An Investigation of Microstructure Analysis for World Health Organizatioan Speeches during Covid-19 Pandemic: Adopted Van Dijk Theory

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Abstract

Manipulation, broadly defined as is a kind of covert behaviours or a means, whether linguistic or non- linguistic, used by manipulators communicative encounters to achieve their goals, desires, and certain interests regardless of the perceptual, cognitive, and emotional feelings of their interlocutors. In this process, the objective of the study was to explore the use of language elements to perform manipulation speeches by World Health Organization related to Covid -19 pandemic issues. The study adopted a descriptive and interpretive research design. The corpus of the study comprised of 6 transcriptions from December 2019 to December 2021 purposefully selected. Teun A. van Dijk, (2008) was used for data analyses. Under micro-structure analysis, syntax and lexical application in the selected conferences were analysed particularly to identify power relations involved in the production of the selected conferences. Overall, findings suggest that the WHO is in the power of controlling the content structure, frames, and the representation of virus situations. The WHO determined the issues to be focused on when reporting the government's progress in fighting the virus. WHO organization used Formal registers than informal to show increase the credibility of reports and updates regarding the virus. WHO used modals of certainty "will" more than those of probability to show the effects of Covid -19. Complex sentences were the most elocutionary and illocutionary acts. The results of the study have been demonstrated that this speech has its distinctive features and that language was used tactfully to arrive at the attended goals of the speaker.

Keywords: Linguistic elements, manipulation, Van Dijk, Microstructure analysis, lexical analysis, syntactic analysis

Introduction

Van Dijk (2006a, pp. 728-229) explains that the concept of manipulation is often associated with negativeness. It often refers to "the rigid, misguided, or partisan ideas of others". One has the truth; others have only ideologies. The negative Ness of manipulative speeches is attributed to the writings of Marx-Engels for whom ideologies were a kind of "false consciousness". Consequently, it can be said that it is possible to misguide a group of people or even a society by some ideologically manipulative speeches. The negativeness of the idea of manipulation is continued to convey that negative meaning as contradictory to objective thinking, even in the latest part of the 20th century. Van Dijk (2006b, pp. 116-117) claims that people usually have "some kind of ideas" or "belief systems", and because there are no "private languages", there are no "private, personal ideologies". Then, this system of beliefs can be

"socially shared". These beliefs are not suddenly, but "gradually acquired" and may be changed through life period. They have some general properties, which are: They are "not the same as discourses or other social practices that express, reproduce, or enact them; and they are not the same as any other socially shared beliefs or belief systems" (Van Dijk, 2006b, p. 117). They are also "not the same as personal beliefs of individual people; they are not necessarily 'negative'... they are not some kinds of 'false consciousness'...; they are not necessarily dominant, but may also define resistance and opposition."However, this system of shared beliefs is often subject to the notion of domination. This indicates that the manipulative speeches "play a role in the legitimization of power abuse by dominant groups". One of the most effective forms of manipulation is dominance where "the dominated groups accept dominant ideologies as natural or commonsense". Thus, those "specific, fundamental beliefs of groups of people" can be manipulated either positively or negatively. However, the concept of manipulation is not exclusively related to the dominant groups because the dominated social groups can also have ideologies such as the "ideologies of resistance and opposition" (Van Dijk, 2006a, pp. 728-729, Elaf &Hussien 2020).

