

Persuasion in the Mirror Newspaper: A Linguistic Approach to Vuwani Demarcation Discourses

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ABSTRACT

This paper is extracted from a study about persuasion in Vuwani demarcation discourses concerning series of articles released in the "Mirror" newspaper within a period of three years ranging from 2015 to 2017. The purpose of this paper was to explore how communicators within a media text deploy linguistic elements in their verbal and non-verbal messages to persuade targets to comply with their desired goals since message production is a result of a goal-driven process and communication is strategic and purposive to gain compliance. The objectives of this paper were to examine specific goals exhibited in messages constructed by communicators who were involved in the Vuwani demarcation discourses and to flag out linguistic strategies and tactics used by communicators to gain compliance. This paper reviews literature pertaining to communication, compliance gaining, persuasion, message production and language usage. Qualitative research design was taken as an approach for this study and media content analysis was adopted as a research methodology whereby four (4) selected articles in the "Mirror" newspaper pertaining to Vuwani demarcation discourses comprising fifty-one (51) excerpts were considered as the population of the study. Using purposive sampling, fifteen (15) excerpts were selected as the sample of the study, while, discourse analysis was used as the method of data analysis. The findings reveal that there are goals exhibited in messages constructed by communicators, ideological realities expressed and ethnic power-relations between the people of Malamulele and Vuwani. The current researcher recommends further exploration into compliance gaining and persuasion within textual discourse.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This paper presents a summary of the findings of a research study that was carried out to investigate the use of linguistic elements in communicator's persuasive messages when persuading targets to comply with the desired/pursuit goals of the communicators. Words contain power that influences people's beliefs and actions and this is termed persuasion (Mongeau, 2007:4). Kubicová (2013:1) describes persuasion as a phenomenon whereby individuals affect one another's perceptions and behaviours through language usage. Since persuasion is taken to be a canopy term for influence, media texts make use of persuasive messages as a way of addressing issues of social importance within the

societies. However, when a writer or communicator within a media presents a viewpoint, he or she uses wide range of linguistics elements to produce messages that influences readers or listeners to comply. According to Simpson and Paul (2004:55), the main factors that persuaders and communicators take into account include audience, purpose, form, language and images. In her illustration of persuasion in accordance to communication, Kubicová (2013:8) articulates that communication "is the process that happens amongst binary sides, this includes the communicator and the target". The coded meaning is therefore diffused through a communication channel from the communicator to the target.

Scholars have systematically elaborated the concept of persuasion in different ways nonetheless, according to Perloff (2003:4), communication scholars view persuasion as “a communication process whereby the communicator seeks compliance from the target”. He further asserts that persuasion is a symbolic activity whose purpose is to change the state of mind of an individual or patterns of behaviour through the exchange of messages. This means that within the communication spectrum, persuasion is seen as an attempt to change attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of targets. In concurrence with Perloff’s statement, O’Donnell and Garth (1999:27) explicate persuasion as “a complex process whereby the communicator uses verbal and non-verbal symbols to influence the target attitude or behaviour”. Persuasion may be explained as a subset of communication because it has various form that varies from one encoder to another. This study is textual based as it analyse extracts from newspaper’s texts. Texts are rich source of message production, a text is anything sent or strewn with the aim of getting the message across and it can either be spoken or written acts of communication and it consists of the associated use of images and visual and also aural stimuli (Beasily & Marcel 2002:14).

There are various types of texts that make different demands on the readers, viewers or listeners. Hence, they are open to various interpretations based on the context in which they are written and received (Caramazza, Laudanna, & Romani, 1988:56; Schreuder & Baayen, 1995:121 cited in Frederick 2011:54). Texts give audiences the opportunity to understand them according to their form, content, purpose and audience and through the social, historical, cultural and workplace contexts that produce and value them (<http://www.thoughts.com>). Texts may be written or spoken however, this study heavily dwells on print media written texts particularly newspaper articles.

Within newspaper articles there are communicators’ statements that are directly quoted by the journalist; these communicators utter or produce messages that have great impact on their audiences, hence the presence of aspects of persuasion within these messages. Communicators within newspaper articles produce messages either seeking compliance, to gain compliance or even to resist compliance. In order for these characters to seek, gain and resist compliance, language must be used as a tool or instrument, which relate to specific goals. Due to the aspects of intended and unintended influence within communicator’s messages these messages are at times termed persuasive messages, these messages are uttered with the intention of influencing the target (Beasily &

Marcel, 2002:44). These scholars further state that with inclusive and exclusive language as well as rhetoric questions, persuasive messages play a major role in influencing the targeted audience. Persuasive messages are uttered with the aim of achieving a desired effect, which is to persuade the target as affirmed by Berger (1997:25).

As a point of focus Vuwani is an area in Vhembe District Municipality in the Limpopo province of South Africa. In 2015, the Municipal Demarcation Board decided to remove Mashau and Masakona settlements from Makhado, and merge them with the Malamulele, Tshikonelo, Munzhelele, Mulenzhe, and Khakhanwa areas of the Thulamela Local Municipality in order to create a new municipality. In 2016, residents dissatisfied with legal rulings that affirmed the Municipal Demarcation Board’s decision resulted in arson and vandalism of 30 schools over a four months’ period. Disruption of government activities and government destruction of property and learning continued into 2017 resulting in the death of two people (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vuwani>). The mechanisms of power inherent in language of messages in media discourses are constructed from a linguistics perspective. Communicators such as politicians, traditional leaders, community leaders as well as other people who are in authority produce persuasive messages with a goal of making the general public comply to their ideologies and decode in a way that will please themselves as encoders (New Mexico Media Literacy Project, 2007:7).

