

Exploring Narrative Strategies in the Trailer of Documentary *The Social Dilemma*: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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- Critical Discourse Analysis
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Abstract

The contemporary era of digital media has greater influence on language use. It prompted persuasive and idea use of specific Linguistic choices to meet their desired results. The present study is about the same area. It is a critical analysis of how the trailer of The Social Dilemma uses language and narrative to shape public understanding and attitudes about the impact of social media on human cognition and social behavior. The analysis is based on the concepts of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG). This research adopts a qualitative critical discourse analysis to analyze selected extracts from the official trailer and identifies key linguistic patterns. The findings show that the trailer design of social media as a means of surveillance, manipulation and psychological control. It occurs on the basis of alarmist discourse and emotionally charged narration. This research combines the discourse analysis approach with issues related to media literacy and digital ethics, enriching the body the discourse of media and its ideological impact in digital spaces. The study highlights the importance of critical media awareness as a stepping stone for individuals to be more conscious and responsible in navigating social media. It implies that the content creation is a responsibility, if not handled properly it could engulf countless lives.

1. Introduction

The use of social media in modern communication has made several key developments. First, it allows for the quick exchange of information, communication, and interaction. Second, it provides a connection to the globalized world. Although the benefits of social media use are high, the overuse of social media has become increasingly linked to psychological/psychosocial issues. There are recent studies indicating that users of digital platforms, especially adolescents and young adults, may experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, loneliness, and lower levels of their attention span (Naslund et al., 2020; Sun, 2023).

Moreover, the spread of information via algorithms can further exacerbate misinformation, echo-chambers and polarization (Quattrociocchi et al., 2021). These have sparked increased research in the domain of social media, human behavior, and digital influence. The Social Dilemma trailer offers a nuanced look at how the social media landscape works and its often-hidden mechanisms. The documentary uses expert testimony, anecdotes and powerful narration to show how the algorithmic systems track users and influence what they see online, for commercial gain. The trailer does not only show how social media is used for communication but also as a system that can affect emotions, beliefs and decision making processes.

Although there have been previous studies on the psychological and social effects of social media, there is not much research that has studied the perception of the audience by looking at linguistic and narrative strategies used in documentary discourse. Current research in the field of scholarship centers on user behavior and innovative effects of technology, instead of the discursive production of digital fear, manipulation and persuasion. For this reason, this study fills this void by examining the language and story-telling methods used in the The Social Dilemma trailer.

1.1. Novelty of Research

This study is also one of the growing bodies of literature in the field of media discourse. It applies the Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) of M. A. K. Halliday to the trailer of the film, The Social Dilemma. Existing literature on the psychological and social impacts of social media has largely emphasized the contents of social media platforms but little research has explored how the linguistic and narrative constructions of media texts create audience perception. This study fills this void by examining how discourse strategies create a discourse of fear, urgency and critical awareness of digital technology.

Moreover, the novelty of this research is that it focuses on a documentary trailer as a field of ideological and persuasive discourse. This study is different from other social media studies which focus on the behaviors of users or social media platforms, instead focuses on language, tone and narrative framing within a short promotional media text. The study applies Field, Tenor and Mode analyses to show how emotive language, rhetorical questions, repetition, metaphor and expert testimony are effectively used to shape viewers' interpretation of social media.

Overall, the discourse analysis is linked with media literacy and digital ethics. It emphasizes the importance of how language use in the media texts influences public perception of the

technology and online activities. The research, in turn, adds to the current debates on algorithm-based communication, critical media awareness and persuasive communication in the era of algorithms.

1.2. Research Objective

- i. To critically analyze the narrative strategies and linguistic manipulation used by social media to control the behavior of users.

1.3. Research Questions

- i. What are the exact linguistic and narrative strategies (e.g., tone, framing, and priming) that are used to manipulate user interactions?

1.4. Statement of The Problem

The use of social media has grown so much that it has become a part of daily life, affecting how people communicate, learn and form opinions. Even though these platforms have their advantages, they're increasingly starting to use algorithm-driven systems to track user activity, tailor content, and generate maximum engagement. Consequently, there have been concerns about digital surveillance, manipulation, misinformation and the impact of excessive social media usage on mental health.