Manipulative speech is one of the major concerns of study in the field of critical discourse analysis. Medical discourse, in particular, has been extensively researched to determine what politicians do to persuade and appeal to the public. It appears that they use language systematically to achieve certain effects, such as convincing the audience to believe or do things that are in the interests of politicians and not in the best interests of the people (Blass 2005; Van Dijk 2003, 2006). One well-known example is governmental and/or media discourse, which is frequently used to blame immigration for a country's economic ills to divert citizens' attention away from government policies (Van Dijk 2003). This type of discourse is known as manipulative discourse, and it communicates in the same way as any other communicative exchange. CDA, according to Van Dijk (2010), deals with fundamental ideas such as micro vs. macro & power as control. Language use, verbal engagement, discourse, and communication, according to Van Dijk, pertain to the micro-level of the social order while power, inequality, and dominance amongst social groupings belong to the macro level of study. As the author pointed out, CDA must theoretically reconcile the well-known gap between micro & macro techniques. The macro and micro levels, according to the author, create one coherent whole. For instance, Van Dijk noted that a racist speech in parliament is the micro-level discourse of social interaction within the unique context of a debate but may also enact or be a part of macro-level legislation of racism. Van Dijk contended that there are numerous strategies to assess and link these levels to achieve a unified critical analysis: the linkage could be in the form of members-groups, personal & social cognition, context-social structure, and action processes.
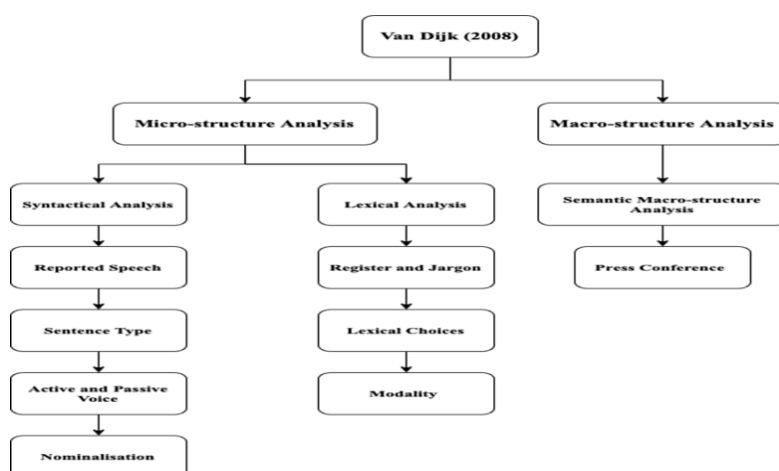

Figure 1.1

Literature Review

Numerous research projects have been carried out to examine the ideological, linguistic, and media aspects of the COVID 19 epidemic. Scholars and analysts have frequently used manipulation, including Nordlund (2003), Pronomarenko (2013), Kamil & Al-Hindawi (2017), and others. In her insightful study, Nordlund (2003) examined how various newspapers presented the same news from opposing political viewpoints to have the desired effect on the reader's mind. She added that the process involved two main types of manipulation: one was at the level of syntax with some strategic moves like "transitivity, active/passive voice, modality, nominalization, permutation, initialization, innuendo, and utterance context"; the other was referred to as "referential manipulation. "As well as, Pronomarenko (2013) looked into how journalists manipulate their terminology. His analysis of several newspapers' journalistic texts revealed that these publications mirrored political viewpoints intended to sway readers' perceptions and the general mass consciousness of society. Otherwise, Kamil & Al-Hindawi (2017) conducted a contrastive study on British and American political debates held by Clegg, Brown, and Cameron as British PM nominees on the one hand, and Ryan-Biden & Bush-Kerry as American Presidential candidates on the other, in order to approach manipulation from a pragmatic point of view. They noted that the "inauguration, argumentation, and conclusion" were the three primary stages of their manipulative language. Additionally, the manipulative discourse of the speakers met the four recognized communication characteristics of "distortion, fabrication, equivocation, and concealment," and. This was put into practice using pragmatic tools like (im) politeness, speech acts, personal pronouns, breaking the rules of polite conversation, maneuvering, and, lastly, pragmatic techniques based on relevance theory. They noted "volitional, deceitful, rational, subservient, social, and emotional" manipulation techniques (Kamil & Al-Hindawi, 2017, pp.315-320). Forinstance, Mohammadi and Javadi (2017) explored and studies the discourse structures and ideological notion of Donald Trump's acceptance speech in the 2016 Presidential Election as an optimum sample of the linguistic features in their study. Moreover, they analysed and uncovered the experiential, relational and expressive values of the wordings, metaphors and grammatical structures of Trump's language use. The findings of their research showed that there are many linguistics features that highlight the ideology in the text at the vocabulary or grammar level. This was found by using Fairclough's three-dimensional model (2010).

