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LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGN POSTERS USED IN THE 2025 PHILIPPINE MIDTERM NATIONAL ELECTIONS

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Abstract: This study analyzed the linguistic features of political campaign posters of political candidates in Ilocos Norte, Philippines, during the 2025 Midterm Philippine National Elections. It employed a descriptive-qualitative research design that involved linguistic analysis of political campaign posters of political candidates in Ilocos Norte used in the 2025 Midterm Philippine National Elections. Specifically, the linguistic features (lexical, syntactic, and semantic features) of the posters were described and analyzed using the English Language Stylistics of Crystal and Davy (1969). This study included the official political campaign posters of political candidates in Ilocos Norte who ran for local positions such as municipal/city mayor, vice-mayor, and councilor. Ten political campaign posters from each of the 21 municipalities and two cities, with a total of 230, were purposively selected and served as the sources of data. Frequency counts and percentages were used to treat the data gathered. The analysis of the linguistic features of the political campaign posters reveals a distinctive linguistic structure, showing that these posters are emotionally appealing, use literal language, and maintain a degree of formality. Also, these posters exemplify impactful phrases, imperatives, and clear messages, mainly highlighting the candidates' advocacies of commitment, true and truthful public service, authenticity, and promise for a better community. Interestingly, a significant number of the posters are influenced by innovations in language to make them more appealing to the target audience. Based on these findings, a similar study may be conducted by other researchers using a larger corpus and in other specific election days or campaigns in order to have a wider view of how other political campaign posters are designed linguistically.
Keywords: *Linguistic features; political campaign posters; political candidates*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a tool for communication. It is used to bridge and link ideas, concepts, and messages to its target audience. Communication, classified into two divisions (verbal and nonverbal), provides a clear and unambiguous message to the receiver when it is sent clearly and decoded properly by the speaker or the source of information.

Nonverbal communication provides information remotely through posts and printed materials. Also, it covers symbols or messages that can represent the ideas or thoughts of the speakers. Accordingly, it can be assumed that visual symbols used are considered a creative representation of language or language of persuasion as used in political aspects (Asrini, 2019). Of the two divisions of communication, nonverbal communication is common to the audience since it can reach a large number of audiences through posters and other printed materials without the physical speaker explaining products, advocacies, and other information that concerns explanation, procedure, and clarification.

Noticeably, posters such as political campaign posters are a great source of nonverbal communication for societies' information dissemination. They are an essential form of visual communication since they convey images and other important graphic and textual details with meaning behind them. Also, they deliver political messages to people during elections by promoting and persuading audiences to vote for the candidates in different positions.

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Likewise, political campaign posters send the main advocacies and unified political platforms objectively to the audience (Russmann, 2012). These convey meaningful verbs and visual symbols that can represent the candidates' goal to persuade the voters to vote for them. These posters are scattered and mounted in various locations, provided that they are approved and mandated by the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) to prevent hazards to the audience and other concerns.

Political campaign posters reflect candidates' accomplishments and public service rendered to people through propaganda. This involves the intentional sharing of facts, opinions, and ideas designed to change behavior or motivate actions (Hobbs et al., 2018). Evidently, it involves the intentional sharing of facts, opinions, and ideas designed to change behavior or motivate action.

Just like in any other regions in the country, political campaign posters are scattered in conspicuous areas in Ilocos Norte, Philippines during campaign periods. Apparently, it has been observed that voters neglect the features and elements presented in political campaign posters. Thus, a comprehensive and contextual analysis of such is required to analyze the contents and relate it with the political candidates' clear objectives in serving the position he or she wanted to be elected to (Benoit, 2007).

Evidently, existing studies focusing on the textual and visual aspects of political campaign posters have been carried out in linguistics fields. For example, Mangad et al. (2024) conducted the study, "Examining the Rhetorical Landscape of Political Campaign Slogans in the Philippines: A Rhetorical-Semantic Analysis," focusing on political campaign posters during a Barangay election. Also, Cristobal (2022) analyzed the graphic and textual features of political campaign posters used by local candidates in one of the municipalities of Ilocos Norte during the 2019 National and Local Elections.

In spite of the availability of different studies concerning such aspects of political campaign posters, there is a significant lack of linguistics-related studies in the Philippines, specifically in Ilocos Norte. It is within this context that the researchers were motivated to analyze the linguistic features of political campaign posters of political candidates in Ilocos Norte during the 2025 Midterm Philippine National Elections using the English Language Stylistics of Crystal and Davy (1969), thus making a great contribution to people's understanding of the multifaceted nature of political communication and its impact on voters.

