

## Language in Clickbait Strategies: A Structural Analysis of Political News Headlines on IDN Times During the Regional Election Week

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### Abstract

*The rapid growth of technology has changed information media, making internet news easily accessible and extensively consumed. To attract readers, numerous online news platforms adopt clickbait methods, typically designing headlines designed to generate curiosity or emotional responses. This study explores the language tactics utilised in clickbait headlines published by IDN Times during the 2024 Indonesian Regional Elections (Pilkada) week. Using a qualitative descriptive technique and content analysis, the study analyzes 25 headlines picked by purposive sampling. Zhang's rhetorical framework, which categorizes rhetorical elements into Hyperbole, Insinuation, Puzzle, and Visual Rhetoric, serves as the basis for the analysis. The statistics suggest that Insinuation is the most often utilized rhetorical component (12 occasions), followed by Hyperbole and Puzzle (10 instances each), and Visual Rhetoric (9 instances). These rhetorical methods effectively engage readers and shape their perspectives, particularly in the setting of political news. While clickbait boosts reader engagement, it also raises questions about media credibility and ethical journalism practices, especially when headlines overstate or mislead. This study contributes to the understanding of how language promotes public interaction with online news and underscores the need of media literacy in interpreting digital information. Future study could expand the scope to include larger datasets, numerous news platforms, or longitudinal analysis to explore the shifting dynamics of clickbait in digital media.*

**Keywords:** *Analysis of Clickbait Use, News Headlines, Rhetorical Features, IDN Times*

### INTRODUCTION

Digital news platforms today engage in fierce competition for user attention, as information is readily accessible and swiftly disseminated. The absence of barriers between news providers and audiences creates a sense of transparency. Functions such as comments and sharing enable the public to respond immediately, offering journalists rapid input on their story. In light of the increasing significance of user comments in indicating news quality, news organisations and social media platforms have committed to ranking these comments, prioritising specific contributions in discussions to reflect a spectrum of perspectives that denote either their quality or popularity (Farnsworth, 2023). As circumstances become more straightforward, competition among online news outlets intensifies, leading to increased needs for news to thrive and captivate a larger readership. Upon clicking such a headline, readers are sent to a news story on the publisher's website, so creating a 'click' for the publisher, which is typically monetised through the display of

advertising alongside the news article (Kaushal & Vemuri, 2021). As news gains popularity, news writers can more readily entice advertisers to their platforms. This enables them to increase revenue, as marketers aim to target a broader audience. With the intensification of rivalry among online news sources, there is mounting pressure to generate engaging, attention-grabbing, and controversial story headlines to captivate readers, frequently prioritising virality over veracity (Bronakowski et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, the expansion of digital media and severe rivalry among online news providers has led to the widespread use of clickbait headlines (Hadiyat, 2019; Vanessa & Ibrahim, 2023). These headlines are designed to attract readers' attention, frequently employing emotional language and culturally relevant themes. While they drive clicks, clickbait also raises issues about misinformation and diminishing trust in the media. Headlines, as the first aspect perceived by readers, play a key function in influencing public impressions and often determine whether the story will be read (Carpio et al., 2024). While they encourage clicks, clickbait also raises issues about disinformation and a reduction in trust towards the media. This research explores the linguistic techniques behind clickbait headlines, concentrating on the news portal IDN Times during the politically sensitive period of the 2024 Indonesian Regional Elections (Pilkada). As a leading online platform catering to millennial and Gen Z readers, IDN Times provides as a useful instance for investigating the usage of rhetorical elements in clickbait. The analysis tries to reveal how these methods engage readers and alter their perspectives, especially in the setting of political news. By setting the study within the broader context of Indonesian media, it shows the function of language in promoting public participation. Based on the data from Statistics Indonesia, there are 76.08% of Indonesians utilising the internet with the intention of acquiring information or news in 2023 (BPS-STATISTICS INDONESIA, 2024). The development of this number is driven by significant technical advancements, making it possible for people to instantaneously receive news and information for free through electronic devices. material sites also take advantage of this by employing sensational or deceptive headlines to attract audiences, sometimes even publishing material that doesn't follow basic journalistic principles. One of the most significant components in catching readers' attention is the news title or headline. As a result, news media compete to develop titles that inspire curiosity and attract readers. According to Marti ( as cited in Riggs, 2020) headlines are another significant and strong discursive approach, as they attract the reader's attention and help them decide whether to read an article. As a result, many readers feel "trapped" or "misled" by headlines that don't fit the real content of the news. One typical method employed by online news editors is clickbait, which is an easy approach for news media makers to improve traffic and attract more readers to their stories(Jung et al., 2022; Rahman & Al Mamun, 2024; Seminar et al., 2020).

