ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 4| April 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691|| ISI Value: 1.188

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON THE LEGITIMATION STRATEGIES FOUND IN COLUMN ARTICLES: EDUCATION-RELATED ISSUES IN FOCUS

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Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra20107
DOI No: 10.36713/epra20107

ABSTRACT

This qualitative corpora-based study examined the legitimation strategies found in the column articles, focusing on education-related issues from various national-based online newspapers in the Philippines. This study aimed to identify the legitimation strategies of Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999) found in the column articles of various national-based online newspaper companies in the Philippines focusing on education-related issues. The study's finding demonstrated that the column articles had the four legitimation strategies (Authorization, Moral Evaluation, Rationalization, Mythopoesis) and their sub-categories. Authorization occurs whenever a speaker legitimizes their discourse by referencing an authority. Moral evaluation is, in turn, a process of legitimization by reference to certain value systems that provide the moral justification for an action. Finally, mythopoesis is realized through storytelling. Through legitimation strategies, this study helps in identifying the credibility and validity of the column articles. Authorization and Moral Evaluation were the frequently used legitimation strategies by the columnists. This means that columnists are keen on establishing credibility, expertise, and ethical justification for their viewpoints on education-related issues. Using Authorization, by appealing to authoritative figures, research findings, or established practices, helps in language learning and teaching to validate one's opinions. On the other hand, through using moral evaluation, the usage of ethical principles, moral judgements, or values helps one to justify their stance on a certain topic, which is a great aid in language learning and teaching.

KEYWORDS: *Legitimation Strategies, Column Articles, Education-Related Issues, Authorization, Moral Evaluation, Rationalization, Mythopoesis.*

INTRODUCTION

Journalism has a crucial role as an essential source of news information dissemination. One of the article types of journalism is column writing, which enables journalists to convey their opinions, offer criticism, and promote particular perspectives to sway and influence their readers. However, columnists can manipulate the perspective of a reader through how they present certain information, specifically in education related issues. They can choose to present only those facts that support their viewpoint while ignoring or downplaying others that do not. They also use emotional language that sway the readers. Anthony (2018) stated that using emotive language in journalism can manipulate people due to their persuasive power.

In Malaysia, a study by Anthony (2018) has demonstrated that the use of emotive language in online news can manipulate public opinion and advance particular agendas. Journalists employ evocative language to provoke intense reactions, such as astonishment, apprehension, discomfort, and concern. Thus, they only present facts that suit their best interest. Furthermore, a study conducted in South Africa reveals that columns have a more significant persuasive impact on regular individuals than elites. According to Hasan and Dutta (2019), the media deliberately uses language manipulation to break ethical standards. They do this by presenting certain situations that alter how the public perceives them.

Similarly, in the Philippines, Cruz (2022) argues that columnists from Manila Bulletin are often associated with a right or left-wing worldview, which influences their writing. They focus on the designated political spectrum, disregarding the other side's one-sided information. This allows them to manipulate readers into believing their stance on a specific issue. Cruz also notes that columnists often write emotionally driven articles, expressing their feelings and views on the issue. This highlights the influence of political worldviews on columnists' writing and the potential manipulation of readers.

Furthermore, Barreiro (2021) studied how online news articles affect the perceptions of the readers in the subject of supporting the former President Rodrigo Duterte. Barreiro interviewed eight locals from different demographics and each individual had their own methods of interpreting and consuming the articles they have read affecting their behaviors and perceptions through reading. One local from Davao City named Saki who became a former supporter of the president. She expressed her disappointment to the former president because of the various reports she saw and read in the articles that made her dismayed. Though, she made it clear that she was not completely opposed

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but just extremely disappointed when Duterte was put into authority. Although Saki lived in Davao City, because of how convincing the articles she had read about the former president were, it somehow affected her emotions leading to her disappointment and change of perception, however, others highlighted that their support would not be based on the reports from the online news.

This study focuses on analyzing the legitimation strategies utilized by the columnists in their crafted column articles. Additionally, students will be able to determine what legitimation strategies are mostly used in column articles on education-related topics that may help them in their studies or any other activities in school, particularly campus journalism, and aiding them to detect potential bias in the article. Moreover, teachers will be able to grasp new knowledge about the various strategies as well as the different issues regarding education.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this qualitative study employing discourse analysis will be to identify the legitimation strategies found in the column articles of various national-based online newspapers in the Philippines focusing on education-related issues.