With a distinct focus on the demarcation issue of Vuwani and Malamulele areas in the Limpopo province, this research project investigates the role of persuasive messages of communicators within the media in shaping and influencing people’s thoughts and actions in relation to the demarcation discourses. This paper examines how various linguistic elements were used to persuade and to convey social, racial ideologies in discourses produced by communicators within the “Mirror” newspaper as a text.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Using media, communicators produce persuasive messages in various discourses and scholars have outlined and elaborated on different forms of persuasion applied by the media in influencing the audience to act or refrain from taking certain actions. However, not much has been researched on message production of communicators within newspaper articles thereof; this study investigated how persuasive messages are constructed in the media through language usage by subject communicators, more especially leaders such as politicians. This study highlights how communicators within a media text

make use of language in their discourses to express ideologies and power to persuade their audience. Therefore, this study also assesses how linguistic elements within the messages of communicators influence the audience either to comply or resist the communicator's message.

3. PURPOSE AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

With a focus on the Vuwani demarcation discourses, the broad aim of this paper is to explore how communicators within a media text deploys linguistic elements in their verbal and non-verbal messages to persuade targets to comply with their desired goals.

- To examine specific goals exhibited in the messages of communicators who were involved in the Vuwani demarcation discourses from the "mirror" newspaper.
- To analyse linguistic strategies and tactics that the communicators used in their messages to gain compliance.
- To highlight power-relations and ideological realities expressed in the selected communicator's messages

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This exploration heavily focuses on communicator's messages within a media text therefore; the study makes use of the Goals-Plans-Actions theory of James Price Dillard (1989) to examine how communicators within a newspaper article generate and produce persuasive or influential messages. The main theoretical points being that (i) communicators create messages in order to achieve some end, (ii) communication is strategic, motivated and purposive, and (iii) message production is the result of a goal-driven process as affirmed by Wilson (1990:103; 2002:225). Through the use of the-Goals-Plans-Actions-theory, the researcher seeks to highlights how linguistic elements were manipulated to achieve single and multiple goals exhibited in communicator's persuasive messages. Goals are future endeavours that individuals want to attain or maintain (Wilson, 2002:226). Individuals seek and resist other people's compliance to elicit desired behaviours (Clark & Delia, 1979:114). Wilson (2009:188) also states that people tend to form goals in accordance with what they believe are possible rather than impossible, and they attempt to overcome the obstacles that might prevent goal attainment. Thus, it is possible to conceptualise the contexts for message production in terms of individuals' perception of social reality and the goals that they subsequently generate for acting upon it. As an important model of message production, the theory also distinguishes between primary and secondary goals (Dillard 2004:185 & Burlison, 2010:153). Goals-Plans-Actions theory, which is the framework for this study explains how communicators

use language to produce messages through the sequence of goals, planning their utterance on how to attain them, and then acting on those plans.

Primary Goals

Goals may vary in status. The primary goal is that which the actor is trying to accomplish. It imbues the interaction with meaning and enables the individual to parse the stream of behaviour into coherent conceptual units (Dillard & Solomon, 2000:77). Primary goals or push goals are the goals that motivate or push one to speak, and they determine the plans and actions (Solomon, 2005:34). A primary goal is viewed as a linguistic goal to produce a message that will be understood as a particular "type" of message with respect to its intent (e.g, as a request, answer, or account). Identifying a speaker's primary goal both categorizes and attributes purpose to his/her communication. Intent to produce a request for action is one type of primary goal. According to Dillard and Marshall (2003:482) primary communication goal is pursued in a unique situational context and their investigation on interpersonal influence goals reveals that there are seven primary goals specified as follows:

- Gain assistance - When trying to obtain favours, information and materials.
- Give advice - as an effort to change the undesirable habits, and lifestyle of the target.
- Share activities - in doing things together such as going to the mall.
- Change relationship - which involves changing the target view towards social affiliations such as law, religions, culture, politics, economy etc.
- Obtain permission – When one tries to get endorsement from those in power or authority.
- Enforce right and obligation – in a situation where the communicator wishes to force someone to be responsible.

Secondary Goals

Following Berger (1997:52) primary or push goals instigate the influence process, while secondary goals shape it and they are also called pull goals since they are sets of boundaries that limit plans and by addressing other concerns that arise from considering how to achieve the primary goal. From Schrader and Dillard (1998:30) investigation, five secondary goals identified are:

- Identity goals: Identity goals are objectives related to the self-concept, including ethical standards and preferences for conduct and they derived from a person's moral, principles of life and personal preferences guiding one's conduct (Dillard & Harden, 1989:21).

- Interaction goals: Interaction goals refer to the social-appropriateness of an action and managing the public impression. They represent the communicator's desire to manage his or her impression successfully, to ensure a good communication flow, to avoid threats, and to produce relevant and coherent messages (Grice, 1975 cited in Dillard & Harden, 1989:22a).

- Resource goals: According to Dillard and Harden (1989:22b) resource goals deal with increasing or maintaining value assets, which can be relational, material and physical. Relational asserts incorporate all personal rewards and gratification, which arises from an interaction with a target. Hill (1987) cited in Dillard & Harden (1989:22c) says that the substance of these goals includes qualities such as emotional support, positive stimulus and social comparison. Material assets involve physical objects such as money whereas; physical assets refer to aspects of communicator's health (Berger, 1985:27 cited in Dillard & Harden, 1989:22d).

- Arousal management goals: Arousal management goals include maintaining the desired level of arousal. Dillard and Harden (1989:23) assume that communication events have arousal properties, which are internally experiences to be pleasurable or unpleasurable.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

Persuasion is illustrated from a communicative and linguistic perspective. Linguistic elements in message production are identified and elaborated from different analytical point of view of various scholars. Persuasion strategies are also captured and illustrated from perspective of various scholars.