In accordance to Merriam-Webster Dictionary (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2024), The clickbait is established as “an internet story, title, image, etc. that is designed to attract attention and encourage people to click on a link.” Clickbait, noted for its contentious and entertaining headlines, has become a frequent method to enhance click-through rates. This is especially visible in Indonesian journalism, where online media investment is rapidly increasing. While clickbait is effective at attracting readers, it has been criticised for potentially misleading audiences and undermining media credibility. The fundamental purpose of clickbait links is simple: gain clicks. When a user clicks on the link or article, the creator has achieved their goal. The clickbait author is unconcerned about further interaction with the website's content. As a result, the information on

landing pages is often of low quality and rarely lives up to the promise made in the headline. As a result, the clickbait headlines are often described as dishonest, unclear, or unsatisfactory in some way (Scott, 2021).

Clickbait itself has many consequences that have an impact on each reader, most of the effects triggered are negative, studies conducted by Ainur Azam and their group in 2023 determined several consequences caused by the use of clickbait, including: trust in journalist reducing, causes reader dissatisfaction and disappointed, and can lead to the reader's interest to read (Aiesyah Ahmad Azam et al., 2024). While basically the objective of online media to produce news using this clickbait strategy, is just to grab clicks from internet users. Clickbait, as we shall see, is designed to create an information gap, where the headlines convey forward referencing cues to stimulate enough curiosity among the readers such that they get forced to click on the link to fill the knowledge gap (Chakraborty Abhijnan et al., 2016). This gap arouses curiosity in the reader, which raises the likelihood that he will have an intense and impulsive, if fleeting, drive to click on the link (Scott, 2021). This curiosity gap is what will eventually make news headlines that use clickbait can stimulate enough curiosity for the audience who in the end they are forced to click on the news headline that gets them curious. This makes people misread clickbait. Even if the meaning of clickbait itself is a click bait that is carried out to attract readers so that there is response in some news. Even so, clickbait is not necessarily negative, it's simply that some media produce clickbait like a click trap where the title and content are different. This is what makes the public's view of clickbait terrible (Putri & Eriend, 2024). In this study, clickbait is defined as a headline that seeks to catch the reader's attention utilising various language tactics. According to (Kaur et al., 2020), clickbait can be classified into eight forms, including Reasoning, Number, Reaction, Revealing, Shocking/Unbelievable, Hypothesis/Guess, Questionable, and Forward Referencing. This research focuses on identifying and assessing how these methods are utilised in online news, specifically in IDN Times during the Regional Elections (Pilkada) in Indonesia.

As stated by Castells (Castells, 2015) in *Networks of Outrage and Hope*, the media, especially digital and social media, has a significant function in moulding public opinion and mobilizing social action, by evoking the emotional response of the audience. During significant events like elections, the media often adopts attention-grabbing methods, like delivering more emotional and dramatic content. In addition, the mass media in Indonesia has considered as the fourth pillar after Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary (Setiawan, 2022). This applies not only to political news but also to other issues, where strategies like clickbait are becoming more widespread to promote reader engagement. The timeframe from 24 -30 November 2024, was chosen for this study because it overlaps with the 2024 Indonesian Regional Election, which could affect news strategy across the media, including non-political news. During elections, the media tends to employ clickbait more to attract readers' interest, altering the general linguistic patterns in the news.