METHOD

This study employed the descriptive-qualitative research design, employing linguistic analysis of political campaign posters of political candidates in Ilocos Norte used in the 2025 Philippine Midterm National Elections to reveal the meaning they convey.

This study gathered the official political campaign posters of political candidates in Ilocos Norte, Philippines, who ran for local positions such as municipal/city mayor, vice-mayor, and councilor. It excluded posters of candidates in Ilocos Norte who vied for other local positions such as governor, vice-governor, and district representatives. Ten political campaign posters from each of the 21 municipalities and two cities, with a total of 230, were purposively selected based on their accessibility and availability. The researchers considered all political campaign posters that were accessible and available both in print and online and not by any political ideology or affiliation. The researchers gathered the posters posted in the different conspicuous places of each municipality and city. Other posters were gathered online through the candidates' or their supporters' official and verified Facebook accounts or pages.

The analysis of the posters was based on the English Language Stylistics of Crystal

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and Davy (1969).

First, the researchers examined the political campaign posters initially to deduce general impressions about them. After this, the campaign posters were analyzed, focusing on their lexical, syntactical, and semantic features. A checklist was used to determine the occurrences of the linguistic features of the campaign posters. The lexical features of the campaign posters focused on whether the language used is: 1) emotive or factual; 2) literal or figurative; and 3) colloquial or formal. On the other hand, the syntactic features determined whether the group of words used in the posters is: 1) phrasal or a full sentence; and 2) declarative or imperative. Lastly, the semantic features focused on whether the language used is clear or ambiguous. The analysis focused mainly on the texts of the campaign posters. It excluded their visual elements such as their graphic and typographical organization. Sample words, phrases, and sentences taken from selected campaign posters were also analyzed for a more comprehensive discussion of results. Words written in Ilocano (mother tongue) and Filipino were translated into English and were verified by experts, including three English professors holding a doctorate degree in linguistics.

Frequency counts and percentages were used to treat the data gathered. This guided the researchers to present an in-depth analysis to highlight each of the posters' linguistic features. Analyses and interpretations were further supported with related literature and relevant studies.

Although the study did not involve respondents, the researchers secured ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Review Board of a state university in Ilocos Norte, Philippines before the implementation of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Linguistic Styles of Philippine Political Campaign Posters

This section presents the analysis of the linguistic features of the political campaign posters. It specifically discusses their lexical, syntactic, and semantic features, which are presented in Table 1.

Lexical Features

The lexical features of the political campaign posters are divided into three sub-categories: emotive versus factual; literal versus figurative; and colloquial versus formal. It can be gleaned from the table that most (226, or 92.26%) of the political campaign posters used emotive language. Emotive language includes the use of phrases that evoke various emotions like hope, anger, fear, or optimism, and rhetorical devices to make the message more notable and impactful (Mangad et al., 2024). This is frequently used in political posters to build a connection among the voters on a personal level that could impact the voters' perspectives and decisions.

Table 1. *Linguistic features of political campaign posters*

Linguistic Features	(***f***)	**(%)**
Lexical Features		
Emotive vs. Factual		
Emotive	226	92.26
Factual	4	1.74
Combined Emotive and Factual	9	3.91
Literal vs. Figurative		
Literal	148	64.35
Figurative	82	35.65
Apostrophe	2	0.87
Personification	16	6.96
Metaphor	34	14.78
Hyperbole	30	13.04
Colloquial vs. Formal		
Colloquial	48	20.87
Formal	182	79.13
Syntactic Features		
Phrasal vs. Full Sentence		
Phrasal	196	85.22
Full Sentence	34	14.78
Declarative vs. Imperative		
Declarative	18	52.94
Imperative	16	47.05
Semantic Features		
Clear vs. Ambiguous		
Clear	230	100.00
Ambiguous	0	0.00

The use of emotive language in the posters clearly specifies the candidates' intention. Evidently, these posters show and remind people of their quality service to them

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since they have already been elected several times.

The use of emotive language in the posters clearly specifies the candidates' intention. Evidently, these posters show and remind people of their quality service to them since they have already been elected several times. These are evident in the phrases, "*natenneb iti panagserbi*," and "*natenneben iti serbision*," translated as tried, proven, and tested in public service. These posters' use of emotive phrases emphasizes the positive transformation they brought in their respective municipalities when they were elected before, and now they are gathering and persuading voters to give them an opportunity to serve with the quality and standard of service to the people.

