Research Article

Acronymization of Political Terms in *The Jakarta Post*: A Morphological Study of Political News Discourse

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Abstract

Background: Acronymization has become increasingly prominent in contemporary political journalism, where complex institutional terms are condensed for brevity and immediacy. Although widely perceived as a neutral linguistic device, acronyms can also function as ideological tools that subtly frame political narratives. Purpose: This study aims to analyze the morphological processes and discursive functions of political acronyms in The Jakarta Post. Method: Using Yule's framework of word formation, the study examined political news articles published in July 2025 and identified 39 political acronyms, which were classified into Initialisms, Acronyms, and Multiple-Process formations. The corpus was then analyzed through Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to determine how these forms operate within political discourse. Results: The results indicate that Initialisms are the most dominant word formation process in the data. At the discursive level, acronymization in The Jakarta Post is shown to serve not only textual efficiency but also broader ideological functions. Acronyms carry historical and political connotations that shape public interpretation by foregrounding authority, institutional identity, and power relations. Conclusion: The study concludes that acronymization in political reporting is both a linguistic and ideological practice that contributes to constructing political meaning within media discourse. This highlights its significance as a communicative strategy in an era of media convergence and digitalized political communication.

Keywords: acronymization, morphology, word formation, political discourse, The Jakarta Post

INTRODUCTION

Language is a way to do the interaction with others and express the feelings or emotions. In general, languages are also related to society. According to Trudgil, "Language is not just a way to get weather information or other objects. However, it is also a very effective way to build and maintain relationships with others"(Trudgill, 2000). Like the establishment of a particular community so that communicating with each other, in their association, can form a new word and make new meanings too. When a new word comes to the forefront of a trend, people will use it in everyday life because the Language in society is connected.

Language plays an important role in the construction and communication of political realities. In political news discourse, journalists often employ linguistic strategies that make information accessible, persuasive, and ideologically meaningful. One of the most frequent

strategies in political reporting is acronymization, the process of reducing multi-word expressions into shorter and more memorable forms. Acronyms are particularly common in political contexts where complex organizational names, parties, and institutions need to be repeatedly mentioned. For instance, terms such as PDIP (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle), PKI (Indonesian Communist Party), and SOEs (state-owned enterprises) are regularly encountered in Indonesian political discourse. These abbreviated forms are not merely convenient; they also carry ideological, historical, and cultural associations that shape readers' interpretations of political events.

In the Indonesian context, The Jakarta Post holds a unique position as the leading English-language newspaper aimed at both domestic elites and an international readership. Its use of political acronyms is not only a matter of linguistic economy but also a reflection of the newspaper's discursive practices. Acronyms allow The Jakarta Post to simultaneously align with international journalistic standards and respond to the local socio-political context. However, while political acronyms are widely circulated, their linguistic formation and discourse functions have not received sufficient scholarly attention. Previous research has largely examined political discourse in terms of rhetoric, ideology, or media framing, but few studies have focused on acronymization as a morphological and discursive phenomenon.

Scholarly discussions on acronyms in political contexts have long revolved around two contrasting views. The first holds that acronyms are ideologically neutral, functioning primarily as tools of linguistic economy and journalistic convenience. From this perspective, their use in media texts is governed by communicative efficiency—shortening long institutional names and aiding readability. The second, more critical perspective, argues that acronyms are political instruments that shape discourse and meaning. Proponents of this view contend that acronymization can conceal or foreground particular ideological stances, influence framing, and even legitimize political entities through linguistic familiarity or repetition. For instance, the consistent use of certain acronyms can naturalize political power structures or frame policy narratives in ways that favor specific groups.

This study engages with that debate by investigating how acronymization functions in political news discourse of The Jakarta Post—Indonesia's leading English-language newspaper. By examining the morphological patterns and ideological implications of political acronyms, the research seeks to determine whether these linguistic forms operate as neutral lexical conventions or as rhetorical strategies that convey political alignment. The Jakarta Post offers a valuable corpus for such analysis because of its dual role as a national publication and an English-language medium that often mediates between domestic political realities and international readership expectations.