While prior research have addressed the psychological and behavioral consequences of clickbait on readers, few have examined the linguistic structures and framing methods utilised in Indonesian online news. This study covers these gaps by presenting a case study analysis of IDN Times' headlines, with a special focus on Zhang's rhetorical framework (2020), which categorizes rhetorical elements into Hyperbole, Insinuation, Puzzle, and Visual Rhetoric. Additionally, few research have studied the structural language methods that drive reader engagement. This study intends to fill these gaps by examining clickbait headlines from top Indonesian news portals,

especially IDN Times which no one has ever investigated previously, providing a deeper knowledge of how language impacts reader perception in this cultural setting. The uniqueness of this research resides in two important features. First, this study introduces a new context by studying IDN Times news headlines during the 2024 Regional Elections, which provides a broad overview of the usage of clickbait methods in political category news. Second, the study gives a fresh perspective through structural analysis from another sorts of clickbait which is the rhetorical frameworks to analyse clickbait methods, providing distinct insights into how language is employed to attract readers' attention in a range of news circumstances. Using descriptive qualitative methods and content analysis tools, this study applies purposive sampling strategies to choose relevant headlines. The results of this research are likely to reveal fresh insights into the dynamics of clickbait in online media, especially in the political context, as well as contribute to the study of media language and digital literacy.

## **METHOD**

This study mixes a qualitative descriptive method with a content analytic approach to evaluate the language strategies utilised in clickbait headlines. The qualitative descriptive approach is chosen to provide an in-depth description of how rhetorical elements are utilized to grab readers' attention in online news. Qualitative research focuses on analysing events in their natural context, where the researcher acts as the primary instrument. Data collection techniques were undertaken by triangulation, and inductive data analysis stressed meaning rather than generalization (Abdussamad, 2021). Content analysis serves as the basic analytical technique, allowing the systematic classification of symbols and rhetorical elements in communication As noted in (Sylvawan, 2020), Burhan Bungin highlights that content analysis entails categorizing symbols in communication, applying precise criteria for categorisation, and employing systematic approaches to produce predictions. Content analysis, as a systematic research technique, is used to make reproducible and reliable inferences from texts (or other significant material) to the context of their use (Krippendorff, 2018). This approach allows the study to identify symbols and rhetorical aspects in communication, apply criteria for categorisation, and utilise specialised analytical tools to reach findings.

The study uses IDN Times as a case study, examining its headlines produced during the Indonesian Regional Election (Pilkada) week, from November 24–30, 2024. IDN Times was picked as the focus platform due to its reputation in Indonesian digital media and its special attraction to millennial and Gen Z viewers. By studying 25 headlines from this platform, the research intends to investigate the rhetorical methods deployed during a politically sensitive moment. The rationale for this case pick resides in IDN Times' influence and its relevance as a sample example of clickbait methods in Indonesia. To ensure diversity and relevance, the study applies purposive sampling to select 25 headlines. This selection strategy enables the researcher to focus on headlines that best show rhetorical elements, as outlined by Zhang's theory which categorizes these features into Hyperbole, Insinuation, Puzzle, and Visual Rhetoric. The relatively modest sample size allows for a deep analysis of each headline's structural and rhetorical features. Although limited in scope, the qualitative technique promotes depth and insight above generalization, coinciding with the objectives of case study research. This project tries to understand how rhetorical characteristics function as clickbait methods and influence reader engagement. Although the focus is on a specific example and timeframe, the findings provide

useful insights into the mechanics of clickbait in political news. The approach also offers a foundation for future studies to enlarge the sample size, compare other news platforms, or study clickbait patterns longitudinally.

### FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

This section shows the findings and analysis of 25 headlines from IDN Times that were considered related to political news and expected to use clickbait methods. The data were collected during the week of the 2024 Indonesian Regional Election (Pilkada) and categorised based on (Zhang et al., 2020). As presented below.

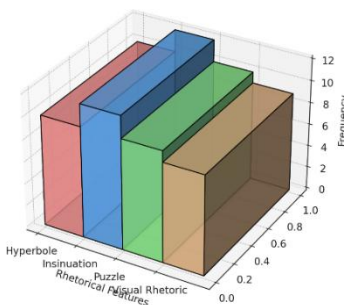
**Tabel 1.** Types of Rhetoric Features in Headlines of IDN Times on Politics News

Rhetorical Features	Frequency
Hyperbole	10
Insinuation	12
Puzzle	10
Visual Rhetoric	9

The design was discovered that the use of rhetoric features in the headline of IDN Times news was dominated using Insinuation (12 headlines) which showed up very often when compared with the other three types of rhetorical features, followed by Hyperbole (10 headlines), then Puzzle (10 Headlines), and Visual Rhetoric (9 Headlines). Linguistic instrument that uses a specific form of phrase structure, tone, or meaning pattern to elicit a specific response from an audience is known as a rhetorical device. Every rhetorical device is a unique instrument that may be utilised to either develop an argument or strengthen one that already exists. When it comes to the headline of the news, the editor utilises it to produce the clickbait itself from the news headline by using these elements. According to Foss, Foss & Griffin (2019) Rhetoric is a persuasive method used to convince and influence an audience. It involves the strategic use of words, pictures, and other symbolic forms to alter the way people think, feel, and act about a specific issue or situation (As cited in Mulya et al., 2024).