Communication as a means of control within the society

Buller, Burgoon and Woodall (1996:10) describe communication as a dynamic and ongoing process whereby senders and receivers exchange messages. According to Deacon, Pickering, Golding and Murdock (2007:144) the way in which speakers communicates reflect power relation and authority in the society due to their standing within a particular society. This means that those who are in power and authority can make use of communication to control others because of their status for example, traditional leaders and police officials may use communication to control others on the bases that they have been granted legitimate power by the state. However, a person of no status may find it difficult to control others because of lack of power or knowledge.

Persuasion as a tool to achieve communicative goals

Perloff (2003:4) defines persuasion as a communicative process in which the communicator seeks to get a desired response from the recipient. Perloff (ibid) further describes it as a symbolic process that consists of a number of closely related steps, which actively involves the recipient of the message. While, messages transmitted primarily through language with its rich, cultural meanings. According to Dudczak (2001:22) cited in O'Keefe (2002: 13), persuasion is a type of social influence wherein the behaviour of one person alters the thoughts or actions of another that can occur when receivers act on cues or messages that were not necessarily intended for their consumption. Dudczak (ibid) also adds that persuasion occurs when messages are produced intentionally with the aim of influencing the recipient. People are more easily persuaded if they think the message is not deliberately intended to persuade or manipulate them (Dillard & Marshall 2003:33).

Finn and Rensburg (1983:1b) consider the target as the most important elements in persuasive communication. De Wet (2010:3) attests that whenever people engage themselves in any communicative function, they are antagonized with persuasion. Mongeau (2007:3-4) believe that messages are uttered with the intention of influencing or persuading others. While, Dillard and Marshall (2003:30) cited in Titi (2009:13) believe that all communication gesture have meaning and should influence the recipient.

Forms of persuasion

Persuasion as a subset of communication has various forms that vary from one encoder to another. These forms are reflected either verbally or non-verbally and they include coercion, propaganda, threat, manipulation and many more which were not considered in this study due to relevancy.

Coercion: Reardon (1995:2-3) and Milner (2002:5) perceive coercion as a means of influencing behaviour by employing physical force or threat to a certain extent. Coercion and force are often used as synonyms of power, and all too often are seen as the only type of power. Perloff (2003:12-13) suggests that coercion necessitates force as a technique labouring for forcing people to act as the persuader wants them to. Violence can produce changes in a target (Miller, 2004: 12).

Propaganda: Propaganda can at a broader sense be regarded as a form of persuasion used for political purposes, propaganda is simply a communication that represent itself as favouring certain ideals or value but

which in fact serves as subtle to undermine the very same thing it represent (Taiwo, 2007:332a). De Wet (2010:89-90) considers bandwagon, transfer and labelling as some of the methods used by propagandists.

Threat: Persuaders also make use of threat as a way of influencing people to do certain things (Taiwo, 2007:332b). For example, as a way of convincing people to stop smoking the persuader may show the smokers a picture of a damaged lung due to smoking, this will serve as a threat and the public will at some instance persuaded to stop smoking.

Manipulation: According to De Wet (2010:5-7), manipulation in communication involves a process whereby the communicator perceives the target as an object to exploit by exerting pressure. Reardon (1995:1-10) and Ugande (2001:8) describes manipulation as a state in which the communicator seeks to pursue his or her goal at the expense of the target. Regular aspects of media messages such as news reports, headlines, advertisements, editorials, features, etc. are often subjected to linguistic manipulations.

Characteristics of persuasive communication

Communicator: According to Wilson et al. (1990:84), experts are more persuasive than non-experts because their message carries more weight and is more valued. Messages produced by prominent peoples such as leaders are easily grabbed by the audiences (Titi, 2009:55).

Message: A message produced with powerless linguistic style such as frequent hedges, tag questions and hesitations is less persuasive (Holtgraves & Lasky, 1999: n.p & O'Donnell, 1999:106). The speakers and the arguments are perceived more positively with powerful linguistic features.

Recipient: O'Donnell and Garth (1999:185) discovered that persuasion can be tough when the recipient or target is hostile to the persuasive message produced, this happens when the audience does not identify with what the media is portraying. Persuasion occurs in a normal and unself-conscious manner without the audience realising that they are being influenced to behave or act in a certain way, and occurs in interactions (Finn and Rensburg, 1983:24).

Linguistic elements in persuasive message production

The role of language in persuasion may be significantly recognised in the linguistic elements when constructing messages. According to Simpson (2004:5) and Kubicová (2013:25), lexical framework

of language focus on the words or vocabulary that people use in either spoken or written texts and the choice of words may fluctuate in message production which includes: political speeches, chats with friends or in news. Language of influence is marked by a wealth of adjective vocabulary, and a poverty of verb vocabulary (Kubicová, 2013:26). Metaphorical messages are more likely to produce greater attitude or behaviour change. Metaphors constitute powerful ways of bringing together very different types of information by relating new information to familiar information (Hermerén, 1999:145 & Kubicová, 2013:30).

Persuasive language in general is intended to make person(s) to behave in a certain way and it involves the use of simple words or sentences which are easy to recall (Kubicová, 2013:6). Persuasive language often breaks down the rules of language with the intention of coining new words that will stimulate attention of audiences (Dyer, 1990:139-140 & Leech, 1966:80-82). Persuasive language leads to a change of mind or a personal habit. A change of mind is an individually controlled, deliberate, linguistic mechanism, not a probability (Yeager & Sommer, 2005:26). Sandell (1977:44) says that in order to change minds, the researcher and persuader employs mechanisms that are largely language phenomena (e.g., words, symbols, imagery, and emotion). Pursuing the goal of persuasion applies communication techniques that belong to the larger topic of linguistic decision-making structures (Yeager & Sommer, 2012:27).

Compliance-gaining messages

According to Cialdini and Sagarin (2012:196), compliance is any action that is taken because it has been requested. This means that to comply is to respond positively with a persuasive attempt. Wilson (2002:4) articulates that compliance gaining is any interaction in which the agent seeks to induce the behaviour of the target individual.

