GREEN LANGUAGE IN DIGITAL SPACES: HOW ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS INSPIRE COLLECTIVE ACTION

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Abstract

The environmental crisis and climate change have fueled diverse digital campaigns aimed at raising public awareness of ecological issues. In this context, language plays a strategic role as a persuasive communication tool that shapes public opinion and motivates action. This study investigates the use of language in environmental campaigns on social media, particularly in constructing narratives, evoking emotions, and issuing calls to action. Employing a qualitative descriptive method with content analysis, the research focuses on digital campaigns by environmental organizations such as Greenpeace and WWF Indonesia on Instagram, supported by a literature review on environmental communication and ecolinguistics. The findings reveal that digital campaigns frequently employ emotional, rhetorical, and repetitive language styles to create affective connections and foster civic engagement. Phrases like "Save the Earth" "Climate Crisis," and "Act Now" emerge as key elements in shaping collective awareness and a sense of urgency. This study underscores the critical role of language as a driving force in digital environmental advocacy and highlights the need for greater public literacy regarding the communicative strategies employed.

Keywords:

Green Language, Environmental Campaigns, Social Media, Environmental Communication, Ecolinguistics.

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INTRODUCTION

Environmental degradation remains one of the most pressing challenges in Indonesia and across the globe. Serious issues such as climate

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change, air pollution, environmental contamination, and the continuing loss of biodiversity have become major contributors to the current environmental crisis. As the impacts of climate change become increasingly visible through extreme weather events, biodiversity loss, and resource scarcity, generations that have grown up with information technology have responded by developing new forms of environmental activism (Pandit et al., 2025). Consequently, environmental crises and climate change have heightened public awareness regarding their far-reaching consequences for society and future generations.

In the digital era, environmental campaigns are no longer confined to physical spaces but have increasingly expanded into digital environments through internet-based social media platforms. The use of green language in digital spaces has emerged as an important strategy for inspiring collective action. Such language is often embedded with moral messages, ecological awareness, and calls to action that can reach broad and diverse audiences. Digital literacy, defined as the ability to access, understand, and utilize information from various digital sources (Susanti et al., 2024), plays a crucial role in this process. Within the context of environmental campaigns, digital literacy functions as a tool for effectively disseminating environmental messages through social media. According to Mukhibun et al. (2024), campaigns that emphasize education, information dissemination, and persuasion encourage individuals to adopt environmentally responsible behaviors, such as replacing single-use plastic bottles with reusable tumblers. These initiatives are expected to contribute positively to ecological sustainability and increase public awareness of the importance of environmental conservation, particularly forest preservation.

Social media plays a significant role by providing real-time and interactive information, enabling users to better understand issues and respond to questions more effectively (Susanti et al., 2024). Furthermore, social media platforms allow environmental messages to reach large audiences rapidly and efficiently. Syawaldi et al. (2025) argue that digital advertising has become increasingly influential in shaping public perceptions of environmental values through visual and symbolic elements. Such advertisements communicate particular ideologies and values, making them powerful instruments of environmental advocacy. Social media also enables individuals and organizations to exchange information, raise awareness, and mobilize support for shared environmental goals. The analysis of social media content offers valuable insights into public perceptions and opinions across various domains, including environmental issues.

Several previous studies have examined the power of digital narratives in promoting collective action. For example, Pera and Luca (2024) found that video narratives can stimulate social activism, whether through protest

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movements or efforts to encourage support for specific causes. Their study demonstrated how narratives can foster a sense of collective action among audiences, as reflected in online comments. Similarly, Pera et al. (2024) emphasized the role of emotionally driven narratives on YouTube in mobilizing collective environmental action. Meanwhile, San Cornelio et al. (2024) reported that environmental activists and environmental influencers on Instagram frequently address climate change through posts and stories that incorporate memes, humor, and popular cultural elements to engage wider audiences.

Despite these contributions, previous studies present several limitations. Most notably, they tend to focus on a single social media platform, limiting the ability to compare the effectiveness of environmental narratives across different digital environments. Furthermore, earlier research has provided limited discussion of the concept of green language within digital spaces. As a result, there remains insufficient understanding of how specific linguistic choices shape environmental messaging and influence public engagement. This study seeks to address these gaps by examining the use of green language across multiple social media platforms and analyzing how different platforms contribute to environmental action and public participation in collective environmental initiatives.