Previous studies have tended to examine the social and psychological impacts of social media. Focusing on media text language and narrative strategies to convey these concerns and audience perception, however, has received limited attention. Documentary discourse of social media manipulation is, in particular, under-researched from a linguistic point of view. The Social Dilemma trailer shows social media as a system of psychological manipulation and technological domination. The persuasive language, emotional appeals, and critical framing in the trailer seeks to impact viewers' perceptions of digital technology and its impact on society. But the discourse strategies employed to build up this message must be studied systematically in academia.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the use of linguistic and narrative techniques in the trailer to induce urgency, fear and critical awareness of the use of social media. The research focuses on how the components of Field, Tenor and Mode are used in the construction of persuasive media discourse, based on M.A.K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG).

1.5. Significance of The Study

This study is an attempt to add to the body of work in discourse analysis by analyzing how the language and narrative strategies are used in media texts in order to influence the perception of the audience towards social media and digital technology. The study employs the Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) by M. A. K. Halliday to demonstrate the role of language in creating fear, urgency, and ideology in the digital discourse of the times, using the trailer of The Social Dilemma as the research data.

A key contribution of this study is that it brings a discursive approach to the study of social media that goes beyond the psychological and technological approaches. It presents how the language device like emotive expression, rhetorical question, repetition, and metaphor in documentary media can help to make a communication persuasive. In this way, the research aims to contribute to the deeper understanding of the influence of media discourse on the perception of the public on social media and its impact on the society.

Moreover, the study adds to the current debate on the issues of media literacy and digital ethics. The results could be useful for teachers, researchers, and media users to become more aware of the persuasive discourse in digital context. The research can also help future researchers who have an interest in critical discourse analysis, media studies, and digital communication to devise a model of how persuasive strategies can be examined in audiovisual media texts.

2. Literature Review

Language plays a very important role in human life. It shapes experiences on social media platforms. The use of social media has changed the ways of communication by providing access to information and connectivity like it was never before. But this move towards an entire new phase of communication reminds us of concern since it raises matters of empowerment versus manipulation in the evolution and adoption of new languages. Ekayati et al. (2024) depicted the role of social media in determining the nature of linguistic development and creating new communicative forms. Similarly, Karjus and Cuskley (2024) revealed that the media has an impact on linguistic divergence.

In the same context, Alonso and Huet (2022) critically examined the themes of language, media, and manipulation focusing on critical perspectives. Social media language amplifies the effect of manipulation in spreading misinformation (Orben et al., 2022; Edelson & Muralidharan, 2022) and hate speech (Eira, 2018; Di Fátima et al., 2023). The emotions and biases of the users were exploited by the algorithms set up by the social networking platforms (Christian et al., 2020). Caplan and Boyd mentioned power dynamics of knowledge and information quality on social networking sites.

Social media is also a black box as far as happiness (Dutot, 2020) and well-being concerns (Kardaras, 2022) go. According to Pang, (2022), people's lives get affected due to social media. There is an urgent need to address the social media regarding issues (Baccarella et al., 2018). Miranda et al, (2016), report the paradox of structure and content of the digital media to the face-to-face contacts. Last, Smith et al. (2021) suggest that in order to move through social media's complexity, it must meet with developing digital literacy and critical thinking skills. For example, the spread of misinformation through social media leads to improper decision making by the public due to the lack of knowledge. This can include accepting conspiracy theories or misinformation on the vaccines.

The implications include that it may have grave negative effects on public health and the overall impact of these divisions on the society at large. In this regard, platform governance and regulation come into play (Hameleers & Schmuck, 2020). The author investigates a phenomenon how linguistics and meaning can be socialized and understood, which, in turn, brings about a significance of context for decisive understanding of one. The author claims that code breaking lies not exclusively as an individual's personal means of communicating

but rather becomes dictated by other factors in the sociolinguistic environment, including but not limited to, culture, forms of power and institutions.

