

Persuasive Strategies in the Discourses of World Health Organization on Covid-19

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Abstract

On 31 December 2019, WHO received information from National Health Commission concerning the outbreak of Covid-19 which was identified by the Chinese authorities. Unfortunately, it seems that WHO depends to great extent on its announcements and instructions on China authorities' declaration. Consequently, positive and negative announcements and strategies are adopted in dealing with this pandemic. This causes a great extent of fear and confusion for people around the world despite all the great efforts that WHO to pass this crucial period successfully and safely. The present study is one of the first studies that seeks to offer critical discourse analysis, description, interpretation, and explanation of persuasive strategies of institutional discourse, and more specifically of WHO on Covid-19 by using Larson's persuasive strategies (2010). It is found that WHO uses certain persuasive strategies by using simple sentences which reflect that the situation is a simple one especially at the beginning of the crisis, then using a complex sentence to show that the situation becomes more complex and there is a need to follow the right measures till finding a suitable vaccine. There is also the use of adjectives that reflect the uncertainty of WHO in finding a suitable roadmap for dealing with this pandemic. It is also found that these persuasive strategies should be based on scientific, psychological, cognitive, social, and cultural perspectives and not just scientific ones because they are used to persuade different people around the world and may affect their lives positively or negatively.

Key Words: CDA, Persuasion, Institutional Discourse, WHO, Covid-19.

استراتيجيات الإقناع في خطابات منظمة الصحة العالمية حول كوفيد-١٩نعم جعفر حسين^{1,2}جامعة البصرة/كلية الآداب /قسم اللغة الانكليزية¹كلية شط العرب الجامعة²علي عبد الحميد فارس¹

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المستخلص

في ٣١ ديسمبر ٢٠١٩، تلقت منظمة الصحة العالمية معلومات من لجنة الصحة الوطنية بشأن تفشي فايروس كوفيد-١٩ الذي حدثته السلطات الصينية. يبدو أن منظمة الصحة العالمية اعتمدت إلى حد كبير في توجيهاتها وتعليماتها على ما تقدمه او تعلنه السلطات الصينية. وبالتالي، تم تبني استراتيجيات إيجابية وسلبية في التعامل مع هذا الوباء. وقد سبب هذا الامر قدراً كبيراً من الخوف والارتباك عند الناس في العالم على الرغم من كل الجهود الكبيرة التي تبذلها منظمة الصحة العالمية لاجتياز هذه المرحلة المصيرية بنجاح وأمان. تعد الدراسة الحالية واحدة من أولى الدراسات التي تسعى إلى تقديم تحليل خطاب نقدي ووصف لإستراتيجيات الإقناع المستخدمة في الخطاب المؤسسي وتفسيرها وشرحها، وبشكل أكثر تحديداً لخطابات منظمة الصحة العالمية (WHO) بشأن كوفيد-١٩ باستخدام إستراتيجيات لارسن للإقناع (٢٠١٠).

لقد وجدت الدراسة أن منظمة الصحة العالمية تستخدم إستراتيجيات إقناع معينة تتمثل باستخدام جمل بسيطة تعكس أن الموقف بسيط خاصة في بداية الأزمة، ثم استخدام جملة معقدة لإظهار أن الموقف قد أصبح أكثر تعقيداً وأن هناك حاجة لاتباع التدابير العلمية الصحيحة حتى العثور على لقاح مناسب. هناك أيضاً استخدام الصفات التي تعكس عدم اليقين لدى منظمة الصحة العالمية في إيجاد خارطة الطريق المناسبة للتعامل مع هذا الوباء. وتوصلت الدراسة إلى أن هذه الإستراتيجيات المقنعة يجب أن تستند إلى وجهات نظر علمية ونفسية ومعرفية واجتماعية وثقافية وليست علمية فقط لكونها تستخدم لإقناع مختلف شرائح الناس في العالم وقد تؤثر فعلياً على حياتهم بشكل إيجابي أو سلبي.

الكلمات الدالة: التحليل النقدي للخطاب، الخطاب المؤسسي، الإقناع، منظمة الصحة العالمية، كوفيد-١٩.

1. 1. Introduction

Language serves many functions such as giving and sending information. It also helps us to do things. It has meaning “only in and through social practice”. Discourse is language in use [1:2]. It is also defined as “language beyond the sentence” [2:124]. It is a continuous stretch of language (spoken or written) larger than a sentence which constitutes a coherent unit such a sermon, argument, debate, etc. [3:141]. It is shaped by the social structure, institutional setting, and context in which it takes place [4:8]. It is concerned with the study of language use and social practice [5:1].

Discourse analysis is language usage analysis [6:1]. Discourse analysis (DA) is also considered as “an epistemological field which aims at studying what happens when people utilize the knowledge they have about language to do different acts in the world” [7:3]. DA is concerned with examining the language pattern of a text and the socio-

cultural contexts in which this text is used. It attempts to show how the use of language may show various views and different realizations of the world [8:11].

As a branch of applied linguistics, critical discourse analysis (CDA) is referred to as critical linguistics. It was initiated with the publication of *Language and Control* (Fowler et al.1979) and *Language as Ideology* (Kress and Hodge 1979) by researchers at the University of East Anglia [9:3]. It is multidisciplinary, not just one theory [10:12]. According to Fairclough (cited in [11:3], CDA describes the various rhetorical devices used to convey the message including words, phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and texts.

CDA is “a socio- politically motivated approach to the study of language in use that generally assigns ideological significance to text based on their linguistic features”. It is a sort of discourse analysis that focuses on how text is used to enact, reproduce, and oppose social power abuse, dominance, and inequality [12:128]. Moreover, institutions are linked to power in the sense that the notion of an institution “has immense power which they impose on people”. Institutional power can also be attained by persuasion and acquiescence in addition to oppression [4:4].

The symbolic process by which messages impact beliefs and attitudes is known as persuasion [13:17]. This can happen in a variety of ways, including social media, movies, and television. Persuasive communicators must persuade others to reconsider a concept, belief, or sentiment about an issue, regardless of the media platform they use. He also mentions that “social media may cause issues owing to the widespread dissemination of misleading information.” As a result, persuasion requires the persuader to be aware that he or she is attempting to influence another person. It also necessitates “the persuadee's decision to change his view about something, whether consciously or unconsciously” [13:18-20]. Fairclough introduces an important concept concerning persuasion which is “the manufacture of consent”. This concept is used to refer to the power which is used through discourse to get the acceptance of people concerning an implicit or explicit ideology [14:33].

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a global public health crisis in 2020 that was unprecedented in recent history. The present study attempts critically to find out the persuasive strategies which worked behind the institutional discourses of WHO. It investigates how different linguistic tools have been used to project or achieve certain objectives during the crisis of COVID -19. The six selected institutional discourses, which are focused to great extent just on covid-19, in (2020) can be analyzed using the analytical frameworks of (persuasion of Larson in his book “*Persuasion Reception and Responsibility*” (2010)). WHO employs different persuasive strategies to influence people to follow its ideologies concerning Covid-19 till finding a suitable vaccine.

1.2. Problem of the Study

WHO has different perspectives concerning Covid-19. One is denying and another is confirming. This means that the institutional discourse of WHO has different ideologies in dealing with such pandemics. This study is conducted to shed light on persuasive strategies in WHO discourse that lead to negative and positive ideologies and then to negative and positive consequences.