Methodologically, the study employs morphological and discourse analysis to identify patterns in the formation, usage, and contextual deployment of acronyms within political news articles. It focuses on how these acronyms are introduced, repeated, and embedded in sentence structures to create particular rhetorical or ideological effects. The analysis further explores how the process of acronymization interacts with media framing, lexical choice, and narrative construction.

By integrating morphological theory with critical discourse analysis, this research contributes to both linguistic and media studies. It extends existing morphological research beyond word formation mechanics to include socio-political dimensions of language use. Moreover, it challenges the assumption of ideological neutrality by demonstrating that acronymization can function as a subtle discursive strategy—reinforcing institutional legitimacy, constructing national identity, or framing political alliances. In doing so, the study

highlights the importance of morphology not only as a structural aspect of language but also as a site of ideological negotiation in political communication.

The present study seeks to address this gap by analysing the acronymization of political terms in The Jakarta Post. Drawing upon word formation theory (Yule, 2006; Bauer, 1983; Plag, 2003) the study classifies the types of acronyms found in political news discourse. In addition, the analysis is informed by Fairclough's (Fairclough, 2013) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which views language as a form of social practice. This dual framework allows the study to explore acronymization not only as a linguistic process but also as a discursive strategy embedded in broader socio-political contexts.

Accordingly, the research is guided by the following questions:

1. What types of word-formation processes, particularly acronymization, are used for political terms in The Jakarta Post*?*
2. How do these acronyms function within the political discourse of the newspaper?

By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to both morphological studies of word formation and critical discourse analysis of political communication. It highlights the role of acronymization as a site where linguistic economy intersects with ideological representation, thereby demonstrating how even the most abbreviated forms of language can participate in the construction of political realities.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Word Formation Processes

Word formation processes are fundamental mechanisms in linguistics that shape the structure of words within a language. These processes involve the systematic modification of base forms to create new words, convey different grammatical categories, or change the meaning. In linguistics, the study of word formation refers to morphology. Yule (Yule, 2005) categorizes word formation processes in English into compounding, blending, clipping, borrowing, and acronymization, among others. Acronymization refers to the process of forming new lexical items from the initial letters of multi-word sequences. Bauer (Bauer, 1983) and Plag (Plag, 2018) further emphasize the productivity of acronyms in modern English, particularly in institutional and political contexts, where efficiency and memorability are valued. Katamba (Katamba, 1993) also highlights acronyms as part of broader morphological strategies that reflect social and pragmatic needs.

Acronyms in Political Discourse

According to Carstirs-Mc Carthy (Carstairs-McCarthy, 2018), the abbreviation consolidates the first letter of each word, but this does not imply that every first letter can be considered an abbreviation. Yule (Yule, 2010) defines acronyms are new words formed from the initial letters of a series of other words, as NATO words taken from the augmentation of the "North Atlantic Treaty Organization". Meanwhile, Political acronyms serve more than linguistic purposes; they also function as identity markers and ideological tools. Acronyms like PDIP and PKI not only identify political parties but also signal alignment with certain historical and ideological positions. In international politics, acronyms such as ASEAN and UNESCO frame regional and global affiliations. Studies on political language (Beard, 2000) have noted that acronyms increase the symbolic power of political actors by making them more recognizable in media discourse.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) originated in Europe. CDA was first introduced by Roger Fowler and fellow scholars in the 1970s and covers the study of applied discourse analysis. CDA discusses many aspects of the world which relate to society, culture, ideology, and power. One of many prominent figures of CDA is Norman Fairclough. CDA derives itself from the text and social analysis. Fairclough (2013) focuses CDA on social relations. In Fairclough's framework, text analysis and social value and criticism are used together, which created the three-dimensional CDA analysis framework which the study of it becomes broader by combining textual analysis and social relations.

Fairclough's (Fairclough, 2013) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides a three-dimensional model to examine language as social practice: (1) textual analysis, (2) discursive practice, and (3) social practice. This framework is particularly relevant for analysing acronyms in political discourse, since it highlights how linguistic forms are produced, distributed, and interpreted within broader ideological and historical contexts. CDA scholars such as van Dijk (Dijk, 1998) and Wodak (Wodak, 2007) also stress the role of discourse in reproducing power and social inequality, reinforcing the need to treat acronyms as ideologically loaded signs rather than neutral abbreviations.