At this stage in research, legitimation strategies found in the column articles of various national-based online newspapers in the Philippines focusing on education-related issues will be generally defined as how these legitimation strategies legitimize and convince audiences to accept ideas by establishing the entity's expertise on the subject matter.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the legitimation strategies found in column articles that focus on education-related issues?

METHODS

This study utilized a qualitative research design, specifically applying discourse analysis. We analyzed and interpreted texts, specifically, legitimation strategies utilized by the columnists to make their column articles legitimized. Legitimation strategies were examined in column articles through identifying the words and phrases that met the criteria for the legitimation strategy and classifying them on their respective sub-categories. After analyzing, we identified which of the following primary legitimation strategies and their sub-categories were used by the column writers to legitimize their column articles.

The research materials for this study are column articles published in national-based online newspapers here in the Philippines, namely the Manila Bulletin, Philippine Daily Inquirer, The Manila Times, and Philippine Star. Clarke and Braun (2013) assert that a range of 10 to 100 research materials was considered sufficient to achieve data saturation in corpora. In accordance with their suggestion pertaining to the optimal quantity for analyzing speeches, the researchers incorporated this guideline in deciding the number of column articles to be examined. Specifically, in the context of this study, the researchers chose to focus on 20 column articles that focused on education-related issues.

Furthermore, the selected column articles focusing on education-related issues were chose through the following inclusion criteria: a.) published in national-based online newspaper in the Philippines, namely the Manila Bulletin, Philippine Daily Inquirer, The Manila Times, and PhilStar; b.) discussed issues related to education; c.) published within the past 2 years until present; d.) must be authored by Filipinos; e.) with legitimation strategies; and f.) can be publicly accessed.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Legitimation Strategies

Legitimation is the method that supports or legitimizes a specific behavior or action for a particular mass of people. "Legitimation involves the process by which communicators approve or license a kind of social action," claimed Reyes (2011), as cited by Wang (2022). In this situation, legitimation is done by argumentation, when the speaker presents support for a certain decision, idea, or declaration of manner that they perceive the other person does not support or agree with (Said, 2017).

Moreover, there are strategies that legitimize an act and that is called legitimation strategies Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999) and this can be classified into four distinct categories namely: authorization, rationalization, moral evaluation, and mythopoesis (Chaidas, 2018), cited by Abuelwafa (2021).

Authorization. According to Van Leeuwen (2008), as cited by Wang (2022), the authorization legitimation strategy holds that making an argument for a course of action or decision by citing authority is necessary. This legitimation can be achieved by referencing the personal authority, impersonal authority, expert authority, role model, conformity to authority, and authority of tradition.

Moral Evaluation. The second category pertains to moral evaluation that is constructed upon the prevailing ideals within social communities. Moral evaluation is sometimes employed with authority, as seen by the statement, the teacher asserts that engaging in group study can enhance students' cooperative skills, wherein moral collaboration is fostered through the teacher's position as a recognized educational authority Leeuwen (2008), as cited by Ananda and Sari (2021).

Rationalization. The third category pertains to the rationalization legitimation strategy, which is constructed through articulating the intentions or functions underlying social activities. However, it is essential to note that not all activities that have justifiable objectives may be classified as rationalization. Instead, this classification is limited to activities that serve moralized purposes or what Habermas (1976), as cited by Ananda and Sari (2021), refers to as strategic utilitarian morality.

Mythopoesis. The legitimation process is achieved by utilizing storytelling and the construction of narratives. Furthermore, according to Van Leeuwen (2008), as cited by Wang (2022), the process of legitimation can also be completed through the use of storytelling or narrative discourse.