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive-analytic research design to collect and analyse the data of the study. The data were collected as transcriptions obtained from the official website of the world health organization https://www.who.int/publications/m .The collected data was in the form of text written by WHO. The study used purposive sampling for selecting the transcriptions The criteria of selection are as follows: the transcriptions posted in the selected time frame and address Covid19 pandemic issues. The researchers were the key instrument of data collection. The researchers used a datasheet as a secondary instrument. The CDA Van Dijk (Teun A. van Dijk, 2008) theory was used to analyse the selected transcriptions. The quantitative data were analysed descriptively as the percentages and frequencies of the linguistic features and ideologies were calculated and presented in tables. Subsequently, the data were analysed qualitatively using the interpretative approach.

Findings and Results

Microstructure Analysis

Two parts of the analysis are categorized under the micro-structure analysis: syntactical analysis and lexical analysis. Syntactical structures analyzed were reported speech, sentence types (simple and complex sentences), active and passive sentences as well as normalization. The lexical analysis focused on register and jargon, word choices, stance words, and modality. The following sections further discuss the importance of these elements as a part of the press conference thematic analysis.

Syntactical Analysis

This part of the analysis discovers the way these elements are present in sentences and hence would generally analyze their patterns and sentence structures. The analysis is focused on uncovering the language elements that exist within the analyzed press conferences that generally hinder the final production of the analyzed press conferences. Not only that, but the syntactical analysis is also useful in uncovering how the WHO frames the themes in the analyzed press conferences to unveil the manipulation strategies. Sections below show the analysis and findings of the investigation conducted.

Reported Speech

Reported speech refers to quotations in press conferences that can indicate the sources that influence the given information. Additionally, the reported speech also may indicate who holds the power in selecting the frames in the press conferences. Reported speech consists of three types which are direct quotation, indirect quotation, and scare quotes. The direct quotation refers to a quotation taken directly from the medical representatives of different country members in WHO without alteration of any single word and is marked by quotation marks. Meanwhile, the indirect quotation is when tenses, word order, or pronouns are different from the source or in other words, paraphrasing by the WHO of what was said or written and are not marked by quotation marks. Finally, scare quotation means marks placed around a word or phrase to draw attention to an unusual or arguably inaccurate use. Putting the term "global warming" in scare quotes serves to subtly cast doubt on the reality of such a phenomenon. Both direct and indirect quotations are usually accompanied by reporting phrases such as "said" and "according to" to indicate the source of information. As illustrated in Table 4.1 below, only two kinds of reported speech are present in the WHO conferences.

Table1 *The use of reported speech*

Types	Reported speech
Direct quotation	**4**
Indirect quotation	61
Scare quotes	0
Total	65

A total of 65 reported speeches were used in the selected press conferences. It is shown that the number of indirect quotations is extremely higher than the number of direct quotations used in the conferences. The WHO members in press conferences used indirect quotations more than direct quotations. However, there was no use of scare quotations in the data.

For the majority of the conferences, indirect quotations from conferences were used quite extensively. Quotations from official sources somehow suggest that scientists, doctors, and health organizations were the ones who determined what topic or aspect to be centralized

when reporting on issues of covid-19, for example, the linkage of the cases. This is because almost all claims and information about the covid-19 updates were quoted from the medical representatives.

It can be seen from the Table above indirect quotations were used more than direct quotations. Indirect quotations are probably used when the WHO wanted to compact as much information as possible through complex sentences whilst still appearing legitimate. Examples are as below.

"So, I think it is a wake-up sign for us, as the DG has said many times, to really think about, as a world, what do we do with available vaccine supplies now and how can we get them into the arms of people who haven't been vaccinated yet." (Example 1)

"On the timeline of this new variant, authorities in Botswana have said that the Omicron variant was first detected in a foreign diplomat who entered the country on November 7 and tested positive on November 11". (Example 2)

"We don't yet have the full picture but, as I said, there are many that are working on this." (Example 3)

"since it will take weeks, as you said" (Example 4)

"The DG has said and Maria spoke again of the things we will do to contain and control the Delta variant" (Example 5)

"as Soumya said, who are highly vulnerable or at risk and making surethat they're offered vaccine and that their concerns regarding the vaccines" (Example 6)

