

## Micro People: Journalism Writing Style in the Digital Era, as a Form of Media Metamorphosis in the Era of Disruption

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### ABSTRACT

Disruption has had a significant impact on print media. Disruption changes the behavior of print media consumers into digital consumers. Especially for digital natives who have the assumption that information is something that can be obtained for free. The shifting demographics of media readers demand an overhaul of the customer management model. Not only in the form of advertising services, but also the typical editorial style tailored to the character of millennials and gen z. Micro people is a new style of journalism in writing news. Micro people have significant differences with straight news writing in print media.

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## INTRODUCTION

The fast pace of the internet has made the print media industry improve. From research conducted in 2020, print media carried out a customer management strategy in order to survive in the era of disruption. In essence, the media does not only carry out one strategy to survive. Customer management is one of many aspects that are addressed in the print media industry. Another aspect that is no less strategic in the print media survival process is adaptation. Adaptation is done not only in the journalistic process but also in the business process. The flow of disruption is full of uncertainty coupled with pandemic conditions that affect industrial processes, print media also carries out an adaptation process or known as mediamorphosis so that it can remain upright amid the onslaught of technology. The mediamorphosis process is a way for print media to "run" in order to keep up with technology. The adaptation made by print media in this process is known as mediamorphosis. Mediamorphosis is a process of communication media transformation that is usually brought about by a complex reciprocal relationship between perceived needs, competitive and political pressures, and various social and technological innovations (Fidler, 2003: 34).

Mediamorphosis is not simply a way of thinking about the evolution of communication media technology, but encourages us to understand all forms as part of an interconnected system and to note the similarities and relationships that exist between past, present and emerging forms. As newer forms of communication media emerge, older forms usually do not die out, continuing to evolve and adapt, (Fidler, 2003:35). This theory is in line with the *Immediacy* and *Hypermediacy* theory presented by Bolter and Grusin (1999), where there is a remediation process, where new media has an impact on old media in form, function and culture created by it. There are two conditions underlined by Bolter and Grusin, namely immediacy, where new media replaces old media; and hypermediacy, where old media still survives because there are still those who use it. In mediamorphosis, existing forms of communication media must change in response to the emergence of a new medium. As a strategy for self-preservation, the principle of mediamorphosis has three main concepts: coevolution, convergence, complexity (Fidler, 2003: 36).

In general, Fidler describes three concepts of mediamorphosis, namely: The first is coevolution. The nature of media is realized and passed on through communicator codes that we call language. Language, without being compared to each other, has been the most influential agent of change in the course of human evolution. The development of spoken and written language gave birth to two major transformations, or mediamorphoses, in the human communication system. A third mediamorphosis poised to radically affect the evolution of communication and civilization is digital language. This language is the lingua franca of computers and global telecommunications networks. It is the domain of the communication domain. Since the birth of written language, various forms of media have evolved along three distinct paths, called domains. Digital language has transformed the existing forms of communication

media. It is the agent of change that is most responsible for blurring the distinction between the historical domains of communication.

The second is convergence, which has always been the essence of the evolution and process of mediamorphosis. Large-scale convergence in the media and telecommunications industry may have happened only once. But the current form of media is in fact the result of innumerable smaller-scale convergences, often happening all the time. Convergence is more like a crossover or marriage, resulting in the transformation of each converging entity and the creation of a new one. Tim Dwyer defines media convergence as the process by which new technologies are combined with existing media and evolving communication industries and cultures (Dwyer, 2010).

The third is complexity. To understand complexity, we can trace the emergence of chaos theory. Chaos is an essential component of change. Without it, the universe would be a place of death and life would be impossible. From chaos, new ideas are born that transform and vitalize various systems. A central tenet of contemporary chaos theory is the idea that seemingly insignificant events or trivial initial variations in chaotic systems. Such as weather and economics, can trigger an escalation of unexpected events that eventually lead to catastrophic events. Systems undergoing chaos are inherently anarchic. They exhibit an almost endless pattern of uncertainty with unpredictable timeframes. This also explains why no one can accurately predict which new media technologies and forms of communication will ultimately succeed and which will fail.

