Analysis on Persuasive Technique of Linguistic Devices and the Application along the Political Spectrum on Roadside Banners Slogans in Hong Kong Legislative Council Election 2016*

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1   Introduction

This research set out to reveal the relationship between the political language use and the society via Critical Discourse Analysis. The discourse of the election campaign, presented on roadside banners for the 2016 Legislative Council Election, is analyzed.

The banners slogans of election candidates are appealing investigative subjects because of their rich linguistics narrative in a relatively compact form. The messages conveyed by the slogans are designed to catch the attention of pedestrians and drivers who would only have a glance at the banners. Yet, they serve as being informative and persuasive. The function of persuasion is particularly crucial under such context as it directly influences readers' political decisions, that are, to participate in the election or cast the vote for particular candidate.

Accordingly, this research attempts to look into the use of linguistics devices on banner slogans election campaign, their affiliation along the political spectrum and their persuasive function.

2   Background

2.1   *HK political background*   Formerly being ruled by Britain since 1898, Hong Kong has always been considered to be a legacy as a colony. Following the 99-year colonial period, the handover from Britain to China in 1997 marked a drastic transformation in the political landscape of Hong Kong. With its special political background, Hong Kong has developed its unique political system model. To achieve a smooth transfer of ruling power, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region was established under the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, signified by the rationale of separation of power characterizing by the independence of the judiciary, legislative and executive branches, checking and balancing each other, to hold one another accountable (Chan, 2015).

2.2   *HK LegCo Election*   The Legislative Council (LegCo), as the main key machinery of the legislative branch, possesses the power and performs the function of a law-maker. Within LegCo, members enact, amend or repeal laws, examine and approve budgets introduced by the government, raise questions on the work of the government, as stipulated in the Basic Law (Article 73, Basic Law). Members of LegCo serve four year terms. In other words, the LegCo Election is undertaken every four years. Seats are determined through a mixed system, in which 35 seats of a total of 70 are selected by local-level geographical constituencies (GCs), 5 seats by regional-level functional constituency, and 30 seats by

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traditional functional constituencies (FCs). Traditional FCs are divided in accordance to designated professional and special interest groups, while GCs members are elected according to electors' registered address, dividing the GCs into 5 regions.

Under the current legislative system of Hong Kong, in comparison with the GCs, the FCs has often been criticized for its limited mandate and engagement of only a limited circle of electors, as well as operation of FCs legislator are at a greater distance from public opinion and fundamental societal aspiration (Kwok, 2006). Taking the data of 2016 LegCo Election, the number of registered electors in the GCs is 3.8 million while that in traditional FCs is only 227 thousand (HKSAR Information Services Department and the Registration and Electoral Office, 2016). In consideration of the broader electoral base, and hence a higher representativeness of political orientation of electors in accordance to the campaign materials of the candidates, in this study, only banners from candidates of GCs are taken into account.

Throughout the election period, GCs candidates initiated different campaigns with strategies in order to gain elector's support and widen their electoral base in society. Slogans on roadside banners, which is the investigative subject of this study, are one of the most commonly used election campaign material by the LegCo Election candidates.

The 2016 Legislative Council Election is the first public election campaign in the post umbrella-movement era, of which the results have been considered and expected to be an important index for reflecting of political orientation of the public after the consequential movement (South China Morning Post, 2016). It also reached a high record of 153 candidates competing for 58 seats. Under such a competitive environment in fighting for the seats, candidates had been trying to approach the public and gain public support by a variety of means, and roadside banners played a significant role with its wide coverage in prominent public places. During the election period, these banners are hung on roadside railing to catch attention of pedestrians and drivers.

2.3   *Political camp categorization*   In this study, the political affiliation categorization for the 2016 LegCo Election from South China Morning Post is adopted. It mainly separated candidates into four camps - Localist, Pan-democrat, Moderate, Pro-establishment. Localist calls for Hong Kong self determination (South China Morning Post, 2016 September 5). The Pan-democratic camp advocates democratization of Hong Kong, and calls for full democratic reform in recent years (Lam, Lui & Wong, 2012*)*. The Pro-establishment camp have strong connections with both the Hong Kong and Beijing government (Yip & Yeung, 2014) as a voting force to enact government proposed policies (South China Morning Post, 2013 August 13). The candidate in the moderate camp are the candidates who does not belong any of the other three camps and do not have a specific political orientation as clear as the other parties.