Recent scholarship on political communication increasingly situates language within the dynamics of digital media, multimodality, and branding. Studies such as (Putra, 2022) and (Santosa & Rahmawati, 2023) demonstrate how political actors use social media platforms to construct digital identities and promote ideological narratives through hashtags, slogans, and abbreviations. Similarly, investigations into political branding and persuasive abbreviation in Indonesian election campaigns reveal how linguistic condensation fosters memorability and emotional appeal. Despite these advances, few studies have examined the morphological formation of acronyms as a key site of ideological negotiation. Most analyses remain descriptive, focusing on communicative function rather than structural form. By combining morphological analysis with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the present study extends current debates beyond digital and multimodal contexts to reveal how acronymization in The Jakarta Post operates as a subtle mechanism of ideological framing in print political discourse.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach. The data consist of political news articles collected from The Jakarta Post on July 2025. Articles containing political acronyms were purposively sampled. The acronyms were identified, classified, and analysed based on Yule's (Yule, 2005) framework of word formation, with reference to Bauer (Bauer, 1983) and Plag (Plag, 2018) for extended categorization.

For the discourse dimension, Fairclough's (Fairclough, 2013) CDA model was employed. Each acronym was analysed at the textual level (form and usage), discursive practice level (production and consumption by journalists and readers), and social practice level (broader ideological and political significance). This combined approach allows the study to capture both the micro-level morphological processes and the macro-level discursive functions of acronymization.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Types of Acronymization
Acronyms (pronounced as words)

ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), *DEN* (National Economic Council), *PAN* (National Mandate Party), *NU* (Nahdlatul Ulama), *SOEs* (State-Owned Enterprises), *Kodam* (The Army), Lesperssi (the Indonesia Institute for Defense and Strategic Studies), *CELIOS* The Center of Economic and Law Studies.

Initialisms (pronounced letter by letter)

AGO (Attorney General's Office), *PBHI* (Indonesian Legal Aid and Human Rights Association), *CSIS* (Centre for Strategic and International Studies), *PDIP* (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan), *MPR* (People's Consultative Assembly), *RPKAD* (Resimen Para Komando Angkatan Darat).

Mixed forms

Kontras (the Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence), *GoTo* Gojek Tokopedia.

These categories confirm the productivity of acronymization in political discourse, aligning with Yule's typology and extending it with context-specific hybrid forms.

The results of the acronyms classification are presented in the following table:
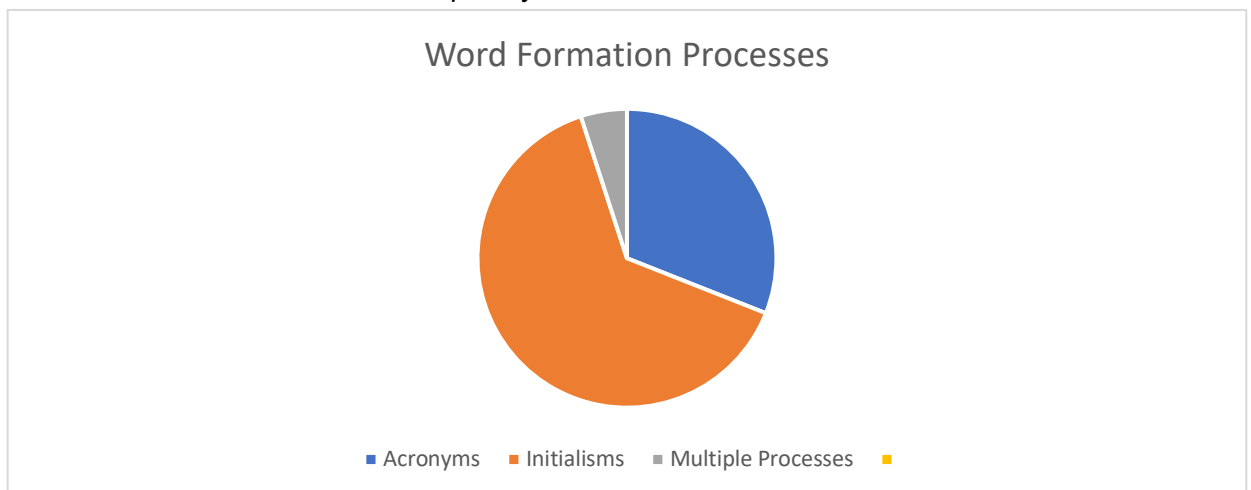
Table 1. Types of Acronymization