These posters can affect voters' emotions by asking for their votes with humility, as objectively stated in "*Toy annak ken kabsatayo"* (Your son and brother). This emotive phrase, which is normally heard in speeches in the Ilocano community, implies that this candidate is someone who establishes a close relationship with the community.

Similarly, in one of the posters, the candidate regards himself as *natulong a pagayam*, which is translated as someone who is dependable or an accommodating friend. Lastly, the posters show the use of modifiers and adjectives to intensify the emotions of the voters by stating the candidates' positive qualities such as "*namuli kas umili"* (honed as a citizen) and "*mannakaawat ken alisto a maasitgan"* (understanding and someone whom people can depend on). The use of emotive modifiers and adjectives in these posters indicates that these candidates possess good qualities that may be considered by voters in choosing them.

Also, the use of emotive language in these posters clearly highlights the candidates' goals. Evidently, these posters remind people that they identify themselves as heroes who would stand to fight for the underprivileged people and others who experience injustice. These are evident in the phrases, "*Mangirupir ti kalintengan Pagsayaatan ti Sapasap Tutukan"* (Fights for the right, works for the good of many), and *Boses dagiti awan gaway na, taklin dagiti maikuskuspil*, (Voice of the small people, strength of the oppressed).

Considerably, the use of emotive language in these posters emphasizes the commitment of the political candidates to serve all people regardless of the people's status in life, and that all are treated equally. The posters also highlight the political candidates' voluntary service to respond to and listen to people's sentiments and needs with equality, which adds to their emotional appeal. Additionally, these posters affect voters' emotions by standing as representatives of the masses in the council. The Ilocano phrase, "*Mangirupir ti kalintegan"* (someone who fights for people's rights), implies that this candidate is someone who would committedly fight for the underprivileged people of the town.

Similarly, in one poster, the candidate regards himself as "*Boses dagiti awan gaway na, taklin dagiti maikuskuspil"* (Voice of the marginalized people and dependable for their welfare). This implies that emotive terms were used to bring hope and make people believe that they will be heard and be considered as part of the community. Lastly, some of the posters used names and tags of candidates to represent the masses - someone whom people can depend on when elected. The use of emotive terms in these posters indicates that these candidates have clear goals and aim to serve the people of their respective towns.

Considerably, four (1.74%) of the political campaign posters prefer using factual rather than emotive language. The use of factual language in these posters directly highlights the candidates' capabilities and achievements as leaders.

Evidently, the posters highlight the candidates' achievements during their past terms. These posters point out their achievements to speak to their credibility and ability to lead and take the role of the position they aim for. Each political candidate listed

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the updated achievements and commendations within their previous terms over the use of words that appeal to the emotions. Clearly, these posters target voters to consider the candidates' commendations with facts over emotive and catchy phrases. These show that people consider the importance of ability and credibility of the candidates more than the rhetorics that appeal to the emotions which are not based on facts, thus, highlighting that actions truly speak louder than words.

Meanwhile, the use of both emotive and factual language is evident in nine (3.91%) political campaign posters. These posters both contain information about the political candidates' accomplishments and qualifications, as well as their slogan and advocacy. These posters present factual and emotive information by providing information about their qualifications such as educational background, work experience, current position, and occupation. Along with the factual information are the advocacies presented using emotive language. For example, one poster presents emotive descriptions about the candidate such as *"Sinsero ken napudno nga agserbi"* (Sincere and truthful in service). Likewise, another poster objectively encourages voters with his three-point agenda platform in public service, which are Transparency, Accountability, and Good Governance.

The posters show balance with the combination of emotive and factual information. These include a variety of emotive terms that affect the electorate's decision and the qualities of a leader. On the other hand, the factual information about the political candidates point out the necessity to put emphasis on evaluating political candidates' qualifications and work experiences related to the position vying for. Relatedly, this is an objective reference that focuses on the necessary political skills of leadership and related fields of specialization as specific aspects of judgment and evaluation of voters to choose their leaders in their community (Malik & Anuar, 2023).

In terms of the category, literal versus figurative, the majority (148 or 64.35%) of the political campaign posters emphasize the use of literal language. This shows that most political candidates prioritize clarity and objective meaning of their advocacy and message to voters rather than making it creative and subjective in nature through figurative language. These clearly determine the message of the poster rather than being misinterpreted and misunderstood by people.