1.3. Objective of the study

The objective of the present study is to identify the various strategies and tools of persuasion in terms of functional dimension (types of sentences, types of words, words order) that are compatible with the six selected WHO discourses that are greatly concerned with Covid-19 in (2020) to highlight the role of language in influencing people and moving them toward certain action.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The researcher believes that it is important to deal with one of the important down-to-earth subjects that affect the whole planet and people around the world. Research is rare on WHO discourse in previous studies especially in terms of persuasive strategies on covid-19. It provides information related to the topic discussed in this study which is expected to be considered as a contribution to fertile and growing fields of Discourse Analysis and CDA by applying multidisciplinary models of (Larson's Three-Dimensional Model of Persuasion).

1.5. Previous Studies

One of the studies investigates the various strategies of persuasion that are available at Nelson Mandela and explores the embodied political ideologies which shaped the notion of in-group and out-group in Mandela's discourse [15]. Another study deals with persuasion as an influential concept resulting from a host of speech acts in the three American presidential debates that were held between Donald Trump and Hilary Clinton [16]. There is also a study that introduces a stylistic study based on Barbara Johnstone's model of persuasion that is applied to two selected short stories "The Lumber Room" and "The Open Window" by Saki to inspect the three linguistic strategies of the model throughout the stories [17]. The present paper is one of the first studies that seeks to offer critical discourse analysis, interpretation and explanation of persuasive strategies and ideological categories of institutional discourse, and more specifically of WHO on Covid-19.

2. Literature Review

2.1. What is Institutional Discourse?

The term "institution" refers to a physical structure or environment, such as a school, hospital, or media organization." Institutions can also refer to the power of government, media, certain powerful groups, etc. The power and politics of institutions are typically exerted through their members' discourses. This power that is imposed on people can be gained not only by oppression but also by persuasion and consent. Institutional discourse is also concerned with "understanding the relationship between discourse, power and ideology"[4:1-5]. Since discourse analysis studies the connections between the contexts and language in which language is employed, CDA is more concerned with issues of language, ideology, and power within the discourse of texts [18:99],[19:5]. Accordingly, the analyst can have "a comprehensible, and an explicit picture of the social order." To sum up, this social order is typified socially, or institutionally [20:141].

2.2. Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA is a theory and method analyzing the use of language by individuals and institutions. Critical discourse analyzers are interested in the "relations between

discourse, power, dominance, and social inequality”, as well as how speech “reproduces and perpetuates these dominance and inequality relations”[21:249].CDA practitioners have an “explicit socio-political position” because they are interested in analyzing “the sometimes opaque links between discourse practices and larger social and cultural institutions”[21:252].CDA differs from Conversation Analysis, which is a more descriptive approach to institutional discourse. Furthermore, it is affirmed that CDA ought to function as a force opposing any conceptual misuse of authority. He also asserts that CDA is a multidisciplinary theory that should link discourse and action to cognition as well as society [22:9].CDA must show what social and cultural developments the text is a part of [23:57].

Discourse analysts have shown a strong interest in many elements of health communication during the last several decades. Discourse analytical methods for health and risk communication have been influenced by research in fields like medical anthropology. Understanding how people's explanations of sickness and hazard vary across cultures is a key goal of medical sociology. It focuses on the ideological aspect of biological discourse, cultural studies, and how health and risk communication are integrated in social institutions [24:841].

2.3. What is Covid -19?

COVID-19 is the disease caused by a new coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. It is an epidemic that has been dubbed "the largest global pandemic ever experienced." On 31 December 2019, The World Health Organization (WHO) was informed of “cases of pneumonia of unknown cause” in Wuhan City, China. A novel coronavirus was identified as the cause by Chinese authorities on 7 January 2020 and was temporarily named “2019-nCoV”. In the beginning, it is affirmed that “The government reports that there is no clear evidence that the virus passes easily from person to person”. Besides “Currently, no case with infection of this novel coronavirus has been reported elsewhere other than Wuhan.” Thus, the WHO declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020 but WHO does not recommend any specific health measures for travelers [25:2].In addition, it is mentioned that “WHO advises against the application of any travel or trade restrictions on China based on the information currently available on this event.” Then, The first cases in North America are reported in the United States in January 2020. Later on, after thousands of people around the world suffer from panic and death due to the spread of Covid-19, the WHO confirms that it is a pandemic on 11 March 2020. But WHO adds that “at this stage, there is no clear evidence of the new variant being associated with more severe disease or worse outcomes” but “further investigations are needed to understand the impact on transmission, clinical severity of infection, laboratory diagnostics, therapeutics, vaccines, or public health preventive measures”[26:3].

WHO and many governments across the world have declared “local and national social lockdown.” Due to the varying perspectives and ideologies of the WHO and other experts in dealing with such pandemics, citizens in various nations have rejected and dismissed requests to stay at home despite the WHO announcements.United States President Donald Trump criticizes the role of WHO in the sense that the coronavirus outbreak has been severely mismanaged and covered up [27:7].Accordingly, WHO again

tries to persuade people by affirming that social lockdown “ is the only existing weapon for prevention of the pandemic until vaccines become available to treat COVID-19, behavioral change in individuals regarding staying at home is crucial.” Later on, WHO finds out that it is necessary to change their ideologies and perspectives in dealing with such a pandemic because the whole world faces a real and crucial crisis of panic, suffering, confusion and death [27:8]. Thus, it is important to understand not only which source perceptions can impact persuasion, but also how such persuasive efforts can be made more effective.

2.4. What is WHO?

WHO is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health. The headquarter is in Geneva, Switzerland. There are 150 field offices worldwide and six regional ones. WHO was founded on April 7th, 1948. It started working in 1951. Its activities include promoting health and wellbeing, monitoring public health hazards, coordinating responses to medical emergencies, and pushing for universal health coverage. It also creates global health standards, provides technical help to countries, and compiles data on global health-related topics. It has been crucial to several advancements in public health, including the elimination of smallpox, the almost complete eradication of polio, and the creation of an Ebola vaccine. It offers technical assistance to nations, establishes global health standards, and gathers information on global health issues [27:1].

2.5. What is Persuasion?

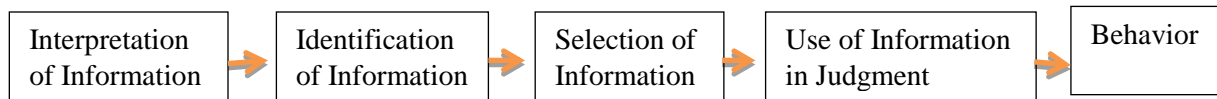
The purpose of rhetoric is persuasion. The use of rhetoric, or the art of persuading, dates back to the ancient Greeks. Aristotle believed that both creative and non-creative evidence can be used to persuade. The persuader should have complete control on the choice of language, the choice of evidence in his/her persuasion [28:13]. For Aristotle, persuasion is based on three basic modes. The first is called “ethos” in the sense that the credibility of a source was necessary for persuading. The second is “pathos” which involves “ the use of emotional appeals”. The third is “logos” which requires the thought of employing logic or reason appeals [29:20-21].