Based on the issues outlined above, this study raises several research questions. First, how does social media contribute to increasing public awareness and fostering concern regarding environmental issues? This question seeks to investigate whether social media serves as an effective tool for communicating environmental information. Social media enables rapid dissemination of messages across geographical boundaries and reaches large audiences through engaging and interactive content. Such features enhance its capacity to attract public attention to critical environmental issues, including climate change, forest fires, and biodiversity loss. Therefore, this study focuses on examining the role of social media in cultivating environmental awareness and concern.

Second, what communication strategies are most effective in conveying green language through social media? This question explores the approaches and communication techniques that are most successful in promoting environmental campaigns. Specifically, it involves analyzing the effectiveness of narrative construction, engaging content formats, and collaborations with influential public figures. The use of green language on social media has the potential to achieve extensive reach through various channels, including social networking platforms, websites, and online campaign portals. In this context, green language refers to forms of communication designed to raise public environmental awareness, promote sustainability values, and encourage individuals to take concrete actions for environmental preservation. Furthermore, this study evaluates which types of content—such as

infographics, short videos, slogans, and other digital formats—are most effective in communicating environmental messages. These formats can simplify complex environmental issues into messages that are accessible, memorable, and persuasive.

Therefore, examining the use of green language in digital spaces is essential for understanding how language influences ecological awareness, shapes public attitudes, and motivates collective action. Such analysis can identify effective communication strategies while also critically evaluating the various forms of green language employed in environmental campaigns. A deeper understanding of these processes may strengthen the role of green language as a tool for environmental communication and contribute to the promotion of sustainability within society.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach using content analysis to examine the use of language in digital environmental campaigns on social media. The primary data consist of campaign posts published by environmental organizations, particularly Greenpeace Indonesia and WWF Indonesia, on Instagram. These organizations were selected because of their active engagement in environmental advocacy and their extensive use of digital media to communicate environmental issues to the public.

The study is complemented by a literature review of scholarly works on environmental communication, digital activism, and ecolinguistics. Secondary sources, including academic journal articles, reports, and relevant publications, are utilized to provide theoretical and contextual support for the analysis.

Content analysis is conducted to investigate how language is employed in environmental campaigns, particularly in constructing narratives, evoking emotions, and encouraging collective action. The analytical process involves identifying recurring linguistic patterns, key themes, persuasive expressions, slogans, and calls to action within campaign content. Special attention is given to the ways in which environmental messages are framed to raise ecological awareness and motivate public engagement.

Furthermore, the study examines the communicative strategies used by environmental organizations in digital spaces and evaluates how these strategies contribute to shaping public perceptions of environmental issues. By combining content analysis with insights from environmental communication and ecolinguistic theories, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the role of green language in promoting environmental awareness and inspiring collective action in the Indonesian digital context.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Narrative Strategies in the Use of Green Language in Digital Campaigns

Narrative strategy is a crucial aspect of the use of green language in digital environmental campaigns. Contemporary audiences do not merely require factual information; they are also influenced by emotionally engaging narratives that resonate with their values and experiences. Environmental organizations such as Greenpeace Indonesia have actively utilized digital platforms to communicate environmental issues and mobilize public support. As an organization committed to peaceful environmental advocacy, Greenpeace Indonesia incorporates environmental narratives into its campaigns to raise awareness and encourage collective action.

According to Hambali and Imran (2024), Greenpeace Indonesia has successfully translated offline environmental campaigns into digital formats through comprehensive online campaign strategies. These campaigns are managed by digital campaigners supported by multidisciplinary teams, including experts in digital strategy, public engagement, and communication. Through these coordinated efforts, Greenpeace Indonesia is able to highlight pressing environmental concerns and disseminate them to wider audiences through social media. Digital campaigns have proven highly effective in influencing public perceptions due to the accessibility and speed of information dissemination enabled by digital technology.

Research by Amangeldi et al. (2023) further demonstrates the significance of emotional narratives in environmental communication. Through sentiment analysis of discussions on Reddit, YouTube, and X (formerly Twitter), the study found that environmental issues such as climate change and air quality frequently evoke strong emotional responses. Emotions including fear, trust, and anticipation were among the most prevalent sentiments expressed in environmental discussions. These findings suggest that emotional engagement is a key factor in attracting public attention and sustaining interest in environmental issues.