"Progresso Sigurado" (Progress is ensured) is stated in one poster, which highlights a direct message of commitment and assurance to the people of progress when elected as mayor in his municipality. The brevity and clarity of the words used in the poster are addressed to the people of the community about the commitment of the political candidate to be fulfilled, as symbolized and supported by the upward arrow which definitely means progress.

Linguistically, the terms "*Progresso*, and *Sigurado"* can be easily understood by the voters. The slogan in the poster evokes a positive feeling towards the political candidate. Considerably, this is a declaration to the people that he ensures progress in his town, without being complicated and complex with words, but only highlighting a goal-oriented advocacy to make the community progressive, which is expressed in simple language. In another poster, the phrase, *Serbisyo a diretso kadagiti tattao* (Service provided directly to the people), highlights a continuous commitment to the people, which assures that all services are given directly and equally, as literally stated in the poster. Considerably, both posters are evidently effective in persuading voters since their campaigns have been proven and experienced by people. These are clearly stated and understood by voters with no misconception; just truth and brevity of words.

Literal language is also evident in the posters. Interestingly, these posters reflect literal language to express the candidates' affection and continued passion in serving the people of their respective municipalities. In addition, the slogan, "*Agnanayon nga*

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agay-ayat kadakayo" (Always loving you all), is a direct statement expressing his love for the community people, which is intensified by the Ilocano term, *kanayon* (always), which is an adverb of frequency. This is a phrase that declares his unending love to the people and will continue his love for them as a public servant when given the chance to serve them again.

Likewise, the slogan, "*Naayat ken naasi a gayyem"* (Loving and kind friend), contains an objective and direct description of the political candidate. She considers herself a friend of the people, which highlights a more intimate and personal relationship with them. Rather than considering them as voters, she regards them as friends who could support her advocacies. The adjectives "*naayat and naasi"* (loving and kind) are the best descriptions of her in dealing with others; someone who is close to the hearts of people and whom they can feel warmth and significance toward.

The use of literal language in the posters implies that direct and objective commitment to the people can easily be understood and can prevent ambiguity and negative connotations, as stated by Bischof and Senninger (2018). Hence, the political candidates can efficiently transmit their message and advocacies to people clearly and directly, especially with the use of common Ilocano terms that appeal to the emotions of voters (Mangad et al., 2024).

Interestingly, 83 (36.08%) of the political campaign posters highlight the use of figurative language. It is significant to use figurative language in posters to make the ideas presented more intense and remarkable to people. As Khazraee and Novak (2018) contended, figurative language is employed to improve the posters' memorability and persuasive influence, and to overcome language barriers to communicate information effectively.

Specifically, 34 (14.78%) of the political campaign posters exemplify the use of metaphor. Mainly, the use of this figure of speech is to make comparisons of local objects (symbols or emblems) and popular Ilocano characters and values to public service that can represent the political candidates. In addition, metaphors can directly explain and relate objects to the political candidate so that voters can understand the slogan and advocacy presented in the posters (Al-Ameedi et al., 2015).

Also, it frames the mind of the people to justify the comparison to be the direct descriptions of the political candidates by the image and objects being compared with them through their experience and encounter with them that could persuade the voters to vote for them. One poster presents the Ilocano term, *"boses"* (voice). This term is considered a metaphor for the candidate since he considers himself the voice of his fellow citizens. The political candidate continues to fulfill his commitment to people who assures to listen and channel their needed services to be heard and eventually be prioritized as he claims himself to be their voice.

Relatively, one poster highlights the phrase, "*Timekyo idiay Konseho!"* (Voice of the people in the council!), to liken the candidate to the voice. The term *"boses"* can also be considered a borrowed term in Filipino, but *"timek"* is used in this poster to promote the Ilocano term, which is more comprehensible to the electorate. Further, the metaphor is supported by a preceding phrase which is, "*Sisasagana a dumngeg ti singasing ti maysa a Batacqueño; Timekyo idiay konseho"* (Ready to listen to the aspirations of a Batacqueño; Your voice in the council), which emphasizes his role to represent the common people.

Timek, in Ilocano in a deeper meaning, is one still voice that is distinct and is meant to be heard. This intensifies and evokes emotional appeal to voters as he considers himself to be the small voice in the council who bravely speaks and takes action with the aspirations of the people whom he intently and sincerely listens to.