Power and compliance gaining messages

Burgoon, Dunbar and Segrin (2012:167) support that French and Raven (1960) identified five bases of power that communicators can draw upon to influence others:

Legitimate power: This is the power that is vested upon an individual because of his position in the society for example, a traditional leader or chief.

Expert power: This is a knowledge based power that communicators possess for example; a teacher has expert power over a student.

Referent power: This kind of power is possessed by someone who is admired for example a mentor.

Coercive power: This is the power to physically cause

pain for example burning of building during a protest.
Reward power: This kind of power is possessed by a person who has power of materials.

Compliance gaining strategies

Marwell and Schmitt (1967:3-60) grouped the tactics in terms of their commonalities, ultimately identifying five basic types of compliance gaining strategies which are:

- Rewarding activity: This involves seeking compliance in an active and positive way (e.g. using promises).
- Punishing activity: This involves seeking compliance in an explicitly negative way (e.g. making threats).
- Expertise: This involves attempts to make a person think that the persuader has some special knowledge (e.g. trying to appear credible).
- Activation of impersonal commitments: which involves attempts to appeal to a person's internalized commitments (e.g. telling the person he or she will feel bad about him/herself if he/she does not comply).
- Activation of personal commitments: which relies on appeals to a person's commitment to others (e.g., pointing out that the person is indebted and should therefore comply in order to repay the favour).

In their study of 'Taxonomic Disorder and Strategic Confusion', Kathy Kellermann and Tim Cole put together 64 compliance gaining strategies as an attempt to classify more than 820 previous strategies (Kellermann & Cole, 1994:3-60). However, the researcher delimits them to only those that are applicable to the study which includes:

- Assertion: The communicator to gain compliance forcefully in a way that will make the target to comply. For example, "Get out of here right now!"
- Audience-Use: The communicator tries to gain compliance by asking the target in front of the public. For example, "I asked her to marry me in front of the entire congregation".
- Authority Appeal: The communicator gains compliance on the basis of power vested upon him/her.
- Aversive Stimulation: The communicator tries to gain compliance by bothering others until they comply. For example, "My partner kept calling until I answered her call".
- Bargaining: The communicator tries to gain compliance by bargaining a deal wherein both parties will benefit. For example, "If you come with me I will help you with your homework".
- Benefit (Other): The communicator tries to gain compliance by telling the targets that if they comply the public will benefit. For example, if you pledge in our organization the lives of ordinary kids will be transformed".

Compliance resistance strategies

In some cases, the message recipients exercise their freedom as noted by Cody, McLaughlin, and Robey (1980:34) who listed and detailed possible strategies that targets deploy when resisting persuasion as follows:

- Negotiation: The target tries to find a loophole to resist compliance, instead of complying he comes up with a better plan that will benefit both the target and the communicator.
- Non-negotiation: The target assertively or bravely says 'no' without explanation.
- Justification: The targets justify their reasons for not complying.
- Management of identity: The target does not comply as a way of protecting his image or identity.

6. METHODOLOGY

This study constituted a qualitative research design because the data are linguistic forms, constituting words, phrases or sentences rather than numbers. These forms of the data certainly represent one of the characteristics of the qualitative research design described by Bogdan and Biklen (1992:111). The methodology adopted for the study was qualitative media content analysis, on the bases that "it is about who says what to whom with what effects" Reese (1996:12). Neuendorf (2002:9) describes media content analysis as "the primary message centred methodology" which is a sub-set of content analysis. In this study the researcher considered a series of Vuwani demarcation articles over a period of three years (2015, 2016 and 2017) in the "Mirror" newspaper. Following their headlines, the four (4) selected articles are termed Article 1, Article 2, Article 3, Article 4 and they are arranged successively on a series of a period of three years as follows:

- A1-"We are not part of the new municipality"-traditional leaders (2015)
- A2-Own municipality to Malamulele the key to Vuwani's problem (2015)
- A3-More demarcation trouble in Vuwani (2016)
- A4- Vuwani boils (2017)

Through the use of purposive sampling, a total of 15 excerpts served as the sample of the study. The researchers select these excerpts based on the assertion that they contain direct utterance from the communicators and this pertains to the aim of the study as outlined in the introductory part of the paper. The data was analysed using discourse analysis.

Data analysis

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore and investigate how communicators within media text use linguistic elements in their verbal and non-verbal messages to persuade targets to comply with their desired goals. Fifteen (15) excerpts containing direct speech of communicators within the articles were considered as the sample of the study. They are therefore analysed successively using discourse analysis as method of data analysis. In an ascending order following their dates of release the four selected articles are analysed as follows: A1, A2, A3 and A4. Through the use of discourse analysis, the researchers were able to determine goals exhibited in the messages of communicators, and to flag out linguistic strategies and tactics used by communicators to persuade targets as well as to highlight ideologies expressed in communicator's message. This flexibility enabled the researchers to analyse the underlying assumptions and power dynamics that were involved in the production of messages, providing a more contextualized interpretation.

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

(i). Goals Exhibited in Communicator's Messages

After analysing the gathered data, the findings concurred with the assumption of the Goals-Plans-Actions-theory which stipulates that communication is strategic and purposive to achieve certain ends or goals. The research reveals that the communicators who were involved in the Vuwani demarcation discourse mostly made use of primary goals in their persuasive messages in the following manner.

- **Give advice:** The spokesperson of the Pro Makhado Task Team spokesperson advises COSAS to stop making utterances without authority. The spokesperson of the Pro Makhado Task Team also advises Vuwani residents to stop engaging themselves in criminal activities, during the course of the protest as it does not reflect positively on the community. An anonymous community member also advises fellow villagers not to shut down the town since it will infringe daily activities of breadwinners.

