

EMPOWERING COMMUNICATION GOALS IN SDGs CLIMATE ACTION WITH ANCHORING TECHNIQUE: A LINGUISTIC APPROACH

Angelica Laurina Silaban¹, Grace Yolanda Panjaitan², Rita Hartati³

Universitas Negeri Medan

angelicalaurina5@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In the digital era, effective communication is crucial for advancing climate action within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This study examines the application of anchoring strategy techniques through a linguistic approach to enhance climate change communication. By analysing digital content such as social media posts, videos, and captions the research identifies the impact of comparative, basic, counter, and debiasing anchoring strategies on audience engagement. Quantitative analysis of interactions (likes, comments, and shares) reveals that strategic semantic framing, persuasive discourse, and pragmatic language use significantly improve message clarity and foster a sense of collective responsibility. The findings suggest that leveraging these linguistic techniques can bridge existing communication gaps, motivate proactive climate behaviour, and support more effective climate action. Future research should explore additional linguistic methods to further refine communication strategies across diverse audiences.

Keyword: Empowering Communication Goals, SDGS Climate Action, Anchoring Technique, Linguistic Approach.

INTRODUCTION

In the growing digital age, communication has undergone significant changes, especially with the dominance of online interactions through various platforms such as social media, messaging apps and virtual conferences. These changes present new challenges in conveying messages clearly, avoiding misunderstandings, and building effective connections amidst the limitations of nonverbal cues typically present in face-to-face communication. In the context of climate action, which is one of the main focuses of the SDGs, good communication is key to convey the urgency and solutions to climate change to various parties, from the general public to policymakers. However, a lack of communication skills, especially in online communication, can lead to miscommunication, dissemination of inaccurate information, and lack of public engagement on important issues such as the climate crisis. Therefore, proper strategies in communication are needed, one of which is by applying the Anchoring Strategy Technique, which can help individuals deliver messages in a more purposeful, confident and persuasive manner. With the right linguistic approach, effective communication can not only avoid miscommunication but also increase awareness and active participation in global issues, including sustainable climate action.

To highlight the importance of using effective communication strategies to convey information, especially in the context of climate action in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By applying strategies such as Anchoring Strategy, one can gain a clearer understanding of important information received, and then relay it back to

those around them, including colleagues in their college, workplace, or organization. This not only helps in disseminating relevant and accurate information, but also strengthens collective understanding of important issues such as climate change. Moreover, effective communication can raise awareness, encourage constructive discussions and motivate others to take action.

Thus, the right communication strategy not only impacts individuals, but also contributes to building a more informed, responsive and proactive environment to global challenges. While communication plays a crucial role in supporting climate action under the SDGs, there are still gaps in how messages are delivered and received by different groups of people. One of the main challenges is the lack of understanding of effective communication strategies, especially in online environments that are often prone to miscommunication, disinformation and lack of active engagement. Many individuals and organizations have yet to optimize linguistic-based communication techniques, such as the Anchoring Strategy Technique, which can help clarify messages, build credibility and enhance persuasion in climate action communication. In addition, limitations in communication confidence and a lack of awareness of the importance of appropriate word choice, tone and message structure in online communication further widen this gap. Thus, research on the application of Anchoring Strategy Technique in climate action communication with a linguistic approach is still needed to bridge this gap, in order to create more effective, persuasive and impactful communication in encouraging real action on climate change.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Linguistic Approach in Communication

Linguistic approaches to communication focus on how language use affects the effectiveness of message delivery. In climate action communication, linguistic aspects such as word choice, sentence structure and language style play an important role in building audience understanding and engagement. Linguistic studies also include framing, persuasion techniques, and discourse analysis to understand how language can be used to shape public opinion and behavior on environmental issues. In the digital context, factors such as misinterpretation due to limited nonverbal cues are also a concern in improving the effectiveness of online communication

According to Jean Baudrillard (1981), simulacra are copies of things that no longer have an original or never had one to begin with. In the digital communication landscape, especially on social media, climate messages often use powerful imagery and language that simulate urgency or reality (e.g., burning forests, polar bears, collapsing glaciers). These representations create what Baudrillard calls a hyperreality, where the representation is perceived as more real than the reality itself. While this can inspire action, it can also manipulate or desensitize audiences. By pairing simulacra theory with anchoring techniques, we can better understand how climate communication may blend fact, emotion, and illusion in persuasive discourse.