No.	Acronyms	Full Form	Word Formation
1	DEN	National Economic Council	Acronyms
2	PSBI	PT Pilar Sinergi BUMN Indonesia	Initialisms
3	PPI	PT Perdagangan Indonesia	Initialisms
4	SOEs	State-Owned Enterprises	Acronyms
5	PBHI	The Indonesian Legal Aid and Human Rights Association	Initialisms
6	AGO	The Attorney General's Office's	Initialisms
7	PDIP	Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle	Initialisms
8	RPKAD	The Army's Special Forces	Initialisms
9	PKI	Indonesian Communist Party	Initialisms
10	CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies	Initialisms
11	APHR	ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights	Initialisms
12	TNI	The Indonesian Military	Initialisms
13	MPR	People's Consultative Assembly	Initialisms
14	KPK	The Corruption Eradication Commission	Initialisms
15	BPK	The Supreme Audit Agency	Initialisms
16	PKB	The National Awakening Party	Initialisms
17	NU	Nahdlatul Ulama	Acronyms
18	PPHN	The So-called State Policy Outlines	Initialisms
19	GBHN	The now-defunct state policy guidelines	Initialisms
20	PAN	National Mandate Party	Acronyms
21	PSHK	The Indonesian Centre for Law and Policy Studies	Initialisms

22	RPJPN	Long Term Development Plans	Initialisms
23	RPJMN	Medium Term Development Plans	Initialisms
24	Kontras	The Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence	Clipping + Acronym (Multiple Processes)
25	AKSI	The Indonesian Historical Transparency Alliance	Initialisms
26	Kodam	The Army	Acronyms
27	Kodaeral	The Navy	Acronyms
28	Kodau	The Air Force	Acronyms
29	Kopassus	The Army's Special Forces	Acronyms
30	Kopasgat	The Air Force's Rapid Force Corps	Acronyms
31	Lesperssi	The Indonesia Institute for Defense and Strategic Studies	Acronyms
32	ISESS	The Institute for Security and Strategic Studies	Acronyms
33	PPATK	Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	Initialisms
34	CDD	Customer Due Diligence	Initialisms
35	EDD	Enhanced Due Diligence	Initialisms
36	CELIOS	The Center of Economic and Law Studies	Acronyms
37	OJK	The Financial Services Authority	Initialisms
38	DPP	The party's central executive board	Initialisms
39	GoTo	Gojek Tokopedia	Blending + Brand Coinage (Multiple Processes)

Description: Word Formation Processes of the Acronyms of Political Terms in the Jakarta Post Political News

Chart 1. Frequency of Word Formation Process

Description: Frequency of Acronyms Word Formation Processes of Political Terms in the Jakarta Post

The analysis of chart frequency of acronyms word formation processes of political terms in The Jakarta Post Political News Discourse was found that the predominant type of Word Formation Process of the Acronyms is Initialisms. The second type which frequent appears is Acronyms. The third type which is less appear is Multiple Processes. Initialisms are abbreviation formed from the first letter of words, where each letter is pronounced

separately. Acronyms are abbreviations formed from the first letters of a phrase or words, but unlike initialisms, acronyms are pronounced as a single word. Multiple process combined which is in the finding Multiple Processes: Clipping + Acronyms and Blending + Coinage.

Functions in Political News Discourse
Textual Level (Description)

In the textual level, the focus is in the linguistic features, vocabulary, grammar and rhetorical strategies. There are three parts in textual level analysis. First, Acronymization & Brevity is Institutions and parties are mostly represented by acronyms (*PDIP, PKI, OJK, KPK*). This makes texts concise but also carries ideological and historical weight. Second, Lexical Choice Acronyms like *KPK* (anti-corruption) are associated with positive legitimacy, while *PKI* evokes negative historical stigma. Third, Nominalization & Abstraction is using acronyms (instead of descriptive names) abstracts institutions, depersonalizing them into symbols of authority or ideology. Fourth, Intertextuality is Some acronyms (*CSIS, APHR, GoTo*) link Indonesian discourse with international/global contexts.

Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

In the Discursive Practice, the focus is on how texts are produced, distributed and consumed. Acronyms' index specialized political knowledge. Domestic readers decode *PDIP* and *PKI* easily, while international readers rely on explanatory context. Journalists thus balance brevity and clarity. First, Production is The Jakarta Post employs acronyms in line with journalistic norms — prioritizing space efficiency, readability, and credibility. Political institutions themselves promote acronyms for branding (*PDIP, PAN*). Second, Distribution is Acronyms are widely circulated in news and political discourse, creating a shared "short-hand" for political actors. For insiders, they are immediately legible; for outsiders, they may require explanation. Third, Consumption is for Local readers are able to instantly understand acronyms due to familiarity with Indonesian political institutions. Meanwhile, For International readers, some acronyms (*SOEs, CSIS*) resonate globally, while others (*GBHN, PPHN*) may require contextualization.

Social Practice (Explanation)

In the Social Practice, the focus is in ideology, power relations and broader socio-cultural context. First, Power & Legitimacy is Acronyms naturalize political institutions, presenting them as stable, authoritative entities. For example, *MPR* and *KPK* appear as unquestioned symbols of governance. Second, Historical Memory is Acronyms like *PKI* reactivate Indonesia's traumatic political past (1965), showing how discourse sustains ideological struggles. Acronyms carry ideological weight. Third, Knowledge & Exclusion is Acronym-heavy discourse creates an in-group (political elites, educated readers) versus out-group (ordinary citizens unfamiliar with acronyms). Fourth, Global–Local Tensions Acronyms such as *SOEs, OJK, GoTo* bridge local politics/economics with global financial discourse, situating Indonesia in the international neoliberal order. Fifth, Normalization of Bureaucracy is Heavy use of acronyms reflects Indonesia's bureaucratic culture, where institutions are seen as central to governance, sometimes overshadowing individual political actors. *SOEs* reinforces state-led economic discourse and *PDIP* functions as a political brand. Through acronymization, The Jakarta Post both reflects and shapes political narratives in Indonesia.

DISCUSSION

This study has examined the acronymization of political terms in The Jakarta Post through the combined lens of word formation theory and critical discourse analysis. The findings reveal that acronymization is a highly productive process in political news discourse, serving not only as a strategy of linguistic economy but also as a discursive practice laden with ideological and historical meanings.

By classifying acronyms morphologically, the study confirms the central role of acronymization in political journalism. By analysing their discursive functions, the study highlights how acronyms operate as tools of identity construction, ideological framing, and political branding.

The analysis of Morphological Study of Acronymization of Political Terms in the Jakarta Post Political News Discourse resulted two predominant types of word formation processes: initialisms and acronyms. The less dominant type is multiple processes which combine two word-formations in producing new words, they are clipping + acronyms and blending + coinage.

The Critical Discourse Analysis of Acronymization of Political Terms in the Jakarta Post Political News Discourse resulted three analysis such as textual level, discursive practice and social practice. First, Textual Level focus in linguistic features, vocabulary, grammar and rhetorical strategies. So, it focuses on the description of text. Second, Discursive Practice focuses on how texts are produced, distributed and consumed. So, it focuses on how the interpretation works on various readers. Third, Social Practice focuses in ideology, power, relations and broader socio-cultural context. So, it explains on how the social practice of ideology, culture, power is implemented in social norms.

Theoretically, the research demonstrates the value of integrating morphological analysis with discourse studies. Practically, it underscores the importance of paying attention to even the most condensed linguistic forms, as they often carry disproportionate socio-political significance.

The analysis shows that acronymization operates at the intersection of morphology and discourse. It was found that the predominant type of Word Formation Process of the Acronyms is Initialisms. Initialisms are abbreviation formed from the first letter of words, where each letter is pronounced separately. The second type which frequent appears is Acronyms. Acronyms are abbreviations formed from the first letters of a phrase or words, but unlike initialisms, acronyms are pronounced as a single word. The third type which is less appear is Multiple Processes. Multiple process combined which is in the finding Multiple Processes: Clipping + Acronyms and Blending + Coinage. On one hand, it demonstrates linguistic economy and productivity in word formation.