- **Change orientation:** Velly Mtileni of the Vuwani Demarcation Task Team wants to change the resident's perceptions into believing that the new municipality is a good entity that will yield development. While, the spokesperson of Vuwani-Malamulele Demarcation Board, Mr Khwara Nennngwekhulu also wants the community to believe that the new municipality is the best thing ever to happen to them. In contrast, Thovhele Masia wants the people of Vuwani to have a negative perception on the newly proposed municipality. An anonymous community member of Vuwani also tries to change

Vuwani's residents about the shutdown that they are planning to impose. Mr Arnold Mulaudzi of the Pro Makhado Task Team wants the residents of Vuwani to show remorse in the government.

- **Gain assistance:** The spokesperson of Vuwani-Malamulele Demarcation Board spokesperson, Mr Khwara Nennngwekhulu wants to gain assistance from the residents; he wants them to believe that the introduction of the new municipality Lim-345 is the best thing ever. In his message, Thovhele Masia calls for assistance from fellow traditional leaders.

- **Enforce rights and obligations:** Community members as well as traditional leaders force the SAPS to come into action and fulfil its mandate of stopping harmful activities in the community since the protest had gone out of hand. Dillard (2004:196) states that apart from primary goals there are secondary goals that shape message production as well as interpersonal interaction.

The findings of this study reveal the following secondary goals exhibited in the communicator's message:

- **Identity Goal:** Thovhele Masia wants to gain compliance from his subjects; through the use of this goal he reveals his ethical and moral standard in relation to the newly proposed municipality Lim 345. On the other hand, an anonymous community member makes use of identity goal to express his opinions about the imposed total shutdown of Vuwani.

- **Relationship management goal:** The spokesperson of the SAPS at times utters statements to manage public impression so that the public can have faith in the SAPS; this is a way of persuading the public to maintain their good relationship with the police.

(ii). Compliance Gaining Strategies and tactics used by Communicators

Communication is purposive and this means that the communicator would make requests with intention(s). Communicators therefore plan before uttering statements as a way of developing compliance gaining strategies or tactics that will influence or change the target behaviour, belief or attitude. Below are strategies and tactics that were used by communicators to gain compliance:

- **Moral appeal:** This strategy the target is forced to comply because not complying is considered to be immoral. The Pro Makhado Task Team spokesperson made use of moral appeal when advising COSAS to stop making utterance without authority. Successively, The Pro Makhado Task Team spokesperson again used moral appeal when advising the community to

stop engaging in criminal activities during the protests as it is immoral to do so.

●**Promise:** This strategy is also known as rewarding activity, this strategy implies that if the target complies he or she will be awarded. SAPS spokesperson, Ngoepe uses promise as a strategy to gain compliance from Vuwani's residents. This is revealed when Ngoepe said that if Vuwani's residents do not retaliate the police will identify the deceased and also find the culprit. the spokesperson of the Vuwani-Malamulele Demarcation Task Team tried to persuade the public by telling them that the new municipality will bring service delivery.

●**Pre-giving:** This strategy implies giving the target a gift before requesting compliance. It is just like offering a bribe before engaging in an activity. The SAPS spokesperson used this strategy by deployed maximum security to protect Vuwani's residents and warning them not to engage themselves in criminal activities.

●**Activation of impersonal commitment:** The communicator uses emotions to persuade the target, according to this strategy if you do not comply you feel bad. This strategy was used by an anonymous community member who wanted the EFF to stop hijacking the strike of residents for their own political agenda.

●**Cooperative strategy:** According to this strategy, the communicator cooperates and collaborates with the target as a way of gaining compliance. This strategy in this study was mostly used by the SAPS spokesperson when trying to calm the community down.

●**Benefit:** In this strategy, the communicator tells the targets that if they comply they will benefit. The spokesperson for the Vuwani-Malamulele Demarcation Task Team, Mr Khwara Nengwekhulu uses this strategy to persuade people into believing that the new municipality is a good thing.

●**Aversive stimulation:** The communicator bothers the target until the target complies. This strategy is used by the community members of Vuwani as they continue to strike until the government hears their cry. Traditional leader, Thovhele Masia also made use of the strategy when he told the media that his community will not rest until their pleas have been heard.

(iii). Compliance Resistance Strategies used by Targets

Cody, McLaughlin, and Robey (1980:34) state that at times targets are able to set themselves free from compliance by resisting persuasive messages of the source. They further listed strategies used by targets to resist compliance. The followings are strategies that were used by targets to resist compliance:

●**Negotiation-** The strategy means that the target do not completely agree to what is being request by the target communicator. After the Pro-Makhado Task Team Demarcation has tried to resolve the dispute with the government the government does not agree but propose a new municipality as a solution as evident.

●**Justification-** The target tries to escape by pointing the negatives. Mr Arnold Mulaudzi of the Pro-Makhado Task Team justifies his people actions by saying that it is the SAPS that started the dispute by arresting the residents.

●**Non-negotiable-** The target directly refuses compliance without hesitation. In H1 excerpt 4.2.1.1 traditional leaders directly resist to be part of the new municipality.

(iv). Linguistic elements used by Communicators to Garner Persuasion

This exploration revealed that choice of words fluctuates in message production for instance, words used by traditional leaders when addressing their subjects differs from words that they use when addressing the government officials, and this extends to the SAPS, when the SAPS addresses the demarcation boards they use clear language unlike when they address the general public they often use pompous terminologies such as 'maximum deployment' with the aim of persuading the public into believing that the SAPS is fulfilling its mandate.

Pragmatics played a major role in this study; pragmatics refers to choice of word formation during language use. Leech (1966, 151) cited in Kubicova (2013) believes that "language of influence is marked by a wealth of adjective vocabulary. Adjectives such as disruptive, ghost and trouble-torn were identified in the messages of communicators and they have persuasive effects on the situation. Furthermore, Semantic which is the study of word meaning (O'Grady et al, 2011) was employed by communicators.