To further visualize the distribution of rhetorical features, a bar chart (Figure 1) is shown below, illustrating the relative frequency of each feature. The chart demonstrates the supremacy of Insinuation, followed by Hyperbole, Puzzle, and Visual Rhetoric.

**Figure 1:** Bar chart demonstrating the frequency of rhetorical characteristics in IDN Times headlines throughout the 2024 Regional Election period





To facilitate the understanding of the data reported in Table 1, a bar chart (Figure 1) is included below. The graphic visually contrasts the frequency of rhetorical traits detected in the headlines, clearly emphasising the dominance of 'Insinuation' as the most commonly utilised feature (12 occurrences). This is followed closely by 'Hyperbole' and 'Puzzle' (10 instances each), while 'Visual Rhetoric' appears significantly less often (9 occasions). The bar chart gives an accessible representation of the data, making it easier to examine the importance of each rhetorical trait and their relative utilisation among the analyzed headlines.

Now we can infer that rhetoric plays a very essential function in making news, where journalists use language as their major instrument to make it simpler for people to grasp and be able to analyse what is happening. The existence of this rhetorical elements allows journalists to group the type of language they will use when producing their news. However, sometimes shortcuts like this are utilised inappropriately by journalists. In Tabel 2, the researcher has discussed in more detail the news headlines that contain rhetorical qualities with their descriptions of a sample of 25 news headlines from IDN Times that have been collected.

**Table 2.** List of Headlines that using clickbait’s rhetorical characteristics

No.	Headline	Rhetorical Features	Description
1.	<i>Adu Sakti Anies dan Jokowi di Pilkada DKI Jakarta 2024</i>	Hyperbole, Insinuation	Hyperbole: The phrase "Adu Sakti" (war of strength) exaggerates the fight between Anies and Jokowi, making it seem more dramatic or fierce than it might be.  Insinuation: The word "Sakti" (magical or powerful) denotes amazing skills, adding a layer of inferred power or mystique to both characters.
2.	<i>Pilkada 2024 di Banyumas, Fenomena Kotak Kosong atau Kotak Sultan</i>	Insinuation, Puzzle	Insinuation: The word "Kotak Sultan" (a box of wealth/power) figuratively denotes a sumptuous or dominant candidate, which contrasts with "Kotak Kosong" (empty box) in an indirect, playful way.  Puzzle: The headline inspires interest by providing a choice between two strange and opposing phenomena, prompting readers to click for clarity.
3.	<i>Ada 'Jokowi Effect' dalam Kemenangan Bobby-Surya di Pilkada Sumut</i>	Hyperbole, Insinuation	Hyperbole: The term "'Jokowi Effect'" exaggerates the significance of Jokowi, portraying it as a decisive or nearly miraculous role in the election triumph.  Insinuation: The headline conveys an inferred causality or behind-the-scenes influence by utilising "Jokowi Effect," enticing readers to examine what that effect involves.
4.	<i>Daftar 10 Petahana yang Tumbang pada Pilkada 2024 di Jatim</i>	Hyperbole, Visual Rhetoric	Hyperbole: The use of "Tumbang" (fallen) dramatizes the circumstance, implying a terrible loss for the incumbents.  Visual Rhetoric: The number "10" adds a specific, attention-grabbing aspect to the headline.