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Legitimation Strategis Used in Journalism

A study by Ananda and Nurmainiti (2022) seeks to answer the legitimation strategies used by the government to persuade the people regarding the positive sides of implementing their law on job creation or also called as UU Cipker in Indonesia. The corpus was from online newspapers, and the results indicated that the government employed the Moral Evaluation, Rationalization, and Authorization legitimation strategy. It is noted that Rationalization is the second most employed strategy by the government to legitimize the law in this study. The answer to the 'why' question is owing to the fact that it is rationalized. It is either beneficial or it is the way things should be (Leeuwen, 2007; 2008). This study shows that the law must be implemented. "The law is also seen as necessary by the government since the country's economy shrank 5.32 percent in the second quarter this year and is widely expected to record the first economic contraction since the 1998 Asian financial crisis this year." The word 'necessary' refers to UU Cipker's unavoidable need to improve Indonesia's economic situation. As a result, the use of the word 'necessary' to characterize UU Cipker denotes the indisputable. The significance of enacting such laws for the government to promote maximum enjoyment for every Indonesian. Furthermore, the government, as if on purpose, used the term 'necessary' remark, as if they wanted to say naturally that the Indonesian people need this law to get out of Covid-19 and increase their economy.

In addition, Ananda and Nurmainiti (2022) also used the Moral Evaluation strategy in their study. It was indicated in the article the morality that the speaker used, as the following: Jokowi further states that the investment which has been done by global and domestic investors remains safe and guaranteed. In here, moral evaluation strategy is seen through the adjectival words, safe and guaranteed.

The study by Robinson (2019) looks at the use of legitimation strategies in journalism regarding public storytelling about racial disparities. The study employs a combination of textual analysis and in-depth interviews. This study examines the discourse to comprehend the different narratives of the topic in relation to racism, journalistic practice, and power dynamics. Additionally, to investigate the data, critical discourse analysis requires adopting an analytical framework that focuses on legitimation strategies, as put forth by the social-semiotics scholar Van Leeuwen (2007). He employs legitimation strategies such as citing experts, providing firsthand accounts, reflecting on their role, telling stories, and utilizing semantics such as "said", "according to" and "confirmed" and operating as an "interpretive community" that standardizes journalistic methods. This study examines the use of impersonal authorization in journalism, specifically the common strategy of citing statistics and government reports as a form of expert authorization.

In connection with the aforementioned study, this strategy is employed by reporters to establish credibility in their coverage of the Madison Prep debate. However, it also reinforces the dominance of White-dominated institutions that produce these reports. In addition, the school board members were consistently mentioned as the primary sources in the reports. Furthermore, most of the comments related to these officials emphasized that, in their capacity as authorities, they represented the interests of all children: We have some very important issues on the table currently, so we have to stay focused on the 26,000 students we have to focused on the 26,000 students we're serving," [Board of Education member Ed Hughes] said. "I don't know if the timing is right for Madison Prep.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1.1
Authorization Found in Column Articles Focusing on Education- Related Issues

Legitimation Strategy Sub-Category	Sample Statement	Analysis
	At a hearing this week conducted by the Senate committee on basic education, it was learned that approximately seven out of 10 students in the country's public schools have suffered some form of bullying. ***(CA02_PS)***	The columnist used the term *"Senate committee"* because the senate committee holds public hearings, where the Senators, who are considered experts, provide testimony, present their findings, and research, on specific education issues or proposed legislation. These hearings allow for detailed presentations and discussions. They established a sense of authority by implying that the Senate has the power to legitimize the statement about the problem in education.
	In 2016, the Council for the Welfare of Children conducted the National Baseline Survey on Violence Against Children showed that 65 percent of the students had experienced bullying. ***(CA02_PS)***	The CWC is a government agency established by law, RA 9262, specifically tasked with promoting the welfare and rights of children. This mandate includes addressing issues related to education and other aspects of child development. By giving reference to the "*Council for the Welfare of Children,"* the authoritative source lends