In line with that, Winstone et al. (2022) emphasize that linguistic approaches help explore how language constructs meaning, influences perception and frames interactions, especially in communication and feedback processes. In climate action communication,

this approach can be applied to ensure that messages are not only informative but also persuasive and easily understood by different groups of audiences. By understanding how language is used to shape responses and actions, communication strategies can be more effectively designed to increase public awareness and participation in climate change issues, especially in the challenging online communication environment.

Anchoring Techniques

According to Bystranowski et al. (2021), the anchoring effect refers to a cognitive bias where a decision-maker, when asked to estimate a numerical value, tends to base their estimate on the first or most salient numerical value they encounter. This effect has been observed across various domains, including legal decision-making, negotiations, price estimations, and forecasting. The anchoring effect influences numerical judgments even when the anchor is arbitrary or irrelevant to the decision context.

The anchoring effect refers to a situation where a decision-maker, when asked to estimate a numerical value, tends to rely on the first (or most prominent) numerical value they encounter. This effect influences judgments across various domains, including negotiations, price estimates, self-efficacy, and forecasting.

Types of Anchoring Techniques

1. **Comparative Anchoring**, Decision-makers are first asked whether a target value is higher or lower than a given anchor before providing their own estimate. This strengthens the anchoring effect by making them consider the anchor more seriously.
2. **Basic Anchoring**, Individuals are exposed to an anchor value and asked to estimate a target value without making an explicit comparison. This technique relies on numerical priming, where the anchor subtly influences judgments.
3. **Counter Anchoring**, in negotiations or legal settings, a second anchor (counteroffer) is introduced to reduce the impact of the initial anchor. However, studies suggest that counter-anchors may not always significantly reduce the influence of the original anchor.
4. **Debiasing Anchoring**, Techniques like making individuals aware of anchoring bias, altering the format of the anchor, or holding individuals accountable for accurate assessments have been suggested as ways to mitigate the anchoring effect.

SDGs and Climate Action: The role of effective communication

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cover various aspects, one of which is action on climate change (SDG 13: Climate Action). To achieve this goal, effective communication is a key element in spreading awareness, building concern, and encouraging concrete action to address the impacts of climate change. A key challenge in climate action communication is how to bridge the gap between complex scientific information and general public understanding, as well as how to increase audience engagement in a digital environment. Therefore, the application of linguistic-based communication strategies, including anchoring techniques, is a potential solution to strengthen communication effectiveness in driving climate action in a broader and more impactful way.

METHOD

This research uses a quantitative method by analyzing posts, captions, and public or netizen responses in the form of likes and comments on various social media platforms. Data was collected by identifying and categorizing the use of anchoring strategies in digital communication related to climate action in the SDGs. The analysis was conducted by calculating the frequency of occurrence of keywords, language patterns used in captions, and the impact of these communication strategies on audience engagement, as measured by the number of likes, comments, and other interaction patterns. With this approach, this research aims to understand how anchoring techniques in online communication can influence public perception and participation on climate change issues.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Tabel 1. Anchoring Types and Linguistic Approach

Anchoring Type	Quote/Sentence from Data Analysis	Linguistic Approach
Comparative Anchoring	"100 years ago, seeds were mainly saved and shared by farmers..."	Highlights contrast between past and present to emphasize the loss of seed sovereignty.
	"The reduction of cabbage varieties from 544 in 1903 to just 28..."	Quantitative contrast to emphasize loss of biodiversity.
	"Over 100 years ago, farmers saved and shared seeds... today corporations control them."	Demonstrates a shift in control from farmers to corporations.
	"We need to reclaim them."	Frames the issue as urgent and just.
	"Will you play a role in seed sovereignty?"	Encourages personal responsibility, increasing engagement.
Basic Anchoring	"Climate change is one of the biggest challenges we face today... It's happening now!"	Uses strong, urgent language to establish climate change as an immediate issue.