"As we said, a blanket travel ban will never stop the circulation of the virus but instead what is needed is a comprehensive" (Example 7)

"We have said this many times, that countries who are taking measures should consider that their actions could punish those who are doing the right thing" (Example 8)

"What we have been hearing from member states these three days and also when we went through the analysis of the more than 300 recommendations coming from the different panels" (Example 9)

The examples shown above reveal that the WHO directors mostly extensively report indirect speech for two main reasons. First to avoid taking the responsibility for what has been said due to the sensibility and uncertainty of information provided by WHO as Covid19 was considered argumentative due to lack of laboratory results on the new emergent variants. The second reason is the use of indirect quotations gives the WHO speakers the freedom to rephrase what has been said to manipulate the facts. In Examples 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, the WHO representatives confirm what has been said by mentioning the source of the text. However, in Examples 7 and 8, the speakers use the pronoun we to refer to either scientists or the WHO to avoid personal attacks on the reported claims. In the ninth example, the WHO representative was quoted indirectly saying "We have been hearing" by omitting the source to avoid being blamed for providing unreliable and uncertain information.

The frequency of direct and indirect quotation use shows that the WHO members have the power of controlling the content and frames and content of the issue to be disseminated.

This is because the WHO is the one highlighting the angle in approaching the covid-19 issues. WHO representatives in the medical press conferences have the power to manipulate facts because the majority of the quotations from the conferences are indirect meaning they can control the production and representation of the issue to achieve certain ideological aims. Thus, it is safe to say that although these selected press conferences of WHO, the power resides in the language while the information sources i.e., the medical officials are the ones that provide the frames for this issue. This section presenting the reported speech contributes to revealing the microstructure linguistics elements.

Sentence Type (Simple, Complex, and Compound Sentences)

Simple, compound, and complex sentences are the three categories of sentence types. Simple sentences comprise one main clause. Complex sentences, on the other hand, include at least one independent clause and one dependent clause. Van Dijk (1988a) mentioned that complex sentences dominate media discourse and information is seldom conveyed in simple sentences, and such complex sentences are interwoven with multiple clauses and nominalizations that consist of multiple propositions. In his examination of media discourse, van Dijk (1988b) demonstrated that media is reasonably organized in a complicated manner, and simple phrase structures could be seen as quite rare. As shown in Table 4.2, the majority of sentences in the selected press conferences are written in complex types.

Table 2 *The use of sentence type*

Types	Press Conferences
Simple Sentence	450
Complex Sentence	467
Compound Sentence	45
Total	762

This supports van Dijk's claim in most of his writings whereby public discourses are written in a complex way. However, simple sentences were frequently used in press conferences because 450 sentences were written entirely. This makes up 32.81 % of the total number of sentences. Compound sentences on the other hand were seldom used whereby only forty-five compound sentences or 5.90 % were found in selected press conferences.

As for simple sentences, many of them were used when encouraging governments and the public to take action against the spread of covid-19. Most simple sentences used in press conferences were to highlight a claim by making it more impactful to readers in a way that is short and easy to comprehend or interpret as shown in the following examples as the representatives of WHO talked about the spread of the virus. Some simple sentences were also used to indicate the factuality of the claims and the decisions taken to control the Covid-19 spread. This finding is similar to van Dijk's (1993) claims whereby simple present tense sentences are used to show factuality. Some examples written in simple sentences are as follows:

"At least 23 countries from five of six WHO regions have now reported cases of Omicron" (Example 1)

"They won't stop Omicron either" (Example 2)
"We have a toxic mix of low vaccine coverage and very low testing" (Example 3)
"WHO continues to call on all countries to optimise public health" (Example 4)
"Ending the pandemic is not a matter of chance" (Example 5)

"We're also getting a picture of some of the cases that are detected in other Countries" (Example 6)

Companies need to tell us very clearly how the supplies are going to flow through COVAX. (Example 7)

"There are other arms of the immune systems" (Example 8).