3   Literature review

3.1   *Slogan and political language*   Slogan is a common investigative subject among scholars. Nemicksiene (2013) and Skorupa & Dubviciene (2015) revealed some common linguistics features of slogans employed in advertising such as personification, hyperbole, metaphor and so on. Asmukovich (2015) analyzed linguistic features of slogans from a lexical level, a syntactic level to a rhetorical level. In Maksimainen (2011)'s study, similar linguistic analysis was also made on syntactic features of the language of slogans and their applicative correlation to a specific group of customers in the advertising campaign of refractive surgery. Other than advertising slogans, political slogans have also caught researchers' attention. For instance, Al-Azzam, Al-Azzam,Khalil & Taiseer (2014), Al Masaeed (2013) and Lahlali (2014) have investigated the political slogan usage in Arabic countries and Egypt. However, these studies investigated slogans held by protestors to express their grievances against the government, unlike this study's investigative subjects, which are slogans used in a campaign to persuade the public.

Other than the study of slogans, the study of political language is also prevalent among scholars. Aduradola & Ojukwu (2013) studied the language of political campaigns in Nigeria, pointing out that the functions of such language use are informing and persuading the public. Horvath (2009) also performed political discourse analysis on former president Obama's speeches and the relation to society.

Furthermore, there are some specific studies on particular linguistics devices such as presupposition (Ge, 2011) and metaphor (Wei, 2000; Korčák, 2011). Wei (2000)'s research is the study most similar to the current research, which investigates the metaphorical usage and reasons of campaign slogans in the 1996 Taiwan presidential election.

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All the studies above composed a broad picture of the study of slogan and political language in relation to society.

3.2   *Critical Discourse Analysis*   The framework of the study is Critical Discourse Analysis, which will be explained in the following.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was put forward by Van Dijk (1993), named as a multidisciplinary discourse framework and aimed at discovering relationship of language use and society.

Language is deemed as "a form of social practice" (Fairclough, 2013) in CDA. Language does not simply refer to the text itself, but its function in a set of cultural, social and psychological frameworks (Horvath, 2009) are also under consideration. Language is a constituent of the society on various levels. Fairclough (2013) proposed that social identity, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief are incorporated in language. All of these levels are interactive and operated with the use of language. The discourse analysis is "critical" because of its ultimate aim of exposing the hidden connection and causes in context (Horvath, 2009).

CDA is interactional: it focuses on social conditions in the production and interpretation of language use. It should be noted that the relationship is bi-directional (Hart, 2010). Not only is the language use affected by its ground within a certain frame of cultural or social practice, but the use of language also influences and shapes the social and cultural context. It can be concluded that discursive practices are constitutive of social structures, the same way social structures determine discursive practices. CDA recognizes both directions, and in particular it "[explores] the tension between these two sides of language use, the socially shaped and socially constitutive" (Fairclough, 2013, p. 92).

CDA seeks to reveal how texts are constructed so that particular perspectives can be expressed delicately and covertly (Horvath, 2009). This is because there is opacity on the linkage between discourse, ideology and power, especially when our social practice is bound up with causes and effect may not be at all apparent (Bourdieu 1977).

Therefore, this study aimed at revealing the interaction between language and the society via election campaign slogans, which is a way election candidates attempt to convey their message and be persuasive using different language techniques.

4   Research design and methodology

The main focus of this research lies on the linguistic devices identified in the campaign and their political affiliation. After that, the persuasive rationale behind the devices are discussed.

4.1   *Collection of data*   Photos were taken on the street within a week after the election period over different geographical locations, including data from all the regions in the election, namely, East and West New Territories, West and East Kowloon, Hong Kong Island, 5 regions in total.

110 photos were collected. After selection and repetition elimination, 82 banners were identified and recorded on a spreadsheet file. Chinese characters on the slogans were recorded. English literal translation and meaning translation was then worked out to form the gloss of the data.

Banners were recorded and separated into four different camps according to the political spectrum categorization previously mentioned.

Distribution of collected banners				
	Localist	Pan-democrat	Moderate	Pro-establishment
Quantity	23	21	12	26
Distribution of candidates in the 2016 election				
Quantity	37	35	21	35

5   Analysis
5.1   *Metaphor*

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5.1.1 *Quantitative analysis of the use of metaphor in the banners*   The table below shows the distribution of the metaphor found in the data:

	Localist	Pan-democrat	Moderate	Pro-establishment	Total
WAR	6	3	0	3	12
JOURNEY	0	2	0	3	5
Others	4	0	0	1	5
Total	10	5	0	7	22

5.1.2 *Qualitative analysis of the use of metaphor in the banners*

5.1.2.1 *Metaphor definition and feature*   Charteris-Black (2004) defined a metaphor as a "linguistic representation that result from the shift in the use of a word or phrase from the context or domain in which it is expected to occur to another context or domain where it is not expected to occur, thereby causing semantic tension" (p. 21).