Liu does not mention that relationships are built-in in languages but rather puts forth their dynamics as contingent processes. The author develops this idea basing in part on the notion of social reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1966) as dramatized reality as well as the systemic functional grammar (Halliday, 1978). Furthermore, Liu investigates other concepts such as tenor, field and mode, following Halliday (1978), to illustrate the various roles that language plays in creating and sustaining social networks and structures.

This is also important to address the social influence in the actualization of language and thus re-iterates the fact that linguistic meanings in social settings must be looked at with a more sophisticated approach. This article examines the language, society and Meaning triangle and the socio-semiotic aspects of language contextualization as such asserting the necessity of social interpretation of language in a given situation.

Overall, it is urgent for users and future scholars to be connoisseurs of these possible disadvantages for further research on more nuances unfolding in the digital playground of social media. Only through the acknowledgment of the darker side of social media will we ever hope to overcome the more negative aspects of social media and find a way for the online environment to become healthy for everyone. Language of social media is the double-edged sword because it empowers users but provides means for manipulation. The negative outcomes and the realization of inherent complexities can make it easy to harness the real potential of social media. Detailed analysis of the views of the several authors has revealed one fundamental point for debate-how users shape their language so listeners come to agree with them. This research is fundamentally about language and power and how complex interplay unfolds in how language in social media can be an instrument of influence and control. Although extant literature indicates the psychological and social effects of using social media, limited research has been conducted on the role of language and narrative frameworks of media texts in their effect on the audience interpretation. Majority of studies are concerned with user behavior, but not discourse strategies incorporated in media representations. The study is useful to the field because it uses the systemic functional grammar (Halliday) to examine how linguistic options define meaning in documentary trailer.

3. Methodology

The research design for this study is a *qualitative research* using *Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)* approach to analyze the language and narrative strategies employed in trailer of *The Social Dilemma*. The study is based on *Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG)* and its theory. It is used to explore the language specifically used to construct meanings, convincing messages, and ideology in media discourse.

This study's data is the official trailer of *The Social Dilemma*. The production of the trailer was chosen for its ability to capture a condensed and compelling version of the documentary's main arguments surrounding the manipulation of social media, surveillance and psychological influences. The oral component in the trailer was transcribed and analyzed in detail to look for important linguistic features and story forms.

The analysis was conducted on particularly those excerpts that featured emotionally charged expressions, rhetorical questions, repetition, metaphorical language, and expert comment. The excerpts were classified based on Halliday's framework of Field, Tenor and Mode to analyze the ways the discourse brings about urgency, fear and critical awareness about social media use. The topic of the discourse, the theme of the discourse, interpersonal relations and attitude of the speaker were identified in Field, the communicative style and attitude of the speaker in Mode and presentation of the discourse in Tenor.

The approach used was qualitative interpretive to examine the persuasive and ideological element of the trailer. The study is not conducted in statistical generalizing but aiming to deepen insight into the function of the linguistic choices in the Documentary Media Discourse. In the light of this analytical framework, the research shows the connection between language and media influence with audience perception in today's digital era.

3.1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on *M.A.K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG)* which considers language as a social semiotic system for the construction of meaning in a particular social context. Halliday (1978) believes that language is not only a means of conveying information, but also a reflection of social relations, ideology, and communications purposes. This approach is particularly useful in **analyzing** media discourse as it allows for an examination of how language can affect the perception of an audience and influence their interpretation of a text.

This research specifically uses the contextual variables of Field, Tenor and Mode, formulated by Halliday, to examine the trailer of *The Social Dilemma*. The components are used as a systematic way to investigate the relationship between language and social meaning in persuasive media texts. Field is the topic of discourse and its theme.

Field is applied in this study to consider the themes of surveillance, digital manipulation, misinformation, and psychological control that are developed in the trailer as they relate to social media platforms.

Tenor emphasizes interpersonal relationship between speaker and listener, tone/attitude, social positioning. This element will be used to determine the use of alarmist, critical and persuasive tone in the trailer to influence the viewers' emotions and thoughts.

