of these factors and strive to communicate in a way that is both informative and responsible.

Language serves as a powerful tool for framing, allowing speakers and writers to shape how audiences perceive and interpret information. By strategically choosing words, phrases, and narratives, individuals can highlight certain aspects of a situation while downplaying others, ultimately influencing attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. This process, known as framing, is a fundamental aspect of communication with significant implications across various domains, including politics, media, and everyday conversations

Narrative structure is the framework that shapes how a story is told, influencing how events, characters, and themes are presented and connected. It's not just about organizing events, but about engaging audiences, evoking emotions, and conveying deeper meanings. A well-crafted structure can make a story more memorable and impactful by amplifying suspense, highlighting themes, and enriching character development.

Agenda-setting theory posits that the media's selection and prioritization of news stories influence what the public perceives as important issues. Essentially, the media doesn't tell people what to think, but rather what to think about. By highlighting certain topics and downplaying others, the media shapes public opinion and influences the issues that gain prominence in public discourse.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

Authenticity, intentionality, and precision are crucial for effective communication, strong relationships, and personal growth. Authenticity involves being true to oneself and one's values, leading to greater trust and stronger connections. Intentionality implies deliberate action and purposefulness, allowing for focused efforts and meaningful impact. Precision, in turn, ensures clarity and accuracy in communication and action, minimizing misunderstandings and maximizing effectiveness

The relationship between journalism and its audience is a dynamic interplay where both rely on each other for information and engagement, but this relationship is facing challenges in the digital age. Audiences are increasingly skeptical and selective, while journalists struggle to maintain trust and financial viability in a competitive media landscape.

V. Conclusion

The language used in journalism plays a crucial role in shaping public perception of events and issues. Through word choice, narrative framing, and information presentation, news media can influence how the public understands and interprets the world around them. The public often fails to understand or realize that news can be constructed to disrupt readers' concentration on a single, widely circulated issue. In mass communication theory, readers are divided into three groups: those who accept the news, those who reject it, and those who neither accept nor reject it a critical group.

Based on the discussion as described previously, the results of this study conclude several points as follows;

1) The language of journalism emphasizes clarity, precision, and conciseness to convey information efficiently to a wide audience. Journalistic language typically uses short, straightforward sentences in the active voice, yet is sharp and unambiguous, avoiding technical terms or complex expressions that are difficult for a wide readership to understand. The model proposed by Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki's framing, it is an analytical model used to examine the reality underlying media discourse

2) The process of shaping public perception has become more complex due to the widespread and massive influence of social media and online platforms. While these platforms expand opportunities for information sharing and public dialogue, they also pose risks such as misinformation and ideological echo chambers,

3) Concerning conflict framing, this study highlights disagreements between two parties, usually on an

issue, which often trigger or exacerbate conflict to the maximum because one party ignores agreed-upon areas: issues and culture, or what has become convention in society. This can occur because an interest is not met, either explicitly or implicitly. This is what often happens in news reporting. The construction of facts and framing something that sometimes obscures the core of the problem itself, and

4) Human interest framing typically focuses on individual stories and personal experiences (and can also be community-based), which have the potential to evoke empathy and emotional responses. For example, regarding Jokowi's fake diploma, consider the case of Habib Nazab in Indonesia, which sparked public outrage. A group of people claimed to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. Many doubted this, and many rejected it by requesting DNA tests. Similarly, the issue of descent from PKI followers was used to discredit individuals, as these descendants were perceived as increasingly vocal and outspoken.

In conclusion, language of journalism (the so-called journalistic language) is a powerful tool that can be used to frame a news issue, thereby profoundly shaping public perception. By understanding the nuances of language and narrative structure, journalists can play a crucial role in fostering informed and relevant public discourse. This is one of the crucial reasons why this study is necessary.

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