



# The Tendency of Persuasive Messages in Instagram Captions @tacobellid Period March – August 2023

Fadli Ammar Tsany<sup>1\*</sup>, Fajar Junaedi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Communication Studies, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, 55183, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Department of Communication Studies, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, 55183, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author's email: [fadligembul@gmail.com](mailto:fadligembul@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

### Keywords

Taco Bell  
Persuasive  
Caption  
Instagram  
Content analysis

Taco Bell is a fast food brand still very new in Indonesia. The arrival of Taco Bell in Indonesia, which is very late, is a challenge to compete with other fast food giants. This challenge is no exception in managing social media, especially Instagram. This quantitative research examines the tendency of persuasive messages in the captions of posts from the Instagram account @tacobellid, a promotional medium for the Taco Bell Indonesia brand. This research uses a quantitative content analysis method on 149 post captions uploaded by @tacobellid in March-August 2023. The persuasive messages analyzed are captions with the category of compelling message requirements. The structure of a persuasive message includes message-sidedness, order of presentation, conclusion drawing, and how to convey a persuasive message. The results of this research show that of the 149 captions during March - August 2023, there were 114 captions containing persuasive messages, with the most detailed categories of persuasive message requirements containing the interests of the sender and recipient of the message, there were 61 captions with a percentage of 54%, the highest message sidedness category was two-sided, there are 92 captions with a percentage of 81%, the highest order of presentation category is primary, there are 71 captions with a percentage of 62%, the highest category for conclusion drawing is explicit, there are 100 captions with a percentage of 88%, and the category for how to convey the most persuasive messages is emotional appeal. There are 42 captions with a percentage of 37%. These findings show that the Taco Bell Instagram account is trying to attract audience awareness by providing a tendency towards a two-sided message structure that displays the emotional side so the audience can accept the messages.

## 1. Introduction

In today's tumultuous digital era, social media has become a primary vehicle for interaction and communication, with one of the most common forms of communication being advertising (Akhyani, 2020). Social media provides an excellent opportunity to influence consumer behaviour through persuasive messages. Kholili & Wijiharto Tunggal (2023) explains that social media comprises various online applications that make interaction and sharing of information more accessible. The use of social media allows individuals to obtain information that is relevant to them quickly, and the impact of the adoption of this media on the world of marketing is very significant, turning it into a more efficient promotional tool than traditional media (Horbinski, 2019).

Apart from that, the use of social media has also influenced people's lifestyles and shopping interests. Indonesian society, which is said to have a high level of self-confidence in its consumer behaviour, is the focus of this research (Bismoaziiz et al., 2021). The fast food industry is also an interesting phenomenon in this context, with increasing demand for practical food with minimal additives (Sari & Basit, 2020). Grand View Research research in 2019 shows that the global ready-to-eat food market continues to grow, reaching impressive values (Wahid & Gunarto, 2022). Therefore, this research aims to understand more deeply the impact of social media on shopping

interest in an increasingly consumerist Indonesian society, focusing on the fast food industry, which is growing (Latif & Calicioglu, 2020).

Taco Bell is a fast food franchise brand originating from the United States (Roberto et al., 2010). The brand is known for its Mexican dishes, such as burritos, tacos, nachos and quesadillas. Founded in 1962, this brand has spread worldwide, including Indonesia. In Indonesia, the first Taco Bell outlet opened in 2019 at Lippo Mall Puri, West Jakarta, with support from the Sari Pacific Indonesia Group, which has experience managing international restaurants in Indonesia. As for the Indonesian market, Taco Bell has adjusted the menu and restaurant concept to accommodate local tastes. For example, Taco Bell's menu in Indonesia offers a variety of vegetarian menus and uses local ingredients to provide an authentic food experience according to local people's tastes (Suprpto et al., 2020).

The background of this research is related to the research object, which is the Instagram caption from the @tacobellid account. As a new fast food brand that has just entered the Indonesian market, Taco Bell faces significant challenges in competing with other large, established fast food brands. Therefore, social media management strategies, especially Instagram, are essential in building and maintaining a customer base and achieving success in this competitive market.

