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Euphemism in Mandarin Online News A Case Study of the COVID-19 Phenomenon

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Abstract

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, this study aims to identify euphemism in information reported through Mandarin online news media *Guoji Ribao* and *Hao Bao* in forms of sentences. This study is based on Allan and Burridge euphemism theory. This study uses discourse analysis technique with qualitative approach and COVID-19 pandemic case study. The data collection was conducted from August to September 2021 using 10 news from *Guoji Ribao* and 10 news from *Hao Bao* Daily. There are 58 euphemisms obtained in the form of sentences with 5 different effects, the ordering or politely asking, stabilizing situation, refining goals, reproaching or mildly criticizing, and substituting words with negative connotation. From all the five euphemism purposes found, the ordering or politely asking purpose is the dominant effect. This relates to the COVID-19 phenomenon relating to the establishments of new policies to protect the society from the impact of the COVID-19 itself. The euphemism in Mandarin online news media *Guoji Ribao* and *Hao Bao* Daily are widely applied as one of the ways to calm the readers regarding the information they receive, while still holding argumentative principle or creating interpretations.

Keywords: euphemism; Mandarin; online news; COVID-19; case study

1. Introduction

The interaction and communication between human can be done either orally or in writing. The social life nowadays is inseparable with information technology. The need of information had become a primary need in understanding various occurring events. These information can be obtained from media. In journalism, media is categorized into printed, electronic, and online media. Media is closely related to news. Spencer and Hepwood (in Siregar, 2014) states that news are fact or the right idea and may draw readers' attention in the form of an initial report of an important event and an event that attract public attention. News is a report of facts and an important and interesting opinion to some people and should be published immediately [1]. It can be concluded that news contain not only the important information that can attract readers' attention, but it should also be published immediately in order to keep the information up to date so that the society get something that is "fresh from the oven", or in other words, news is expected to provide latest information quickly.

One of the ways to publish latest news that can be accessed quickly and easily by readers is using digital media, such as online news media. Nowadays, online news media has become an alternative for seeking information. The advantage of an online media is it provides an up to date, real-time, and practical information. Up to date, because online media can upgrade an information or news from time to time. Real-time, because online media can directly provide information and news right when the event is occurring. Practical, because online media is accessible anywhere

and anytime, as long as it is connected to the internet and the language of journalism is the news media's strength [2]. The power of journalism language used might be the news presentation style, diction, display, and other things that can influence the news' strength. One of the journalism power used is language style. In both printed and online news text, using certain language style affects the reader's interest. The language style includes the soften language style (euphemism) to soften the words or the coarsen language style (dysphemism) to give negative impression on what is being reported.

Euphemism (Greek eu "good, well"; phēmē "speaking") and dysphemism (Greek dys "bad, unfavorable") are obverse sides of the same coin. The concepts imply the presence of direct terms that are neither sweet-sounding, evasive, or overly polite (euphemistic), nor harsh, blunt, or offensive (dysphemistic) [3]. Euphemism (avoidance language and evasive expression) is the polite thing to do, and dysphemism (offensive language) breaks social convention. Euphemisms enable people to maintain a positive tone when discussing unpleasant or negative topics, to neutralize things that are directly related to negative emotions, or to substitute direct and harsh expressions with indirect ones so as not to be hurtful [4]. Euphemisms have two functions: beautification and concealment. Beautification implies the avoidance of or the replacement of vulgar or uncomfortable words and expressions. Concealment aims to disguise the truth with alternative words or to hide it ambiguously, and sometimes, this actually ends up sounding rude and causing the other person to lose his/her dignity [4]. In Mandarin, euphemism is known as *委婉语*. *委婉语*是人们在交际和交流中希望找到的一种合适的表达方式, 即使双方能够顺利完成交际, 又使双方感到此次交际是愉快的 [5]. Euphemism is an appropriate way of expression that people hope to find in communication. It does not only enable both sides to successfully complete the communication, but also makes both sides feel that the communication is pleasant. It can be concluded that euphemism is a language style that accentuates politeness by considering the positive effects that it wants to convey [5].