Metaphor is prevalent in everyday life. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) pointed out that metaphor is part of our conceptual system that affects the way we perceive, think and act. It is widely adopted because of its feature of simplifying complex situations by transferring a set of experiences, usually more concrete, familiar and material to another set of experiences, which is abstract or unknown (Wei, 2000). The connection between two concepts helps people to relate relatively unfamiliar concept to simpler ideas so as to facilitate understanding.

For instance, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) put forward a common metaphorical expression *"TIME is money"* to illustrate how metaphorical concept is reflected in the everyday language. *"How do you spend you time?"* is a way to put time as money to illustrate the idea of time as a valuable resource. With such an idea in mind, the experience of spending money in daily life affects our perception of time. For example, TIME is limited (shown in the expression *"running out of time")* and a valuable commodity like money (shown in *"Thank you for your time").*

In addition, metaphor has long been applied to politics as an important political rhetoric as it assists with conceptualizing political issues and constructing world views (Charteris-Black, 2016). Therefore, the relatively abstract and distant political concepts could be understood more easily by the public.

In the data collected, common political rhetoric such as WAR and JOURNEY are found.

5.1.2.2 *WAR metaphor*   The frequently detected verbs and nouns that hinted *WAR* metaphor in the collected data are "Win" or "Lose", "Defend", "Guard" or "Protect", "Struggle", as well as "Fight". According to Adrian (2000), military activities share a range of vocabulary with politics, especially in election as both winning elections and winning wars involve running successful campaigns (Beard, 2000). The examples below illustrate the usage of the WAR metaphor in the research data.

(1)   強權壓港 奮起力抗
Power pressure Hong Kong , together fight against
"Let's fight together against the strong power pressurizing Hong Kong"

This is a relatively comprehensive illustration of a WAR framework used in the campaign. An enemy, own territory to be protected and war strategies are essential in any war. In this example, it could be found that "fighting together against (the strong power pressurizing Hong Kong)" is a war strategy, whereas the "the strong power pressurizing Hong Kong" is the enemy and "Hong Kong" is the territory to be protected. The suggested idea of the political situation in Hong Kong and political actions are connected to the idea of war in the metaphor. This helps in conceptualizing people's idea on political participation, such as voting in this campaign.

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The second example below contains more explicit wording related to the application of the war metaphor.

(2)
<div align="center">

轉守為攻 自主前途

Change defense to offence, self determine the future

"Change tactics from defense to offence. Self-determine the future"
</div>

The actions of "defense" and "offence" were apparently taken from a war context, which are clear war strategies. The suggested idea of "changing tactics from defense to offence" could be a proposal for citizen to change their political engagement from passive to active. The proposed choice of political engagement can possibly shape people's view on the election like being involved in a war, in which there are choices for them to contemplate on their stance or involvement level in politics or in the election.

5.1.2.2.1 *Application along political spectrum*　What is worth noticing in the research data is that, the enemy is subtle in pro-establishment camps whereas they are more obvious for the localist and pan-democrat camp. For instance, "enemies" for the localist camps included "Pro-establishment parties" and "Strong power pressurizing Hong Kong". Examples of "enemies" in pan-democrat camps included "superior power" and "Leung Chun Ying (Current Chief Executive of HKSAR at the time of the election)". Nonetheless, in the data from the pro-establishment camp, the war metaphor is mainly illustrated by the idea of war tactic "guarding" and "charging (as an attack)" and war rhetoric "winning". There was no obvious enemy mentioned.

5.1.2.3 *JOURNEY metaphor*　According to Lakoff and Johnson (2008), people make use of the physical concept of location, force and movement in journey metaphor to facilitate the understanding of states, causes, changes, action and purposes in different contexts. Kövecses (2005) further suggested that political actions are deemed as purposeful activities and "politics is a journey" is a cross-culturally common metaphor around the world.

　　The frequently detected words for the JOURNEY metaphor in the data are "walk", "way", "finish line". They are all verbs and nouns associated with the idea of movement and location, as compared to political orientation and progress.