Persuasion is one of communicative processes in which the communicator seeks to elicit the desired response from his receiver [30:6]. It is a conscious attempt by one individual to change the attitudes, beliefs, or behavior of another individual or group of individuals through the transmission of some messages [31:3]. It is “the symbolic process in which communicators try to convince other people to change their attitudes or behaviors regarding an issue through the transmission of a message, in an atmosphere of free choice” [13:8]. Mulholland cited in [17:22] adds that persuasion allows the differences in points of view. Persuasion “ refers generally to the use of language by one party to encourage another to accept a point of view” [32:13]. Persuasion is regarded as human communication intended to affect other people's judgments and actions [33:23]. According to Tomaszczyk cited in [16:19] people are persuaded when they are connected to their desires

Persuasion is considered as the ability to influence an audience's opinions and arguments in a way that benefits the speaker's goals. Persuasion can happen in all communicative contexts [34:13]. It is also affirmed that “the ultimate objective of

persuasion is to influence people and promote them to change and or adopt certain beliefs and attitudes in favor of these presented by addresser”[15:26]. Persuasion “has an impact on the cognitive system of recipients and may affect their attitudes and behavior”[35:4]. Although statistics can be used by persuaders as supportive evidence, manipulation of this statistical information is a skill that debaters should master in persuading the audience [36:52-53]. What’s more, In a situation where the persuadee has some degree of freedom, persuasion is a successful intentional effort to change the other person's state of mind through speech. It has been stressed numerous times that persuasive communication has its limitations, just like all other forces in existence. Persuasion can have these results, but it can also serve as “a tool for personal growth, psychological healing, and social change” [13:584].

As far as persuasive strategies are concerned, it is affirmed that “Persuasive strategies are the range of options from which a speaker selects in deciding on an appropriate tactic or combination of tactics for persuasion in a given situation” [7:134]. There are five elements of persuasive discourse: “attention-getting, confidence-building, desire-stimulating, urgency-stressing and response-seeking” [37:23]. Similarly, people who are exposed to persuasive messages are not only passive receivers of information, instead, individuals sequentially create mental representations from the information at hand. She adds that there are five stages for processing persuasion such as follows [38:65-66]:



Figurer (1) Stages of Processing in Persuasion

One or more people are involved in persuasion when they create, reinforce, modify, or eliminate beliefs, attitudes, intentions, motivations, and/or behaviors within the confines of a specific communication environment [39:88]. The interpretation of the message should be conscious and intentional by the audience or reader. They must aware of the messages that they want or intend to receive. Moreover, persuasion depends on communication that attempts to change the belief or behavior of another person in some way or another. Both the sender and the receiver must take part in persuasion. The receiver's world, circumstance, setting, culture, norms, emotions, and motivations must all be taken into account for persuasion to be successful [29:29].

Larson (2010) identifies three dimensions of language in terms of persuasion (Functional, Semantic, and Thematic). He states that the use of language and proficiency with language analysis tools are two things that receivers must master. Thus, it is important to be competent enough in knowing the use and dimension of language so as to be competent enough in using and receiving persuasive messages [29:137]. These three dimensions of language can be seen in the following figure:

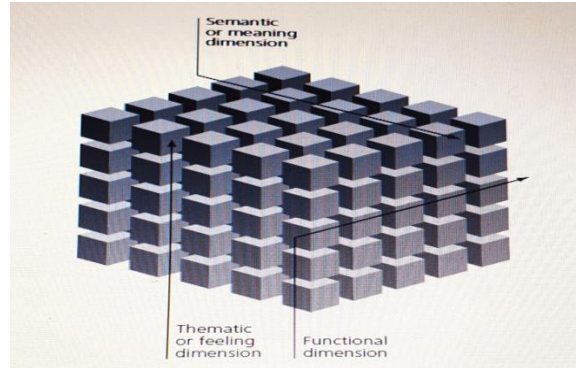


Figure. (2) The Three Dimensions of Language

The cube in Figure (2) represents three dimensions of language. They are (1) the functional dimension “the jobs that words can do, such as naming”, (2) the semantic dimension “the meanings for a word”, and (3) the thematic dimension the feel and texture of words like "swoosh" are important. The cube represents a word or group of words by use of a large number of smaller cubes, each of which has its own distinct semantic, functional, and thematic qualities [29:137].

2.6. Larson’s Three- Dimensional Model of Persuasion

2.6.1. Tools for the Functional Dimension

In order to examine how language symbols function in persuasion, two tools are used which are “grammatical categories and the effects of word order or syntax in sentences.” Richard Weaver cited in [29:143], pioneer in language theory, affirms that a person's preferred sentence structure can provide insight into his\her worldview. These grammatical categories can be seen in the following:

2.6.1.1-Types of Sentences

a-Simple Sentences

A subject, action verb, and object are all required components of a simple sentence. such as “He hit the ball”. They must also represent a single complete idea or point. Simple phrase advocates don't think the world is that complex [29:143].

b-Compound Sentences

Combining two or more basic phrases with a conjunction like “and” or “but” results in a compound sentence. The compound sentence can be in balance such as "He ran, and he ran fast” or opposition such as "He ran, but she walked". A tension that has either been relieved or not is conveyed by the compound sentence. The world is viewed in terms of contrasts or similarities by persuasive speakers who use compound sentences[29:144].

c- Complex Sentences

Complex sentences also have two or more separate elements. For example, the complex sentence: “Whenever we come upon one of these intensely right words in a book or a newspaper, the resulting effect is physical as well as spiritual and electrically prompt”[29:144].

2.6.1.2-Types of Words**a-Nouns**

Nouns are defined as “the name of a person, place, or thing.” People respond to nouns as if they were the things they name. The nouns a persuader uses can give information about how he/she sees the world [29:144].

b-Adjective

Adjectives are used “to enhance and distinguish a noun.” Adjectives are used to show “uncertainty”. The use of adjectives by a persuader, such as “good and bad, hot and cold, light and dark”, can convey his or her confusion and what they perceive in opposition to what [29:144].

c-Adverbs

Adverbs are “words of judgment.” Adverbs serve as “a social judgment that encourages us to accept the persuader's version of our beliefs.” Adverbs that imply agreement include “surely,” “certainly,” and “probably” for instance. The audience is assumed to agree when persuaders assert, “Surely we all know that thus-and-such is so”[29:144].

2.6.1.3- Syntax or Word Order

Syntax is defined as “the pattern or structure of the word order in sentences or phrases.” How is that supposed to be persuasive? The reader or listener might be distracted or alerted by word order. Think about how these two sentences differ from one another:

- 1- “Before bombing the terrorist headquarters, we made sure the target was the right one.”
- 2- “We were sure the target was the right one before bombing the terrorist headquarters.”

To lessen the impact of what comes next, some persuaders start sentences with strong or unexpected terms. Because the allegation is emotional, the listener concentrates on the supporting information [29:144-145].

2.6.2. Tools for the Semantic Dimension

“While the functional dimension carries important verbal and nonverbal meanings, the semantic dimension of co-created interactive meaning carries the bulk of persuasion in most messages” [29:145]. This dimension includes the following :

1. Scene

The scene includes “physical location, the situation, time in history or time in life, social place, occasion, and other elements.” It is the container of the action [29:148].

2.Act

The act refers to “any motivated or purposeful action that occurs within the scene.” The verb is the most effective way to convey an action in persuasive communication. Thus, it is appropriate to begin an analysis by focusing on the verb [29: 148-149].

3-Agent

The agent is “the person or group of persons who take action in the scene” or “the actors or characters who make things happen.” [29:149].

4-Agency

The agency is “the tool, method, or means used by persuaders to accomplish their ends.”[29:150].

5-Purpose

The purpose is “the reason an agent acts in a given scene using a particular agency.” The persuasion can more or less reveal the genuine intent of the persuader[29:150].

6. Strategic Uses of Ambiguity

Many persuaders intentionally communicate in ways that are confusing despite some people's beliefs that doing so is unethical. They make an effort to be ambiguous, sweeping, and general in order to promote the widest range of “ “identification, common ground, and meaning co-creation” [29: 150].