Metaphors which are figure of speech in which an expression is used to something that it does not literally denote (Sage Dictionary, 1999) were occasionally used by communicators. For instance, the

Pro-Makhado Task Team spokesperson makes use of metaphor by referring COSAS members to puppets.

Hyperboles as described by Sage Dictionary (1999) are an extravagant exaggeration; this is for instance noted in Mr Arnold Mulaudzi's speech of the Pro-Makhado Demarcation Task Team when he refers to the demarcation dispute as a Bantustan. Metonymy on the other hand means to take something related to represent the whole concept (Hermerén 1999, 145). In this study, aspects of metonyms are many as noted by pronoun "we", for instance the Pro-Makhado Task Team spokesperson makes use of the pronoun "we" as employed by communicators to represent the entire community.

Idioms and verbs were also prevalent in communicator's messages. Idioms provides meaning that are deeper than the literal words, Mr Khwara Nennngwekhulu of Vuwani-Malamulele demarcation made use of an idiom "come on board" as a way of persuading the residents of Vuwani to join the merriment of the newly formed municipality. Most of the communicators within the study were found to have used wide arrays of verbs with the aim of persuading the 'other'. For instance, verbs such as request, appeal, condemn and enforced were used for persuasive effects.

(v). Ethnic power-relation and Ideologies Expressed in Communicator's Messages

Ideology refers to a complex concept that involves a set of ideas which produces a partial and selective view of reality (Chad, 2003:77). The findings of this study reveal that there are ideologies that are hidden within communicator's messages; these ideologies are solely based on the relation between the residents of Malamulele and those of Vuwani. These ideologies express anger and disappointment of one tribe towards another. Ideologies are mostly prevalent in the speech of leaders for example, Thovhele Masia among other traditional leaders in Vuwani area clearly stipulated that he does not want his subjects to be part of the new municipality. For example, Thovhele Masia with anger states "let them go", referring to those who want to join Malamulele residents in the new municipality.

The findings display that communicators do not share equal status and as a result they deploy different persuasive strategies. The study further highlights the existence of power-relation between communicators who were involved in the demarcation discourses of Vuwani; communicators with more power are more likely to gain compliance than those without adequate power. For example, (i) SAPS spokesperson (Ngoepe) messages are more persuasive based on the fact that he has expert power due to his work experience and he

also has legitimate power that has been vested upon him by the state. (ii) Traditional leader's messages are also effective in persuading the audiences because of the legitimate power they possess from the traditions and culture of the society.

The findings also show that in pursuit of justice, active members of communities have power to engage in collective action with the goal of mobilising resources to ameliorate perceived injustice and relative deprivation. Municipal boundary demarcation requires rethinking because there is a risk of losing its mandate to further democracy. Demarcation has been a stimulus for violent protest and destruction to people's properties.

Communicators also expressed their approval and disapproval through the use of visual symbols or non-verbal communication within their messages for instance, the burning of schools were symbol of coercion (inflicting punishment) by the residents to the government. Vuwani community feels that they will lose efficiency in service delivery in the new municipality; they contemplate that the new municipality will favour people of Malamulele at the expense of Vuwani communities. This is because they think tribalism, identity, lingoes and ethnicity may influence provision of service in the new municipality. Another important aspect to flag out is that some of the people mistrust the role of traditional leaders in adopting a solution to this demarcation dispute due to the fact that some of the traditional leaders such as Thovhele Masia expressed subjectivity in their messages.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the analysis, the researcher recommends that the general public should be educated about the disadvantages of vandalising and burning of buildings, on the bases that burning of schools or any other property is not a solution but the cause of more lack of service delivery. South Africans are to some extent suffering from mental slavery because they are democratically free but they are still suppressed mentally to an extent that they believe in burning properties as they did during the apartheid regime.

The public should come up with new measures of showing disapproval in the government rather than protesting or imposing total shutdown because protests hinder service delivery and it may lead to loss of lives. Those in authority or power such as traditional leaders, police and spokesperson should not abuse their power by uttering statements that force the powerless to comply with their requests. For peace to reign in South Africa, black people should embrace their difference ethnicity and they should accommodate one another without subjectivity and biasness. For further study, scholars and researchers

should also explore the relevancy of the Goals-Plans-Actions-theory in communicator's everyday speech. Researchers should in future explore the effects of linguistic features in persuasive messages as well as to examine the effects of power in compliance gaining.

9. CONCLUSION

This research focused on how communicators within a media text construct persuasive messages with the aim of gaining compliance from their targets. The research was predominantly focused on the Vuwani demarcation dispute; it was a qualitative study conducted through qualitative media content analysis. The research reveals how communicators construct messages, the strategies used by communicators to construct messages as well as linguistic features that are predominantly used in persuasion. The study has explored the field of persuasion in a different manner that will open room for further research. In my opinion, the study has yielded maximum results because it has provided answers to all three objectives of the study.

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APPENDIX 1 – A1

Article Headline: “We are not part of the new municipality” - traditional leaders

News - Date: 08 May 2015

Written by: Kaizer Nengovhela

1. Well-known traditional leaders, who include Thovhele Ntumeni Masia, Thovhele Nesengani, Thovhele Davhana and representatives from Thovhele Netshimbupfe, as well as many traditional leaders serving under the four chiefs, took part in a protest march last Friday, demanding that their areas be excluded from the newly envisaged fourth municipality.

2, The protesters also sent a petition to the Municipal Demarcation Board, dissociating them from presentations made on March 21 at the Thohoyandou Indoor Sports centre that the people of Vuwani wanted Vhembe to have four municipalities. This follows the de-establishment of the Mutale Local municipality.