Euphemism also contain a concept of social and culture communication of a country and nation [6]. Euphemisms represent a very productive area of linguistic analysis, and this is particularly evident in the analyses of euphemisms used to avoid the direct mention of what is considered to be an unpleasant or embarrassing concept in a given sociocultural context. Some areas of human experience, such as religion or death, have traditionally been euphemised. Besides these, there are many other areas that reveal characteristics of euphemistic usage in a specific community at a given point in time [6]. Euphemisms reflect the sociocultural characteristics of language users [4]. With the development of social economy, people spontaneously pursue the language civilization to show that they are civilized and cultivated. Almost all cultures seem to have certain notions or unpleasant things that people try to avoid mentioning directly, even when there is such a term in a language. When such a notion or thing has to be referred to, the practice will be a substitute that sounds better. That's the coming of euphemisms. Euphemism plays an important role in facilitating social interaction. It is not only a cultural phenomenon, but also a social phenomenon. It just likes a mirror, which reflects some social and psychological phenomena [7].

One of the phenomenon and information which developments are constantly demanded is information about the global COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has occurred for almost two years. Debates on the origin of COVID-9, the impact on various sectors, recovery and death cases, vaccination, and other information related to COVID-19 keep emerging in media including online news media. The happening and globally reported phenomenon is interesting and beneficial to be a research object. The COVID-19 phenomenon can also be researched from other fields of study outside medical studies. In this study, the COVID-19 pandemic will be researched from language perspective. The news report of the COVID-19 pandemic that uses euphemism language style with certain purpose and effect also gives a chance for foreign language learners especially Mandarin language learners to be able to study it through Mandarin online news.

In this study, the online news media used are *Guoji Ribao* and *Haobao Daily*. The existence of Mandarin newspapers in Indonesia are not new. *Harian Indonesia* or *Sin Chew Jit Poh* *印尼星洲日报* is the first Mandarin newspaper in Indonesia established by Chinese descendants in Indonesia who vocalized nationalism in 1910. Certain conditions affect the discontinuation of Mandarin newspapers publishing. However, after Soeharto presidency, Mandarin newspapers started publishing, two of them are *Guoji Ribao* and *Haobao Daily*. *Guoji Ribao* is a collaboration of 3 media such as *Guoji (LA-United States)*, *Wen Wei Po (Hong Kong)*, and *Ren Min RI Bao (China)*, intrigued to make Mandarin newspapers in Indonesia. The collaboration of these media then become known as *Guo Ji Ri Bao* which means *International Daily News*, which started publishing in the late 2000. Then, it joined *Jawa Pos Group* making *Guo Ji Ribao* become more solid. *Guoji Ribao* can be accessed online at [首页 - 国际日报](#)

(guojiribao.com)

Hao Bao was published as a weekly newspaper in Medan on December 3rd 2008. In May 11th 2011, Hao Bao developed from weekly newspaper to daily newspaper, publishing 24-28 large pages everyday, focusing on reporting local and international news about politics, economics, social, culture, and sports to Chinese readers in Indonesia. Since 2014, Hao Bao can be accessed online at www.haobaodaily.co.id. However, since the COVID-19 pandemic Hao Bao stops publishing in May 1st 2020, and became an online media.

Some studies references have been researching on euphemism using news media as the source of the data as in Sulistyono focused on the structure and function of euphemism in Kompas daily obituary rubric [2], Kurniawati used lingual unit in news text of various rubric from Spiegel Online containing euphemism and dysphemism [8] or in Jayanti et al that focused on euphemism and dysphemism in Balikpapan Pos news title only [9] and some studies focus on political euphemism for example Zhao found that euphemism could be uses as a tool for political leaders to control information transmission [10], Sariah discussed about the use of euphemism as a reality manipulation on political news [11]. However, in this study the euphemism research is focused on the case studies of COVID-19 news from many parts of the world as a world phenomenon in the form of sentences that indicate the use of euphemism concept in Mandarin online news *Guoji Ribao* and *Hao Bao*.

2. Method

This study uses descriptive qualitative approach with discourse analysis research method. According to Moeleong, a qualitative approach aims to understand a phenomenon that is experienced by or currently occurring in the research object holistically and described through words and language. A research with discourse analysis research method discusses about the scientific use of language, both oral and written [12]. This study also uses case study approach. Lisa M. Given states that “A case study is a research approach in which one or a few instances of a phenomenon are studied in depth”. A case study is a study where it is done intensively, in detail, and profound towards an organization, institution, or certain phenomenon, where the phenomenon that are being reviewed are current or real life events and currently happening, not past events [13]. In this study, the happening phenomenon is the COVID-19 pandemic in written language from Mandarin online news media *Guoji Ribao* and *Hao Bao Daily* which is described through sentences.