5.	<i>Andra Soni Bantah Diendorse Prabowo di Pilkada Banten</i>	Puzzle	Puzzle: The headline stimulates curiosity by stating a denial of support, encouraging readers to find out the background behind the allegation
6.	<i>Seluruh Rocky Gerung Usai Bertemu Pramono: Bahas Fufufafa</i>	Puzzle, Insinuation	Puzzle: The term " <i>Bahas Fufufafa</i> " is enigmatic and purposefully imprecise, making readers curious about its meaning and driving them to click. Insinuation: The usage of the word " <i>Seluruh</i> " (quip or jest) obliquely hints at humor or secret subtext, stimulating speculation.
7.	<i>Kemenangan Kotak Kosong di BaBel Alarm Bagi Demokrasi</i>	Insinuation	Insinuation: The word " <i>Alarm</i> " symbolically conveys a warning, signalling potential danger for democracy without actually stating it.
8.	<i>Lawan Kotak Kosong di Pilkada Sukoharjo, Paslon Etik-Sapto Menang</i>	Visual Rhetoric	Visual Rhetoric: The names " <i>Etik-Sapto</i> " offer distinctiveness, while "Kotak Kosong" as a concept captures attention by contrasting with the idea of an active opponent.
9.	<i>Jokowi Soal Jagoannya Keok di Pilkada Jakarta: Tanya Pak RK</i>	Hyperbole, Puzzle	Hyperbole: The phrase "Keok" (defeated) exaggerates the loss, portraying it as more significant. Puzzle: The order "Tanya Pak RK" (ask Mr. RK) is unclear, creating curiosity about what the response might be.
10.	<i>Gibran Langsung Bertolak ke Jakarta Usai Nyoblos</i>	Insinuation	Insinuation: The term "Langsung Bertolak" (quickly departed) conveys haste or purpose, hinting to a vital reason without elaborating.
11.	<i>6 Daerah Duel KIM vs PDIP di Pilkada, Siapa yang Menang?</i>	Visual Rhetoric, Puzzle	Visual Rhetoric: The number "6" makes the headline more particular and eye-catching. Puzzle: The query "Siapa yang Menang?" explicitly provokes curiosity, prompting readers to figure out the answer.
12.	<i>16 Gaya Tokoh Publik dan Pejabat saat Pilkada, Kompak!</i>	Visual Rhetoric, Hyperbole	Visual Rhetoric: The number "16" draws attention to the range of examples Hyperbole: The phrase " <i>Kompak!</i> " (unified!) highlights the synchronisation in a dramatic fashion
13.	<i>Dasco: Pilkada DKI 2024 Kemungkinan Terjadi 2 Putaran</i>	Puzzle	Puzzle: The word " <i>Kemungkinan Terjadi 2 Putaran</i> " (possibility of 2 rounds) conveys uncertainty, raising interest about the conclusion.
14.	<i>10 Kejadian Kocak dan Tak Terduga di TPS, Pilkada Core!</i>	Visual rhetoric, Hyperbole	Visual Rhetoric: The number "10" lends definition and structure to the headline. Hyperbole: The phrases " <i>Kocak</i> " (hilarious) and " <i>Pilkada Core!</i> " boost the headline's attractiveness with humor and enthusiasm.
15.	<i>Pramono-Rano Menang Pilkada Jakarta Satu Putaran?</i>	Puzzle	Puzzle: The inquiry " <i>Satu Putaran?</i> " (one round?) introduces doubt and urges the reader to explore deeper.
16.	<i>Lima Daerah di Jabar Bakal Menggugat Hasil Pilkada ke MK</i>	Insinuation	Insinuation: The word "Menggugat" (challenge/against) denotes possible confrontation, raising doubts about fairness or dispute.
17.	<i>Gaya Artis saat Nyoblos di Pilkada 2024, Ada Nagita Slavina</i>	Visual Rhetoric, insinuation	Insinuation: Mentioning "Nagita Slavina" implies at celebrity appeal, indirectly implying glamour or excitement around the election.