Other posters also portray the use of metaphor. Notably, the second most frequently used object for metaphor is light, which is reflected in these posters. Ilocano

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terms, "*silao," "raniag,"* and *"silnag,"* are all associated with light.

For example, one poster represents this metaphor in the phrase, *"SiLAO dagiti napangLAO"* (Light of the poor). Evidently, this directly embodies the political candidate as the light of the poor and heightens the effect of his advocacy campaign in the poster. Likewise, he identifies himself with his fellow citizens who are underprivileged by recreating the Ilocano term, *"siLAO"* and *"napangLAO."* The choice of light as a metaphor in this poster can be attributed to the candidate's last name as well as the rhyme it creates in the slogan. Likewise, one poster compares the candidate to light through the phrase, "*Raniag ti Umili"* (light of the community). This presents another term associated with light, *"raniag"* instead of *"silao." "Raniag,"* which contextually means scattered light or a ray of light, is preferred in this poster to highlight a positive vibe that inspires hope for the people, which could also mean a new beginning. Interestingly, the candidates' preference to compare themselves with light through metaphor can be attributed to the literal meaning of their surname, Silao, since it speaks of light.

Subsequently, as reflected in Table 1, another dominant figure of speech is hyperbole, which is reflected in 30 (13.04%) political campaign posters. Generally, hyperbole is used to heighten and exaggerate the kind of service the political candidates want to offer. It emphasizes a point or evokes a strong emotional response and conveys urgency or significance to the voters.

The phrases "At your service 24/7" and "*Unli Serbisyo Totoo"* (Unli true service) both highlight an exaggeration in serving the people by being alert and available for 24 hours without fail. Additionally, the prefix unli-emphasizes the continuity of quality and true service to the people. These are not realistic in serving the people all day without rest, as well as the unlimited service for the people, for a political candidate can only implement services through approved ordinances, laws, and most especially appropriation of budget from the government.

The use of this figure of speech is an exaggeration of the services they can offer to the public. This is used to persuade people to believe in the concept of unrealistic service hours and unlimited true service served for them, where policies must be implemented accordingly.

The political campaign posters also manifest the use of personification (16 or 6.96%) and apostrophe (two or 0.87%). Considerably, there are posters which exemplify both personification and apostrophe in just one statement.

These posters evidently fuse the use of personification and apostrophe in one statement by calling an entity or the townspeople, as evidenced by the statements, *"Burgos, agtignay kan!"* (Burgos, act now!) and *"Agriing kan, Pasikinew!* (Wake up, people of Paququin). In the posters, the entities being called are immortalized and personified through human characteristics or capabilities by the Ilocano terms*, "agtingnay kan"* and *"agriing,"* which are both imperative or commands. These imply a call to action to the voters and that they must respond immediately by taking action in voting the political candidates reflected in the posters.

Interestingly, the use of apostrophe and personification in the posters can be both effective, as these can prompt voters to reflect and realize that their votes are significant to respond to the call of being responsible by choosing the able leaders of their respective towns.

The last category of the lexical features of the political campaign posters focuses on whether they show colloquial or formal language. Table 1 reveals that the majority (182 or 79.13%) of the posters highlight the use of formal language. This implies that the candidates consider using formal terms to create an identity of formality and credibility rather than novelty. The slogan, *"Ti gobyerno isu ti agserbi iti tao, saan a ti tao ti agserbi para iti gobyerno"* (Government should serve the people and not

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the government to be served by its people), is one of the best examples of using formal language to address a message and a reminder to the present administration that the government must work for its people and not the people to work for them. Since the central message in the poster is something serious, it is also presented with a certain degree of formality in language. This is used to achieve its goal, which is to emphasize the need for transformation through formal advocacy and that the government must be responsible to its people because politicians are elected by the people. In other words, the poster portrays a formal tone through the use of words that are direct, concise, and objective.

Meanwhile, one poster portrays a formal tone to give inspiration and motivation to voters, with his advocacy to provide quality public service and have a better future for his fellow citizens. This is clearly stated in the slogan, *"Para iti masakbayan ti umili, itultuloy ti napudno a panagserbi"* (For the future of his fellow citizens, continue truthful service). The use of formal terms and expressions in Ilocano intensifies the need to vote for the political candidate toward a more progressive community.