The data collection was conducted from August until September 2021 obtaining 20 news, 10 news from *Guoji Ribao* online news media and 10 news from *Hao Bao* online news media. The classification is based on Allan & Burridge euphemism theory and pragmatic theory. The first step of the analysis is data reduction, data reduction is conducted by identifying units. Unit identification is identifying the smallest unit in the data that has meaning or is related to the focus of the study. After the units are obtained the coding will be made in each. The second step of the analysis is data categorization, sorting each units into parts that have similarities. Then, each categories is given certain label. The last stage is data interpretation, where the collected and copied data are interpreted according to the established guidelines [12]. The data classification and data analysis step has a strong connection with the data context. The data context plays an essential role to clarify the euphemism meaning, and to reveal the reason of using the language style [8].

3. Result and Discussion

Based on the data collection, there are 58 sentences obtained from *Guoji Ribao* and *Hao Bao Daily* online news text that are indicates using euphemism. The sentences are also classified based on the effects and there are 5 effects found in the sentences. Those effects are the ordering or politely asking, stabilizing situation, refining goals, reproaching or mildly criticizing, and substituting words with negative connotation.

Table 1. The five effects on online news sentences

Effects	Number
Ordering or Politely Asking	22
Stabilizing Situation	13
Refining Goals	11
Reproaching or Mildly Criticize	7
Substituting Words with Negative Connotation	5

3.1 Ordering or Politely Asking

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the negative impact of the pandemic to the society highly influence people's emotions, so that the use of euphemism is essential in order to avoid orders or requests that sound harsh to be softer in order to be perceived well by the society. In the data obtained, the dominant order is from the government towards the society. The use of euphemism in sentences in *Guoji Ribao* and *Hao Bao* online news can be seen in these data.

Data (1)

鲍比市长要求棉兰的所有学校遵守禁止面授的规则。

Bàobǐ shìzhǎng yāoqiú miánlán de suǒyǒu xuéxiào zūnshǒu jìnzhǐ miànshòu de guīzé.

Mayor Bobby **asked** all schools in Medan to abide by **the rules prohibiting** face-to-face teaching.

In data (1) there three words determine the sentence is indicates as euphemism. The word 要求 *yāoqiú* means asking and 遵守 *zūnshǒu* means respecting. The word 要求 *yāoqiú* and 遵守 *zūnshǒu* are used to soften the order from Medan Mayor, Bobby Nasution, towards the society especially schools to obey the regulation due to the condition in Medan that is still not possible for offline or face-to-face activities.

Data (2)

卫生部表示，会定期检讨有关措施，并希望在保护病人和医院的当儿，得到所有国人的谅解和配合。

Wèishēng bù biǎoshì, huì dìngqī jiǎntǎo yǒuguān cuòshī, bìng xīwàng zài bǎohù bìng rén hé yīyuàn dí dāng er, dé dào suǒyǒu guó rén de liàngjiě hé pèihé.

The Ministry of Health said that it would regularly review the relevant measures and **hoped to get the understanding and cooperation of all Chinese people** in protecting patients and hospitals.

In data (2) all hospitals in Singapore establish a regulation of temporary suspension of visits in order to stop the COVID-19 spread in hospitals. This is marked by the sentence 得到所有国人的谅解和配合 *dé dào suǒyǒu guó rén de liàngjiě hé pèihé* that means “to get the understanding and cooperation of all people”. This sentence indirectly asks for Singapore society to obey the regulation established by the hospitals in order to protect the patients.

Data (3)

尊尼部长请媒体直接问卫生部长布迪

Zūn ní bùzhǎng qǐng méiti zhíjiē wèn wèishēng bùzhǎng bù dí.

Minister Johnny **asked** the media **to ask** health minister Budi **directly**

The data theft and data selling of vaccination participants' personal data in *Peduli Lindungi* application has caused anxiety and the media also took part in suing explanation from Indonesian government. The word 请 *qǐng* in Mandarin language has various meanings and is used to express politeness. In that sentence, the word 请 *qǐng* can be translated to “welcoming”, Ministry of Communications and Information Johnny G Plate welcomes or politely ordered the media to refer 直接问 *zhíjiē wèn* to the party that is considered more responsible, the health minister Budi Gunadi Sadikin.