			Visual Rhetoric: The term "Gaya" (style) draws attention to visual characteristics, strengthening the headline's attraction.
18.	<i>Disdik KBB Izinkan Sekolah Disulap jadi TPS Pilkada 2024</i>	Hyperbole	Hyperbole: The phrase " <i>Disulap</i> " (transformed) dramatizes the process of converting schools into polling centres, making it appear magical or remarkable.
19.	<i>Catat, Promo Pilkada 2024 dari Pakuwon Mall Jogja</i>	Insinuation, Visual Rhetoric	Insinuation: The instruction " <i>Catat</i> " (write it down) adds urgency, tacitly asking readers to pay attention. Visual Rhetoric: The relationship with "Pakuwon Mall" links the headline to a known location, improving its attractiveness.
20.	<i>Belasan Petugas Pilkada di Kota Sukabumi 'Tumbang'</i>	Hyperbole, Visual Rhetoric	Hyperbole: The phrase " <i>Tumbang</i> " (fallen) exaggerates the state of the election officials, dramatizing the scenario. Visual Rhetoric: The word " <i>Belasan</i> " (dozens) denotes a considerable quantity, drawing attention.
21.	<i>3 Petugas Pemungutan Suara Gugur saat Pilkada Jatim</i>	Hyperbole, Visual Rhetoric	Hyperbole: The use of " <i>Gugur</i> " (fallen/died) gives an emotive and dramatic appeal. Visual Rhetoric: The number "3" adds specificity and draws focus.
22.	<i>Pilkada Aceh, Bustami: Kalau Gak Menang Pulang Kampung</i>	Insinuation, Puzzle	Insinuation: The sentence " <i>Kalau Gak Menang Pulang Kampung</i> " (if we don't win, we'll go home) implies to stakes or resignation, providing an indirect emotional appeal. Puzzle: The comment inspires suspicion about whether Bustami's side has realistic chances or hidden motives.
23.	<i>Perjuangan Epik Distribusi Logistik Pilkada ke Perbatasan</i>	Hyperbole, Insinuation	Hyperbole: The word " <i>Epik</i> " (epic) accentuates the difficulty or heroism of the logistical process, dramatizing it. Insinuation: The mention of " <i>ke Perbatasan</i> " (to the border) indicates at remoteness or great effort, indirectly giving weight to the narrative.
24.	<i>Tanggal 27 November Apakah Libur? Ini Penjelasan</i>	Puzzle	Puzzle: The inquiry " <i>Apakah Libur?</i> " (Is it a holiday?) directly awakens interest, pushing readers to click for clarification.
25.	<i>Pasokan Listrik Aman saat Pilkada 2024? Ini Kata Bos PLN Lampung</i>	Puzzle, Insinuation	Puzzle: The query " <i>Aman?</i> " (Safe?) stimulates interest regarding the reliability of electrical supply during the elections. Insinuation: Mentioning " <i>Bos PLN Lampung</i> " conveys authority, indirectly assuring readers of credible information.

As we can see from Table 2, there are some news headlines that use more than one rhetorical characteristic. Two different styles of rhetoric in single headline, or what is described as compound rhetoric (Mulya et al., 2024). This reveals that journalists from IDN Times itself, nevertheless very often utilise this one strategy. Moreover, the journalists who work on the IDN Times web themselves are highly experienced with the use of rhetorical characteristics in news headlines.

Hyperbole refers to the use of words that are overstated. This method of overstatement or overemphasis is very often observed in this type of discourse. Most journalists utilise this approach with the use of excessive adjectives such as "Explosive", "Unbelievable", this technique can also be applied in the mention of specific numbers that provide the sense of exaggeration. In the data in Table 2, one example we can see is the use of hyperbole in news headlines: "Disdik KBB Izinkan



Sekolah Disulap jadi TPS Pilkada 2024” (KBB Education Office Allows Schools to Be Transformed into Polling Stations for the 2024 Regional Election), where the word "Disulap" (transformed) dramatizes the process of converting schools into voting stations, making it seem magical or extraordinary.

Insinuation refers to the underlying meaning of a word or sentence which is sometimes provocative or spiteful. This rhetorical trait suggests that the literal text of these words is ostensibly innocuous, yet they manage to subserve a problematic conversational argument (Domínguez-Armas & Soria-Ruiz, 2021). In its use, journalists or news editors commonly employ this strategy by putting terms that are word playing, or guiding the reader to rich imaginations, where readers are expected to have an anticipation just by reading the news headline, and occasionally utilising words that are punch lines etc. For example, we may look at the Table 2, one of the headlines that uses this technique: “Lima Daerah di Jabar Bakal Menggugat Hasil Pilkada ke MK” (Five Regions in West Java to File a Lawsuit Against Election Results at the Constitutional Court), where the phrase "Menggugat" (challenge/against) denotes probable conflict, raising issues about fairness or dispute.