The slogan, *"Ili ti panununuten, ibotos dagiti rumbeng."* (Think of the municipality, vote for those who are worthy), uses formal language in the form of advice or encouragement to the people. It reminds voters to think of their municipality, and by doing this, they have to consider the worthy leaders to serve their town. The Ilocano term, *"rumbeng"* (worthy), is a formal term that emphasizes significance, importance, and worthiness, which collectively means that people prove their commitment and love of the town by electing officials who are committed and responsible in serving the people.

Similarly, formality in language is manifested in another poster which advocates for the health system of the town with the use of formal terms *pannakasaluad* (ensuring) and *ipangpangruna* (priority). These terms highlight her main platform in promoting and elevating the health system. Her advocacy to provide a better health care system to the people delivers a message of sincerity and an objective plan to prioritize people's health and wellness when elected as councilor.

In contrast to the use of formal terms and words is the use of colloquial language, which is reflected in 48 (20.87%) of the political campaign posters. This is obviously identified with word contractions or abbreviations and unconventional sentence structure. Also, this is the use of terms that are formed in various ways, like letters with numbers in between capital letters, blending and clipping of names and objects, and phenomena that voters can relate to.

The use of colloquial language in the political campaign posters can be attributed to the candidates' generation since there are candidates who belong to the young generation. Likewise, these posters used colloquialism to establish a closer connection with young people since there is a significant number of voters belonging to the young generation whose language has strong influence from language trends, such as online trends.

This claim can be associated with what Briones et al. (2024) posited: in contradicting the conventions of formal and academic language, colloquial terms or words are formed and structured to have a more conversational, intimate, and casual communication, especially to be comprehensible among the masses, who are the majority of the voters.

Similarly, colloquialism has gained language acceptance among the young generation in different societies and groups. Considerably, the main purpose of colloquial language is to be relevant and up-to-date to keep up with the trend of the young generation (Sikandar et al., 2022).

In one poster, the candidate's name is written through a combined numerical and alphabetical format. The real name of the candidate is Alecz; however, in the poster, "e" is replaced with "3," resulting in Al3cz, which is an innovation in language used by

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the new generation. In another way, the poster's slogan *"Cidadaan nga agserbi, serbisyo nga awan mailakcid!"* (Always ready and be of service to all) also manifests colloquialism. Spelling deviates in this case, in which the candidate's surname, *Cid*, replaces the correct syllable, *sid*, in the word. This preference for the use of colloquialism is consistent with the candidate's profile of being young, whose language is characterized by innovation in language.

Also, another poster manifests a unique way of sending the message to voters by using his current position as an incumbent vice-mayor, along with his surname. As stated in the poster, *"SerVICEyo awan PUTINgana"* (Endless service), the campaign advocacy clearly emphasizes the position vying for, which is vice-mayor, by replacing the correct syllable, "*bis*," with "vice."

Similarly, the Ilocano term, *"patinggana,"* is misspelled in *"PUTINgana,"* through the insertion of the candidate's surname into the word, written in uppercase. This deviation is achieved to highlight the association of the candidate's surname with the quality of service he can offer. Considerably, these posters strategically use their names primarily to create a lasting and unique recall of their advocacies in the posters. These also show that political posters evolve to keep with the trend in word formation and neologisms that make colloquial terms exist as an innovation of language.

Overall, the analysis of the lexical features of the political campaign posters reveals that they are emotionally appealing and provide a clear and objective message of the political candidates' slogans. On the other hand, the use of figurative language simplifies ideas and concepts.

Syntactic Features

The second category under the linguistic features of the political campaign posters focuses on their syntactic features, with two sub-categories: phrasal versus full sentence, and declarative versus imperative.

Table 1 shows that the majority (196 or 85.22%) of the political campaign posters use phrases rather than full sentences. These posters conform to the effectiveness of brevity in writing, considering the limited space on the posters. Likewise, phrases can be more easily remembered than full sentences. Phrases may be short, but they are impactful and appealing.

The posters use phrasal structure in the candidates' advocacies to send a message of hope and change that can lead to better living. These use phrases to persuade voters to join them to fulfill their commitment to leading their respective communities.

In one poster, the advocacy, "A Better City, A Better Life," is divided into two equally patterned phrases which show parallelism. The first phrase, "A Better City," highlights a commitment to the residents toward a better city. The second phrase, "A Better Life," is a conclusive phrase that promises a more convenient and progressive life.