In the meantime, complex sentences predominate mostly in the sentence types featured in the analyzed conferences. The majority of complex sentences are made up of one independent clause and one or more embedded dependent clauses. The WHO representatives extensively used complex sentence types, which may have been featured to further clarify and offer more information on the Covid-19 scenario. Yet, certain complex sentences included in the analyzed conferences seem to be too complex for the public to simply grasp since conferences often address medical topics, as shown in the example below (2). In a study by Montgomery and Evans (2009), their findings show that complicated sentences have an impact on reading comprehension and could deter readers from continuing to read a text. The following are some examples of one of complex sentences from analyzed press conferences.

We still need to find out if there is any loss of protection but we think vaccines will still protect against severe disease as they have against the other variants. So, this is a call for countries to really look at their data, look at the groups that have been vaccinated. (Example 1)

"Just as countries have united in the past to adopt treaties against tobacco, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, climate change and more, so, today, the nations of the world have made a strong statement that health security is too important to be left to chance, or goodwill, or shifting geopolitical currents, or vested interests." (Example 2)

"A convention, agreement or another international instrument will not solve every problem but it will provide the overarching framework to foster greater international cooperation and provide a platform for strengthening global health security." (Example 3)

"That may seem like a long process, and it is, but we should not be naïve in thinking that reaching a global accord on pandemics will be easy" (Example 4)

"At the same time, we must not forget that we are already dealing with a highly transmissible, dangerous variant, the Delta variant, which currently accounts for almost all cases globally." (Example 5).

"We need to use the tools we already have to prevent transmission and save lives from Delta and, if we do that, we will also prevent transmission and save lives from Omicron, but, if countries and individuals don't do what they need to do to stop transmission of Delta, they won't stop Omicron either." (Example 6).

Besides that, complex sentences are predominantly used to condense details to elucidate the centralized issue to disseminate as much information in a concise and impactful manner for the readers. This is because the topic of Covid-19 requires detailed and urgent explanations daily to ease fear and increase understanding of the Covid-19 situation among the public and keep the audience up to date with information regarding the new variants as this information will be considered reliable as the source is WHO.

Active and Passive voice

Clauses written in active voice may portray the agent that is doing an action or verb, whereas clauses written in passive voice can portray a patient being acted upon by an action or verb that permits the agent to be addressed at the end of the clause or deleted. "Sue changed the flat tire" and "the flat tire was changed by Sue" are both examples of active and passive voice, with the agent Sue appearing at the start of the sentence through an active voice although at the latter in a passive voice. Such a position emphasizes what is stressed in the sentences, which are the actor in active voice and the patient in passive voice. As a result, active and passive voices are examined concerning the agent, patient, and sentence sequence to identify any agent with power.

Table 3 *The use of Active and Passive voice*

Types	Press Conferences
Active voice	534
Passive voice	25
Total	559

As can be seen from Table 4.3, the majority of sentences and clauses used in the selected conferences are in the active voice with remaining in the passive voice. A total of 559 clauses and sentences are written in active voice while 25 clauses and sentences are written in passive voice. The ratio of active voices in the selected conferences is about ten times the number of passive voices.

Some active forms are used to indicate the factuality of the claims or what is being presented to the audience and to make the sentences easily deciphered and interpreted as shown in example (1). Some examples include:

"This includes measures to delay or reduce the spread of the new variant" (Example 1)

"We need to use the tools we already have to prevent transmission and save lives from Delta" (Example 2)

"I think that should be commended" (Example 3)

"I do want to say a special thank you to so many researchers across South Africa" (Example 4)

"the most optimistic scenario is that Omicron ultimately turns out to be both more transmissible and less dangerous than Delta." (Example 5)

"We're also getting a picture of some of the cases that are detected in other countries." (Example 5)

"the new variant that was detected by South Africa"

It is deeply concerning to me that those countries are now being penalised by others for doing the right thing."

In most cases, most agents in the sentences from data, regardless of active or passive voices, are "health", "Covid19", "omicron", "pandemic", "vaccine", "variants", "effect", "Delta", "cases" and "patients". These agents are either written in active or passive voice whereby some are foregrounded while some are backgrounded. Another possible reason is the

WHO representatives want to direct attention to the effects of the virus and increase the truthfulness of the claims and decisions taken by the government. The repeatedly mentioned agents appeared to promote the effects of the actions done by WHO and steps given to health organizations in affected countries in controlling the virus. Some examples from the selected conferences are mentioned below.