(3)
<div align="center">

為香港 創出路

For Hong Kong, Pave a way out

"Pave a way out for Hong Kong"
</div>

Example (3) illustrated the idea of comparing political progress as a journey and political action as a choice of movement. The idea of "paving a way out" is the political action leading to new political orientation or goal which is similar to a change of destination via a new choice of road in daily life experience of a journey.

(4)
<div align="center">

公義同行 堅持 帶來改變

Justice walk together, perseverance bring changes

Walk together with justice, perseverance brings changes
</div>

In example (4), the metaphor described political progress as a journey, where politicians and people are travelers, walking together towards a destination as though the collective engagement in politics could help with political achievement.

5.1.2.2.1 *Application along political spectrum*　There was no apparent difference on the proposed meaning with the use of the JOURNEY metaphor along the political spectrum.

5.1.2.3 *Other metaphors*   Other metaphors and their usage are exhibited as follows.
Example (5) compared strong political power as a "high wall" and the political action of challenging higher power as the action of "dismantling the high wall".

(5)   推倒高牆 自決自強
Push down high wall, self determined, self-strengthened
"Dismantle the high wall, pursue self-determination and be self-strengthened"

Example (6) compares the action of restructuring the legislative council as the action of lighting up a candle, which signified new hope in both contexts.

(6)   革命之火 點亮議會
Revolution fire, light up council
"Light up the council with the fire of revolution"

Example (7) compares the political enemies of the candidate as "monsters". The idea of getting rid of them is compared to the idea of beating up the monsters.

(7)   打倒賣港 牛鬼蛇神
Beat down sell HK; Bull Ghost Snake Spirit
"Beat up the monsters that sell Hong Kong away"

5.1.3 *The enhancement of persuasiveness of the use of metaphor in the banners*   After the illustration of metaphors detected in the data, the function of persuasiveness enhancement is explained in the following.

Metaphor is commonly adopted as a persuasive tool because of its feature of triggering both logical and emotional appeal to readers. "It potentially has a highly persuasive force because of its activation of both conscious and unconscious resources to influence our intellectual and emotional response, both directly through describing and analyzing political issues and indirectly by influencing how we feel about things" (Charteris-Black, 2016, p. 30).

Metaphor makes relational connections and draws semantic pathways among concepts and ideas (Gentner, 1983). The arguments that incorporate metaphor can be integrated together more easily and coherently according to Allbritton et al (1995). Also, the clearer schematic framework of idea from metaphor use guides interpretation, facilitates organization, thus facilitates systematic processing of literal statements contained in a communication (Read, Cesa, Jones & Collins., 1990). Hence metaphor assists people in conceptualizing abstract ideas by understanding them through more relatable experiences.

In addition, metaphor provides a colorful and accessible means of explaining abstract notions (Charteris-Black, 2004). In different context, the transmission of ideas with metaphor usually conveys the value of the writer, hence affects the interpretation and stance of the viewer. The perception of new concepts in terms of familiar concepts trigger the recognition of a shared system of beliefs. This offers new ways to look at issues, and often provides fresh insights. The cognitive and cultural role is crucial in exerting emotional effect on viewers (Charteris-Black, 2004). Martin (2000) suggested that "where effectual meaning is evoked, a distinction can be drawn between metaphorical language which in a sense provokes an affectual response…and non-metaphorical languages which simply invite a response" (p. 155).

An example is taken from the data to illustrate the theoretical logical and emotional appeal as follows:

(8)   換特首 香港 從投開始
Change Chief Executive, Hong Kong, From head/Vote Start
"Change the Chief Executive, Hong Kong, Start from the beginning/Vote to start over"

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The metaphor conceptualizes the political action of voting or changing the Chief Executive as choice of the journey with an option to go in a new direction or changing the way. This gives voters a clear idea of the political action of changing the chief executive might give rise to a new situation to Hong Kong. Not only does it draw a relation of changing the chief commander to a new government but also highlights the new condition that would probably be faced by Hong Kong and its citizens. It draws semantic pathways to make the political idea of the candidate clear, which is to get Hong Kong to a new condition. Meanwhile, the idea of starting over enhances the persuasiveness by triggering a new emotion of facing changes, which is not usually connoted with politics, to the viewers. The combined effect of the logical and emotional appeal used in the example illustrated the persuasiveness enhancement function with metaphor.

Persuasiveness enhancement with logical or emotional appeal are also found and illustrated with the other examples (1) to (7).