Data (4)

他还呼吁县长和市长密切关注小学和幼儿园级别的有限面对面学习。

Tā hái hūyù xiàn zhǎng hé shì zhǎng mìqiè guānzhù xiǎoxué hé yòu'eryuán jíbìe de yǒuxiàn miànduìmiàn xuéxí.

He also called on County heads and mayors **to pay close attention** to the limited face-to-face activities at the primary and kindergarten levels.

The context of the news is from the news of West Java Governor, Ganjar Pranowo, who addresses 呼吁 *hūyù* and politely asks the regent and mayor to pay more attention 密切关注 *mìqiè guānzhù* to the face-to-face activities in elementary and kindergarten school since the students are of a very young age to get vaccinated.

Data (5)

治疗的效果也越来越好，但是目前我们还不能掉以轻心。

Zhìliáo de xiàoguǒ yě yuè lái yuè hǎo, dànshì mùqián wǒmen hái bùnéng diào yǐ qīng xīn.

The effect of the treatment is getting better, **but we can't take it lightly at present.**

China was first country to be infected by COVID-19 and they have more experience in the treatment progress 治疗的效果也越来越好 *Zhìliáo de xiàoguǒ yě yuè lái yuè hǎo*, but the China government also asks the society not to take COVID-19 lightly. This is marked by 但是目前我们还不能掉以轻心 *dànshì mùqián wǒmen hái bùnéng diào yǐqīngxīn*, and the word 不能 *bùnéng* means “not allowed” which emphasizes the order or the request.

3.2 Stabilizing Situation

The COVID-19 pandemic condition once caused panic and anxiety in people who are affected. This study presents the data where the *Guoji Ribao* and *Hao Bao* online news media use euphemism to give calming effect in order to avoid causing anxiety in society who are affected by COVID-19 in several countries. Those can be seen in these data.

Data (6)

人和病毒共存是一个美好的愿望，它是需要条件的。

Rén hé bìngdú gòngcún shì yīgè měihǎo de yuànwàng, tā shì xūyào tiáojiàn de.

The coexistence of human and virus is a good wish, and it requires conditions.

In data (6) the news context contains information regarding COVID-19 which can mutate and cause anxiety in society but in order to stabilize the situation, the China government stated that 人和病毒共存是一个美好的愿望 *rén hé bìngdú gòngcún shì yīgè měihǎo de yuànwàng* the coexistence of human and virus is a good wish. In this statement, the China government intended to convey a hope that human and virus can live together 共存 *gòngcún* although certain terms and conditions are required 它是需要条件的 *tā shì xūyào tiáojiàn de*.

Data (7)

不过，文告说，院方将根据个别情况进行评估，允许病危病人、年幼病患、待产和产后妇女及需要额外看护的病人接见访客。

Bùguò, wéngào shuō, yuàn fāng jiāng gēbié qíngkuàng jìnxíng pínggū, yǔnxǔ bìngwēi bìngrén, nián yòu bìng huàn, dàichǎn hé chǎnhòu fù nǚ jí xūyào éwài kānhù de bìng rén jiējiàn fǎngkè.

However, the notice said that the hospital will assess on an individual basis and allow critically ill patients, young patients, women awaiting delivery and postpartum and patients **in need of additional care to receive visitors.**

In data (7) the news context contain information of the cause of the virus spread rapidly in the hospitals in Singapore, the hospitals establish temporary suspension of visit. This can make the family or the patients anxious that they cannot see each other. In order to stabilize the situation, the hospital states 需要额外看护的病人接见访客 *xūyào éwài kānhù de bìng rén jiējiàn fǎngkè* that the patients with certain condition or disease can be visited.

Data (8)

目前在通讯和信息部云中的 *PeduliLindungi* 数据刚刚迁移到通讯和信息部直接管理处，其状态是安全的。

Mùqián zài tōngxùn hé xìnxī bù yún zhōng de PeduliLindungi shùjù gānggāng qiānyí dào tōngxùn hé xìnxī bù zhíjiē guǎnlǐ chù, qí zhuàngtài shì ānquán de.