	"We all have a role to play!"	Direct appeal to the audience's responsibility.
	"\$38 trillion - the cost of inaction on climate change."	Introduces a large number to influence perception of economic impact.
	"The question isn't whether we can afford to act – but whether we can afford not to?"	Uses rhetorical questioning to prompt reflection and urgency.
Counter Anchoring	"Hypothetically, if CO2 was good for the planet..."	Uses a hypothetical scenario to challenge assumptions.
	"We have to get to something that is sustainable... tautologically it's unsustainable."	Uses tautology to emphasize the unsustainability of fossil fuels.
	"We have to get to something sustainable... We can't keep running the same experiment forever."	Highlights the necessity of change by rejecting the status quo.
Debiasing Anchoring	"It's not just about us, it's about the entire ecosystem."	Reframes the issue beyond human centered perspectives.
	"It's our collective responsibility to care for the Earth."	Establishes moral obligation and collective responsibility.
	"The Earth unites all living things it's not just ours."	Uses implicit contrast to challenge the anthropocentric bias.

FINDINGS

Tabel 2. Distribution of Anchoring Types Percentage

Anchoring Type	Number of Data	Percentage (%)
Comparative Anchoring	5	33.33%
Basic Anchoring	4	26.67%
Counter Anchoring	3	20.00%
Debiasing Anchoring	3	20.00%
Total	15	100%

1. COMPARATIVE ANCHORING



Figure 1. Comparative Anchoring of Past and Present Seed

Link: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DFdHe7gKmSs/?igsh=djR1YTdyeWJyandj>

The video primarily uses Comparative Anchoring, as it contrasts past and present seed ownership and diversity. By stating that 100 years ago, seeds were mainly saved and shared by farmers, but now over two-thirds are owned by petrochemical companies, the speaker emphasizes the drastic shift. The reduction of cabbage varieties from 544 in 1903 to just 28 further reinforces this comparison, anchoring the audience's perception of seed sovereignty loss.

1. **Semantic Framing:** The phrase "**over two-thirds of the world's seeds are owned by petrochemical companies**" presents the issue as corporate control over food production. This makes the situation seem urgent and problematic. By stating "**we need to reclaim them,**" the speaker frames seed sovereignty as something necessary and just, encouraging the audience to see it as an important cause.

2. **Persuasive Discourse Strategies:** The video uses statistics to strengthen its argument. For example, it highlights the drastic reduction in seed varieties, from 544 types of cabbage in 1903 to just 28 today. It also presents data on seed imports and exports, making the issue of seed control feel real and urgent.

A strong call to action is used to engage the audience. The phrase "**Will you play a role in seed sovereignty?**" encourages personal responsibility, making viewers feel like they can contribute to the solution. This increases the persuasive effect of the message.

The video also appeals to emotions by linking seed control to "**food security.**" This creates a sense of fear and responsibility, making the audience more likely to take the issue seriously and take action.

3. **Pragmatic Analysis:** Without directly saying that corporations are harming food security, the speaker implies this by linking corporate seed ownership to declining biodiversity and food insecurity. This technique, known as implicature, allows the message to be clear without making explicit accusations.

The video also emphasizes contrast to make its point. By comparing the past, when farmers shared seeds freely, to the present, where corporations control most seeds, the message highlights how privatization has negatively impacted food security. Instead of directly stating that privatization is harmful, the video lets the audience come to that conclusion on their own.

Through these linguistic techniques, the video effectively persuades its audience, reinforcing the **comparative anchoring** strategy by contrasting past and present seed control.

1. Figure 2



Figure 2. Comparative Anchoring of Fact and Reality

Link: <https://youtube.com/shorts/-L FfbhRy I?si=5EtV VSRdFkIwRx0>

The post utilizes Comparative Anchoring because it explicitly contrasts two numerical values: the target of 40% emissions cut versus the reality of a 10% increase. By presenting these figures side by side, the audience is forced to consider the gap between the ideal and actual situation, reinforcing the urgency of climate action. This anchoring strategy makes the failure to meet climate goals more striking and impactful.

1. Semantic Framing

The use of “FACT” versus “REALITY” frames the issue as a stark contrast between what should happen and what is happening. The phrasing suggests that the needed action is objective and unquestionable, while the reality is a concerning deviation, shaping the reader’s perception of climate inaction as

a crisis.

2. Persuasive Discourse Strategies

The caption includes a **call to action** with phrases like “we need to drive change even more,” which motivates the audience to take responsibility. The phrase “We are missing our goals by a far amount” amplifies the emotional impact, making the shortfall feel severe and unacceptable.