Mode is the means of communication and how it is done. For the purpose of this study, the term Mode is applied to the analysis of the persuasive structure provided by spoken narration, rhetorical statements, expert testimony, and emotionally charged expressions in the trailer.

The study examines the role of discourse in the realm of persuasion and ideology in the context of modern digital communication, drawing on these three dimensions of SFG. The framework thus serves as an appropriate analytical model to interpret the link between language, media representation and audience perception.

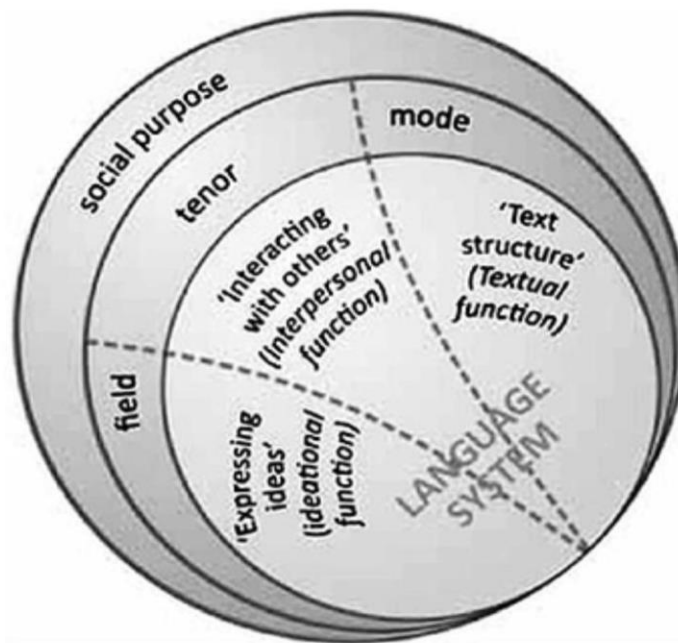


Figure 1. Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar

3.1.1. Field: The Scope of Discourse

Field emphasizes the view by Halliday that one has to grasp the nature of the social and cultural content embedded within discourse, which often determines choices about language and strategies of communication undertaken by the participants. As has been seen recently in research work by Martinez and Lee in 2023, how social media designers go into a lot of trouble when composing their subject matter and content to make their users entertained.

3.1.2. Tenor: An Interpersonal Dimension

According to Halliday, it defines how language brings to life those interpersonal relations that get constructed with the help of the language such that, which can subsist at length, they may also fail or grow because there will always be an influence associated with the use of the language. According to Wong and Ahmed (2022), in the case of social media, how the platforms create and sustain a relationship with the user is through well-crafted language patterns. In their research, they found that social media simulates and intimate personal relationships and maintains a corporate distance that manipulates user perceptions and interactions.

3.1.3. Mode: The Channel of Communication.

According to Halliday, his thought concerning Mode is how different communications' channels influence the creation as well as interpretation of that particular message. Patel et

al. (2023) research on how the incorporation of different communication channels in a social media platform creates what they term *modal overflow* when users are flooded with the variety and volume of options for communication. It thus underlines the importance of Mode in understanding how platforms handle user engagement and interaction with them.

4. Data Analysis

Social media is making the world a more global community; nevertheless, the documentary titled *The Social Dilemma* (2020) has a different view of the phenomenon. *The Social Dilemma* is a documentary created by Netflix which consists of the interviews of former workers of large social media platforms, such as Google, Facebook, and Instagram. These ex-workers explain the way that algorithmic design causes user addiction, and they point to the ethical issues that are disproportionately harmful to adolescents in psychological and physical terms. It is basically a monologue by *Tristan Harris*, who is an American Technology Ethicist. He is an Executive Director and Co-founder of the center for *Humane Technology*. He studied how major technology platforms wield dangerous power over human abilities to make sense of the world and lead them call for systemic change.

The Social Dilemma shows a look into the impact of social media apps in the current culture. The trailer uses emotionally charged discourse, narration and interviews to emphasize issues of algorithmic control, digital surveillance, misinformation and psychological manipulation. The film includes interviews with former employees and tech experts from the social media giants—Google, Facebook and Instagram—and their insights into the tricks that platforms use to drive engagement and influence.