The emotions evoked from war metaphor are deemed to be persuasive as most of them implies the idea of "fighting a war together". This promotes a collective identity and the common political belief by protecting your own territory (Hong Kong). This is likely to have an emotional appeal to cast the vote to the candidate so as to fight against the enemy. The metaphor visualized the idea of voting as a means to win the war (election).

The use of the JOURNEY metaphor in the data mostly signified the concepts of walking together or going in a new way. This conceptualizes political actions as a journey. A destination will be reached through the political actions or the election. This draws a clear idea in readers' mind and constructs the idea that the election is a way of political action to reach goals, for example, a better Hong Kong. Paving a way out is also an evocative portrayal of a change in life or political situation. Hence inducing a vivid idea of the candidate's goal (to bring changes) in the audiences' minds.

5.2   *Presupposition*

5.2.1   *Qualitative analysis of the use of presupposition in LegCo Election banners*

5.2.1.1   *Definition of presupposition and feature*   Goffman (1983) defined presupposition in broad sense as "a state of affairs we take for granted in pursuing a course of action" (p. 1). Huang (2007) further explained presupposition in pragmatics is "an inference or proposition whose truth is taken for granted in the utterance of a sentence" (p. 65).

The constancy under negation test is often used to find out the presupposition in an utterance as Frege (1892) observed that presupposition was not altered under negation. Due to the fact that the "background assumption remains in force under negation" (Yule, 2014), the element that remains truthful in a sentence after negation is the presupposition.

5.2.1.2   *Importance of presuppositions*   Bekalu (2006) points out that presuppositions in general are an inherent property of human language use. He further elaborates that it is impossible to make an utterance that does not contain some kind of assumption, which is presupposition.

Presupposition is crucial in daily life because of its facilitation of economical use of language in communication. Goffman (1983) suggested the importance in the idea of "felicity conditions". He further suggested that context of interaction, in terms of common ground and shared knowledge, permits the understanding of an utterance (ibid.). This suggested that presupposition is essential in achieving effective communication between the addresser and the addressee.

5.2.1.3   *Types of presupposition*   Yule (1996) observed 6 types of presupposition and concluded them in the table as follows:

Type	Example	Presupposition
Existential	The X	>> X exists
Factive	I regret having done that	>> I did it
Lexical	She managed to escape	>> She attempted to escape
Structural	Who is coming?	>> Someone is coming
Non-factive	He claimed to be a teacher	>> He is not a teacher
Counter-factual	If I were not ill…	>> I am ill

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Yule (1996 P.73)

In the data collected in this study, four out of six types of presupposition are found and their corresponding examples are as follows. Constancy under negation test is applied to illustrate the presupposition found. The data is presented in the following format with reference to Yule (1996)'s example.

<div align="center">

Chinese
Literal translation
Paraphrased translation

</div>

- Negated phrase
- ➔ Presupposition detected

5.2.1.3.1 *Existential presupposition*   Existential presupposition is the presupposition of existence of certain element in the utterance. In (9), the existence of evil law is brought out.

(9)
<div align="center">

智抗惡法 力保民生

Wisdom against evil law, power protect livelihood
"Use wisdom to resist evil law, strive to protect livelihood"

</div>

- **Do not** use wisdom to resist the evil law
- ➔ Existence of the evil law

5.2.1.3.2 *Factive presupposition*   Presupposition that is treated as a fact and presumed in an utterance is factive presupposition. In the following, with the use of the verbs "resist" and "desist", the intervention from Chinese Communist Party and downfall Hong Kong are presented as a known fact in the slogan.

(10)
<div align="center">

抵抗中共干預 力阻香港沉淪

Against Chinese Communist intervention, stop Hong Kong sinking
"Resist intervention from the Chinese Communist Party, stop the downfall of Hong Kong"

</div>

- **Do not** resist intervention from Chinese Communist Party,
- **Do not** stop the downfall of Hong Kong
- ➔ Intervention from the Chinese Communist Party and the existence of downfall Hong Kong

5.2.1.3.3 *Lexical presupposition*

(11)
<div align="center">

我地一齊贏返香港

We together win back Hong Kong
"Let's win back Hong Kong together"

</div>

- **Let's not** win back Hong Kong"
- ➔ Hong Kong is losing

(12)
<div align="center">

反對拉布 反對港獨 還香港人一個法治社會

Anti-filibuster, anti-Hong Kong independence, Give Hongkonger back a law-ruled society
"Anti-filibuster, anti-Hong Kong independence. Give Hongkongers back a law-ruled society"

</div>

- **Do not** give HongKonger back a law-ruled society
- ➔ The law-ruled society has been taken away

Yule (1996) mentioned that lexical presupposition is the use of a lexical item which involves asserted meaning that is conventionally interpreted with a non-asserted meaning (presupposition). "Win back" is the lexical trigger of the presupposition in this sentence. In (11), "win back" literally means that "something you had before but lost temporarily (Cambridge dictionary, 2016)". Under the negation test, whether or not we win back Hong Kong, it is presupposed that Hong Kong is losing.