At present, the **Peduli Lindungi data** in the cloud of the Ministry of Communications and Information **has just been migrated to the direct management office of the Ministry of communications and information, and its status is secure.**

The data leak or data selling of the vaccination participants in *Peduli Lindungi* application will surely cause anxiety among Indonesian citizen, due to the fact that they personal data could be abused. In order to stabilize the situation, the Ministry of Communications and Information of Indonesia argued that the data have been migrated 迁移 *qiānyí* and secured 其状态是安全的 *qí zhuàngtài shì ānquán de* to the Communications and Information management office. That statement aimed to calmly effect Indonesians citizens.

Data (9)

规模和更广泛地实施 COVID-19 疫苗接种可以加速经济增长。

Guīmó hé gèng guǎngfàn dì shíshī COVID-19 yìmiáo jiēzhǒng kěyǐ jiāsù jīngjì zēngzhǎng.

Scale and wider implementation of COVID-19 vaccination can accelerate economic growth.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacts badly to various sectors including the economic sector. The Indonesian

Employers Association (APINDO) states that one of the ways to restore the economic sector is through vaccination. The euphemism can be seen in 实施 COVID-19 疫苗接种可以加速经济增长 *shíshī COVID-19 yìmiáo jiēzhǒng kěyǐ jiāsù jīngjì zēngzhǎng* which means COVID-19 vaccination can accelerate economic growth. The statement aims at calming down Indonesian entrepreneurs who are affected by the bad effects of COVID-19.

Data (10)

从监测数据看：当前新冠疫苗对变异毒株依然有效！

Cóng jiāncè shùjù kàn: Dāngqián xīnguān yìmiáo duì biànyì dú zhū yīrán yǒuxiào!

From the monitoring data, **the new crown vaccine is still effective against the mutant strain!**

A news emerged that the COVID-19 can mutate and has many stronger variants, which will really make people worried and it is predicted that the third dose of vaccine is needed. However, the statement from the China government helped stabilize the situation by saying, that from their monitoring data the new crown vaccine is still effective against the mutant strain.

3.3 Refining Goals

Euphemism with a refining goals effect intend that the information given can be perceived well by the society and will not give negative effect. Based on the COVID-19 case, sentences that contain euphemism aims to educate the society, self-proof, and commercial. The education purpose is found dominant in the data, compared to other purposes. The purposes can be seen in the following data.

Data (11)

阻断病毒传播主要依靠公共卫生措施和疫苗接种。

Zǔ duàn bìngdú chuánbō zhǔyào yīkào gōnggòng wèishēng cuòshī hé yìmiáo jiēzhǒng.

Blocking the spread of the virus **mainly depends on** public health measures and vaccination.

One of the sentences using euphemism with education purpose can be seen in the sentence of data (11) which purpose is to educate the society that the main way to stop the COVID-19 spread depends on the application of health protocols by the society and the vaccination. The word 主要依靠 *zhǔyào yīkào* “mainly rely on” subtly emphasizes that the society’s obedience towards the application of health protocols is very influential towards stopping the COVID-19 spread.

Data (12)

通过数字生态系统，其中之一是中小微企业的数字化，商业参与者可以广泛营销他们的产品，而无需面对面，以推动经济发展。

Tōngguò shùzì shēngtài xìtǒng, qízhōng zhī yī shì zhōngxiǎo wēi qǐyè de shùzìhuà, shāngyè cānyù zhě kěyǐ guǎngfàn yíngxiāo tāmen de chǎnpǐn, ér wúxū miànduìmiàn, yǐ tuīdòng jīngjì fāzhǎn.

Through the digital ecosystem, one of which is the digitization of small, medium-sized and micro enterprises, business participants **can widely market their products without face-to-face to promote economic development.**

That statement was made by the *Indonesian Employers Association (APINDO)* which aims to educate the society that the COVID-19 pandemic impacts badly to the economy, and the business or trade sector experience drastic decline. However, one of the ways to maintain the economy or business sector is to support the economic development 以推动经济发展 *yǐ tuīdòng jīngjì fāzhǎn* despite the occurring COVID-19 by utilizing the digital payment technology 数字生态系统 *shùzì shēngtài xìtǒng* in which application requires no physical contact or face-to-face interaction 而无需面对面, *ér wúxū miànduìmiàn.*

Data (13)

他指中国已实施新中国成立以来规模最大的全球人道主义行动。已向世界提供逾 12.5 亿剂冠病疫苗。

Tā zhǐ zhōngguó yǐ shíshī xīn zhōngguó chénglǐ yǐlái guīmó zuìdà de quánqiú réndào zhǔyì xíngdòng. Yǐ xiàng shìjiè tíngōng yú 12.5 Yì jì guān bìng yìmiáo.