3. Pragmatic Analysis

The text implies an urgent need for corrective action without directly blaming specific actors. By stating “**Climate Actions needed VS. Climate Action taken,**” the post subtly critiques current efforts, pushing the audience to infer that policymakers and society must do more. The contrast between the numbers also serves as an **implicature** that if no stronger action is taken, the consequences will worsen.

2. BASIC ANCHORING

1. Figure 1



Figure 3. Basic Anchoring of A Value or Information

Source: Facebook

The caption above uses Basic Anchoring, which is a technique where readers are exposed to a value or information without explicit comparison, but are still influenced by the framing provided. In the context of linguistic approach, Basic Anchoring in this caption works through semantic framing, persuasive discourse strategies, and pragmatic analysis.

1. Semantic Framing: The caption frames climate change as a major challenge by using emotionally charged words such as “**biggest challenges**”, “**harming people, animals, and ecosystems**”, and emphasizes urgency with “**it's happening now!**”. This makes the reader accept the urgency of

- the problem without comparing it to other data or scenarios.
2. **Persuasive Discourse Strategies:** The caption uses persuasive strategies such as rhetorical appeals (pathos, ethos, logos), word choices that build engagement **“we all have a role to play”**, as well as direct appeals **“Let's take action today for a greener tomorrow.”**. This reinforces the Basic Anchoring effect by embedding the idea without the need for a numerical comparison.
 3. **Pragmatic Analysis:** Through presupposition, the caption assumes that climate change is a reality that must be addressed immediately, without making room for other perspectives. Directive speech acts such as **“We all have a role to play!”** also make clear the intention to influence the reader's actions.

2. Figure 2



Figure 4. Basic Anchoring The Cost of Climate Change

Link:

https://www.instagram.com/p/C7sAgH_McN1/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==

This post uses **Basic Anchoring** because it presents a large number (\$38 trillion) as an initial reference without explicit comparison before inviting the audience to consider the impact. By presenting this figure right at the beginning, the reader is influenced by the figure in assessing the cost of climate change. Later, this figure is used in various perspectives (e.g., compared to the EU GDP) to reinforce its influence.

1. **Semantic Framing:** This post portrays climate change as an economic burden, not just an environmental issue. By emphasizing big numbers like **“\$38 trillion”** and mentioning that **“it's cheaper to act now,”** the message appeals more to those who care about the financial impact than just ecological issues.
2. **Persuasive Discourse Strategies:**
Rhetorical Questions like **“The question isn't whether we can afford to act - but whether we can afford not to?”** make the reader think that inaction would be more costly. It reinforces urgency without making room for alternative answers. Call to Action appears in calls like **“Sign our action telling G20 nations...”**. This sentence directly encourages the reader to act, making the issue feel more personal and urgent.
3. **Pragmatic Analysis:**

The implicature in this post implies that if we don't act now, we will face more costly consequences in the future. This makes immediate action seem like the most sensible option.

Deixis with the words “we” and “our” creates a sense of community. This makes the reader feel part of a collective movement, and thus more compelled to care and

3. COUNTER ANCHORING

1. Figure 1



Figure 5. Counter Anchoring of Opposite hypothetical Scenario

Link: <https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSMstgrN1/>

The text in this video demonstrates Counter Anchoring, where the speaker challenges the common assumption that CO₂ is harmful to the environment by presenting an opposite hypothetical scenario. By stating **“hypothetically CO₂ was good for the environment,”** the speaker plants a new idea before eventually returning to the main argument about energy sustainability. This technique is used to highlight the absurdity of an extreme view to make the audience more receptive to the point of view.

1. Semantic Framing: The speaker uses hypothetical framing with the phrase **“let's say hypothetically”**, in order for the audience to consider alternative viewpoints before returning to a more plausible reality.
2. Persuasive Discourse Strategies: He applies Reductio ad absurdum, which is making extreme assumptions (CO₂ is good and the US has all the world's oil) to show the bad impact. In addition, he uses rhetorical questions (**“I just don't understand why we'd run that experiment”**) to challenge the logic of defending fossil fuels.
3. Pragmatic Analysis: The statement **“we have to get to something that is sustainable... tautologically it's unsustainable”** suggests that fossil energy will run out, so renewable energy is a must. He also uses implication, where without stating it directly, he makes the audience understand that maintaining fossil energy will be bad for the economy.