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Similarly, in the sentence of "give Hongkongers back a law-ruled society" in (12), it can be inferred that the presupposition is the law-ruled society has been taken away.

5.2.1.3.4   *Structural presupposition*

(13)

您可以選擇 更好的生活

You can choose, better life

"You can choose a better life"

- You **cannot** choose a better life
- ➔ The existence of a better life

Yule (1996) suggested that a sentence structure could conventionally presuppose part of the sentence and incorporated the assumption. A modal verb is a typical example of such a structure. In the example, with the modal verb "can", in the latter part of the sentence, the idea of the world of "a better life" is presupposed.

Non-factive presupposition and counter-factual presupposition are not found in the data. Non-factive presupposition is the element of the sentence that is assumed not to be true (Yule,1996). They are usually associated with verbs like "dream" and "pretend" that the untruthfulness of the statement is inferred by the verb. Counter-factual presupposition means the presupposed element is contrary to the fact, usually associated with conditional structure.

The absence of the two kinds of presupposition may be due to the untruthfulness of the presupposed element. In the context, where credibility is highly valued in the election of the council, it might be less desirable for the candidate to employ such kind of non-factive language.

5.2.3   *The enhancement of persuasiveness of the use of presupposition in election banners*
After reviewing different kinds of presupposition in the data, the section below will explain the persuasiveness enhancement by presupposition in the discourse.

5.2.3.1   *Sense of inclusion*   The sense of inclusion brought about by presuppositions are crucial in persuasion. The common ground between the writer and the reader is the fundamental element of presupposition. A communication would be classified as failed if the common ground is not shared by the communicators. Therefore, the first persuasive function of presupposition is the sense of inclusion induced by the sharing of common ground. Wodak (2009) pointed out that if the receiver does not know or recognize the proposed meaning or ideology, he/she is necessarily excluded from the communication. Particularly in political discourse analysis, Chilton (2004) proposed that politicians frequently employ presuppositions as a means to include or exclude certain groups and audiences, which can be seen as a way of strategically "packaging" information' that is only known to insiders.

The following example demonstrates the idea of inclusion in the 2016 election campaign:

(14)   守護公帑 揼實保皇黨

Guard Public Fund, Hammer Solid Pro-Emperor Party

"Guard the public funds, stop the Pro-Emperor party"

In the data, "Pro-Emperor party" is an insider metaphor. The Beijing or the local government is the "emperor" in the metaphor. The title of "Pro-Emperor party is the cynical description from the opponent of the Pro-establishment parties of which they promote and assure the enactment of Beijing-directed policies as if they were adherent of the emperor. The pro-establishment parties' full support on policies are mocked by the opponents in this context. This insider metaphor is presupposed in the slogan and the shared knowledge tends to excluded outsiders. It also draws a closer mental distance within the candidate and the "insiders". This is the function of distance-shortening in response to presupposition. Wang (2007) suggested that the common ground of presupposition highlighted the dialogic feature between the addresser and addressee, which portrays daily life experience of a development of a closer relationship out of the greater amount of shared background knowledge.

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5.2.3.2 *Induced consensus*   Chiliton (2004) further proposed that presupposition is the micro-mechanism in language use which contributes to the building of consensual reality. This is because in order to proceed with communication and the understanding of the utterance, the taken-for-granted information (presupposition) has to be taken with the least effort. Sperber & Wilson (1995) and Simons (2002) agreed that the reader will not find utterance relevant if he/she reject the background information. Meanwhile, Sperber & Wilson (1986) put forward that the search for relevance is a basic feature of human cognition. Therefore, information presented in presupposition could draw readers' consensus in relatively less effort. The following example exhibits this feature:

(11)   我地一齊贏返香港
repro.   We together win back Hong Kong
                            "Let's win back Hong Kong together!"