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Expert Authority		credibility to the claim about the prevalence of bullying among students, as the former is recognized as a reputable organization in addressing issues related to children's well-being.
	the DepEd told the House of Representatives that there is a shortage of 165,000 classrooms. ***(CA06_MB)***	This statement legitimized the DepEd's authority in addressing educational challenges, emphasizing its credibility and expertise in addressing these issues. DepEd is part of the executive branch of the Philippine government that is entrusted to advocate equity and enhance the standard of primary education.
Personal Authority	*An environment of fear, he said (Senator Gatchalian), is not conducive to learning.* ***(CA02_PS)***	By pertaining to "*Senator Gatchalian"* and presenting his perspective on the impact of fear on learning environments, the statement relied on his personal authority and expertise as a senator to lend credibility to the assertion. Senator Gatchalian's position and authority as a public servant and lawmaker give weight to the statement's argument that an environment of fear is detrimental to the learning process.
	The Vice President said there are also learners who suffer from emotional abuse, exhaustion and psychological fatigue. ***(CA05_PS)***	By highlighting the Vice President in the sentence, it shows personal authority. The Vice President is considered an authoritative figure in addressing students' emotional abuse and psychological fatigue, as they acknowledge these issues and provide necessary support.
	He made the commitment as Vice President and DepEd Secretary Sara Duterte said "Filipino learners are not academically proficient" and many of them "may fail to meet the standards of the demanding and competitive world." ***(CA05_PS)***	The attribution of statements to a specific individual, including "*Vice President and DepEd Secretary Sara Duterte."* The sentence emphasized her personal authority in making the comments about the academic proficiency of Filipino learners.
Authority of Tradition	*A huge burden is being carried by our teachers to ensure that our children are getting the proper education that they require to become productive members of society.* ***(CA09_MB)***	It highlighted the long-standing belief and expectation that teachers play a crucial role in shaping the future generation and preparing them to contribute positively to society. This notion of teachers being responsible for providing essential education to children is deeply rooted in traditional societal norms and values.
	The struggles our teachers go through to prepare the youth to succeed in this volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world are common knowledge. ***(CA19_TMT)***	This statement served the idea that the hardwork and dedication of the teachers to their roles as the master of knowledge is deeply stuck in societal norms and values, which conforms to the authority of tradition.
	The teachers' duties do not stop the moment the dismissal bell rings... More often than not, they work well into the night and even on weekends. ***(CA19_TMT)***	By emphasizing the ongoing responsibilities and commitment of teachers to their students and profession, the statement draws on the authority of tradition in education, where teachers are traditionally seen as dedicated professionals who go above and beyond their official duties to support student learning and well- being.
Impersonal Authority	*Government policy and practice, thus, made it difficult for the private sector to pursue*	The phrases "*government policy and practice"* implied a source of power that

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	cutting-edge, 21st-century education issues to which the leading HEIs aspire. ***(CA13_PDI)***	influenced the academic landscape. The sentence highlighted the influence of government laws and choices on the education sector by linking them to the challenges faced by the private sector in addressing advanced educational difficulties.
Authority to Conformity	*Prior to its enactment, the Philippines was one of the last three countries in the world – the other two were Angola and Djibouti – with only a 10-year pre-university requirement. The universally recognized norm is a 12-year basic education program that provides the best preparation for students and professionals.* ***(CA07_MB)***	By using the phrase "universally recognized norm" to validate the benefits of a 12-year basic education program, this statement conforms to conformity to authority.

Authorization Found in Column Articles

After analyzing the column articles, it was found out that authorization is the legitimation strategy that is frequently utilized. According to Van Leeuwen (2008), cited in Wang (2022), authorization helps to strengthen the columnist's arguments or viewpoints by boosting their credibility and persuasiveness. By referencing credible sources, experts, or respected organizations, columnists seek to back up their assertions, present evidence for their perspectives, and build trust with readers on matters related to education. Upon analyzing the chosen column articles, various subcategories of authorization are recognized, such as personal authority, impersonal authority, expert authority, authority of tradition, and conformity to authority.The analysis supports Ananda and Sari's study (2021), which explains that establishing expert authority involves the use of experts from various fields of knowledge. They also argued that legitimacy comes from one's expertise rather than their status or position. In this study, the columnist utilized expert authority by referencing terms such as "Senate Committee," and citing organizations like the "Council for the Welfare of Children" and the Department of Education (DepEd) to legitimize statements about educational issues. This approach emphasizes their expert authority, as they reinforce a sense of credibility by directly or indirectly referring to the credentials of individuals, making it easier to justify why certain actions should be taken.