"they're sick of watching their communities devasted, and that's not just for this COVID but so many other epidemic diseases, be it cholera, Ebola and others." (Example 1)

"You cannot have a pandemic in part of the world and not in others and, for the record, we're very much in the middle of this pandemic." (Example 2)

"I would like to use this opportunity to thank South Africa and Botswana for what they have done, for detecting, sequencing, and reporting this variant soon they should not be discouraged by what happened, and I would like to assure them that were are on their side." (Example 3)

"Globally, we have a toxic mix of low vaccine coverage and very low testing, a recipe for breeding and amplifying variants" (Example 4)

"At least 23 countries from five of six WHO regions have now reported cases of Omicron, and we expect that number to grow." (Example 5)

"At the same time, we must not forget that we are already dealing with a highly transmissible, dangerous variant, the Delta variant, which currently accounts for almost all cases globally."

"The emergence of the Omicron variant has understandably captured global attention"

Nominalisation

Nominalization is the formation of a noun phrase that comes from another word class, generally known as the verb. It is well-referred to as verb-noun form since it converts verbs into nouns. Nominalisation may deplete an agent's energy and distort any notion of agency. Nominalisations, based on Hitchings (2013), emphasize the action more instead of the agent accountable for the action. They may be in that situation since the personnel accountable for the actions are unknown or irrelevant, but they are frequently utilized to hide power relations and minimize awareness of what is genuinely engaged in the action process.

There is a total of 25 nominalizations identified in the analyzed press conferences. Frequently used normalized phrases in the analyzed press conferences are shown to be the "contact tracing" and "rollout." This is most likely since the agent, such as the contact tracer, is well known to the readers, as seen in example (1). Another explanation might be because WHO represents are attempting to deemphasize any agents participating in the acts of tracking the occurrences by highlighting the fundamental cause of battling the virus. Most nominalizations employed in the analyzed conferences, such as "record-keeping," "downstream," "waste-water," and "upstream," are capable of suppressing the agents that produce such situations and abstracting them by concentrating on the core of such acts. The following are some evident examples of how agents are being silence proportional risk-reduction measures in keeping with the International Health Regulations. (Example 1)

"That's why we continue to urge countries to fully fund the act-Accelerator" (Example 2)

"Using a risk-based approach and evidence-based approach on the situation to take comprehensive measures including testing, including checking of symptoms and others and these measures could be more effective to prevent the spread of the new variant." (Example 3)

"So, I think it is a wake-up sign for us, as the DG has said many times, to think about." (Example 4)

So, not only do we need to increase vaccine coverage around the world and not just percentage-wise, but make sure that we reach those people who are most vulnerable first in all countries not just in some. (Example 5)

Finally, this week is breast-feeding awareness week. As we have seen, again and again, standard public health measures are often the most effective. This week is breast-feeding awareness week and we're reiterating the importance of breastfeeding, which has life-saving benefits for babies and families. (Example 6)

It can be seen from the above examples that, the most possible agent that is responsible for taking the actions of keeping records, tracing cases, searching for solutions, give information is most likely done by WHO. However, to demonstrate these operations of tracing and scanning. The WHO represents tried to suppress and omit the agents through the use of nominalization as it helps to shift the attention towards the action rather than the performers since these operations i.e. tracing, scanning, and recording are more important than the performers.

Lexical Analysis

In this part of the analysis, the aforementioned aspects will be evaluated to reveal any power imbalances at work in the prime minister's press conferences. The use of certain terms may indicate the level of formality, as well as the connection between the WHO and the audience (van Dijk, 1988a).

Register and Jargon

The register of discourse is governed by several elements such as word choice, context, the purpose of discourse, topic, and intended audience. Register particularly would consider the degree of formality of a text. According to to van Dijk (1988a), readers considered as the target audience are only involved indirectly and implicitly in media discourse, and they are not to be acknowledged. This, though is not included in quotations, and sometimes in editorials, the pronouns "you" and "I" are not used. The WHO conferences define the target readership, and the aim of the news also influences the new register. For example, if a news piece is published to inspire the audience in doing something, the level of formality of the selected conferences could be decreased to foster rapport.