The declarative statement gave an immediate impression to the audience that an action is to be taken place (to win back Hong Kong), which has proposed the the idea of "Hong Kong has been lost" without truthfulness being questioned. It is significant because the consensus is drawn subconsciously with the use of presupposition. In addition to building consensus to the statement, Yule (1996) pointed out that structural presupposition "can lead listeners to believe that the information presented is necessarily true" (p. 29). He further explained that presupposition is a "subtle way of making information that the speaker believes appear to be what the listener should believe" (p. 29). The idea instilled with the statement could possibly inform the reader and make them believe in the idea proposed, hence shape the view of certain issues in reality.

5.2.3.3 *New information assertion*   Finally, the co-occurrence of presupposed information and asserted new information strengthens the power of persuasion, according to Wang (2007). He further explained that the presence of presupposition would act as the initiating point of information sharing. Accordingly, the effort in processing an utterance is minimized and the information gained from the utterance is maximized. In other words, presupposition facilitates smoother and easier inference of the utterance. Therefore, the additional information has a greater tendency in being accepted in the readers' mind. The example below shows the persuasive effect from the integration of new information and presupposed information.

(15)   香港自決 拒絕大陸化
                        Hong Kong self determination, reject mainlandization
                    "Self Determination for Hong Kong, reject mainlandization"

In the example, "mainlandization" is presupposed to be an existential, ongoing process and they can be "rejected". When readers agree to the common idea of the ongoing process of "mainlandization", "self-determination of Hong Kong" in the slogan, appeared to be a the newly proposed idea. With the co-appearance of the known knowledge and new idea, readers could draw a logical pathway more easily. Hence making the new idea more appealing and persuasive to the public.

5.2.4 *Application along the political spectrum*   Since presupposition is universal and observed in most of the slogans, except those of incomplete conjunctions, no special preference along the political spectrum can be observed concerning the use of presupposition. However, the examples used above are taken from different political camps. It can be shown that all of the political camps in the data employed presupposition as one of the linguistic persuasive devices.

	Localist	Pan-democrat	Moderate	Pro-establishment
Example	(9) (14)	(10) (15)	(13)	(11) (12)

5.3 *Written Cantonese*

5.3.1   *Quantitative analysis of the use of written Cantonese in the banners*   Out of 81 banners, 10 of them employed written Cantonese instead of standard written Chinese. They are identified by the use of Cantonese phrases and the distinction are detected by the researcher, who is a native Cantonese speaker.

The frequency of the use of written Cantonese in the data			
Localist	Pan-democrat	Moderate	Pro-establishment
2	3	3	2

The use of written Cantonese on the banners are evenly distributed among the four camps.

5.3.2   *Qualitative analysis of the use of written Cantonese in the banners*

5.3.2.1 *Background of Chinese usage in Hong Kong*

5.3.2.1.1   *Standard Written Chinese versus spoken Chinese*   In Hong Kong, spoken Chinese in a daily setting is different from written Chinese in the form of documents, letters or any written circumstances. Spoken Chinese is Cantonese whereas written Chinese is taught in the form of Standard Written Chinese(SWC).

According to DeFrancis (1984), Standard Written Chinese is the written form constructed on Mandarin Chinese. Nonetheless, written Cantonese is the written form of Cantonese lexicon (Bauer, 1988). Some believe Cantonese is a dialect but linguist generally treat it as a distinct language because Mandarin and Cantonese are mutually unintelligible (Zhang,1998).

A brief illustration of the difference between Standard Written Chinese and Cantonese is given below, including lexical items and grammatical features (Snow, 2004).

Lexical comparison (Snow, 2004)

	Standard Written Chinese	Cantonese	
Noun	家具	傢俬	(furniture)
Verb	給	俾	(to give)
Negator	不	唔	(negator)

Grammatical comparison (Position of direct object and indirect object) (Verb: to give) (Snow, 2004)

Standard Written Chinese	Cantonese
我給他錢	我俾錢佢
1sg Give 3sg.m Money	1sg Give Money 3sg
"I give him money"	"I give him/her money"

5.2.3   *The enhancement of persuasiveness of the use of written Cantonese in the banners*   The potential ground of the usage of written Cantonese are presented below. They have a higher effectiveness of message delivery, friendliness projection and the promotion of collective identity.