One of the elements that can lead to the emergence of new technologies is adaptive and complex systems. The richness of interactions found in living systems allows them to undergo spontaneous self-organization. In other words, complex systems are adaptive, in that they only respond passively to events. They actively try to direct whatever happens to their advantage. Thus, we can see that all forms of media live in a dynamic and interdependent world. As external pressures and new inventions arise, each form of communication is affected by a spontaneous process of self-organization. Just as species evolve for better survival, so do existing forms of communication and media companies. This process is the essence of mediamorphosis. Each print media has a different mediamorphosis process. In this study, researchers want to research how the mediamorphosis models carried out by print media in order to survive in the era of disruption or even be able to turn the crisis that occurs into an opportunity to maintain the existence of print media.

This research discusses more about the mediamorphosis process in the form of changes in journalistic language. Journalistic language before the digital era was known as *straight news* journalistic language which tended to be rigid, straightforward and strictly in accordance with the KBBI. In the disruption era, researchers saw that the media's language style began to shift to become more "fluid", less rigid, and even tended to use viral vocabulary used by generation Z or millennials in communication. This change in news writing style is the media's response to the evolution of technology that is running more massively. Another influencing factor is that news readers and

media market segments will shift to millennials and gen z. These generations are very skilled in using internet media, the home of mass media today. If they want to survive, mass media that migrate to online must follow the tastes of readers, who are used to getting focused information quickly. The media's target market is a generation that has a scrolling habit and considers information something important in the first three seconds, so, the media's language style then adapts as much as possible close and close to the communication style of the existing target market. Then, how is the adaptation model of news writing style in the digital era and what factors influence the writing style will be explored in this journal.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Media and its Types in Mass Communication*

Media is a means or tool used to convey messages from communicators to communicants so that information can be received properly. In the world of communication, media can come in various forms. As a growing industry, the media not only functions as a disseminator of information, but also opens up employment opportunities in various sectors, both in the production of goods and services. In addition, mass media has a great influence in society, acting as a source of power, control, and innovation that can even replace the role of other resources (McQuail, 2000: 102).

Mass media helps people obtain information, whether in the form of news, education or entertainment. Various platforms such as print, electronic and online media allow for widespread dissemination of information. Currently, online media is increasingly popular due to its fast and practical access. With its existence, the media can also function as a hidden reflection of the social reality that exists in society. In addition, media plays a role in shaping lifestyles and influencing consumption patterns in the modern industrial era. As part of a rapidly growing industry, mass media is often considered an *agent of change*. In practice, the media functions as a tool that sensitizes the public and acts as an educational medium. Through its various forms, mass media helps build a more open and advanced mindset (Bugin, 2006: 85). In fact, the media is often considered as a means to "free" people from ignorance by presenting a variety of useful information and knowledge.

Technological developments have also brought major changes to mass media. Over time, media forms adapted to the progress of the times. In the printing press era, newspapers and magazines were the main source of information. Then, when electronic technology developed, media such as radio and television were present. Now, with the rapid use of the internet, the media has also evolved into a digital form that we know as online media.

### *Types of Mass Media*

As a communication tool, mass media can be categorized into three main types: print media, electronic media, and online media.

#### 1. Print Media

Print media is a form of media that relies on visual displays to convey information. This type usually comes in the form of newspapers, magazines, or tabloids that are printed in physical form and used as a source of news and entertainment.

2. Electronic Media

Electronic media includes means of communication that rely on electronic devices such as television, radio and movies. Because it combines audio and visual elements, this media is more easily understood by the public and is able to convey information in a more interesting way.

3. Online Media

Online media or cyber media is a type of media that is available digitally via the internet. After the era of print and electronic media, online media is the third generation in media development. Today, online media is growing rapidly and is a major part of the digital journalism ecosystem.