He pointed out that China has implemented the largest global humanitarian action since the founding of new China and **has provided more than 1.25 billion doses of coronal disease vaccine to the world.**

In the opening ceremony of The Sustainable Development Forum 2021 China State Councillor and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi, stated that China has given many humanitarian contributions towards many countries since the establishment of the New China by giving out 1.25 billion dose of vaccines to many countries. This can be seen

in 已向世界提供逾 12.5 亿剂冠病疫苗 *yǐ xiàng shìjiè tígōng yú 12.5 Yì jì guān bìng yìmiáo* in which euphemism purpose is as a self-proof of having done things or subtly aims to give self-compliment.

Data (14)

我们都用很快的时间控制了疫情的进展，而我们对疫情的治疗的经验也越来越丰富，因此死亡率很低。

Wǒmen dōu yòng hěn kuài de shíjiān kòngzhìle yìqíng de jìnzhǎn, ér wǒmen duì yìqíng de zhìliáo de jīngyàn yě yuè lái yuè fēngfù, yīncǐ sǐwáng lǜ hěn dī.

We have all controlled the progress of the epidemic very quickly, and we have more and more experience in the treatment of the epidemic, so the mortality is very low.

The China government who was first to experience the COVID-19 pandemic prove themselves by stating that they are more capable of decreasing the death rate 因此死亡率很低 *yīncǐ sǐwáng lǜ hěn dī* due to rapid surveillance 我们都用很快的时间控制了疫情的进展 *Wǒmen dōu yòng hěn kuài de shíjiān kòngzhìle yìqíng de jìnzhǎn* and the richer and more various treatment knowledge or experience 我们对疫情的治疗的经验也越来越丰富 *ér wǒmen duì yìqíng de zhìliáo de jīngyàn yě yuè lái yuè fēngfù.*

Data (15)

但桥本圣子表示，“只要有观众希望入场观看奥运会，我们就应当在将感染风险降到最低的情况下，尽可能满足他们的要求。

Dàn qiáo běn shèng zǐ biǎoshì, “zhǐyào yǒu guānzhòng xīwàng rù chǎng guānkàn àoyùnhuì, wǒmen jiù yīngdāng zài jiāng gǎnrǎn fēngxiǎn jiàng dào zuìdī de qíngkuàng xià, jǐn kěnéng mǎnzú tāmen de yāoqiú.

But Yoshiko Hashimoto said, "as long as there are spectators who want to enter to watch the Olympic Games, we should try our best to meet their requirements while minimizing the risk of infection.

The host of the 2020 Olympiad was Japan, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Olympiad was postponed and was being held again in 2021. The research team from Japan suggested that the Olympiad is better held without audience. However, the Japan Olympiad committee Yoshiko Hashimoto said “只要有观众希望入场观看奥运会，我们就应当在将感染风险降到最低的情况下，尽可能满足他们的要求” “As long as there are spectators who want to enter to watch the Olympic Games, we should try our best to meet their requirements while minimizing the risk of infection.” The Olympiad committee gave an alternative to fulfill the society’s demand to watch the Olympiad live by limiting the number of audience. Indirectly, the statement showed a commercial purpose to promoting the Olympic event, this is done due to its relation with the country’s income or foreign exchange.

3.4 Reproaching or Mildly Criticize

Euphemism can be used to reproach in eastern ways that is indirect, with symbols that avoid people from possible conflicts. This can be seen in the following data.

Data (16)

嫌犯之一是穆阿拉卡朗(Muara Karang)乡公所的职员，他能够轻易获得人口数据。

Xiánfàn zhī yī shì mù ālā kā lǎng (Muara Karang) xiāng gōngsuǒ de zhíyuán, tā nénggòu qīngyì huòdé rénkǒu shùjù.