On the other hand, it embodies ideological and historical significance, illustrating Fairclough's view that language is in textual level, discursive practice and social practice. First, Textual Level focus in linguistic features, vocabulary, grammar and rhetorical strategies. So, it focuses on the description of text. Second, Discursive Practice focuses on how texts are produced, distributed and consumed. So, it focuses on how the interpretation works on various readers. Third, Social Practice focuses in ideology, power, relations and broader socio-cultural context. So, it explains on how the social practice of ideology, culture, power is implemented in social norms. Therefore, Acronyms in The Jakarta Post are thus both morphological products and discursive tools that contribute to the reproduction of political ideologies.

The integration of morphological analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in this study allows structural linguistic features to be interpreted as carriers of ideological

meaning. For instance, when political entities such as *KPK* (*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi*) or *PAN* (*Partai Amanat Nasional*) are acronymized, the morphological reduction simultaneously functions as a rhetorical strategy that promotes institutional familiarity and ideological legitimacy. Morphologically, these acronyms exhibit truncation and abbreviation, but discursively, they construct authority and public trust through repetition and lexical economy. By categorizing the acronyms according to their formation types such as initialism, acronym and multiple process. This study demonstrates how linguistic condensation aligns with ideological positioning. Thus, the morphological structure of an acronym is not an isolated linguistic phenomenon but an index of power relations and media framing.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the process of acronymization in political news discourse of *The Jakarta Post* to uncover how morphological structures can convey ideological meaning. By combining morphological analysis with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the research revealed that acronyms in political reporting function not only as linguistic shortcuts but also as instruments of ideological framing. Acronymization shapes readers' perceptions by constructing familiarity, authority, and legitimacy around political entities. The findings demonstrate that language economy in media is inseparable from the socio-political intentions embedded within it.

The study contributes methodologically and theoretically to the fields of morphology and media linguistics. It illustrates how linguistic form interacts with discourse structure, suggesting that morphology should be studied not merely as a system of word formation but as a discursive mechanism capable of encoding ideology. In doing so, it bridges the gap between formal linguistics and critical approaches, showing that morphological patterns such as clipping, initialism, and blending can participate in ideological negotiation within political communication.

Future research should compare acronymization across different media outlets or languages, or conduct diachronic studies on how the meanings of political acronyms evolve over time. Such studies would further illuminate the relationship between word formation, discourse, and political communication. In conclusion, acronymization in The Jakarta Post exemplifies how small linguistic forms can play a major role in shaping political realities.

This research advances linguistic theory by situating morphology within ideological discourse. It argues that morphological processes are contextually motivated, shaped by institutional and communicative power. Integrating morphological categorization with CDA expands the analytical reach of both disciplines, providing a model for investigating how linguistic form contributes to meaning-making in political and media contexts. Furthermore, in an age of media convergence, the findings highlight the adaptability of morphological economy across genres—demonstrating how linguistic compression used in print discourse continues to influence digital and hybrid media environments.

For media analysts and journalists, the findings emphasize the need for reflective acronym use. Editorial teams should ensure transparency by introducing full forms before using acronyms and by avoiding abbreviation practices that may inadvertently privilege certain political actors. For educators and curriculum designers, incorporating morphological awareness into language and media courses can strengthen critical literacy—helping students identify the ideological implications of seemingly neutral linguistic forms. Using authentic examples from The Jakarta Post and digital political discourse can

foster analytical skills that promote sustainable media literacy in a convergent communication landscape.

While this study focused on acronymization in the political news discourse of The Jakarta Post, future research can expand its scope in several ways. First, comparative studies across digital media platforms—such as online news portals, social media, or citizen journalism—could explore how acronymization evolves within more interactive and multimodal environments. This would reveal whether the ideological patterns found in print discourse persist or transform in the networked public sphere. Second, a corpus-based or computational linguistic approach could provide quantitative evidence of acronym frequency, contextual variation, and discursive functions across larger datasets. Third, cross-linguistic or cross-cultural analyses could investigate how political acronymization operates in multilingual societies, examining how English-based acronyms coexist or compete with local linguistic forms. Finally, future studies may integrate audience reception analysis to understand how readers interpret and emotionally respond to political acronyms. Such extensions would not only deepen the theoretical link between morphology and ideology but also enhance the practical understanding of language's role in shaping political consciousness in an era of globalized media convergence.

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