### *Journalistic Language and News in Mass Media*

In the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), language is defined as an arbitrary system of sound symbols used by people to communicate, interact and identify themselves. In journalism, the use of language still adheres to the rules of the Indonesian language. Journalistic language is often referred to as press language, which is the language used in writing news published through mass media. *News* is the main element in mass media, apart from opinions or *views*. Finding news material and compiling it is the main task of a journalist and editorial department in a press publication. Without news, mass media will not have enough appeal to maintain its audience.

According to Pauk De Massenner in the book *Here's The News: Unesco Associate*, quoted by Haris Sumadiria, news is information that has important value and is able to attract the attention and interest of the audience. Meanwhile, Charnley and James M. Neal define news as a report about an event, opinion, trend, situation, condition, or interpretation that has important, interesting, and actual value, so it needs to be immediately conveyed to the public (Errol Jonathans in Mirza, 2000: 68-69).

In KBBI, news is also defined as a story or information about an ongoing event or subject of discussion. In the digital era, online media prioritizes the presentation of text in news writing. Therefore, the use of language in online media needs to be carefully considered, including spelling, word choice, and active and passive sentence structure. Because online media is text-based, readers tend to pay attention to every detail of the published writing.

Apart from being text-based, online media news also has to fight against the speed of news upload time. The more realtime the news is uploaded, the more it will attract readers' attention. Given that online media readers have a short focus in deciding to read or not, which is about three seconds.

### ***Mediamorphosis***

Mediamorphosis is a process of communication media transformation that is usually brought about by a complex interplay between perceived needs, competitive and political pressures, and various social and technological innovations (Fidler, 2003: 34). Mediamorphosis is not simply a way of thinking about the evolution of communication media technology, but encourages us to understand all forms as part of an interconnected system and to note the similarities and relationships that exist between past, present and emerging forms. As newer forms of communication media emerge, older forms usually do not die out, continuing to evolve and adapt, (Fidler, 2003:35). This theory is in line with the *Immediacy* and *Hypermediacy* theory presented by Bolter and Grusin (1999), where there is a remediation process, where new media has an impact on old media in form, function and culture created by it. There are two conditions underlined by Bolter and Grusin, namely *immediacy*, where new media replaces old media; and *hypermediacy*, where old media still survives because there are still those who use it. In mediamorphosis, existing forms of communication media must change in response to the emergence of a new medium. As a strategy for self-preservation, the principle of mediamorphosis has three main concepts: coevolution, convergence, complexity (Fidler, 2003: 36).

In general, Fidler describes three concepts of mediamorphosis, namely: The first is coevolution. The nature of media is realized and passed on through communicator codes that we call language. Language, without being compared to each other, has been the most influential agent of change in the course of human evolution. The development of spoken and written language gave birth to two major transformations, or mediamorphoses, in the human communication system. A third mediamorphosis poised to radically affect the evolution of communication and civilization is digital language. This language is the lingua franca of computers and global telecommunications networks. It is the domain of the communication domain. Since the birth of written language, different forms of media have evolved along three distinct paths, called domains. Digital language has transformed the existing forms of communication media. It is the agent of change most responsible for blurring the distinction between the domains of the historical domain of communication.

The second is convergence, which has always been the essence of the evolution and process of mediamorphosis. Large-scale convergence in the media and telecommunications industry may have happened only once. But the current form of media is in fact the result of innumerable smaller-scale convergences, often happening all the time. Convergence is more like a crossover or marriage, resulting in the transformation of each converging entity and the creation of a new one. Tim Dwyer defines media convergence as the process by which new technologies are combined with existing media and the various communication industries and cultures that develop (Dwyer, 2010). An example in Indonesia is Transmedia's entertainment convergence is mytrans.com, which combines television and internet media. If we have been enjoying television programs by sitting still in one place while looking at the