2. Figure 2



Figure 6. Counter Anchoring of Scientific Evidence of Climate Change

Link:

https://www.tiktok.com/@bumijourney/photo/7434537035320397111?is_from_web_app=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=7416252511612552720

The post incorporates Counter Anchoring because it initially presents a false claim such as **“Global warming is just a natural cycle and will fix itself”** and then directly refutes it with factual information **“While Earth has natural cycles, human actions\ like burning fossil fuels are making global warming happen so fast that Earth can't keep up”**. This method reduces the impact of the initial false anchor by providing a counter-anchor backed by scientific evidence, guiding the audience toward a more accurate understanding of climate change.

1. Semantic Framing:

The false claim is framed as a common misconception, but the subsequent correction reframes global warming as an urgent, human-induced crisis. This shift in framing emphasizes that the issue is not merely a natural cycle but a critical challenge that requires immediate action.

2. Persuasive Discourse Strategies:

The use of explicit labels such as “REAL” and “FAKE” simplifies the distinction between correct and incorrect information. This direct contrast, combined with the clear refutation of the false claim, persuades the audience to adopt a more scientifically informed perspective, thereby strengthening the corrective message.

3. Pragmatic Analysis:

By implying that the claim “global warming is just a natural cycle” is unfounded, the text subtly encourages the audience to dismiss uncritical acceptance of that idea. The clear juxtaposition between the false claim

and the corrected facts directs readers to recognize the error in their assumptions, prompting them to seek out more credible sources of information.

Overall, this counter anchoring strategy effectively challenges misleading information by not only presenting an erroneous anchor but also offering a robust counter anchor that reshapes audience perceptions regarding climate change.

4. DEBIASING ANCHORING

1. Figure 1

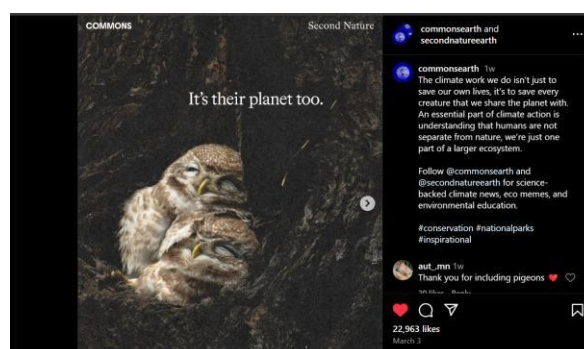


Figure 7. Debiasing Anchoring of A Broader Perspective

Link:

https://www.instagram.com/p/DGtLKRcyXf1/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==

This post can be categorized as Debiasing Anchoring because it tries to reduce human bias towards environmental issues by encouraging audiences to consider a broader perspective. The following is an analysis based on a linguistic approach:

1. **Semantic Framing:** This post uses semantic framing that shifts the focus from a typically human centred environmental issue to a broader perspective of the entire ecosystem. The phrase **"It's their planet too."** frames the earth as belonging to all, not just humans, thus challenging the anthropocentric bias. With this framing, audiences are invited to think about the environmental impact on other species, not just on themselves.
2. **Persuasive Discourse Strategies:** The persuasive strategies in this post are more reflective and ethical than using an alarmist approach. Minimalist statements like **"It's their planet too."** create space for the audience to fill in their own meaning, which can increase cognitive engagement. In addition, the use of Wendell Berry's quote establishes moral credibility and emphasizes that responsibility for the earth is a collective obligation. Visually, the use of peaceful animal images also reinforces the message without the need to present explicit threats or catastrophic imagery.
3. **Pragmatic Analysis:** From a pragmatic perspective, the phrases used contain an implicit contrast indirectly suggesting that humans often consider the earth to belong only to them, although this is not explicitly stated. There is also a presumption in Wendell Berry's quote, namely that

the earth is something that unites all living things, thus reinforcing the concept of sustainability as a shared responsibility. With this approach, the post does not directly criticize humans, but lets the audience realize their own biases.

2. Figure 2



Figure 8. Debiasing Anchoring of Reframing the Issue of Comment Misconception

Link: <https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSrNnyfSV/>

This post is best categorized as Debiasing Anchoring. It challenges the common misconception that **"people don't care about climate change"** by reframing the issue in terms of everyday concerns such as protecting homes from damage, preventing sky-high energy bills, ensuring clean air and water, and safeguarding nature for future generations. In doing so, it mitigates the initial bias by linking the abstract concept of climate change to tangible, relatable consequences.