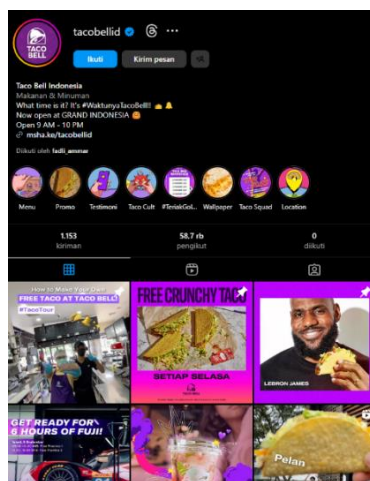


Fig. 1. @tacobellid Instagram Account

This research aims to provide theoretical benefits by increasing understanding of how persuasive messages are conveyed through Instagram post captions at @tacobellid restaurant in March-August 2023. In addition, practical benefits include the potential to serve as a reference for similar research in the future and provide valuable insights for business actors. Fast food that wants to strengthen their brand through social media.

## 2. Method

This research examines the text elements in Instagram post captions related to persuasive messages. Researchers conducted this research using quantitative and content analysis methods (Rinawiyanti & Kusumo, 2023). The uploads analyzed were persuasive messages with the categories of persuasive message requirements and structures, including message sidedness, order of presentation, conclusion drawing, and how to convey persuasive messages, which were uploaded in March–August 2023 (Fadillah et al., 2022). The paradigm used in this research is positivism, based on empirical observations prioritizing objectivity, validity and data reliability (Qinyu & Zhuang, 2023). Researchers in collecting data carried out pre-research by pulling captions from posts on the @tacobellid restaurant Instagram account by copying the captions and moving them in the MS.Word application, as well as using the filter facility in it to filter the captions to be researched. In this case, the researcher reads a caption, gives an assessment, and then fills in the coding sheet that has been prepared. In order to avoid bias in coding and maintain research objectivity, researchers also conducted reliability tests.

### 3. Result and Discussion

The @tacobellid account regularly uploads posts every day. Taco Bell shares a caption on each post. So, the researchers selected and analyzed all post captions uploaded in March-August 2023. During those six months, Taco Bell uploaded 149. Next, the researchers grouped them based on messages that met the requirements of a persuasive message, which was reflected through a word that was able to represent a category. The reason for choosing words is based on the Official Indonesian Dictionary, and 114 captions contain persuasive messages. In this study, reliability ranged between 0 and 1, 0 meaning there was no agreement between the coders, and 1 meaning there was perfect agreement between the coders. In the Holsti formula, the minimum reliability figure tolerated is 0.7 or 70%. It means the measuring instrument is reliable if the calculation results show a reliability figure above 0.7. However, if the calculation results show a number below 0.7, the measuring instrument (coding sheet) is not a reliable tool.

**Table 1. Reliability Test**

Coder	Total Captions Containing Persuasive Messages (N = 114)	
	Agree	Disagree
Coder 1	114	0
Coder 2	109	5

From the table above, results are obtained based on the formula that:

$$\frac{2(M)}{N1+N2} = \frac{2(109)}{114+109} = \frac{218}{223} = 0,97$$

Based on the calculation above, you can see in the caption of the Instagram account post @tacobellid which contains a persuasive message, the reliability value is 0.97 or 97%.

#### Persuasive Message Terms Category

The researcher conducted an analysis based on the 4 main categories of persuasive message requirements and saw opportunities if these categories appeared simultaneously or in collaboration. The explanation regarding the results found based on this categorization includes:

**Table 2. Results from the Persuasive Message Terms Category**

Code	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Interests of Both Parties	61	54%
2	Not Forcing	7	6%
3	Contains No Lies	8	7%
4	Motivating	10	9%
5	1 and 2	16	13%
6	1 and 3	4	4%
7	1 and 4	6	5%
8	3 and 4	1	1%
9	1, 2, and 4	1	1%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on the table above, the results show that the post caption with the highest category of persuasive message requirements interests both parties, with a percentage of 54%. When reviewed based on theory, a message that contains the interests of both parties is a message that not only contains the interests of the sender but also what the recipient of the message needs.