Puzzle refers to the use of words that are inquisitive, interrogative use or cross-checking. From a linguistic standpoint, puzzles could be generated in two ways: maintaining pronoun(s) in headlines and developing question-based headlines (e.g. echo questions or interrogative sentences) (Zhang et al., 2020). As an instance, we can look at the Table 2, one of the headlines that using this technique: “Dasco: Pilkada DKI 2024 Kemungkinan Terjadi 2 Putaran” (Dasco: The 2024 Jakarta Regional Election May Go to Two Rounds), where the phrase "Kemungkinan Terjadi 2 Putaran" (possibility of 2 rounds) suggests uncertainty, creating curiosity about the outcome.

Visual Rhetoric refers to visually communicable imagery, Journalists frequently employ this strategy in their use as clickbait using three different sorts of visual rhetoric: symbols, digits, and pictures. This form of Rhetoric Feature also serves to provide an expectations in the reader's description of the news title, the picture which is one of the types of Visual Rhetoric here, can be comprehended as the use or description of something that can be described by the viewer's imagination, such as the name of the place, etc. For example, we can look at the Table 2, one of the headlines that employing this strategy “Belasan Petugas Pilkada di Kota Sukabumi 'Tumbang’” (Dozens of Election Officers in Sukabumi City 'Collapse'), where the phrase "Belasan" (dozens) denotes a huge quantity, drawing attention.

The findings imply that rhetorical elements play a vital role in influencing the appeal of clickbait headlines. By utilising Insinuation, journalists can gradually affect reader impressions while preserving an air of intrigue. The frequent usage of Hyperbole underscores the function of exaggerated language in dramatizing events and creating emotional responses. Similarly, Puzzle and Visual Rhetoric cater to human curiosity and cognitive engagement, guaranteeing readers are drawn to examine the content further. These tactics highlight how language acts as both a tool for persuasion and a means of engaging readers in a busy digital media world. However, they can create ethical difficulties, particularly when rhetorical elements are employed to deceive audiences or alter the content's true substance. For example, headlines that unnecessarily exaggerate or imply hidden meanings may lead to irritation or disappointment among readers when the content fails to meet their expectations. Although the study focuses on a small sample size and a specific time period, it offers useful insights on the dynamics of clickbait in Indonesian political news. Future research could broaden the dataset to include other timeframes or compare clickbait methods

across different media providers. Additionally, research might study the impact of these rhetorical qualities on audience trust and engagement, providing a more comprehensive understanding of clickbait's function in digital journalism.

## CONCLUSION

This study investigated the usage of clickbait methods in political news headlines produced by IDN Times during the 2024 Indonesian Regional Election (Pilkada) week. By utilising Zhang's rhetorical framework, the research revealed four primary rhetorical features: Hyperbole, Insinuation, Puzzle, and Visual Rhetoric. Among them, Insinuation emerged as the most commonly employed feature, followed by Hyperbole, Puzzle, and Visual Rhetoric. The findings show the strategic use of these rhetorical tactics to engage readers and affect their perceptions, particularly in a politically heated situation. The study underlines the important importance of rhetorical elements in creating the attraction and efficacy of clickbait headlines. These traits are not simply instruments for gaining attention but also processes for shaping tales and affecting audience participation. However, while these methods efficiently attract readers, they also create ethical concerns, particularly when headlines mislead audiences or fail to deliver on their promises. Such methods can diminish faith in media and add to the growing problem of misinformation.

This research contributes to the increasing body of knowledge on media linguistics by presenting a case study of clickbait in Indonesian journalism. It underlines the significance of media literacy in an age where digital headlines dominate news consumption. By grasping the linguistic methods utilised in clickbait, readers can better navigate online news and critically analyse the material they receive. However, the study has drawbacks. The sample size was constrained to 25 headlines from a single news site and a specified timeframe, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future research should broaden the sample size, include new media outlets, and explore clickbait methods over a longer extended period. Such research might also evaluate how clickbait headlines effect reader trust, engagement, and behavior across different demographic groups. Despite these limitations, the study provides useful insights into the dynamics of clickbait in political journalism. It provides as a framework for ongoing investigation of how language impacts digital media practices and audience interactions, particularly in the context of quickly shifting news environments.

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