2.6.3.Tools for the Thematic Dimension

The quality that gives some words or groups of words a texture or feel is referred to as the thematic dimension of language. Although words certainly have a variety of semantic meanings and syntactical purposes, their ability to evoke particular emotions or establish a particular tone or theme is what gives them their greatest power. According to Larson[29:152],the influential elements in this dimension can be clarified in the following :

1. Alliteration

It is the thematic significance of consonant repetition such as “ Smooth. Silky, Stain, Cigarettes”.

2. Parallel sentence structures

It can occasionally convey a thematic sense such as “ He knows what clothes to wear” , “What credit card to buy? ”, “What he eats”, and “What he wears”.

3. Metaphorical Style

Persuaders can grab their audience's attention by “constantly employing particular sounds, expressions, and visual cues.” Using metaphors can have positive impacts, according to a recent study on their effects [29:153].

4. God, Devil, and Charismatic Terms

The creation of the term families is another thematic or textural aspect of the persuasion style. God term is defined as “an expression about which all other expressions are ranked as subordinate and serving dominations and powers.” Contrarily, Devil terms are the exact opposite. They are repulsive expressions that convey negative values. [29: 153-154].

5. Pragmatic Styles

A pragmatic persuader aims to persuade an audience that is either neutral or hostile. Instead of reaffirming preexisting views, they seek to change minds When addressing a news conference as opposed to a crowd of supporters, politicians tend to utilize the pragmatic style more frequently. [29:155].

6.Unifying Style

Unifying persuaders “use different styles because they want to motivate people who already believe what they’re going to say; they just reinforce beliefs to whip up enthusiasm, dedication, or encouragement” [29: 155-156].

To sums up, the three-dimensional Model of Larson can be clarified in the following table:

Table (1) Larson's Three-Dimensional Model

Tools for the Functional Dimension	Tools for the Semantic Dimension	Tools for the Thematic Dimension
Types of sentences a-Simple Sentence b-compound Sentence c- complex sentence Types of Words a-Noun b-Adjective c-Adverb Syntax or Word Order	1-Scene 2-Act 3-Agent 4-Agency 5-Purpose 6- Strategic Use of Ambiguity	1-Alliteration 2-Parrallel Sentence Structure 3-Metaphorical Style 4-God, Devil, and Charismatic Terms 5-Pragmatic Style 6-Unifying Style

3. Methodology of Research

The present study investigates Persuasive Strategies in the discourses of WHO on Covid-19. It is qualitative in nature due to CDA. It also gives a detailed description, analysis, and interpretation of persuasive strategies in WHO discourse on Covid-19 in(2020) in terms of Larson's Three-Dimensional Model of Persuasion (2010). Tables, graphs, and figures are presented to convey a precise and clear image of the used persuasive strategies. They help in making a comparison among the dimensions of the model, the persuasive strategies in each discourse of WHO on covid-19, and other selected discourses to get more insightful and reliable results. The six selected written transcriptions of WHO discourses are the primary data of this study. These discourses are selected according to their confinement to a great extent on Covid-19. The transcript of the discourses are found on the official website of WHO. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus> and <https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/director-genera> (see [25], [40], [41], [42], [43], and [44]). These are WHO discourses (1,2,3,4,5and 6) that are used in the study.

4. Data Analysis and Findings: Persuasive Strategies in the discourses of WHO on Covid-19

This section represents a critical discourse analysis of six discourses of Who on Covid-19. In this concern, the functional dimension has (908) persuasive strategies. The semantic dimension has (746) ones and the thematic dimension has (463) respectively (See Table (2) and Figures (3) and (4)). For the limitation of the research, the present study will focus on the functional dimension which has the highest persuasive strategies.

Table (2) Persuasive Strategies of WHO Discourses on Covid-19 in 2020 in terms of Larson's Three Dimensional Modal

Larson's Three Dimension	January	February	March	July	October	December	Total
1-Functional Dimension	145	164	198	126	128	147	908
2-Semantic Dimension	73	167	112	163	109	122	746
3-Thematic Dimension	51	79	101	67	86	79	463
Total	269	410	411	356	323	348	2117

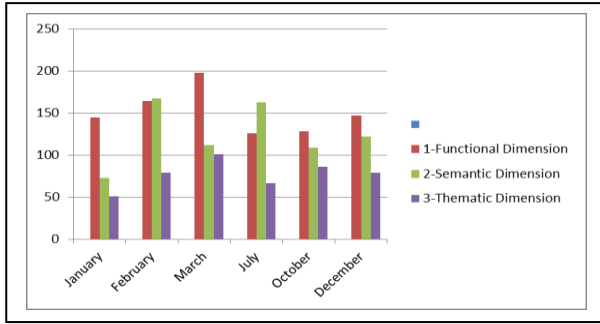


Figure (3) Persuasive Strategies of WHO Discourses Strategies in WHO Discourses

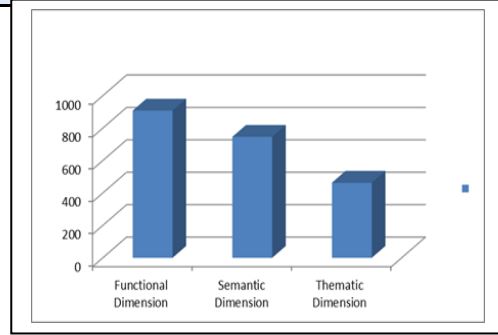


Figure (4) Total Number of persuasive Strategies in WHO Discourses

4.1. The Functional Dimension

4.1.1. Types of sentences

Examining the persuasive strategies in terms of Larson’s Functional Dimension and the types of sentences, it seems that “simple sentence” is the highest in number (128), complex sentence (94), and compound sentence (62) (see Table (3) and Figure (5) and (6)). The persuader who uses such type of sentences does not find the world as a very complex place. This is the point that reflects the contradictions in the decisions that the WHO produces positively sometimes and negatively others [29:143].

Table (3) Persuasive Strategies Of WHO Discourses on Covid-19 and the persuasive points in terms of Larson’s Functional Dimension

Functional Dimension	January	February	March	July	October	December	Total
1-Simple Sentence	12	32	26	26	26	6	128
2-Compound Sentence	11	10	24	8	5	4	62
3-Complex Sentence	10	11	12	16	17	28	94
4- Noun	70	61	74	34	32	65	336
5-Adjective	20	23	47	17	26	20	153
6-Adverb	9	8	3	13	11	7	51
7- Words Order	13	19	12	12	11	17	84
Total	145	164	198	126	128	147	908