3, *Leading the march last Friday, Thovhele Masia submitted a petition to the Municipal Demarcation Board that he and other traditional leaders around Vuwani and their people did not want to belong to a new municipality that would include his area and Malamulele. He criticised members of the Vuwani Demarcation task team who submitted that they would like to meet with the people of Malamulele and be part of the new municipality.*

4, *“Let them go,” said Masia, referring to those who wanted to mix with the Malamulele people in the proposed new municipality. Masia said his people had nothing to do with the Vuwani Demarcation task team, a combination of community structures that made a submission to the public hearings held by the board in Thohoyandou.*

5, *The Vuwani Sanco Clusters, however, criticised the chief and sided with the presentations made by the Vuwani Demarcation Task team. During these presentations, Velly Mtileni of the Vuwani Demarcation Task Team said that the people of Wards 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 in the Makhado Municipality wanted Vhembe to have a fourth municipality.*

6, *Mtileni said recent marches by the people of Waterval in Makhado and the people of Malamulele in Thulamela showed that three municipalities would not be able to service the entire area of the Vhembe District Municipality.*

7, *Mtileni said Vuwani was a neglected area and the town did not have a single shopping complex “We have been neglected, just as the Malamulele towns of Saselamani and Malamulele were neglected by the Thulamela Municipality, and together we will be able to develop our areas with the new municipality,” said Mtileni.*

8, *At the hearings, Chief Masia submitted that he and other traditional leaders wanted to remain in the Makhado Municipality, because they were witnessing a lot*

APPENDIX 2 – A2

News - Date: 27 July 2015

Article Headline: Own municipality to Malamulele the key to Vuwani’s problem

Written by: Kaizer Nengovhela

1. *Its official. After malicious and devastating protests that left many schools and businesses burnt and pupils losing almost three months of their schooling, residents of Malamulele finally have their municipality.*

2. *The Municipal Demarcation Board made the formal announcement last week, that Malamulele and parts of Vuwani, Tshikonelo, Mulenzhe, Mashau, Masakona and Bungeni are now a new municipality, which is still to be named. The announcement has been the best news for the people of Malamulele, who are in a celebratory mood.*

3. *For years this community fought tirelessly to have their own municipality, separate from Thulamela. The spokesperson for the Vuwani-Malamulele Demarcation Task Team, Mr Khwara Nenngwekhulu, described the announcement as the best thing to have happened for the people of Vuwani and Malamulele. “We know that it is for the best for the community and we have no doubt the new municipality will deliver service to the people and people will not regret the decision. He said that they were appealing to the people who were against the idea “to come on board and work together for the benefit of our people.”*

4. *The decision came, however, as a thorn in the flesh of some people from certain quarters in the Vuwani area, who feels betrayed. Even before a formal pronouncement could be made, protest marches were held in Vuwani. The seriousness of the situation in the area forced the premier to visit the area, leading to the calming down of the situation. Since then, many leaders from the province have visited the area in an effort to quell tempers.*

5. *A new wave of violence started after the announcement of the new municipality's borders and residents of the Vuwani area accused the government that they must suffer in an effort for the government to appease the people of Malamulele. The aftermath of the violence has been devastating, with many businesses looted and burnt and even private cars set alight or damaged.*

6. *This time around, the community demands that Pres Jacob Zuma must visit the area to solve their problem. “We have done everything in the book to show our displeasure at being part of a new municipality that we did not ask for, but this government chose to disregard the voices of the masses and to enforce a Bantustan disguised as a municipality on the people of Vuwani. We will never be part of the new setup where we were sold out for the benefit of the people of Malamulele,” said Mr Arnold Mulaudzi of the Pro-Makhado Demarcation Task Team.*

7. *Mulaudzi added that the president was their last hope. “The arrests of our people would not deter us in the fight against our incorporation into the new order. We regard the onslaught by the police against our people as very barbaric, as they did nothing to suppress protestors in Malamulele”, he said.*

8. Sources close to the situation point out that tension is simmering when it comes to the way forward after the formal announcement, with traditional leaders opting for the legal route, while some militants opted for a complete shutdown. "I think a complete shutdown is not the right way to go as it will disadvantage our people on the ground. Many of our people depend on selling goods in town for a living and would not survive when there is a total shutdown. The worst part is that we suspect that our just struggle has been hijacked by a third force, the EFF, which wants to see anarchy and lawlessness in the area to tarnish our good name," said a community member who did not want his name mentioned.

9. On Tuesday, a meeting organised by traditional leader Livhuwani Matsila gave the police, community structures and traditional leaders a platform to chart the way forward in the troubled area. During the meeting, Chief Matsila said he was worried after seeing the situation go from bad to worse in the area. "As traditional leaders, we cannot not just sit and pretend as if nothing is happening. Our area is burning and a lot of damage has been caused to property. Many members of the community have been arrested and some have been injured in confrontation with police". He mentioned that crime and anarchy were on the increase and that they could not keep quiet "while the police fail to control the situation".

10. Matsila further indicated that they agreed that the police should not confront the community as it sometimes angered protestors in peaceful marches. It was also agreed that leaders of the protestors would guide their people and work with the police in rooting out criminal elements among their ranks. It was agreed that the community would meet on Wednesday and that Cooperative Governance Minister Pravin Gordhan would address them on their problems. (At our going to press, the outcome of the meeting was not yet known.) of development here.

APPENDIX 3- H3

Article Headline: More demarcation trouble in Vuwani

News - Date: 04 March 2016

Written by: Kaizer Nengovhela

1. Services around Vuwani came to a standstill on Monday when hundreds of villagers marched to the Vuwani Magistrate's Court to support 33 suspects charged with public violence, arson and theft. They were arrested during the unruly protests at Vuwani and Mashau last year.

2. Members of the community demanded that the cases against the suspects be withdrawn. The arrests came after dissatisfaction with the Municipal Demarcation Board's decision to incorporate their area into a new municipality that will include Malamulele. Residents in the area had made it clear that they wanted nothing to do with the proposed municipality, and that they wanted to remain under Makhado Municipality.