One of the suspects guilty of stealing the personal data of vaccination participants is a civil servant. This sentence indirectly reproaches that the suspect who sold the data of the vaccination participants is a civil servant that is why he can easily obtain and sell the data 他能够轻易获得人口数据, *tā nénggòu qīngyì huòdé rénkǒu shùjù.*

Data (17)

白宫曾承诺阿富汗是首批获得美国疫苗捐赠的国家之一，但具体多少剂疫苗，以及将在何时运往阿富汗还是未知数。

Báigōng céng chéngnuò āfùhàn shì shǒu pī huòdé měiguó yìmiáo juānzèng de guójiā zhī yī, dàn jùtǐ duōshǎo jì yìmiáo, yǐjī jiàng zài hé shí yùnwǎng āfùhàn háishì wèizhīshù.

The White House has promised that Afghanistan is one of the first countries to receive U.S. vaccine donations, but the exact number of doses and when they will be shipped to Afghanistan are still unknown

The US government promises 白宫曾承诺 *Báigōng céng chéngnuò* that Afghanistan is the first country to receive vaccine donations but in the sentence 但具体多少剂疫苗, 以及将在何时运往阿富汗还是未知, *dàn jùtǐ duōshǎo jì yìmiáo, yǐjǐ jiàng zài hé shí yùnwǎng āfùhàn háishì wèizhīshù* it is a subtle or indirect reproach that this promise is yet to be realized due to the amount or shipping time that remains unconfirmed 还是未知 *háishì wèizhī*.

Data (18)

我想只要有一个国家的疫情得不到控制, 全世界的疫情就不能说是胜利, 也不会得到安宁。

Wǒ xiǎng zhǐyào yǒu yīgè guójiā de yìqíng dé bù dào kòngzhì, quán shìjiè de yìqíng jiù bùnéng shuō shì shènglì, yě bù huì dédào ānníng.

I think as long as the epidemic situation in one country is not controlled, **the epidemic situation in the world can not be said to be a victory or peace.**

The China government in data (14) has earlier declared their self-proof on the progress of COVID-19 treatment in their country. In another occasion, Zhang Boli, an academic from Chinese Engineering Academy and the honorary president of Chinese Traditional Medicine University, Tianjin University, delivered his speech in video, indirectly reproached countries that have not been able to control the COVID-19 pandemic that may interrupt other neighboring countries and the meaning of 不会 *bù huì* it self is “will not” which is more pressing that statement.

Data (19)

王毅也在演讲中称, 要尊重各国自主选择的道路与制度, 平等相待。

Wáng yì yě zài yǎnjiǎng zhōng chēng, yào zūnzhòng gèguó zìzhǔ xuǎnzé de dàolù yǔ zhìdù, píngděng xiāng dài.

Wang Yi also said in his speech that **we should respect the roads and systems independently chosen by all countries and treat each other equally.**

In the opening ceremony of The Sustainable Development Forum 2021 Wang Yi also states *that* 要尊重各国自主选择的道路与制度, 平等相待 *yào zūnzhòng gèguó zìzhǔ xuǎnzé de dàolù yǔ zhìdù, píngděng xiāng dài* we should respect the roads and systems independently chosen by all countries and treat each other equally. This sentence is indirectly a reproaching euphemism towards certain countries that frequently criticize China or the China government and asked to respect the Chinese government policies.

Data (20)

新冠病毒变异了疫苗还有效吗? 疫苗接种速度要跑赢病毒变异。

Xīnguān bìngdú biànyìle yìmiáo hái yǒuxiào ma? Yìmiáo jiēzhǒng sùdù yào pǎo yíng bìngdú biànyì

Is the vaccine effective after the new coronavirus has mutated? Vaccination speed must outperform virus mutation.

The COVID-19 various and rapid mutation makes the society question or reproach the effectiveness of vaccines they have received, because this makes the society worried of the impact of the virus mutation.

3.5 Substituting Words with Negative Connotation

Words with negative connotations can directly hurt people's feelings. The *Guoji Ribao* and *Hao Bao* Daily news text use euphemism or another term used to keep the language use from offending, insulting, or condescending. The euphemism used to respect people is also found in the data, but there is also the use of euphemism which functions for “lose dignity”. The use of euphemism can be seen in the following data.