The register of discourse is governed by several elements such as word choice, context, the purpose of discourse, topic, as well as the intended audience. Register, in particular, considers the degree of formality of a text. According to van Dijk (1988a), readers as the intended audience are only present indirectly and implicitly in media discourse, and they are not even acknowledged. Except in quotes and sometimes in editorials, the pronouns "you" and "I" are not used. For example, if the WHO in her press conferences aims to inspire the audience to do something, the degree of formality of the discourse may be decreased to foster rapport.

The analyses of the current study showed that in the majority of WHO conferences, the jargon is formal register. Formal registers are probably used by the WHO to increase the credibility of reports and updates regarding the virus. Moreover, as the conferences tackle the Covid19 updates, most of the terms related are medical jargon. The use of medical jargon is used be used to impose power on readers and is often seen as the language of elites who are in power (van Dijk, 1988a). The use of formal jargon forces the audience to believe and follow the information and regulations given by WHO because these facts and manipulated information are supported by medical facts that might be not real. Below are a few examples of the informal register, for example, the word circulate, patients are the formal word used to describe or refer to Covid-19 while the patient refers to any other medical sickness:

Table 4 *Informal and formal Jargon*

Informal	Formal
Patients	Cases
I	WHO
Stop	Ban/prevent
Lockdown	Curfew
Hard	Firm/rigid/Difficult
Found	Detected
Spread	Circulate

lexical Choices

Thornborrow (2012) mentioned that lexical choice analysis entails examining the types of words or phrases in describing an event such as the types of acts that have been associated with it such as, and who is accountable for the actions. All these decisions are aspects of the event's representation process. Furthermore, such lexical construction is to convey a negative or positive meaning concerning the event that has been reported (van Dijk, 1983).

Based on the analysis of the selected press conferences, the word "threat", "deadly" and "dangerous" were widely used in the selected press conferences when mentioning the spread of the situation of covid-19 to manipulate the audience by passing the ideology of fearing among the public. Moreover, words like "vaccine", "test" and "social distancing" were also used widely when talking about tackling the virus and supported by medical arguments to force people to follow the regulations and introduce vaccines as the only solutions. These choices of words somehow promoted the danger and the health problems caused by Covid-19. Also, these words promoted the urgency and the sense of responsibility to take actions and precautions to fight the virus, like "vaccine" and "social distancing". These lexical choices are presented in the following examplesSarkhi et.al (2022).

I think it's also very important for countries to strengthen and expand vaccination coverage, especially in the priority populations. (Example 1)

We know that it is people above 45 with underlying comorbidities who are at the highest risk of developing severe disease after getting an infection, whether it is Omicron or Delta or any of the variants (Example 2)

On Omicron, the most optimistic scenario is that Omicron ultimately turns out to be both more transmissible and less dangerous than Delta.(Example 3)

The beginning of a very important journey and maybe control for the first time in history over the threat and risk of pandemics in the future.(Example 4)

Under lexical choice, stance words such as "likely" and "unusual" were also analyzed as such choice of words revealed the WHO perceptions towards the situation in fighting Covid-19. In the conferences, stance words were not widely used and could only be found in four media conferences. An example of stance words that can be found in one of the selected conferences is

"Whether it is Omicron or Delta or any of the variants, we know that vaccines are likely to have some protection".

"The DG has said and Maria spoke again of the things we will do to contain and control the Delta variant will likely stand us in good stead should the Omicron variant continue to spread or demonstrate any signs of increased severity or vaccine escape.".

"Likely" is as in the sentence which functions to express the WHO doubts indicating that she is sceptical about the source of the increase of the cases.

Besides that, in the example

"We, as WHO, we rely on our member states, we rely on public health professionals, those who are carrying out surveillance, those who are caring for patients in countries, researchers across academic, the public, the private sector to share information with us as quickly as possible so that decisions can be made".