Similarly, Ziyada et al. (2024) reported that audience interactions, including comments and reactions, had a substantial impact on the popularity of environmental campaign videos. Their findings indicated that interaction-based features achieved a predictive accuracy of 0.80 in determining campaign effectiveness, compared to 0.67 for raw video features alone. Metrics such as likes, shares, and comments were found to be more influential than content characteristics alone in determining audience engagement. The study highlights the relationship between content features and public perceptions in shaping the visibility and effectiveness of environmental messages on social media.

These findings suggest that green language can be strategically employed to frame environmental messages in ways that evoke empathy, awareness, and anticipation. Expressions such as "Save the Earth," "Climate Crisis," and "Act Now" function as powerful rhetorical devices that encourage environmental concern and collective responsibility. Such language can help transform public attitudes from passive awareness to active engagement with environmental issues. Furthermore, campaigns that focus on timely and globally relevant environmental concerns are more likely to capture audience attention and facilitate message acceptance. The integration of compelling visual narratives and relevant hashtags further enhances audience motivation and environmental consciousness.

The Role of Environmental Communication on Social Media

According to Pitriansyah and Dirgantara (2021), environmental communication refers to the application of communication strategies and techniques to promote environmental protection and advocate for sustainable environmental management. Effective environmental communication requires carefully designed strategies to ensure that messages reach and influence the intended audiences. One of the most prominent strategies in contemporary environmental advocacy is the use of digital campaigns through social media.

The literature indicates that social media has become one of the most effective channels for disseminating environmental messages. Its capacity for rapid information sharing and broad audience reach makes it a powerful medium for educating, persuading, and mobilizing the public around sustainability issues (Tian, 2024). Unlike traditional mass media, which typically operates through one-way communication, social media facilitates multidirectional communication. Through features such as comments, likes, shares, and reposts, users can provide feedback, ask questions, and further distribute environmental messages within their own networks. These interactions not only expand the reach of environmental campaigns but also foster a sense of ownership and personal involvement in the issues being addressed.

Environmental communication on social media serves several important functions. First, it contributes to increasing public awareness of environmental issues. Information can be communicated through infographics, short videos, and persuasive narratives designed to encourage environmental responsibility. Acquaye et al. (2023) found that short-form video content on platforms such as TikTok and YouTube Shorts effectively engages younger audiences and promotes optimism regarding climate action.

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Second, social media encourages active public participation. Digital platforms such as X and TikTok function not only as channels for information dissemination but also as spaces for mobilizing social movements and environmental activism. Educational visual content, digital campaigns, and hashtag-based advocacy initiatives are commonly used to encourage public involvement. Bakti (2024), for example, reported that the #SaveOurEarth campaign conducted on Instagram in 2021 successfully increased public attention toward environmental sustainability through heightened social media engagement.

Third, social media facilitates the formation of environmental communities. These communities often extend beyond virtual interactions and develop into real-world networks of environmental activists and volunteers. Individuals who share similar concerns and objectives can collaborate on environmental initiatives, such as campaigns addressing plastic pollution or community-based environmental clean-up activities. In this way, social media serves as a platform for collective organization and community building.

Despite its significant advantages, the use of social media in environmental communication also presents several challenges. The widespread circulation of inaccurate or misleading information can obscure core environmental messages and reduce their effectiveness. Additionally, online engagement does not always translate into meaningful real-world action, a phenomenon commonly referred to as slacktivism. Another important concern is the practice of greenwashing, whereby organizations exaggerate or misrepresent their environmental commitments. Greenwashing can undermine public trust in environmental campaigns and organizations. Persakis et al. (2025) found that non-transparent environmental claims are associated with declining public trust, increased skepticism, and reduced environmental awareness.