Data (21)

新冠肺炎疫情, 给人民造成了重大的生命损失。

Xīnguān fèiyán yìqíng, jǐ rénmin zàochéngle zhòngdà de shēngmìng sǔnshī.

The outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia has caused **great loss** to the people.

生命 *shēngmìng* means “life”, and 损失 *sǔnshī* “lose” the use of phrase 生命损失 *shēngmìng sǔnshī* *shēngmìng sǔnshī* is to substitute negative words or phrases like death or 死亡.

Data (22)

艾朗卡解释说, 加强疫苗将免费提供给供款援助接受者。

Ài lǎng kǎ jiěshì shuō, jiāqiáng yìmiáo jiāng miǎnfèi tígōng gěi **gōng kuǎn yuánzhù jiěshòu zhě**.

Elanka explained that the enhanced vaccine would be provided free of charge to **Donor Assistance Recipients**.

The Indonesian government plans to make policies for paid vaccines. However, there are exceptions for certain society, such as 供款援助接受者 **gōng kuǎn yuánzhù jiěshòu zhě** that is a group of society that are entitled to receive support from the government. This term is used to substitute the term “lower class society who receive support” because it gives a bad impression and offensive.

Data (23)

他也提到若有罹患糖尿病等的严重疾病患者，或是医护、教师等**一线工作人员**，也都可以免费接种。

Tā yě tí dào ruò yǒu líhuàn tángniàobìng dǐng de yánzhòng jíbìng huànzhě, huò shì yīhù, jiàoshī dǐng yīxiàn gōngzuò rényuán, yě dū kěyǐ miǎnfèi jiēzhǒng.

He also mentioned that if there are serious diseases such as diabetes, or medical workers, teachers and other front-line workers, they can also be vaccinated free of charge.

Besides the group of society who receive government support except for certain condition or status that can get free vaccine. **一线工作人员 yīxiàn gōngzuò rényuán** in Indonesian is known as “Garda Depan” or front-line workers. This term referred to people who work as COVID-19 security units such as doctors, nurses, paramedic officers, laboratory workers, military, also the janitors along with other workers who work in complete Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and have to handle the COVID-19 patients. This term is used to respect those workers.

Data (24)

然后伪造疫苗接种证明书，**卖给有需要用到的民众**。

Ránhòu wèizào yìmiáo jiēzhǒng zhèngmíng shū, mǎi gěi yǒu xūyào yòng dào de mǐnzhòng.

Then forge vaccination certificates and **sell them to people in need**.

需要用到的民众 **xūyào yòng dào de mǐnzhòng** **people in need** is a euphemism of people who buy the personal data of the vaccination participants for their own commercial interest especially to gain big profit. The use of euphemism in that sentence refers to the euphemism function as concealment. Concealment aims to disguise the truth with alternative words or to hide it ambiguously, and sometimes, this actually ends up sounding rude and causing the other person to lose his/her dignity [4].

Data (25)

而使馆暂停业务的决定极大地**影响了这些人的“努力”**。

Èr shǐguǎn zàntíng yèwù de juédìng jí dàdì yǐngxiǎngle zhèxiē rén de “nǔlì”.

The decision of the embassy to suspend business has **greatly affected the "efforts" of these people**.

The effort in here means the effort of Afghanistan people to get visa to be able to migrate to the US as they are afraid of being Taliban targets because they work for the US. The embassy temporarily closed all services including visa making as there are more than 100 people infected by the COVID-19 in the US embassy for Afghanistan.

4. Conclusion

Based on the 58 euphemism sentences found, those sentences can be classified into 5 different effects, the ordering or politely asking, stabilizing situation, refining goals, reproaching or mildly criticizing, and substituting words with negative connotation. From the five purposes of euphemism found, the ordering or politely asking purpose is the dominant effect. This relates to the COVID-19 phenomenon and relates to the establishment of new policies to protect the society from the impact of COVID-19 itself. Euphemism in *Guoji Ribao* and *Hao Bao* Daily online news are widely applied as one of the ways to calm the readers regarding information they receive while still holding argumentative principle or creating interpretations. The euphemism used in the *Guoji Ribao* and *Hao Bao* online news dominantly are translated from Indonesian language or other foreign languages, therefore the euphemism in the *Guoji Ribao* and *Hao Bao* online news has not fully shown Mandarin euphemism culture.

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