In this study some samples of the trailer are going to be studied using *M. A. K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG)*. The focus of the analysis is on the construction of fear, urgency and critical awareness of social media use, which is done by the use of linguistic devices and narrative strategies. The following focus is on the use of emotive language, repetition, rhetorical questions, metaphorical language, and expert opinion in the trailer to consider how social media is presented as a system of surveillance and behavior manipulation.

The trailer starts out as follows:

Google offers different results for people searching for climate change is... based on their location, says Kelsey Bisson.

This introduction sets up the concept of algorithmic customization and targeted information provisioning. The declarative structure lends the writing an informative tone and the phrase “different results” indicates that there might be controlled and filtered digital experiences. The trailer creates a discourse of technological influence, and the objectivity of online information, as it uses the language to establish this.

The tone of caution and surveillance is further enhanced by the following statement:

It's not coincidental, it's a technique of the design, everything that they do online is being monitored, tracked.

According to the repetition of the passive constructions like ‘is being watched’ and ‘is being tracked’, the experience of surveillance is foregrounded, with the agents of surveillance being

backgrounded. In this way, this linguistic technique establishes invisibility and a lack of control. The short declarative sentences also help to give an urgent and authoritative tone, which helps to strengthen the sense of social media platforms as intentional systems of manipulation of behavior.

The other major indication in the trailer is:

More than a generation,....*a whole generation is more anxious, more depressed*.....

The use of comparative repetition (more anxious, more depressed) in this expression highlights the psychological impact that is linked to excessive social media use. The word 'whole generation' moves the issue from being personal to social. The emotional nature of the lexic choice builds socially media as a contributing factor to poor mental health of youth.

Similarly, the statement:

Fake news goes six times as fast as a true news.

It applies statistical language and contrastive language to enhance argumentation. The opposition between "fake news" and "true news" (or "real news") creates a binary opposition, and thus makes "misinformation" the dominant form of communication in digital contexts. Numerical evidence is used to bolster the persuasive impact of the discourse, and the trailer's critical representation of social media.

The trailer ends with the metaphorical saying:

This is, checkmate on mankind.

The term *checkmate* is a term that comes from the game of chess and has a connotation of strategic defeat and finality. The trailer's social media characterization as a threat to humanity rather than a communication tool is driven by the notion of technological influence and the defeat of humanity. Such a metaphorical presentation heightens the alarmist nature of the discourse and strengthens the documentary's message as a whole in the ideological aspect of the dangers of uncontrolled technological power.

Social media sites have mastered the art of narration, which has enabled them to create robust campaigns and intellectual backdrops that can easily withstand any form of logical refutation or knowledge. The well-crafted stories often found in political speeches and other dilemmas usually possess the capability of evoking deep and interesting feelings in the minds and hearts of people. Thus, the strong conviction of the people demands extreme measures such as war and violence in its protection. Destructive ideological wars have indeed been a part of human history, with men fighting for the preservation or clarification of ideas, along with leaving devastating marks on humanity. The notorious leaders like Hitler, Montesquieu and Bismarck notoriously used narrative strategies in order to legitimize their actions and win the hearts and minds of the masses. Their flawed ideologies were eloquently presented, where they could easily play on emotional and cognitive biases to appeal to people.

The proliferation of social media today has further amplified the reach and influence of such narratives. It is a disaster that remains in the wake of robust ideologies, especially those powered by persuasive storytelling, in terms of the rise of extremism, polarization, and social unrest. Likewise, linguistic and narrative strategies used in the Social Dilemma trailer offer significant fodder in the construction of public opinion and influence viewer's attitudes toward social media. The table below elaborates it clearly, Further driving home the vast

influence narrative strategies have on constructing opinion, framing political discourse, and inciting harm-inducing actions, this sets the stage for massive influence in the way the news is disseminated, therefore calling for instant critical literacy, facts-based information, and all-inclusive dialogue.