Moreover, the columnists' use of personal authority in their articles aligns with Pusa's (2019) explanation that a person holds legitimate authority due to their status or role within a specific institution. In this study, it was found that the columnist employed personal authority by referencing figures such as "Senator Gatchalian," "Vice President," and "DepEd Secretary Sara Duterte" to legitimize statements about educational issues. “Authorities have been mentioned because the statements from the column articles come directly from them, which were quoted by the columnists. This includes senators, the Vice President, and the DepEd Secretary, as they hold high positions.” Due to their positions, these authorities can justify decisions or actions with a simple “because I say so.” They are recognized as personal authorities who possess a certain degree of power and influence due to their individual roles.

Furthermore, the results regarding the Authority of Tradition align with Alamri’s (2019) perspective. To understand the relationship between the Authority of Tradition and Alamri’s viewpoint, it is important to recognize how tradition functions as a legitimizing force in various contexts. In this study, the columnists employed the Authority of Tradition by emphasizing the statement, "The teachers' duties do not stop the moment the dismissal bell rings... More often than not, they work well into the night and even on weekends." This form of legitimization draws on customs, habits, and traditions, portraying teachers as professionals who are traditionally seen as going above and beyond their official duties to support student learning. On the other hand, columnists often leverage the concept of Authority to Conformity, which aligns with Riani’s (2022) findings that this authority functions as a form of social influence, emphasizing collective behavior with arguments like “everybody else does” or “that’s what most people do.” In this study, the columnists used the phrase “universally recognized norm” to legitimize their statements. This fits within the concept of Authority to Conformity by presenting the standard as a well-organized and widely supported practice endorsed by experts in the field of education.

Lastly, the findings on Impersonal Authority are supported by Al-Manaseer and Ali Akbar (2021), which encompass laws, traditions, rules, or regulations. In the context of this study, the columnists utilized Impersonal Authority by referring to “government policy and practice” to legitimize statements addressing educational challenges. These references to impersonal authority highlight the influence of government laws and policies on the education sector’s response to these challenges.

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Table 1.2
Rationalization Found in Column Articles Focusing on Education- Related Issues

Legitimation Strategy Sub-Category	Sample Statement	Analysis
Instrumental Rationalization	*To fully recover from the massive declines caused by the pandemic, the government must take decisive action to fast-track the clearing of the classroom backlog, hire and train qualified teachers, provide needed textbooks and install digital connectivity.* ***(CA06_MB)***	By emphasizing these actions (fast-track the clearing of the classroom backlog, hire and train qualified teachers, provide needed textbooks and install digital connectivity) as instrumental to the recovery process of the education sector, the statement appeals to legitimize the proposed measures as essential for overcoming the setbacks caused by the pandemic.
	Given the amount of work put in by our teachers and the physical, emotional and mental toll their jobs have on them, providing them with this option to retire early will allow them to enjoy life while they are still well and able. ***(CA09_MB)***	By framing early retirement as a means for teachers to enjoy life while they are still in good health justify the proposed action as a way to address the well-being of the educators.
	Give support for teachers to teach better, like more teaching supplies, de-loading of clerical work. ***(CA20_TMT)***	The columnist highlights how important it is to support teachers by giving them more materials and relieving them of administrative duties. This will help them provide better instruction and refine their methods, which will lead to achieving the goal of better teaching as the intended result.
Theoretical Rationalization	*The Department of Social Work and Community Development is at the nexus of continuing efforts to address these problems that are deeply rooted in poverty and social inequality through the Philippine Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Project (PMNP), Food Stamp Program (FSP) and Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino.* ***(CA06_MB)***	The text mentions a list of programs that serve as a theoretical justification by offering an organized and strategic framework for addressing significant societal problems through targeted programs designed to tackle the underlying causes of poverty and inequality in the Philippines.
	These hurdles in education governance, early childhood care and development, teaching quality, standards and assessment, as well public-private complementarity keep us from realizing the promise of quality education. ***(CA15_PDI)***	By utilizing Theoretical Rationalization, the columnist justifies the statement by establishing the truth through the explanation on what are the situations that keep us from realizing the promise of quality education. By explaining the hurdles in education governance, early childhood care and development, teaching quality, standards, assessment, as well publice-private complementary, the columnist justifies why we couldn't realize the promise of having a quality education.