#### **Persuasive Message Structure Categories (Message Sidedness)**

The following analysis is how the persuasive message structure is designed, one of which is the alignment of the message consisting of one and two sides. The explanation regarding the results found based on this categorization includes:

**Table 3. Results from the Persuasive Message Structure Category (Message Sidedness)**

Code	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1A	One Sided	26	23%
1B	Two Sided	88	77%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3 shows that the post captions containing the most persuasive message structures in the message-sidedness category are two-sided, with 77% of the total captions containing persuasive messages. It can illustrate, in general, that in delivering the message, @tacobellid's message structure can be conveyed well.

#### **Persuasive Message Structure Categories (Order of Presentation)**

Next is an analysis of the message structure; order of presentation is one of the persuasive message structures that want to see where the core of a persuasive message is placed. The explanation regarding the results found based on this categorization includes:

**Table 4. Results from the Persuasive Message Structure Category (Order of Presentation)**

Code	Category	Frequency	Percentage
2A	Climax	6	5%
2B	Anticlimax	16	15%
2C	Regency	21	18%
2D	Primary	71	62%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4 shows that the post captions on the Instagram account @tacobellid, which contains the most message structures in the order of presentation category, are primary, 62%. The primary is a message containing the interests of both parties, and the main sentence is at the beginning of the paragraph or sentence.

#### **Persuasive Message Structure Category (Conclusion Drawing)**

Conclusion drawing is a category of message structure that can lead researchers to discover how the conclusion of a message is conveyed. In this case, the conclusions that will be examined come from the 114 Instagram captions @tacobellid are as follows:

**Table 5. Results from the Persuasive Message Structure Category (Conclusion Drawing)**

Code	Category	Frequency	Percentage
3A	Implicit	14	12%
3B	Explicit	100	88%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on the table above, conveying the core of the message explicitly requires that the recipient of the message receive clear information. This delivery method received a higher percentage, namely 88%, illustrating how most of @tacobellid's captions packaged the essence of their message.

### Category How to Convey Persuasive Messages

Sometimes, the way a message is delivered varies depending on the recipient and the content of the message itself. This category of analysis of how to convey a persuasive message then encourages researchers to see how a persuasive message @tacobellid is processed to deliver it using various approaches as follows:

**Table 6. Results from the Category How to Convey Persuasive Messages**

Code	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Fear Arousing	7	6%
2	Emotional Appeal	42	37%
3	Reward Appeal	36	31%
4	Motivational Appeal	19	17%
5	Humorous Appeal	10	9%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the table above, the percentage of captions with a persuasive message in the category of how to convey the message is an emotional appeal of 37% with a frequency of 42 captions. The way to convey a persuasive message using an emotional appeal approach is to link the message or argument we want to convey to the audience's emotions or feelings. It is done by using stories, examples, or words that evoke empathy, sympathy, or a sense of emotional involvement from the audience. By stimulating emotions such as affection, concern, fear, or happiness, the message becomes more convincing and compelling, making the audience more likely to respond positively to the message conveyed.

### Discussion

These findings reveal that Taco Bell's Instagram account succeeded in attracting the attention of an audience consisting of mostly young people by using appropriate persuasive message structure strategies. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) theory can be applied (John & De'Villiers, 2020). Conclusion drawing, which tends to be explicit by ELM, can effectively influence young people who are highly motivated to process messages carefully (Qorin Munandiyal & Fajar Junaedi, 2022). By emphasizing the message directly and firmly, Taco Bell allows its audience to connect it to their emotions, often crucial factors in purchasing decisions (Mubarok & Mujab, 2022).

In addition, in the context of copywriting for social media (Floreddu & Cabiddu, 2016), emphasis on language style and message presentation is significant. Taco Bell understands the importance of writing attention-grabbing captions, using witty, humorous, and relevant language to their young target audience. They can also present messages concisely and concisely, in line with the characteristics of social media, which often require short and compelling messages to attract

attention. Thus, the combination of appropriate persuasive message structure strategies, as shown in the findings, with intelligent copywriting skills allows Taco Bell to communicate with their audience and influence purchasing decisions effectively (Suleman et al., 2023).