Table 1:

Application of Halliday SFL on the Social Dilemma

S. No	Field (Discourse)	Tenor (Tone/Attitude)	Mode (Channel of Communication)
01.	<i>Google knows about your interests. That's not by accident. That's a design technique.</i>	Critical/Concerned	Emotive language, Expert testimony
02.	<i>Being watched is being tracked. Every single action you take is carefully monitored and recorded.</i>	Alarmist/ Cautionary	Intense/ threatening/ provocative
03.	<i>What they don't realize is there's an entire team of engineers whose job is to use your psychology against you.</i>	Cautionary/Warning	Expositional
04.	<i>A whole generation is more anxious, more depressed.</i>	Concerned/Empathetic	Reflective
05.	<i>Fake news spreads 6 times faster than true news.</i>	Urgent/ Alarmist	Informative
06.	<i>We have less control over who we are and what we really believe.</i>	Critical/ Concern	Reflective
07.	<i>This is checkmate on humanity.</i>	Dire/ Alarmist	Declamatory

Through the following metafunctional analysis, the use of M. A. K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) in the study is further strengthened. The table below expands the analysis by considering Halliday's three metafunctions (Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual) whereas the previous table looked at the discourse from the contextual dimensions of Field, Tenor, and Mode. This analytical system illustrates the ways in which the language of the trailer creates social reality, builds emotional engagement and frames persuasive significance. In these metafunctions, the trailer plays an intelligent game of presenting social

media as a system of surveillance, manipulation and psychological influence, and of asking the viewer to critically think about their digital actions.

Table 2:

Halliday's Metafunctional Analysis

Data	Ideational Function	Interpersonal Function	Textual Function
“You’re going to see different results depending on where you live.”	Represents algorithmic personalization and selective information exposure.	Creates suspicion and critical awareness among viewers.	The clause structure foregrounds “different results” to emphasize digital filtering.
“That’s not by accident. That’s a design technique.”	Constructs social media systems as intentional and controlled mechanisms.	Establishes an authoritative and cautionary tone.	Short declarative sentences create emphasis and rhetorical impact.
“Everything they’re doing online is being watched, is being tracked.”	Represents surveillance and loss of digital privacy.	Generates fear and insecurity through passive constructions.	Repetition of parallel structures reinforces the idea of constant monitoring.
“A whole generation is more anxious, more depressed.”	Constructs social media as a source of psychological decline.	Evokes empathy and emotional concern for younger users.	Comparative repetition strengthens emotional intensity and thematic focus.
“Fake news spreads six times faster than true news.”	Represents misinformation as dominant within digital platforms.	Builds urgency and credibility through statistical framing.	Contrastive structure between “fake” and “true” news sharpens the persuasive effect.
“We have less control over who we are and what we really believe.”	Represents identity and belief as vulnerable to technological influence.	Inclusive pronoun “we” establishes collective concern and shared responsibility.	Coordinated clause structure emphasizes loss of autonomy and self-perception.

“This checkmate humanity.”	is on	Frames technology as an existential threat to society.	Creates an alarmist and dramatic emotional response.	The metaphor “checkmate” functions as a powerful concluding statement.
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The metafunctional analysis shows how the language system is used in a systematic manner to create a convincing and ideologically charged text about social media. The ideational metafunction is manifested as technology as surveillance, misinformation, psychological control. The interpersonal level of the discourse is created by using cautionary tone, inclusive pronouns, and evaluative language to create the atmosphere of fear, urgency, and emotional engagement. These meanings are repeated, contrasted, metaphorized and encapsulated within short, declarative sentences that lend coherence and persuasive force to the text, and organized by the textual Metafunctions. Overall, these linguistic strategies support the main conclusion of the documentary, which is that social media platforms have a strong impact on the perception, behavior, and social interaction of humans.

5. Findings

Analysis of the trailer of The Social Dilemma shows that the language and stories used in the narrative are used strategically to build up the narrative of social media being a form of surveillance, manipulation, and psychological manipulation. The research uses *M. A. K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG)* in dimension of Field, Tenor, Mode and metafunctional analysis to analyze the language function that can influence the perception and emotional response of the audience.