Rationalization Found in Column Articles

Rationalization is a type of legitimation strategies in which it is an act or intention of legitimizing by underlying its usage, objectives, and utility of social activities. In the category of rationalization this can be classified into two distinct categories, namely instrumental rationalization, and theoretical rationalization. In addition, according to Leeuwen and Wodak (1999), cited by Wang (2022), stated that rationalization is attain by citing or invoking the effectiveness of a specific social objectives or "the facts of life", by making the experts in a certain fields as reference who conveys understandings that can be used for legitimation purpose.In the context of this study, it was found that columnists utilized rationalization to legitimize the statements in their column articles. Specifically, two types of rationalization were identified. The columnists' utilization of Instrumental Rationalization to justify their statements is supported by Said (2017), who noted that this strategy involves the use of prepositions followed by "purpose linking words." Additionally, Fairclough (2003), as cited by Wang (2022), highlights that columnists often employ the infinitive "to" to connect to their moralized purposes, using phrases like "to help" and "to realize." This linguistic strategy allows them to articulate the purposes behind their claims and to legitimize specific educational-related issues. In the context of the study, the most frequently utilized sub-category among the chosen articles was Instrumental Rationalization. This philosophical frameworks proposed by Leeuwen (2008), as cited in Ananda and Sari (2021), that purposefulness,

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usefulness, and effectiveness serve as criteria for determining truth and form the basis for ethical behavior that adheres to established norms. The columnists' use of Instrumental Rationalization stemmed from the articulation of the underlying purpose behind a justified action. The statements are emphasized as instrumental rationalization due to the usage of to-infinitive, adding it to the purpose of the columnists on why the act is purposeful, highlighting that "it is useful" and "it is effective," which possess inherent legitimacy. This approach suggests that the proposed actions are practical and effective solutions, leading toward the goal of improving education and addressing its issues.

On the other hand, the least used sub-category of rationalization was Theoretical Rationalization, which relates to the inherent structures within society that provide legitimacy. In the context of this study, Theoretical Rationalization was employed by referencing programs that serve as theoretical justifications, offering an organized and strategic framework to address societal issues. The columnist utilized this strategy to justify their statements by explaining the challenges in education governance, early childhood care and development, and teaching quality standards. This approach establishes legitimacy by framing these issues within a broader theoretical and systematic context.

Table 1.3
Moral Evaluation Found in Column Articles Focusing on Education- Related Issues

Legitimation Strategy Sub-Category	Sample Statement	Analysis
Evaluation	*The exodus of teachers slowed down as pay and benefits were improved, and there has been a continuing government program to hire more educators.* ***(CA05_PS)***	By improving teacher pay and benefits, and actively hiring more educators, the government seeks to demonstrate its commitment to the education system and its value for teachers. Education is seen as a fundamental right and a cornerstone of a healthy society. Therefore, actions that improve the lives of teachers and strengthen the education system are generally considered morally good.
	Assuring grade-level reading proficiency of basic education students was and remains a DepEd responsibility. ***(CA13_PDI)***	Reading proficiency is a foundation for learning in all subjects and is crucial for personal development, civic engagement, and economic opportunity of the students. Therefore, it is morally expected that the DepEd agency is responsible for the education and is held accountable for achieving this goal.
	If they're not equipped to teach their students how to think, chances are they wouldn't be able to tell the fake from the real. ***(CA14_PDI)***	Without the ability to discern truth from misinformation, students are vulnerable to manipulation and may struggle to function effectively in society. Therefore, it is morally right and just for educators to teach students to discern truth from falsehood, navigate misinformation, and make informed decisions as individuals, taking part in the society.
Analogies	*"Our best learners are comparable only to the average student in Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei and Vietnam."* ***(CA03_PS)***	By using these analogies, the statement strives to legitimize the inequality in the educational system. Hence, the analogies presented are employed as a persuasive instrument to convince the audience or readers, especially stakeholders of the institutions to make a change in the system of education for the betterment of the learners.
	Education is our passport to employment and a stable future. ***(CA15_PDI)***	The analogy highlighted the value and importance of education in society. It suggested that education is not just about acquiring knowledge, but also about gaining access to opportunities and securing a better future. This perception helped legitimize the role of education in society and reinforces the need for investment in education systems.
	Zubiri claimed that liberalizing the entry of foreign universities like Harvard and Yale will improve the quality of education in the country.	By attracting internationally recognized institutions, the government can demonstrate its commitment to improving education quality and attracting global talent. This could potentially