#### 4. Conclusion

The research results on @tacobellid Instagram post captions during the March-August 2023 period illustrate Taco Bell's efforts to increase audience awareness by using a two-sided message structure approach that contains emotional elements, allowing the audience to respond more efficiently. In addition, this research shows that using a clear and explicit message structure and conveying the essence of the message at the beginning is a strategy implemented effectively to maximize the impact of brand communication on the Instagram social media platform.

#### 5. References

- Akhyani, I. (2020). Integrated marketing communication “Gadis modis” sebagai usaha mikro kecil dan menengah dalam meningkatkan loyalitas konsumen. *COMMICAST*, 1(1), 10. <https://doi.org/10.12928/commicast.v1i1.2411>
- Bismoaziiz, B., Suhud, U., & Saparuddin, S. (2021). INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING, ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH AND CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT TO BRAND LOYALTY IN INDONESIA GRAB COMPANY. *International Journal of Business and Social Science Research*. <https://doi.org/10.47742/ijbssr.v2n2p3>
- Fadillah, D., Farihanto, M. N., & Setiawan, R. A. D. (2022). “Senggol Bestie” as Media Promotion Among Muhammadiyah Universities. *Komunikator*, 14(2), 148–158.
- Floreddu, P. B., & Cabiddu, F. (2016). Social media communication strategies. *Journal of Services Marketing*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-01-2015-0036>
- Horbinski, A. (2019). Convergence Culture. In *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405165518.wbeos1270>
- John, S. P., & De’Villiers, R. (2020). Elaboration of marketing communication through visual media: An empirical analysis. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0969698919304199>
- Kholili, P. E., & Wijiharto Tunggal, A. P. P. (2023). Motives for using reels TikTok social media among Children. *COMMICAST*, 4(1), 118–125. <https://doi.org/10.12928/commicast.v4i1.6291>
- Latif, S., & Calicioglu, C. (2020). Impact of social media advertisement on consumer purchase intention with the intermediary effect of brand attitude. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, 11(12).
- Mubarok, M. H., & Mujab, S. (2022). Co-Branding and Brand Repositioning Ramayana Sabar Subur: Consequences of Retail Acquisition in the Midst of a Pandemic. *International Journal of Social Science*, 1(6), 917–928. <https://doi.org/10.53625/ijss.v1i6.1836>
- Qinyu, S., & Zhuang, X. (2023). Research on strategies to enhance the effectiveness of financial information dissemination under the background of rural revitalization. *International Journal of Communication and Society; Vol 5, No 1: June 2023*. <https://doi.org/10.31763/ijcs.v5i1.1052>
- Qorin Munandiyal, Q. M. H., & Fajar Junaedi, F. J. (2022). Production management of digital content for social media in the department of communication and informatic Batang Central Java. *COMMICAST*, 3(3), 181–191. <https://doi.org/10.12928/commicast.v3i2.5953>
- Rinawiyanti, E. D., & Kusumo, A. H. (2023). Clustering of business strategies among Indonesian manufacturing firms. *International Journal of Communication and Society; Vol 5, No 1: June 2023*. <https://doi.org/10.31763/ijcs.v5i1.746>
- Roberto, C. A., Hoffnagle, E., Bragg, M. A., & Brownell, K. D. (2010). An observational study of consumer use of fast-food restaurant drive-through lanes: Implications for menu labelling policy. *Public Health Nutrition*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S136898001000039X>



- 
- Sari, D. N., & Basit, A. (2020). Media Sosial Instagram Sebagai Media Informasi Edukasi. *PERSEPSI: Communication Journal*. <http://jurnal.umsu.ac.id/index.php/PERSEPSI/article/view/4428>
- Suleman, D., Suyoto, Y. T., Sjarief, R., Sabil, S., Marwansyah, S., Adawia, P. R., & Puspasari, A. (2023). The effects of brand ambassador and trust on purchase decisions through social media. *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.ijdns.2022.9.003>
- Suprpto, W., Hartono, K., & Bendjeroua, H. (2020). Social Media Advertising and Consumer Perception on Purchase Intention. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 76. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20207601055>
- Wahid, R. M., & Gunarto, M. (2022). Factors driving social media engagement on Instagram: Evidence from an emerging market. *Journal of Global Marketing*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08911762.2021.1956665>