5.2.3.1   *Effectiveness of message delivery*   Firstly, the transmission of political message is more compelling with written Cantonese. Cantonese is a conversational language in daily life in Hong Kong. According to the HKSAR Government census, almost 90 percent of the Hong Kong population uses Cantonese as the primary language in daily settings. Meanwhile, the high degree of discontinuity of the spoken and written language (i.e. Standard Written Chinese) entails transformation strategies. Therefore, citizens are taught to express ideas and read texts in Standard Written Chinese. The ability to render Cantonese speech is therefore developed (Wu, 2003). However, this also means that perceiving Standard written Chinese requires extra effort. On the contrary, as Cantonese is the direct transcription of thought, reading Written Cantonese induces less effort for readers to understand and interpret the idea in their mind. The message is conveyed more effectively in this straight-forward manner.

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5.2.3.2 *Friendliness projection*   Secondly, given that the general impression of politics is serious, the use of written Cantonese will soften the seriousness and increases the projected friendliness. This is because written Cantonese is used less often in formal contexts. Formal documents such as government public announcement or business communication documents are either in English or Standard Written Chinese. The majority of written Cantonese are the "light text" that are usually in text with entertainment or advertisement (Snow, 2004). It is relatively rare to see written Cantonese used for purpose that would be considered serious or simply informative. The lighter association of written Cantonese reduces the seriousness of the political messages, lightens the impression of "politics is serious" and possibly project a more casual image of the politician. This removes barriers and reduces the distance between politicians and the mass public.

In addition, in a similar study about the Taiwan presidential election campaign (Wei, 2000) usage of Southern Min (a local dialect), it was suggested that the local dialect served the function of friendship projection to the designated audience. Empirical studies also show that Cantonese speakers favor written Cantonese (Bauer,1988) as "it establishes a sense of closeness or intimacy" (p. 201). Thus, the use of written Cantonese in the election could possibly make use of the "lighter" association of Cantonese to reduce the distance between voters and politician and show friendly gestures. Thus it made "politics" closer and more relatable to the readers. This is more likely to increase the general willingness to engage in politics, which could be voting in the election.

5.2.3.3 *Collective identity*   Finally, the promotion of collective identity driven by written Cantonese could be a crucial factor of persuasiveness in the banners. The most distinctive feature to distinguish between a Hongkonger and someone from the Mainland is the difference of language. Non-speakers of Cantonese cannot possibly understand the message (Zhang, 1998). Snow (2004) also suggested that Cantonese functions in Hong Kong "as a language of solidarity for a population in which local Chinese care more about being a member of the Hong Kong community than that of the country. In Hong Kong, Cantonese is used as a means of intra-ethnic communication and identification with local values binging Hong Kong people together. Kaeding (2008) also proposed that the Hong Kong identity connotes affluence, openness to the world, professionalism and pragmatism and in this it has remained distinct from and to some extent "opposed to Chinese identity with its attachment to a particular tradition, ethnicity, and nationality" (Mathews, Luis & Ma 2008, p. 11).

Cantonese serves as a "language of the heart" in which Cantonese speakers can express thoughts and feelings with more emotional immediacy and impact, and which more readily create a sense of in-group belonging when used between Cantonese speaker (Snow 2004).

Thus, the use of written Cantonese did not only bring out the value of common ground and a common language, but also a common identity that people embrace in the campaign. With increasing tension between Hongkongers and Mainlanders in recent years, this reinforces the idea of being a member of Hong Kong society. The sense of inclusion projected by this technique engages the audience and derives the idea of sharing the same belief in their mind. The appeal to an inclusive identity serves as a vehicle to persuade an audience to the idea of shared belief. It is suggested that the emotion triggered could possibly encourage people to participate in political actions, such as voting for a desirable candidate in the election.

6   Conclusion

There were various linguistics devices employed in the 2016 Legislative Council election campaign. This study has taken metaphor, presupposition and the use of written Cantonese for investigation. It was found that WAR and JOURNEY metaphors were particularly common in the campaign data, four out of six types of presupposition were detected, the use of written Cantonese was also significant in the banner slogans.

It is believed that various linguistic devices were used to aid in the persuasion to attract votes for candidates in the election. Persuasiveness could be enhanced with metaphor by logical and emotional appeal while presupposition performed the function by inducing the sense of inclusion, passive consensus and enhance smoother acceptance of new information. Finally, written Cantonese was persuasive because of its characteristics of the enhancement of message delivery, friendliness projection and collective identity.

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Technique	Localist	Pan-democrat	Moderate	Pro-establishment	Total
Metaphor	10	5	0	10	25
Written Cantonese	2	3	3	2	10
Total data collected	23	21	12	26	82

As for the distribution along the political spectrum, it is observed that there was no obvious differentiation in the usage of linguistic devices among different political camps, which means no particular camp favor any specific device.

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