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	(CA16_TMT)	boost the country's reputation and attract more investment in education.
Abstraction	*Earlier this year, 19 young Filipinos clinched gold medals at the World International Mathematical Olympiad (WIMO) in Bangkok, Thailand. These exceptional achievements demonstrate that, properly trained and guided, young Filipinos could match and even outperform their peers.* ***(CA06_MB)***	Even though the Philippines is facing challenges in the educational field, still, with proper training and guidance, the students can achieve great things and excel on the global stage. The statement also evoked a sense of national pride, giving importance to the achievements of the Filipino youth on an international platform.
	Topping the list is the salary increase for teachers. Not only would it boost morale, it would also help the rebranding of teaching as a profession, thus enticing competitive young minds to take up education as a career. ***(CA11_PDI)***	By improving teachers' financial well-being, teachers would feel more valued and motivated, leading to a more positive and effective learning environment for students. This aligned with the moral principle of promoting well-being and empowering individuals.

Moral Evaluation Found in Column Articles

During the analysis, it was found out that columnists used evaluation, abstraction, and analogies to justify their opinions in their articles. The columnists used Evaluation through stating statements that are considered natural, such as ensuring literacy is a fundamental responsibility of education systems, thus framing it as an inherent expectation. They referenced historical commitments to education as a public good, positioning it as a natural obligation of the Department of Education (DepEd). Also, columnists argued that critical thinking is an essential skill in modern education, thus framing the ability to discern truth from misinformation as a necessary evolution in teaching. This perspective normalized the idea that educators must adapt to changing societal needs.

The columnist's utilization of Evaluation to legitimize their statements was anchored to what Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) highlighted that moral evaluation pertains to the inclusion of terminology related to discussions of what is considered natural, including terms like normal and natural, as well as references to time and change.

Furthermore, Analogies were used in the column articles. The usage of Analogies to legitimize the columnists' statements was supported by Amalia et al. (2021), where she stated that analogies serve as a core tool for comparing one conduct to another. In the context of the study, the columnists made use of analogies through comparing aspects of education to certain metaphors, such as how the columnists compared education as a passport to employment; Filipino students being compared to another Southeast Asian students; and entry of foreign universities as means of the improvement of the nation's educational problems.

Lastly, there were also column articles that were under Abstraction. The usage of Abstraction to legitimize the columnists' statements was anchored to Pusa (2019), wherein legitimizing is achieved by extracting moral values from the statement being legitimized. More so, he added in here instead of describing the phenomenon under legitimation straight as it is, it is expressed in an abstract and moralized way.

In the context of the study, the columnists used Abstraction through identifying a specific quality that is valued from a moral perspective, such as even though the Philippines is facing challenges in the educational field, still, with proper training and guidance, the students can achieve great things and excel on the global stage. This abstracts the sense of national pride, hope, and confidence in today's youth. Also, through using Abstraction, another columnist legitimizes his claim through giving emphasis on boosting teachers' morale, thus, extracting moral values from the statement where teachers' motivation and sense of being valued are given importance, leading to a more positive and effective learning environment for students.

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Volume: 11| Issue: 4| April 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691|| ISI Value: 1.188

Table 1.4
Mythopoesis Found in Column Articles Focusing on Education- Related Issues

Legitimation Strategy Sub-Category	Sample Statement	Analysis
Cautionary Tales	*Without the right education, we are depriving our children, our children's children and so on, of a chance to achieve self-actualization, of a chance to reach their full potential.* ***(CA01_PS)***	This statement is considered to be Cautionary Tales because it emphasized the ripple effect of educational deprivation across generations. Additionally, it serves as a warning about the long-term consequences of having inadequate education.
	Philippine education's systemic failures and shortcomings go back many decades, to problems being recognized by previous studies (notably Edcom I in the early 1990s) but left unattended rather than decisively acted upon. ***(CA04_PS)***	This statement is considered as a Cautionary Tale under the Mythopoesis of legitimation strategy because it points out the persistent systemic failures in Philippine education and the historical neglect of addressing these issues which indicate a possible outcome of a certain situation. Additionally, this sample conveys narrative construction.
	The lack of classrooms has been a problem for many decades. ***(CA05_PS)***	In this statement, this can be seen as Cautionary Tales of Mythopoesis under the legitimation strategy because it incorporates a representation of a broader societal problem, which presents a possible effect or consequences of the negative impacts of insufficient funding for education. Additionally, through highlighting a narrative construct by stating "for many decades" , the columnist emphasizes the continuous nature of the problem over many decades.
Moral Tales	*Over the years, we have filed several measures aimed at improving the plight of our teachers and equipping them with the tools necessary to properly do their jobs.* ***(CA09_MB)***	This sample is considered as Moral Tales of the Mythopoesis under legitimation strategy because it presents a story line of on-going efforts and initiatives aimed at improving or developing the situation and support for educators. Also, it conveys the means or purpose of the measures which entails morally righteous in helping the teachers.