television screen, now there is a different way offered. Various programs aired on TransTV and Trans7 can be watched through gadgets such as smart or mobile phones or other devices. Simply by connecting to the internet network. There is also another product, DetikTV (tv.detik.com), which combines print media, television media, and the internet. The third is complexity. To understand complexity, we can trace the emergence of chaos theory. Chaos is an essential component of change. Without it, the universe would be a place of death and life would be impossible. From chaos, new ideas are born that transform and vitalize various systems. A central tenet of contemporary chaos theory is the idea that seemingly insignificant events or trivial initial variations in chaotic systems. Such as weather and economics, can trigger an escalation of unexpected events that eventually lead to catastrophic events. Systems undergoing chaos are inherently anarchic. They exhibit an almost endless pattern of uncertainty with unpredictable timeframes. This also explains why no one can accurately predict which new media technologies and forms of communication will ultimately succeed and which will fail. One of the elements that can lead to the emergence of new technologies is adaptive and complex systems. The richness of interactions found in living systems allows them to undergo spontaneous self-organization. In other words, complex systems are adaptive, in that they only respond passively to events. They actively try to direct whatever happens to their advantage. Thus, we can see that all forms of media live in a dynamic and interdependent world. As external pressures and new discoveries arise, each form of communication is affected by a spontaneous process of self-organization. Just as species evolve for better survival, so do existing forms of communication and media companies. This process is the essence of mediamorphosis.

## METHODOLOGY

This research uses qualitative research methods that are presented descriptively. The qualitative research model was chosen because the problems studied are holistic, complex, dynamic and full of meaning. Data sources This research will be obtained in two categories, namely Primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources are obtained from interviews and *Focus Group Discussions*. While secondary data sources are obtained from literature in the form of data, previous research results, books, journals.

Data collection techniques in this study will be adjusted to the needs and studies analyzed by researchers, including:

1. Interview
2. Focus Group Discussion
3. Literature review is by studying, studying and analyzing books, journals, scientific articles that are relevant to the research context.

The sample of research data sources was selected *purposively* and was *snowball sampling*. Determination of data source samples, in the proposal is still temporary and will develop later after researchers are in the field. In the early stages, samples were selected from people who had *power* and authority over the

object under study so that they were able to "open the door" for researchers to continue collecting data. The data analysis used in this research uses the Miles and Huberman data analysis method. Data analysis is carried out interactively through the process of data *reduction*, data *display* and *verification*.

## RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Along with the increasing rate of communication and information technology in the media field, the adaptation process must be carried out by the media in order to continue to maintain its existence. The adaptation process carried out is a continuous and continuous adaptation process which then produces new forms in the development of print media. This process of adaptation and renewal is a way for the media to adapt to the conditions of the times both in terms of technological developments, and also market conditions. There are two factors that drive the media morphosis process of print media, namely:

- a. Market Character.
- b. Double Disruption (Disruption due to the development of digital technology and disruption due to pandemic conditions).

The pandemic that occurred in the range of 2020-2022 was a driving force for print media to clean up and change business processes into something different. Pandemic conditions change various aspects of people's lives, especially the way they communicate. Media, as a company engaged in communication and information, is directly affected by this pandemic condition. For example, newspapers that should be distributed through agents, in pandemic conditions become difficult due to established contact restrictions.

With these conditions, print media carries out a process of adjustment and adaptation called Mediamorfosis. Mediamorfosis was developed by Roger Fidler decades ago. Mediamorfosis not only tells the story of how the media industry changes to new forms that are in accordance with current communication technology, but mediamorfosis encourages us to understand historically and culturally how all forms of change are part of an interrelated system, and notes the various similarities and relationships that exist between forms that have emerged in the past, the present, and those that are in the process of emerging (Fidler, 1997). Departing from this fidler theory, the author finds the right concept to describe how the media process survives in an era of disruption and unstoppable information abundance.