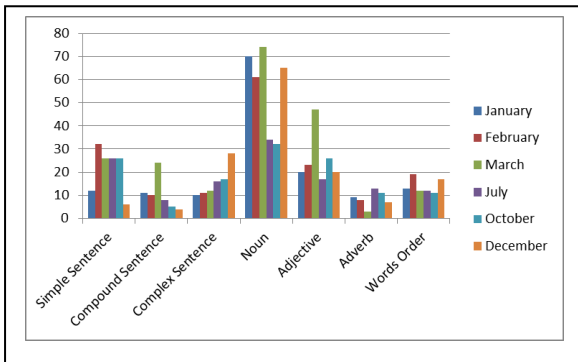


Figure (5) Persuasive Strategies Of WHO Discourses Strategies in WHO Discourses

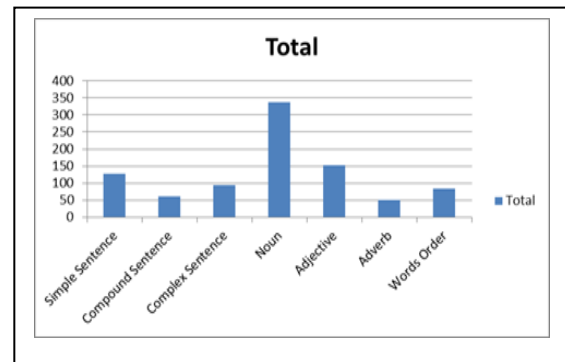


Figure (6) Total Number of persuasive Strategies in WHO Discourses

4.1.1.1 Simple Sentence

At the beginning of Covid-19 and depending on the information from China's authority, WHO does not advise any particular health precautions for travelers. In February, the use of simple sentences doubled (32) (see Table (3) and Figures (5) and (6)). It seems that it is still that Covid-19 can be contained with the right measure and tests despite the increase in cases and death. This is again dependent on the declaration of China's authority. There is also a different orientation in dealing with this crisis positively and negatively. This makes people feel like they are in a puzzle. In March, the use of simple sentences (26) is less than in February, but there is more use of compounding sentences (24) which depending on Larson compound sentence conveys that the persuader believes that the tension is either resolved or not [29:143]. WHO admits that Covid-19 is a pandemic now. In March, there is another orientation should be tackled in dealing with this crisis. There should be testing, making social distance among people, and cleaning or washing hands. For WHO, these are the best means to reduce the virus transmission and enable the health system to cope with this pandemic besides the spirit of solidarity will play a great role in this concern.

In July, WHO finds that the situation becomes more serious, crucial, and very dangerous: "Covid-19 made the road harder". At the same time, it admits that "we are not prisoners of the pandemic" and "the future is in our hands". In October, WHO rejects the use of "herd immunity" strategies, i.e. "letting the virus spread at different places in the world": "It is scientifically and ethically problematic". Later on, the pandemic becomes a human crisis that leads to millions of dead people and millions of suffering people from Covid-19 itself or of losing the dearest persons for them. In December, the use of this type of sentence less down to (6) and the use of complex sentence rise to (28). It seems that the situation is very complex now. Accordingly, the focus of WHO becomes on finding suitable vaccines and sufficient does that should be "distributed equitably around the world". These points can be seen in the following:

- 4 "The market was closed on 1 January 2020." (Discourse 1).
- 34 "WHO does not recommend any specific health measures for travellers." (Discourse 1).
- 5 "Outside China, there are now 3474 cases in 44 countries, and 54 deaths." (Discourse 2).
- 6 "We are at a decisive point." (Discourse 2).
- 11 "You can prevent people getting sick." (Discourse 2).
- 16 "With the right measures, it can be contained." (Discourse 2).
- 17 "That is one of the key messages from China." (Discourse 2).
- 37 "But we are not hopeless." (Discourse 2).
- 71 "Once again, this is not a time for fear." (Discourse 2).
- 2 "In the past week, we have seen a rapid escalation of cases of COVID-19." (Discourse 3).
- 6 "Social distancing measures can help to reduce transmission and enable health systems to cope." (Discourse 3).
- 7 "Hand washing and coughing into your elbow can reduce the risk for yourself and others." (Discourse 3).
- 15 "We have a simple message for all countries: test, test, test." (Discourse 3).
- 36 "This is a serious disease." (Discourse 3).

- 63 “ This amazing spirit of human solidarity must become even more infectious than the virus itself.” (Discourse 3)
- 6 “ In the past 6 weeks, the total number of cases has roughly doubled.” (Discourse 4).
- 9 “ COVID-19 has changed our world.” (Discourse 4)
- 11 “It has shown what humans are capable of—both positively and negatively.” (Discourse4).
- 25 “We convened hundreds of scientists to develop a roadmap for research.” (Discourse4).
- 56 “ That road has been made harder by COVID-19.” (Discourse 4).
- 61 “We are not prisoners of the pandemic.” (Discourse 4).
- 63 “ The future is in our hands.” (Discourse 4).
- 2 “There has been some discussion recently about the concept of reaching so-called “herd immunity” by letting the virus spread.” (Discourse 5).
- 22 “ In other words, herd immunity is achieved by protecting people from a virus, not by exposing them to it.” (Discourse 5).
- 24 “ It is scientifically and ethically problematic.” (Discourse 5).
- 25 “ First, we don’t know enough about immunity to COVID-19.” (Discourse 5).
- 27 “ We have some clues, but we don’t have the complete picture.” (Discourse 5).
- 33 “Third, we’re only beginning to understand the long-term health impacts among people with COVID-19.” (Discourse 5).
- 2 “ With vaccines now being introduced, it’s really important that they are distributed equitably around the world.” (Discourse 6).

4.1.1.2. Compound Sentence

In dealing with the compound sentences as persuasive devices, there are (62) ones in WHO discourses on covid-19 (see Table (3) and Figures (5) and (6)). As it is mentioned previously, a compound sentence reflects “tension that has either been resolved or not”. In January, it is mentioned that there is no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission of this virus. So there is no clear tension here, there are (10) compound sentences. In February also there is no so clear tension, there are (11) ones. According to the WHO, more than 320,000 community samples from Guangdong were analyzed, and just 0.14% of those samples tested positive for COVID-19. Thus, it is important just to calm down and do the right things to fight the virus that WHO admits is a very dangerous virus. In March, the tension rises with the use of compound sentences to (24) ones and with the rise of transmission of the virus around the world. WHO declares that to reduce the transmission of the virus and save lives it is crucial to break the chains of transmission and to follow social distancing measures.

In the other months, there is a lowering in the use of compound sentences (8,5,4) and rising in the use of complex sentences(16,17, 28) (see Table (3) and Figures (5) and (6)). This reflects that the persuader has a sense that the situation becomes more complex and crucial and it is not just tension. In July, WHO shows that there are (16 million cases and more than 640.000 deaths). So WHO affirms that there is a need to know more about this pandemic because the situation becomes more complex: “We have learned an enormous amount, and we’re still learning”. In October, the situation becomes more and more complex “between letting the virus run free and shutting down our societies.”

Accordingly, in December, WHO hopes that vaccines may give hope for finding certain ways to get rid of this pandemic: “Progress on vaccines gives us all a lift and we can now start to see the light at the end of the tunnel.” These points can be seen as follows:

5“At this stage, there is no infection among healthcare workers, and no clear evidence of human to human transmission.” (Discourse 1).

14“According to information conveyed to WHO by Chinese authorities on 11 and 12 January, 41 cases with novel coronavirus infection have been preliminarily diagnosed in Wuhan City.” (Discourse 1).

76“ The most important thing is to calm down and do the right things to fight this very dangerous virus.” (Discourse 2).

6“Social distancing measures can help to reduce transmission and enable health systems to cope.” (Discourse 3).

11“ But the most effective way to prevent infections and save lives is breaking the chains of transmission.”(Discourse 3).

4“ Almost 16 million cases have now been reported to WHO, and more than 640,000 deaths.”(Discourse 4).

12“ We have learned an enormous amount, and we’re still learning.” (Discourse 4)

13“Countries have responded differently, and countries have been affected differently.”(Discourse5).

38“It’s not a choice between letting the virus run free and shutting down our societies.”(Discourse 5).

10“ Progress on vaccines gives us all a lift and we can now start to see the light at the end of the tunnel.” (Discourse 6).

21“ WHO is engaged with our partners at all levels, working to boost manufacturing and ensure rollout of COVID-19 vaccines.” (Discourse 6) .