3. Some of the suspects are school pupils. Charges against them include arson, public violence and theft. Soon after the court adjourned, a group of youths attempted to block the road and some pelted passing vehicles with stones. The police then used rubber bullets to disperse them and one police vehicle was damaged.

4. Buses and taxis were not moving and streets were deserted, with people staying at home. Most of the community members who commute from around Vuwani could not travel to their work places as there was no transport, due to the shutdown.

5. A resident of Tshitungulwane, Mr Ruzani Mukobani, who works in Thohoyandou, said that he did not go to work as there was no transport available. "Although I failed to go to work, I am supporting this strike because the government did not consult us. They took a decision regarding the new proposed municipality and we want to remain under Makhado Municipality," he said.

6. The spokesperson of the Pro Makhado Task Team, Mr Arnold Mulaudzi, said that the community around Vuwani and other traditional leaders around Vuwani and their people did not want to belong to a new municipality that would include his area and Malamulele. He criticised members of the Vuwani Demarcation task team who had submitted that they would like to meet with the people of Malamulele and be part of the new municipality.

7. "Let them go," said Mulaudzi, referring to those who wanted to mix with the Malamulele people in the proposed new municipality. Mulaudzi said his people had nothing to do with the Vuwani Demarcation Task Team, a combination of community structures that made a submission to the public hearings held by the board in Thohoyandou last year. He warned the police not to arouse the anger of the people by arresting their leaders.

8. "The people of Malamulele burnt schools and shopping complexes, but no one was arrested. Here you are practising double standards by intimidating leaders by arresting them," he added. Mulaudzi said, "Businesses and schools were closed because the community is in solidarity with those who appeared in court and whose cases were postponed."

9. Vuwani Magistrate Court manager Mr Moses Muravha responded to the memorandum handed over by the residents that demands that all charges against the accused be withdrawn. Muravha said that he had sent the memorandum to the National Prosecuting Authority for a decision.

10. Vuwani SAPS spokesperson W/O Elijah Matatjie said that Dingan Mashau (25) of Vyeboom had been charged with malicious damage to property and he appeared on Tuesday. His case was postponed to 14 March for a bail application.

APPENDIX 4 –H4

Article Headline: “Vuwani Boils”

News - Date: 21 April 2017

1. Only a week ago, the situation had returned to normal in the trouble-torn Vuwani, where residents are fighting against their inclusion in a new municipal entity that includes areas of Hlanganani and Malamulele.

2. On Monday, it took a different turn when, during a short meeting, residents decided that a total shutdown should be imposed in the area.

3. The residents, who had planned to hold a meeting at the local Nandoni Sports Ground, were told the gathering was illegal as they did not have permission to hold such a meeting.

4. They moved to the nearby Vuwani Science Resource Centre, but were prevented from holding such a meeting there.

5. There was heavy police presence with police officers posted strategically around the town of Vuwani.

6. Leaders of the Pro Makhado Task Team tried in vain to convince the police to allow them to hold the meeting.

7. The police maintained that the meeting was illegal and that the crowd had to disperse peacefully.

8. Their leaders urged them to behave in a peaceful manner during the shutdown. Just after the announcement, some angry residents started barricading roads and pelting vehicles with stones.

9. Police had their hands full trying to locate those involved in the stoning of cars.

10. On Tuesday, the situation was still tense with many vehicles stoned by angry residents in the area. There

were virtually no activities in town, with no schooling in the villages.

11. The spokesperson for the Pro Makhado Task Team, Mr Nsovo Sambo, said the shutdown will be peaceful and indefinite until government comes with a solution.

12. Meanwhile, the ANC in Limpopo, which has been quiet about the situation in Vuwani, had called on residents in the area to let children go back to school and let life return to normal.

13. The organisation’s secretary, Mr Nox Seabe, said they have started consultations with structures in the area and that the talks are showing results.

14. In a statement, the Pro Makhado Task Team reacted with annoyance to the calls by the ANC Limpopo. “The Pro Makhado Demarcation Task Team has noted with shock the existence of the ANC Limpopo which has been non-existent for the past two years, and with disappointment on their utterances which were recently made regarding the position maintained by Vuwani residents. We further request Cocas to refrain from making utterances without authority. All the affected schools in Vuwani have no affiliation or membership with Cocas and we therefore request them to stay on their lane and not become puppets of the ANC propaganda,” the Task Team said.

15. According to the Task Team, the leadership in Vuwani considers the rights of all the citizens equally and all are treated with equality.

16. “Furthermore, the Task Team condemns all the criminal elements and acts of violence which are manifesting themselves as they do not represent the views of the Vuwani residents. We appeal to the law enforcements agencies to maintain their strong presence within the area and our members to refrain from these criminal elements,” he said.

17. Meanwhile police in Vuwani are investigating a case of culpable homicide which occurred on Tuesday night along one of the local roads in the Vuwani area.

18. It is alleged that three people were traveling in a sedan and their vehicle crashed into one of the pipes that was used to barricade the road.

19. The vehicle went up in flames. Limpopo police spokesperson, Lt-Col Moatshe Ngoepe, said two people burnt to death and one was taken to hospital with serious injuries.

20. “We have opened a culpable homicide case and the process of identifying the deceased is still on. The police investigations are continuing.”

21. *Motorists are advised to drive with caution especially during the night, because there might still be some barricades on the roads and because of the volatility of the situation, the possibility of stones being thrown at passing vehicles from the bushes cannot be ruled out.*

22. *Ngoepe further indicated that by Tuesday, six vehicles were damaged by people throwing stones*

from the bushes and cases of malicious damage to property were opened. No arrests have been affected yet

23. *“The South African Police Service has done maximum deployment in the Vuwani area to protect all the community members and properties during these disruptive actions and will continue to monitor the situation until normality returns,” Ngoepe said.*