Mythopoesis found in Column Articles

Mythopoesis is classified under legitimation strategy in which it pertains through storytelling and the narrative construction. It is a process of conveying information in a narrative form of discussion or in a form of telling a story that captures the reader's attention. In column articles, Mythopoesis is utilized for the purpose to engage or persuade the audience on the way the context is being delivered.

The columnists used Mythopoesis to employ legitimacy on their statements by conveying the context through storytelling because it aims to justify actions that will give an impact to the readers' viewpoints. In the context of the study, it was observed that Mythopoesis was utilized by the columnists through legitimizing their columns through using conjunctions of time. Through using the phrases "back many decades", "over the years", "for many decades", the columnists legitimized their articles through narrating the adverse effects of educational-related issues over time. According to Sayah & Fatemi (2013), narration in storytelling is one of the social activities shown by people. The formation of conjunctions is the most important component in generating cohesive narrative.

During the analysis of this column articles there were two sub-categories found, which include the Moral Tale and Cautionary Tale. These categories would add interest to the readers' mind and attention, and would enable them to identify or familiarize the strategies being used in the column articles.

In addition, the most frequently seen sub-category among the selected column articles is the Cautionary Tale. According to Van Leeuwen (2007), cited in Pusa (2019), cautionary tales are incorporated, indicating the potential consequences that may arise under specific circumstances. In the context of the study, the columnists justified the negative impact of education-related issues in the society by narrating it using the conjunctions of time. By using the conjunctions, the columnists legitimized the warning about the long-term consequences of having inadequate education. Through narrating the decades of combating issues in education, it acted as a warning about the long-term repercussions of a poor education and the persistent systemic failures in Philippine education and the historical neglect of addressing these issues.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 4| April 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691|| ISI Value: 1.188

On the other hand, the Moral Tales was used with only one (1) sample statement found in the column articles. Additionally, Van Leeuwen (2008), cited in Wang (2022) stated that moral tales discuss narratives that depict legitimate activities and endeavors aimed at reinstating the rightful order, resulting in rewards. The narrative concludes with a positive outcome. In this study, the columnist utilized narration through using the conjunction of time in a rightful manner. The term "over the years" created a narrative that stressed the emphasis put on educators and the dedication to their well-being and professional growth. Furthermore, the columnist used this statement to emphasize the several measures used to improve the plight of the teachers in educational-related issues.

CONCLUSION

With the rampant cases of misinformation and fake news nowadays, studying legitimation strategies to analyze column articles made us realize many things. First, column articles are known to be opinionated since the articles were crafted out from the standpoint of the writers themselves and not the publication itself. Thus, tendencies of bias may arise in the statements made by the columnists. However, we have learned that there are lots of ways to identify if a statement is credible or not, and one of those is the legitimation strategies.

Second, we have learned that studying legitimation strategies in column articles shed light on the complexities of justifying actions, decisions, or policies in the field of education. It showcases the diverse approaches used to establish legitimacy and credibility. Also, engaging in discourse analysis of column articles on education-related issues cultivates critical thinking skills by encouraging us to question and evaluate the underlying assumptions, biases, and persuasive techniques employed in the statements.

Lastly, we have learned that using the legitimation strategies in analyzing column articles could help us have a profound understanding on the overall impact of the education-related issues in our daily lives. These learnings that we have garnered out from the painstaking effort to do this paper could also help other learners and researchers become aware of the importance of evaluating and assessing column articles to validate its credibility.

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