The process of mediamorphosis carried out by the media is divided into three stages, namely, coevolution, convergence, and complexity. Coevolution is: The nature of media is realized and transmitted through communicator codes that we call language. Language, without being compared to one another, has been the most influential agent of change in the course of human evolution. The development of spoken and written language spawned two major transformations, or mediamorphoses, in the human communication system. A third mediamorphosis poised to radically affect the evolution of communication

and civilization is digital language. It is the lingua franca of computers and global telecommunications networks. It is the domain of the communication domain. Since the birth of written language, different forms of media have evolved along three distinct paths, called domains. Digital language has transformed the existing forms of communication media. It is the agent of change that is most responsible for blurring the distinction between the historical domains of communication.

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members of society, based on the culture they share. "The system in this definition points to the existence of elements and their relationship with each other which ultimately form a consistent, hierarchical system" (Dardjowidjojo. 2003: 16). In journalism, the use of language has a variety of language that is different from the language used in general. However, although journalistic language has its own language variety, the language used in journalistic language must not violate the standard rules, rules and grammar set according to language standards. *Journalistic variety is language that is concise in its narrative, dense in content, and simple in form.* Poerwadarminta (1980) Language is a series of facts framed in such a way in mass media that has a significant influence on socio-cultural changes in society. Language is a set of tools that can shape facts, perceptions and thoughts of society. Thus, language has a very strategic role in the media industry because, writing errors in language will have a major impact on the reception and meaning of the facts that the media wants to convey. Today's media, to survive, does not only stand as a business engaged in the editorial field. However, print media is fully transformed into an industry that accommodates various community needs in the fields of information, production, EO and broadcasting (Dewi, 2022).

When print media transforms into this business form, the written product (language) also undergoes a process of transformation of form and model. The journalistic writing models of each media try to adjust to their market segmentation. Media with a middle to lower market segment favor a variety of straightforward and controversial journalistic writing that creates curiosity when reading the headline or title of a news story. Meanwhile, media with an upper-middle market segment prefer journalistic language that is humanist, subtle and educative as a form of transformation. Although in general, it was found in the observation that the length of news writing is currently reduced because it adjusts the number of printed media pages which are also reduced in number of pages. Along with the transformation of print media forms that also have online media, journalistic products in the media today can be classified in two forms, namely: journalistic language and content.

### ***Journalistic Language***

Journalistic language products have the same character as news. Journalistic news products must be in accordance with journalistic principles and in writing must be in accordance with the rules of correct journalistic writing. The journalistic principle here is the principle of writing facts in the field by paying attention to accuracy, balance (balanced), and clear (comprehensive). In addition, the journalistic language used must be specific, straightforward, word-efficient and full of meaning. In news writing technique is known as the inverted pyramid, where the main fact is placed at the beginning of the paragraph (news core) followed by other supporting facts.

Journalistic language is oriented towards conveying facts in a straightforward and clear manner. Journalistic language in the mass media can be seen in the news. Journalistic language in general in several mass media, in the observation of researchers, has not experienced significant

changes in the structure of news writing in print media. The type of writing chosen in writing news is *straight news*, with a concise character, straightforward and what it is.

### ***Micro People: A New Style of Journalistic Writing***

From the researchers' observations, the coevolution of news in the print media is very significant in the tribune media. The Tribune named its journalistic writing style as *micro people*. *Micro people* journalism has a different character from the straight news writing style in news. *Micro people* write news with the concept of drama, where there are three main components in writing news with micro people journalism style, namely, characters, conflicts, and climaxes. From the research data collected through interviews, the Editorial Manager of Tribun Jogja, Ikrob Didik Irawan said that this *micro people* journalism was born based on the results of market research conducted by the Tribune. "*People are very fond of drama, especially women, and from the results of observations it was found that women are the determining factor in the family when making decisions, so the tribune to get closer to the market, needs an approach strategy, one of which is done through writing that is familiar to women,*" As the name suggests, this *micro people* journalism does bring up the *little people* as the main characters in the news writing. The appearance of the characters in the news is expected to sharpen the empathy of readers so that the news will be more interesting. The concept of micro people and the selection of characters in writing news in the Tribune is in contrast to the method of writing news in *straight news*. Usually, the main sources in *straight news* writing are stakeholders, influential figures, famous people, or public officials. However, in writing *micro people* tribune chooses one person in an event who is directly affected by the event. From the chosen source, the problems and impacts that directly occur between the character and the event that occurred are explored.