Similarly, in another poster, the advocacy starts with a gerund phrase, "Building a better Sarrat," which also highlights a move to make the town better. It ends with an impactful noun phrase, "Best Choice," which complements the first phrase that building a better community is the best choice. The phrase also signifies that it is the best choice to elect him, and that the advocacy will be realized if he wins.

The phrases in the posters may be short, but they bring an impactful message to the people. They highlight the need for change for a better community rather than adhering to the traditional and conventional form of leadership and government. Contrary to the structure of phrases, the phrases in the posters are unconventional because they are punctuated with a period and an exclamation point, respectively. Clearly, these phrases provide objective and subjective meaning because of the word "better," for it cannot be quantified, but the meaning of the phrases can be deduced directly.

"Nadur-as a Batac, patas a panagserbi!" (Progressive Batac, Fair Public Service) is a two-phrase advocacy and

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understatement of the political candidate. These phrases represent the vision of the political candidate as a future leader of the city. She envisions leading the city into a progressive one and serving the people with fairness and equality. Considerably, these phrases are concise but complete in communicating the message of the poster. The phrases are straightforward, stating the candidate's goals.

Considerably, the phrases used in the posters are effective and impactful since they are written with simple terms and repetition of the main concept with a single term. Also, the phrases used exemplify a resonant and memorable message or advocacy to promote their aims and goals for their respective communities. The phrasing of the slogan, provided with contextual meaning of the words, was used to make the posters carry out their motivational quality, which could be a determining factor for voters to consider voting for these candidates (Newsome, 2002).

On the other hand, full sentences communicate the message of the slogans in the posters. The political candidates' use of full-thought sentences requires well-structured sentences with a formal tone that establishes the candidates' credibility and professionalism. This could develop the candidate's identity, which builds confidence and trust from the voters (Bischof & Senninger, 2018).

One of the posters presents the use of a full sentence. The sentence, *"Damilientayo ti nalinak ken narayray a masakbayan"* (Let us mold a peaceful and bright future), is a well-thought-out invitation to the people by requesting them to join him in molding the town, like a clay pot, which symbolizes the artistry and creativity of the people of San Nicolas, with a clear and bright future ahead in his leadership.

Although the sentence delivers the message figuratively, it can still be comprehended by the locals because of the association of their culture with crafting and molding, one of its major sources of livelihood: pottery. Another, the sentence does not end with a period, which makes the sentence continuous, but the structure and the thought prove that it is a sentence. Moreover, the sentence is in the form of persuasion using the first-person plural, we, signifying a shared action or goal.

A full sentence is also exemplified in "Legacy continues," which is a two-word simple sentence that contains a subject and a predicate. By using short and simple sentences, which are easily understood, the poster reiterates the importance of the legacy and continuity of service to the people through the next generation of the family. The use of a simple sentence in the poster does not complicate the message it conveys.

In addition to the analysis of syntactical features is the use of declarative and imperative. Evidently, 18 (52.94%) of the posters present advocacies and platforms by using declarative sentences. The use of declarative statements exemplifies confidence among the candidates that their advocacies will continuously be delivered, and their projects and goals will be prioritized when elected to the positions they aim for, rather than asking questions that could create an impact of doubt and uncertainty among voters.

Interestingly, declarative statements are used to project a tone and a message of proclamation and declaration of the candidates' capabilities to change and lead in their respective communities. In one poster, *"Umili ti no.1."* (People are the number one priority) is a short, impactful full sentence that brings out a message of commitment to the residents of the town that this candidate will prioritize their welfare first.

The declarative statements in the posters relate to each other as they are clearly stated with clear goals in serving people; in order to continue progress, the community's welfare is prioritized first at all times. As stated by Cummings (2018), the use of declaratives creates a strong impact on people to believe and be hopeful about the straightforward declaration of political candidates in their posters.

The use of imperatives is also evident,

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as reflected in 16 (47.05%) political campaign posters. This study only focused on imperatives that are reflected in the candidates' slogans or advocacy. It did not include imperatives that are commonly used in political campaign posters, such as the one-word imperative "Vote!"

Generally, the imperatives in the posters imply a call or a plea not only to vote for them but also to support their advocacy. For example, one poster shows the imperative, "*Itultuloy panagdur-as!"* (Continue progress!), which means that the candidate is one with the townspeople in sustaining progress in their municipality. As a public servant, this is a commitment from him to sustain progress and transformation through his leadership.