1. **Semantic Framing:** The post reframes climate change by highlighting concrete issues that people already care about (e.g., house damage, high energy bills, clean air, water, and thriving nature). This shift in framing makes the abstract notion of climate change accessible and urgent.
2. **Persuasive Discourse Strategies:** It uses a series of relatable examples to build a narrative, culminating in the rhetorical question, **"So really people do care about climate change? They just use different words for it."** This strategy encourages the audience to reconsider their assumptions and see the connection between their daily concerns and climate change.
3. **Pragmatic Analysis:** By implicitly criticizing the notion that people are indifferent to climate change, the post uses implicature to suggest that the issue

is significant, though often expressed in different terms. The use of inclusive language (e.g., “people care about...”) creates a sense of shared understanding, prompting the audience to acknowledge their own underlying concerns about climate change.

DISCUSSION

The results show that linguistic-based anchoring strategies especially comparative, basic, counter, and debiasing anchoring techniques have a significant influence in improving the effectiveness of climate action communication within the SDGs framework, especially SDG 13 (Climate Action). Of the 15 data analyzed, comparative anchoring dominates (33.33%), followed by basic anchoring (26.67%), and counter and debiasing anchoring at 20% each. This shows that delivering messages by comparing ideal and reality conditions (for example, loss of seed diversity or emission reduction targets vs. realization) can strengthen public perceptions of the urgency of climate issues.

In terms of linguistic approaches, the communication strategies used successfully convey implicit meanings (implicature), build collective responsibility through deixis such as “we” and “our”, and increase audience emotional and cognitive participation. By using semantic framing, the narrative highlights the climate crisis not only as an environmental issue, but also a moral, social and economic issue. This strategy frames climate change as something that touches people's daily lives - from high energy prices to air pollution and housing destruction. This means that the message becomes more relatable, not just abstract or scientific.

Linked to the communication goals in the SDGs, these findings reinforce the argument that effective communication strategies are key to building collective awareness, strengthening public education, and motivating action. In the context of the SDGs, communication is not only a means of conveying information, but also a transformative instrument to create behavior change. The right language, persuasive framing, and a communication style that encourages active engagement are the foundation of inclusive and impactful communication. Therefore, this study confirms that the integration of linguistic techniques in digital campaigns has the potential to narrow the gap between scientific knowledge and public participation - an important step towards achieving sustainable development goals, especially in the context of climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In achieving SDG 13 (Climate Action), communication goals such as raising awareness, encouraging sustainable behavior, and fostering public participation often face challenges like message fatigue and the abstract nature of climate risks. To address this, the Anchoring Strategy Technique offers a linguistic approach that makes messages more personal and emotionally resonant.

By introducing a key phrase or reference point early such as “*Act now for our children's future*” the message becomes more relatable and memorable. Findings show that anchoring enhances message salience, improves recall, and strengthens behavioral intentions by

emotionally framing climate action as urgent and personally relevant. Through strategic use of repetition, metaphors, and culturally appropriate language, anchoring helps overcome public indifference and boosts engagement. Thus, integrating this technique supports SDG communication goals by making climate messages clearer, more persuasive, and action-oriented.

CONCLUSION

The use of anchoring strategies in climate action communication under the SDGs can significantly improve message clarity, audience engagement, and persuasion. By understanding how language influences perception, communicators can craft more effective messages that inspire public awareness and action against climate change. Future research should explore additional linguistic techniques and their impact on different audience demographics to refine climate action communication further. This study shows that the use of anchor strategies in climate behavioural communication can significantly improve clarity, audience commitment, and persuasive effects in the context of the SDGS framework. Through detailed linguistic analysis, we found that comparison and fundamental fixation effectively highlights the urgency of climate issues by representing strong contrast and numerical evidence, and that the accompanying Anchorage misinformation is controlled by a general misconception investigation. Furthermore, Debias's fixation extends perspectives and combines abstract concepts of climate change with concrete everyday concerns to promote a sense of collective responsibility. By integrating a semantic framework, persuasive discourse strategies and practical analytics, communicators can adapt messages that resonate with a wide range of audiences and motivate real climate measurements. Future research should examine other language technologies and their different effects in different demographic groups to continuously improve communication strategies at global climate interfaces.

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