The stance word "**quickly**" is also used a few times to prompt the WHO teams and researchers around the world to act faster to take action and track the source of increased cases.

Adjectives were also analyzed as they can hint at the WHO attitude towards fighting covid-19. In analyzing adjectives, the focus is on the WHO choice of adjective when describing the pandemic. In the data, adjectives were mostly used to describe the effects of Covid-19 on health and the economy. Through the use of adjectives such as "**dangerous**" and "**infectious**", the WHO represents try to imply the serious health problems of Covid-19 by construing a sense of alarm when talking about the impact of Covid-19.

We're trying to stop the spread of a particularly **infectious** and tricky virus
(Example 1, Press Conference 31 August 2021)
It's more **infectious**, and we know it moves faster
(Example 2, Press Conference 26 August 2021)

Delta is more infectious, it is more difficult, it is more **dangerous**, and it's more important than ever that people follow the rules

(Example 3, Press Conference 29 August 2021)

Modality
According to Pajunen (2008), modality holds an important role in the portrayal of individuals or events by highlighting attitudes or remarks that is whether they are explicit or implicit in the journalist's linguistic stance. Hence, modal words have always been employed in works of writing to communicate one's viewpoint or to demonstrate one's attitude toward

the issue under discussion. It may also be beneficial to regulate any potential action by using the implications of such modal words. As a result, modal statements often reveal writers' perspectives on the issue under discussion. Modal words include the phrases "can", "will", and "might".

Upon analyzing the use of modality in the selected conferences, the results show that modalities were used extensively when delivering information about the various effects of the virus. Modal words such as "may", "could be", "would" and "likely" were the most widely used modal words in the selected press conferences when talking about events that might happen in the future due to the virus. Such use of modal words suggests uncertainty whether the claimed effects of Covid-19 will happen or not as such news is shortly. Also, the use of modal of uncertainty was used to manipulate the facts and effects of Covid19 by not giving any assured and reliable information. However, in a few other cases, the modality "will" be used when talking about the effects of Covid-19 and the vaccinations plans which promoted a sense of future certainty and thus, increased the sense of urgency Aubadi& Gameel (2021).

Table 5 *the use of Modal verb*

Modal verb	Frequency
Will	150
Would	50
Must	17
Could	60
Can	113
May	120
Might	30

Some examples of such use of words can be seen below

"That may seem like a long process, and it is, but we should not be naïve in thinking that reaching a global accord on pandemics will be easy." (Example 1)

"To step forward to be open about the new variants they might be seeing in their surveillance data" (Example 2)

Including checking of symptoms and others and these measures could be more effective to prevent the spread of the new variant. (Example 3)

"To give more time to countries to be prepared for the spread but a travel ban cannot stop the circulation of virus and, more importantly, the travel can jeopardize the effort to fight against the outbreak." (Example 3)

There is still a chance that additional information could emerge to change this conclusion. (Example 4)

This virus has demonstrated that it will not simply disappear. How many more lives and livelihoods it takes is up to us. (Example 5)

Conclusion

It also aimed to identify the linguistic elements used by World Health Organization on official website related to the Covid-19 pandemic issue. The study adopted the mixed-method design approach for collecting and analyzing the data of the study. The corpus of the study comprised 6transcriptions from (December 2019 to December 2021). The collected data were analyzed in the light of thirteen A. van Dijk, (2008) theory. The results also showed the microstructures elements. Syntactical and lexical elements are analysed in microstructure analysis to identify power relations hidden in data, through the analysis of reported speech, sentence type (simple and complex), active and passive voices, and nominalizations. The lexical analysis examines register and jargon, as well as word choices and modality. Based on these results, under micro-structure analysis, syntax and lexical application in the selected conferences were analyzed particularly to identify power relations involved in the production of the selected conferences. Overall, findings suggest that the WHO is in the power of controlling the content structure, frames, and the representation of virus situations. The WHO determined the issues to be focused on when reporting the government's progress in fighting the virus investigate other politicians' discourse like UK, France, and Germany regarding the same issues raised in this study. Conducting research to compare other discourse of World Health Organization indicating whether he follows the same linguistic features and ideologies in his other speeches.

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