Therefore, the role of environmental communication on social media extends beyond the simple dissemination of information. It encompasses the formation of public opinion, the strengthening of environmental awareness, the creation of engaged communities, and the mobilization of collective action. When used effectively, social media can become a powerful instrument for promoting environmental sustainability and encouraging public participation in addressing environmental challenges.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that language plays a significant role in mobilizing public engagement with environmental issues. Through the strategic use of green language, environmental organizations

are able to transform complex ecological challenges into accessible and emotionally resonant messages. However, the long-term effectiveness of environmental communication remains dependent on several factors, including the consistency of environmental messaging, the ability of organizations to adapt to constantly evolving social media algorithms, and the integration of online advocacy with offline environmental action.

This study contributes an ecolinguistic perspective to the discussion of digital environmental communication by examining how linguistic choices shape public perceptions of environmental issues. Ecolinguistics emphasizes that language is not merely a medium for conveying information but also a tool for constructing social realities and influencing attitudes toward the environment. The findings suggest that specific lexical choices, slogans, and persuasive expressions can influence how audiences understand environmental problems, assign responsibility, and perceive the urgency of taking action. Despite the growing importance of environmental communication, the role of linguistic framing in Indonesian social media remains relatively underexplored in existing research.

Social media has become one of the most influential platforms for public discussion and opinion formation regarding environmental and ecological issues. Through interactive features, users can share information, express opinions, and engage in discussions that contribute to the development of public discourse. These interactions can strengthen environmental awareness and reinforce collective ideas about sustainability. Nevertheless, the same platforms can also facilitate the spread of misinformation and misleading narratives, which may distort public understanding of environmental issues. Furthermore, the diverse characteristics of users across different social media platforms influence how environmental messages are received, interpreted, and acted upon. Consequently, communication strategies that are effective on one platform may not necessarily achieve similar outcomes on another.

The findings also indicate that successful environmental communication on social media depends on a combination of creativity, credibility, and evidence-based messaging. Effective campaigns not only employ engaging narratives and persuasive language but also establish trust through transparency and factual accuracy. Environmental messages are more likely to resonate with audiences when they are supported by reliable data and communicated in ways that encourage meaningful interaction within online communities. In addition, community engagement plays a critical role in transforming awareness into participation and collective action.

Finally, the study highlights the importance of continuously evaluating public responses to environmental campaigns. Regular

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assessment of audience engagement, public sentiment, and communication outcomes enables organizations to refine their strategies and maintain the relevance of their messages. As environmental challenges continue to evolve, environmental communication must remain adaptive, evidence-driven, and responsive to changing social and digital contexts. In this regard, green language serves not only as a communication tool but also as a catalyst for fostering environmental awareness, strengthening civic engagement, and promoting long-term sustainability.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, this study concludes that language, particularly *green language*, plays a vital role in environmental campaigns conducted within digital spaces. The effectiveness of environmental communication on social media depends largely on the strategic use of persuasive and emotionally engaging narratives delivered through various digital platforms. Environmental activists, organizations, and influencers contribute significantly to amplifying environmental messages and increasing public awareness of ecological issues. By framing environmental concerns through relatable and emotionally compelling language, digital campaigns can strengthen audience engagement and encourage greater concern for environmental sustainability.

The study further reveals that audience interaction, as reflected through likes, shares, comments, and other forms of engagement, constitutes an important indicator of the effectiveness of digital environmental campaigns. These interactive features not only increase the visibility of environmental messages but also facilitate public participation in discussions surrounding environmental issues. Moreover, environmental topics that are highly relevant and widely discussed on social media, such as air quality, plastic pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss, tend to attract greater public attention and generate stronger engagement among audiences.

In addition, the use of environmental hashtags, positive messaging, and persuasive calls to action can influence public attitudes toward environmental issues. Such communication strategies have the potential to transform passive audiences or individuals with limited environmental concern into more environmentally conscious citizens who are willing to participate in concrete environmental actions. Through consistent exposure to environmental narratives, audiences may develop a stronger sense of responsibility toward environmental protection and sustainability.

Finally, environmental organizations and media institutions, such as Greenpeace, play a crucial role in disseminating environmental information and promoting *green language* within digital campaigns. Their ability to communicate environmental issues effectively contributes to the formation of public awareness, the strengthening of environmental values, and the mobilization of collective action. Therefore, *green language* should be recognized as a strategic communication tool capable of fostering ecological awareness, encouraging civic participation, and supporting long-term environmental sustainability in the digital era.

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