The angle explored in *micro people* journalistic writing is to bring something small to the surface. So, it goes through the order of special to general, not general to special. This writing style succeeds in attracting audiences to stop *scrolling* because *micro people* news then fosters reader empathy from the stories raised.

### ***Content***

The second product produced in the coevolution of print media is Content. Content is different from news. Content is writing that is written thematically. Meanwhile, news is a type of written language that is written based on facts and events. Content is written for the needs of online media. By definition, content is: information available in electronic media or products *KBBI electronic edition (Language Center, 2008)*. Because it is information, content is different from news because it is not based on events or issues that occur. Content usually contains light and popular information. The standard or basis for creating content is the popularity of the topic and the level of search for related keywords on search engine pages (Google Because the standard of content creation is based on popularity, Content as a form of media product

that evolved from news, content is used by the media as a tool to boost the popularity or traffic of media sites in order to have a good ranking in search engines (google). The function of content as a driver of traffic and media ranking on the first page of Google, makes the content theme not fully constructed by the media. Content themes follow trends in society and google trends. For this reason, the content team in a media is filled with writers called content writers and an IT team whose job is to analyze keywords and *search engine optimization* (SEO) content so that it can be indexed on the first page of the search engine. In content production, there is the term *evergreen content*. The term *evergreen* refers to *keyword* and SEO search trends that are always green. This means that these contents are durable and are often sought after by the public. Interestingly, *evergreen* content is often clichéd, such as dream predictions. Then, this *evergreen* content can also be prayer readings, letters in the Koran, song lyrics and so on.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research only discusses coevolutionary mediamorphosis in terms of grammar and journalistic writing style used by one of the media in Indonesia. In the future, research can be continued by accumulating journalistic writing models in the digital era, especially the use of viral words and terms used in news. Furthermore, perhaps research can be carried out related to news *framing* in the disruption era, namely after 2020 and before 2020 so that we can find out how the media in the digital era carry out the *framing* process and agenda setting amid the onslaught of viral content on social media.

This research highlights the coevolutionary mediamorphosis in journalistic grammar and writing style within one Indonesian media outlet, offering insights into linguistic shifts in the digital era. The findings underscore the dynamic nature of media adaptation, influenced by changing audience preferences, technological advancements, and the growing dominance of social media as a primary news source. Future studies can expand this scope by systematically mapping journalistic writing models in digital media, focusing on the proliferation of viral words and terminologies shaping news narratives. Additionally, a comparative analysis of news framing before and after 2020 would provide a deeper understanding of how media organizations navigate the disruptive influence of social media and algorithm-driven content dissemination. Investigating the role of artificial intelligence in shaping editorial decisions, the impact of clickbait-driven journalism, and the ethical challenges of viral content will further enrich discussions on media transformation. Understanding these evolving journalistic strategies is crucial for media practitioners, policymakers, and scholars in adapting to the rapidly changing digital information landscape while ensuring ethical and responsible reporting. This research lays the groundwork for further interdisciplinary exploration into the intersection of media, technology, and public discourse in an era of rapid digital transformation, contributing to the broader discourse on media sustainability, credibility, and its societal role in shaping public perception.

## ADVANCED RESEARCH

Future research should explore the dynamic evolution of journalistic language and framing strategies in the digital era by integrating computational linguistics, big data analytics, and AI-driven sentiment analysis. A longitudinal study comparing pre- and post-2020 news framing could reveal shifting editorial priorities in response to digital disruption, audience engagement metrics, and algorithm-driven content curation. Additionally, analyzing the linguistic patterns of viral news, including keyword propagation, meme culture influence, and intertextuality in digital journalism, would provide deeper insights into media adaptation. Combining these approaches with network analysis of information dissemination could offer a comprehensive framework for understanding how media shape public discourse in an era dominated by social media virality and algorithmic gatekeeping.

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