4.1.1.3. Complex Sentence

Complex sentences as persuasive devices constitute (94) ones (see Table (3) and Figures (5) and (6)). The use of complex sentences reflects that the persuader sees the world as a complex place. The use of complex sentences is less than the other types of sentences, especially in the first months. This means WHO does not find a complex situation at the beginning of the outbreak of Covid-19 depending on the information that the WHO gets from China’s authority. Later on, it seems that there is a certain increase in the numbers of these sentences gradually through 2020 especially at the end of it as (10,11, 12,16,17, and 28) respectively. In January, depending on reports from China’s government, WHO gets a report that there isn’t any concrete proof that the virus spreads quickly from one person to another. So what is important is that “travelers are encouraged to seek medical attention and share travel history with their healthcare provider.”WHO announces these decisions before knowing the results of the investigations that WHO insist on as required to better understand this virus. In February, the WHO presents messages for people that this virus may have pandemic potential so it is important to introduce guidelines to detect and manage cases. In March, WHO finds that there may be an increase in the complexity of the situation and there is a need to test and wear masks. WHO mentions that both the patient and their caregiver

should wear a medical mask when they are together in the same room, but the urgency of testing, isolation, and contact tracking has not increased sufficiently.

In July, the complex sentences are arisen to (16). WHO admits that this virus has really changed the world. Thus, there is an obligation to “find, isolate, test and care for cases; and trace and quarantine their contacts.” In addition, WHO begins to take the role of people into consideration in saving themselves and others: Keep your distance from others, wash your hands frequently, stay away from crowded spaces, and wear a mask when advised. We are aware of the frustration that many people, organizations, and governments are feeling as the pandemic persists.

In October the complexity also arose (17) with the use of “herd immunity”. WHO finds that this strategy is not applicable to Covid-19 instead the virus can be controlled by implementing targeted measures. The complexity arose on December (28) due to the perception that this pandemic still has a long way to go as well as the focus on the best strategy to guarantee widespread use of the new Covid-19 vaccinations. All these points can be illustrated in the following:

3“ The evidence is highly suggestive that the outbreak is associated with exposures in one seafood market in Wuhan.” (Discourse 1).

23“The government reports that there is no clear evidence that the virus passes easily from person to person.” (Discourse 1).

18“The evidence we have is that there does not appear to be widespread community transmission.” (Discourse 2).

64“Our message continues to be that this virus has pandemic potential and WHO is providing the tools to help every country to prepare accordingly.” (Discourse 2).

17“If they test positive, isolate them and find out who they have been in close contact with up to 2 days before they developed symptoms, and test those people too.” (Discourse 3).

28 “ For example, both the patient and their care-giver should wear a medical mask when they are together in the same room.” (Discourse 3).

14“And nor have the basic measures needed to suppress transmission and save lives: find, isolate, test and care for cases; and trace and quarantine their contacts.”(Discourse 4).

15 “Keep your distance from others, clean your hands, avoid crowded and enclosed areas, and wear a mask where recommended.”(Discourse 4).

61“As we mark 6 months since the declaration of the global health emergency, the COVID-19 pandemic is illustrating that health is not a reward for development, it’s the foundation of social, economic and political stability.”(Discourse 4).

5“We well understand the frustration that many people, communities and governments are feeling as the pandemic drags on, and as cases rise again.” (Discourse 5).

18“Herd immunity is a concept used for vaccination, in which a population can be protected from a certain virus if a threshold of vaccination is reached.” (Discourse 5).

35 “I have met with patient groups suffering with what is now being described as “Long COVID” to understand their suffering and needs so we can advance research and rehabilitation.” (Discourse 5).

45 “And persist with the same tools that we have been advocating since day one: find, isolate, test and care for cases, and trace and quarantine their contacts.” (Discourse 5).

55“There are many tools at our disposal: WHO recommends case finding, isolation, testing, compassionate care, contact tracing, quarantine, physical distancing, hand hygiene, masks, respiratory etiquette, ventilation, avoiding crowds and more.”(Discourse 5).

11 “ However, WHO is concerned that there is a growing perception that the pandemic is over.”(Discourse 6).

32“ To ensure that this effort becomes a reality, the ACT-Accelerator, urgently requires a cash injection of US \$4.3 billion to fast-track critical areas of work and ensure that rapid tests, treatments and new vaccines are distributed equitably.”(Discourse 6).

46 “Young people aren’t just the future, they are the present and we must hear their voice and experience to build the post pandemic world together.”(Discourse 6).

4.1.2-Types of Words

As far as the types of words is concerned, noun gets the highest number (336) as a persuasive device, then adjective (153) and adverb (51) (see Table (3) and Figures (5) and (6)).

4.1.2.1.Noun

The use of nouns by a persuader can give information about how he sees the world [29:144]. WHO uses nouns highly in all discourses except in July and October (70,61,74,34, 32,65) (see Table (3) and Figures (5) and (6)). In January, WHO focuses on information and investigation of Chinese authorities about the outbreak of Covid-19 at one of the seafood markets in Wuhan and introduced recommendations and advises accordingly: “January”, “information”, “Health”, “WHO”, “the outbreak”, “investigations”, “market”, “Wuhan”, “Chinese”, “authorities”, “medical”, “experts”, “recommendations”, “advice” (Discourse 1).

In February, the WHO mentions certain countries that were affected by Covid-19 such as Brazil, Georgia, Greece, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, and Romania, etc. and about the infection and transmission of the virus to find guidelines: “China”, “COVID-19”, “WHO”, “the world”, “this virus”, “people”, “influenza”, “scientists”, “samples”, “transmission”, “measures”, “patients”, “equipment”, “hospitals”, “infections”, “health minister”, “guidelines” (Discourse 2).

In March, WHO declares that Covid-19 becomes a pandemic and may lead to a crisis because it has infection and chain of transmission. There is a need to follow WHO’s guidance in testing and following its message in solidarity: “Covid-19”, “WHO”, “China”, “Health”, “health workers”, “pandemic”, “infection”, “crisis”, “WHO’s guidance”, “symptoms”, “hospital”, “patients”, “chains of transmission”, “test”, “solidarity”, “message”, “people”, “countries” (Discourse 3).

In July, the use of the nouns is minimized to (34) as if the view is minimized to find a roadmap and guidance by WHO, International Health Regulations, and scientists and people to face this pandemic. The pandemic, death, patients, health problem social and economic burden makes a late consideration of the role of people, communities, and future generation with the role of scientists and their roadmaps to fight this virus till finding a suitable vaccine: “Covid-19”, “WHO”, “China”, “public health emergency”, “International Health Regulations”, “the pandemic”, “death”, “cases”, “people”, “testing”, “the virus”, “scientists”, “roadmap”, “guidance”, “disease”, “patients”, “vaccine”, “future generations”, “challenges”, “social and economic burden” (Discourse 4).

In October, the use of noun is also minimized to (32) in the sense that WHO focuses on the bad consequences of applying herd immunity strategy with this pandemic which will cause a real risk of infection of this virus which they do not have a complete picture about it. WHO admits that it is better to use the toolbox, hospitalization, measures, technologies, and research in dealing with this virus till finding a suitable vaccine. There is also late consideration for the cognitive side in terms of the frustration and suffering of the people and patient groups during 2020: “COVID-19”, “herd immunity”, “the virus”, “a pandemic”, “the frustration”, “the toolbox”, “measures”, “vaccination”, “infections”, “suffering and death”, “risk”, “patient groups”, “research and rehabilitation”, “transmission”, “cases”, “tools”, “communities”, “technologies”, “mobile applications”, “Germany’s Corona-Warn app”, “the European Centre for Disease Prevention”, “message” (Discourse 5).