Similarly, another poster uses the imperative, "*Ipangruna tayo ti pinagserbi*" (Let us prioritize public service). This imperative engages not only the political candidate but also motivates and inspires others to prioritize serving their town. Likewise, the imperative is structurally an emphatic request in a form of encouragement to all people which does not sound demanding or does not turn into a command. Rather, it communicates the message of collaboration among them to achieve quality service.

Clearly, the use of imperatives in both posters shows an illocutionary act in the form of a directive statement. The imperative, which is considered an illocutionary act, communicates a clear and objective message of encouragement and challenge to provide the best quality of life and service to people (Susanti et al., 2022).

In general, the syntactic features communicate a factual, objective, and clear message in the political posters. The structure of statements and sentences in the slogans, advocacies, and statements influences the meaning and message of the posters that are deduced by voters (Lirola, 2016). Accurately, the syntactic features of the posters are significant to achieve clarity of message through the structures and functions of language (Winton, 2013).

Semantic Features

Linguistic features also include the analysis of the political campaign posters' semantic features, focusing on statements' clarity and ambiguity. Interestingly, all of the posters use clear phrases and sentences. This means that political candidates are careful in choosing the words they want to convey in their posters because these may either present a clear message or lead to misinterpretation. Also, the posters' goal is to make voters fully understand the message and advocacy they want to convey and not to make them skeptical of candidates' intentions.

The statements, "*Napudno a panagserbi, awan maisupsupadi"* (True public service, all are equal), and "*Sapasap a panagserbi awan mailanglangi"* (Service to all without exceptions), deliver an objective and clear meaning to the voters, which is a campaign for truthful and fair service to all people. In another poster, *"Awan madamdama, aksyon insigida"* (No delay, service in action provided instantly) delivers a message to the people that the political candidate is always ready and prepared to be of service to them immediately. The slogan of the poster is a clear statement that reminds the people of the political candidate's commitment to serve them whenever they are in need: one dependable public servant who responds to the needs of the people instantly.

Likewise, *"Alisto asetgan, napudno agserbi ken mapangnamnamaan"* (Accessibility to service, trustworthy and dependable) has the same message, emphasizing the accuracy and efficiency of service provided to the people. It communicates a clear message of availability, accessibility, and truthful service to his constituents. Also, through the use of a clear message, his best qualities as a public servant are enumerated to highlight that he is a good public servant.

The analysis of the linguistic features of the political campaign posters reveals a distinctive linguistic structure, reflective of the Ilocano community. It further reveals that these posters are emotionally appealing, use literal language, and maintain a degree of

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formality in language. Also, these posters exemplify impactful phrases, imperatives, and clear messages, which highlight the candidates' plea or request to the people to vote for them.

CONCLUSION

Findings reveal that in terms of lexical features, the majority of political campaign posters are emotive, literal, and formal. These results imply that the campaign posters focus more on their emotional appeal, while facts come second. This feature allows the campaign posters to connect better with their audience and win the hearts of voters. Also, these campaign posters use literal language to be understood instantly by all. Moreover, the choice of formal language builds trust and shows that campaign posters follow standards of language, although they are posted in public and informal settings.

In terms of syntactic features, most of the campaign posters' texts are written in phrases. This choice allows readers or the audience to remember the candidates' advocacy easily, especially with the use of catchy or powerful phrases. This implies that short phrases in campaign posters are more conversational and relatable, unlike full sentences, which can sound academic.

With regard to semantic features, all the campaign posters deliver clear messages. This implies that political candidates prefer the use of clear language since doing so allows readers to understand instantly the message they want to convey.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that political campaign posters are not designed randomly. The different linguistic structures are strategic decisions shaped by how people see, think, and feel.

It can also be concluded that political candidates choose words carefully, not only for emotional appeal but for the impact they can leave on people. They are specially designed not for a single group of individuals but for the masses.

Likewise, political campaign posters are a source of political communication that delivers significant messages to their target audience.

With the findings and conclusions drawn, this study could provide meaningful insights and understanding to community members, specifically voters, to choose the right and most suitable political candidates in the position that they are aspiring for by considering how political campaign posters communicate with them. By providing insights and understanding of the language of political campaign posters, this study could empower them to make informed decisions about political candidates, leading to a more engaged and informed electorate.

Similarly, this study could help political candidates to be objective, direct, and relevant in crafting and strategizing their political campaign posters by considering their linguistic features, visual elements, and propaganda characteristics, which could persuade and provide a clear and objective message to voters.

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The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used in this study. The authors solely responsible for the content of this manuscript.

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