The first of the key findings of the study is the use of the alarmism and cautionary tone in the entire trailer. The lexical elements used, like “*watched, tracked, anxious, depressed* and *checkmate* build a fear story and urgency round the use of social media. Such statements place digital platforms in the role of a powerful system that has the power to shape human behavior, beliefs and emotional state. A further intensification of the persuasive effect of the discourse is created by the usage of short declarative sentences, which results in a direct and authoritative tone.

The study also reveals that the device of repetition and contrastive structures is important as a persuasive device in the trailer. The use of repetitive constructions like *being watched* and *being tracked* also implies an ongoing monitoring process; the polarity of *fake news/true news* contributes to the critical attitude of the documentary text towards digital media. The use of these linguistic strategies helps to engage an audience and helps to reinforce the social media as a danger to autonomous individuals and a social instability.

Also, with the use of inclusive language and expert testimony, it builds credibility and shared concerns. When *we* is used it evokes a feeling of shared responsibility and vulnerability between speakers and viewers. Likewise, the former tech workers and experts bolster the credibility of the talk and the warnings that are offered in the trailer. Such emotional appeal combined with the positioning of the experts lends further power to the story.

The analysis also shows that metaphorical language is crucial to the representation of the threat of technology to society. Words like “checkmate on humanity” do more than simply state a concern; they create powerful, engaging visual imagery and emotion around the algorithms and digital systems. The use of such metaphors makes technology issues more comprehensible, but also adds to the meaning of the discourse in a ideological and emotional sense.

The overall results suggest that the trailer has well-designed linguistic and narrative means to shape the readers' reading experiences of social media and digital technology. Ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings work together to create a persuasive discourse that makes viewers reflect on the function of social media in the modern world.

Table 3:

Linguistic Features and Narrative Strategies use in Trailer

S. No	Linguistic Features	Narrative Strategies
01.	Simple sentences	More triggering to human beings mind
02.	Emotive language (Anxious, Depressed)	More appealing to heart, establishing credibility.
03.	Repletion of words for emphasis (being watched, being tracked)	To give rhetorical, emotional and cognitive effect.
04.	Inclusive Language (We have less control...)	To instigate critical thinking.
05.	Statistical Evidences / Hyperbole (6 times faster) and contrastive language (Truth vs. Fake news)	To build tension and logically align with the audience.
06.	Rhetorical Questions (Who we are, What we really believe)	To emphasize the self-reflection and engage the audience
07.	Metaphors (Checkmate on Humanity)	Convey complex idea and creates vivid imagery

5. Conclusion

To sum up, the trailer of The Social Dilemma uses various linguistic and narrative techniques to provide a critical discussion on the impact of social media in today's society. Application of *Mikel Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG)* shows that the Field, Tenor, Mode and metafunctional meanings help build the fear, urgency and critical awareness in the trailer. The analysis shows that there are linguistic devices that are applied strategically to guide the

audience's thinking and strengthen the persuasive message of the documentary, including emotive language, repetition, rhetorical statements, contrastive language and metaphor.

The findings also show the social media as a surveillance system, misinformation and psychological manipulation. The documentary utilizes the testimony of experts and emotional rhetoric to argue that digital platforms are potent instruments that can influence beliefs, behaviors and social interactions. The use of metaphorical expressions *checkmate on humanity* strengthens the ideological dimension of the discourse and invites viewers to creatively and critically engage with their relationship to technology.

The study is valuable to the field of media discourse analysis given its emphasis on how language constructs meanings in ideological terms in digital media texts. It also highlights the need for media literacy and critical awareness in the understanding of the role of persuasive communication in algorithmic contexts. The research illuminates the language aspect of documentary discourse and its impact on how the audience interprets the meaning of the media picture in the digital era.

The Social Dilemma is studied in some detail, but potential future research could be broadened to analyze other documentaries, social media campaigns or multimodal digital texts from other creators, using other discourse analytical frameworks. In the future, the study could also be carried out by analyzing the images, sounds, editing and the use of visual symbols in the construction of persuasive media discourse. As Christian Lous Lange quoted, *technology is a useful servant, but a dangerous master*.

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