In December, the use of nouns is risen to (65) in the sense that the view of WHO includes the whole world. There is consideration of different institutions such as UNICEF, World Bank, and others to focus on COVID-19 vaccine and making vaccination plans, funds, etc., in the battle to fight this pandemic and distributing the vaccine around the world: “The pandemic”, “decisions”, “leaders”, “citizens”, “the virus”, “vaccines”, “the world”, “WHO”, “UNICEF”, “World Bank”, “Global Fund”, “COVID-19 tools”, “WHO Technical Advisory Group”, “the United Kingdom’s Medicines”, “COVID-19 vaccine”, “the battle”, “transmission”, “measures”, “people”, “hospitals”, “vaccination plans”, “decision makers”, “manufacturing”, “funds”, “initial lessons”, “recommendations”, “WHO Youth Council”, “advice”, “organizations” (Discourse 6).

4.1.2.2. Adjective

In terms of adjectives, (153) ones are used by WHO in 2020 in talking about Covid-19 (see Table(3) and Figures(5) and(6)). The use of adjectives may reveal the persuader’s uncertainty [29:144]. This may reflect that the uncertainty of WHO concerning Covid-19 is arisen gradually during 2020, especially in the first half of the year and is lowered in the second half of it : (20,23, 47,17,26, and 20).

In January, following the information from China’s authority, WHO is uncertain about the infection aspects of Covid-19 and whether it can be transmitted from human to human. Thus, the main concern is to produce intensive care for patients and make epidemiological investigation in terms of specific and diagnostic kits: “**intensive** care”, “**epidemiological** investigation”, “**medical**”, “**specific and diagnostic** kits”, “**Public** health”, “**National** Health” (Discourse 1)

In February, the WHO is also uncertain about Whether Covid-19 is a pandemic or not because it admits that there doesn't seem to be broad community transmission, according to the evidence we have although it also states that “this very dangerous virus”, “We are at a decisive point” and “Each of these countries is different”. Accordingly, WHO suggests that the containment of the virus is possible and “You can prevent people getting sick” with the right measures and right chemicals because we are not hopeless or defenseless : “**the latest** numbers”, “now **our greatest** concern”, “**decisive point**”, “people getting **sick**”, “With **the right** measures”, “**widespread** community transmission”,

“containment is **possible**”, “countries are **different**”, “we are **not hopeless**”, “We are **not defenseless**”, “**the right** information”, “this **very dangerous** virus.” (Discourse 2).

In March, despite the rapid escalation of Covid-19 around the world and considering it a “global health crisis of our time”, WHO states that there is a simple message for all countries to “test, test, test”. When a patient and their caregiver are in the same room together, both individuals should put on a medical mask to break the chain of transmission. In addition, there is also a need for the “amazing spirit of human solidarity” at this time to face this virus : “**rapid escalation of cases of COVID-19**”, “**all countries must take a comprehensive approach**” , “ We have a **simple message** for all countries: test, test, test, **the global demand, medical mask, diagnostic tests**”, “**global health crisis of our time**”, “This **amazing** spirit of human solidarity.” (discourse 3).

In July, the use of adjective is minimized to (17) which reflect the minimizing of uncertainty concerning the fact that this virus is a hard, severe, incredible, long burden in the sense that it is “one of the most significant challenges” and “the highest level of alarm” at present time. So what is important is a determination to face this pandemic because “That road has been made harder by COVID-19” : “**the most severe**, one of **the most significant** challenges”, “That road has been made **harder** by COVID-19”, “**the highest** level of alarm” , “one of the most **fundamental** ingredients for stopping this virus is determination”, “we published **extensive** guidance” , “We have done **an incredible** amount, but we still have **a long, hard** road ahead of us, especially those with **the highest** burden”, “It’s an **enormous** social and economic burden.” (Discourse:4).

In October, the use of adjectives arises a little bit to (24) by WHO because of the uncertainty of using herd immunity to face this virus. WHO declares that on a moral and scientific level, it is unacceptable to allow the spread of a hazardous virus that we do not fully understand because we do not know the strength or duration of that immune response, or how it varies between individual: “**an increase** in the number of reported cases of COVID-19”, “**a comprehensive** approach, **the highest** number of cases”, “**widespread** transmission”, “It is scientifically and ethically **problematic**”, “we don’t know how **strong or lasting** that immune response is, or how it differs for **different** people”, “we don’t have the **complete picture**”, “at risk of **severe** disease and death”, “**Long** COVID”, “Allowing **a dangerous** virus that we don’t fully understand to run free is **unethical**” (Discourse 5).

In December, the use of adjectives is confined to the importance of using the new Covid-19 vaccine with equitable distribution because this is a significant scientific advancement for the entire globe because the fight against COVID-19 will depend heavily on vaccines, and equitable distribution is the proper and intelligent course of action. What’s more, WHO considers people’s rules in this battle to face this health crisis. Thus, WHO advises people that It’s crucial that individuals continue to abide by national and local regulations because doing otherwise is extremely difficult: “it’s **really important**”, “how **best** to ensure **high** coverage of new COVID-19 vaccines”, “this is **an important scientific** step for the world as vaccines will be **critical** in the battle against COVID-19”, “it’s **important** that people should continue to follow national and local measures”, “it’s the **hardest** it can possibly be, please be **careful**”, “The pandemic still has a **long** a way, to vaccinate those at **highest** risk of the virus”, “**Equitable**

distribution is the **right** choice and the smart choice”, “It’s **important** that all groups have a voice in the future” (Discourse 6).

4.1.2.3. Adverb

Adverbs are considered words of judgment that encourage us to accept the persuader’s version of belief [29:144]. There are (51) adverbs used by WHO (see Table (3) and Figures (5) and (6)). It seems that the use of adverbs is the lowest persuasive strategy within the types of words. This may reflect that WHO does not concern very well encouraging people to accept its version of belief in the sense that considering people or the social effects of this situation is too late. What is important is to present its view on the world and the situation depending on China and other authorities or scientists. Moreover, there is arisen in the use of adverbs in July and October when it begins to find that the role of people is also important within the pandemic formula. When people follow the WHO’s suggestions and advice carefully this will help in fighting this deadly virus as the WHO admits and it will ultimately end: (9,8,3,13,11,7).

In January, there are (9) adverbs. It seems that the use of adverbs is more than the two other months. It seems that WHO wants to encourage or persuade the listeners that everything is under control because of “share information regularly” and “ Currently, WHO is closely monitoring the situation” : “share information **regularly**”, “The evidence is **highly** suggestive”, “the total number of cases has **roughly** doubled”, “**initially** reported”, “preliminarily diagnosed in Wuhan City, humans are capable of – **both positively and negatively**”, “WHO worked **tirelessly** to support countries” , “**Currently**, WHO is **closely** monitoring the situation” , “this advice **carefully and consistently** have done well” , “the information **currently** available on this event.” (Discourse 1)

In February, there are (8) adverbs that show that this virus can be contained if a person acts aggressively in following the advice that is presented by WHO to move swiftly in early measures to prevent the transmission of this virus before it gets a foothold: “If you act **aggressively** now , you can contain this virus”, “**early** measures can prevent transmission before the virus gets a foothold”, “**unfortunately** both had new cases yesterday”, “People can have concerns and **rightly** so” , “People can be worried and **rightly** so”.(Discourse 2).

In March, WHO finds that it is important to encourage humans to “physically apart from each other” which can help “to provide care as safely as possible” : “**ideally** someone”, “**deeply** concerned”, “**physically** apart from each other”, “to provide care as **safely** as possible”.(Discourse 3).

In July, the use of adverbs is more than in the other months (13). WHO finds that “the total number of cases has roughly doubled”. This may cause the highest burden for such a “deadly disease”. So WHO encourage humans to positively follow its advice carefully: “The total number of cases has **roughly** doubled”, “It has shown what humans are capable of – **both positively and negatively**”, “followed this advice **carefully**”, “WHO has worked **tirelessly** to support countries, and **immediately** started working with a manufacturer in Germany to produce tests and ship them to countries most in need, **especially** those with the highest burden, **deadly** disease”.(Discourse 4).

In October, WHO finds out later that because people reside in many nations and may have various cognitive and cultural viewpoints, each nation has responded and been

affected in a unique way. A deadly virus that we don't completely understand should not be allowed to run free, and employing herd immunity as a tactic is both unethical and problematic from a scientific and moral standpoint. On the other hand, WHO advises that nations can successfully manage or prevent widespread transmission through the use of proven measures.: “ an increase in the number of reported cases of COVID-19, **especially** in Europe and the Americas”, “Countries have responded **differently**, and countries have been affected **differently**”, “**successfully** prevented or controlled widespread transmission with proven measures”, “some discussion **recently** about the concept of reaching so-called “herd immunity” by letting the virus spread, It is **scientifically** and **ethically** problematic”, “Allowing a dangerous virus that we don’t **fully** understand to run free is **simply** unethical”, “This virus transmits **mainly** between close contacts”. (Discourse 5).

In December, WHO declares that this virus is the hardest that it can be but at the same time WHO is hopefully encouraging people to follow its instruction concerning “COVID-19 vaccines”. It is really important that these vaccines are distributed equitably around the world so “this pandemic will ultimately end”: “this pandemic will **ultimately** end”, “With vaccines now being introduced, it’s **really** important that they are distributed **equitably** around the world”, it’s the hardest it can **possibly** be”, “treatments and new vaccines are distributed **equitably**” (Discourse 6).

4.1.3. Syntax or Word Order

Considering syntax or word order as the last persuasive device at the functional level, there are (84) ones (see Table (3) and Figures (5) and (6)). Syntax and word order are used by persuaders to start sentences with strong or unexpected terms to lessen the impact of what comes next [29:144-145]. They are used as (13,19, 12,12, 11,and17) respectively.

In January, depending on China’s national authorities reports, the government report, and information by national authorities, the WHO states that “The evidence is highly suggestive that the outbreak is associated with exposures in one seafood market in Wuhan”. Consequently, there isn't concrete proof that the virus spreads quickly from person to person. This makes people around the world feel free of any danger. In February, the use of syntax and word order is arisen to (19). WHO begins to search for an operational guideline to prevent, detect and manage cases because There have been 54 fatalities and 3474 cases outside of China in 44 different countries. The number of new cases reported elsewhere in the world has surpassed the number of new cases in China for the past two days. It seems that WHO consider time and places in terms of this virus. It confirmed that if people act aggressively now in terms of the right measures, the virus will be contained. In March, the use of this persuasive device is lowered to (12) which focuses on time: “In the past week, we have seen a rapid escalation of cases of COVID-19” and “ the days, weeks and months ahead will be a test of our resolve, a test of our trust in science, and a test of solidarity.”

In July, WHO is also considered time in the sense that The overall number of cases has approximately doubled over the past six weeks, and the COVID-19 pandemic is showing that stability in social, economic, and political systems depends on good health rather than development. Six months have passed since the global health emergency was declared. Thus, in dealing with this pandemic, social, economic and political stability

should be considered in any decision because each country has its own social, cultural, economic and political perspectives which may differ accordingly. In October, The focus is on areas where there has been an upsurge in COVID-19 cases. This helps WHO comprehend the anguish and suffering that many people and nations are going through as the number of cases of COVID-19 keeps rising. Despite that WHO affirms that “you can do it” in terms of certain tools such as case finding, isolation, testing ,etc. In December, the use of this persuasive device into (17). The main concern of WHO is Covid-19 vaccines. There should be an adequate plan to distribute it equitably around the world. Moreover, WHO has recently realized the value of taking into account people, especially the young, and listening to their opinions and experiences in order to jointly create the post-pandemic future.

3“ The evidence is highly suggestive that the outbreak is associated with exposures in one seafood market in Wuhan.” (Discourse 1).

23“ The government reports that there is no clear evidence that the virus passes easily from person to person.” (Discourse 1).

5“ Outside China, there are now 3474 cases in 44 countries, and 54 deaths.”(Discourse2).

10 “ If you act aggressively now, you can contain this virus.”(Discourse 2).

16 “ With the right measures, it can be contained.”(Discourse 2).

2“ In the past week, we have seen a rapid escalation of cases of COVID-19.”(Discourse3).

21 “ Over the past 6 months, WHO has worked tirelessly to support countries to prepare for and respond to this virus.”(Discourse 4).

61 “ As we mark 6 months since the declaration of the global health emergency, the COVID-19 pandemic is illustrating that health is not a reward for development, it’s the foundation of social, economic and political stability.”(Discourse 4).

5“We well understand the frustration that many people, communities and governments are feeling as the pandemic drags on, and as cases rise again.”(Discourse 5).

55“There are many tools at our disposal:WHO recommends case finding, isolation, testing, compassionate care, contact tracing, quarantine, physical distancing, hand hygiene, masks,respiratory etiquette,ventilation,avoiding crowds and more.”(Discourse5).

63“My message to every country now weighing up its options is:you can do it too.”(Discourse 5).

2“With vaccines now being introduced, it’s really important that they are distributed equitably around the world.” (Discourse 6).

16 “We know it’s been a hard year and people are tired, but in hospitals that are running at, or over, capacity; it’s the hardest it can possibly be.” (Discourse 6).

46“Young people aren’t just the future, they are the present and we must hear their voice and experience to build the post pandemic world together.” (Discourse 6).

5.Conclusion

After investigating the persuasive strategies of the discourse of WHO, certain conclusions can be presented in the following:

1-It seems that the use of Larson’s Three Dimensional Model and especially the functional dimension, which is the concern of the present study, is useful and very

- fruitful in the analysis, interpretation and explanation of an institutional discourse of WHO.
- 2-The use of the functional dimensions reflects the persuasive strategies of WHO in dealing with the pandemic and the ideologies that are used by it to handle this health crisis by using simple sentences at the outbreak of the virus, then complex sentences later on to show the complexity of the situation. The use of nouns reveals that WHO is based, especially at the outbreak of the Covid-19, on the information and investigations of Chinese authorities. These information caused a great contradiction later on that lead to more infection and transmission of the virus. The use of adjectives also represents the uncertainty of WHO in finding positive ways in dealing with this very dangerous virus because sometimes they become negative ones due to the lack of complete knowledge concerning this pandemic and the suffering, frustration, and death of people around the world during this health crisis who became part of WHO consideration lately.
 - 3- It is important to take into consideration that WHO or its persuasive tactics of it should not depend just on the scientific side in dealing with the pandemic, though it is a scientific and medical one, also the psychological, cognitive, social and cultural perspectives are so influential in dealing with people around the world. There is a crucial need to consider the opinion of humanistic specialists , socialists, and anthropologists besides the scientist because the discourse is oriented toward different people on the plants with different languages, social circumstances, and cultures. There should be a team of all the above to find the words that can persuade the people and affect their minds, hearts, and behaviors in one way or another that can achieve the ultimate goal that goes side by side with WHO ideologies.
 - 4-The use of Larson's Three Dimensional Model of persuasion will provide insightful means that can be used in a discourse and literary analysis in the future research papers. It can achieve very significant results.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

There are no conflicts of interest

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