CDA's Analysis of the Covid-19 Hoax:
The Message Behind the Message

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Abstract

During the Covid-19 pandemic, many hoaxes were circulating through various platforms on the internet. As the name implies, hoaxes are false, misleading, and counterproductive to reduce or eliminate coronavirus transmission. This study aims to find out more deeply the meaning behind hoax messages so that the results can be used as a basis for understanding hoaxes and preventing their spread in the future. Critical discourse analysis from Norman Fairclough was chosen as a theory as well as an analytical tool. Hoax messages that have been selected are analyzed in three levels, namely Social structures, Social practices, and Social events. Hoaxes were chosen from three pandemic periods: the pandemic's beginning, during the pandemic, and the pandemic's peak. The study results found that hoaxes were made as simple as possible so that recipients easily understood, agreed, and spread the message. Hoax creators also consider the multimodal aspect where messages must be combined appropriately between text, images, and videos. This makes the hoax message even more convincing. The more ultimate findings show several things that stand out: the use of religious sentiments, distrust in Covid-19 and distrust in the government in handling the Covid-19 pandemic, and the 2019 election residue.

Keywords: *hoax, Covid-19 pandemic, CDA*

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 has brought the world into crisis. The daily routine changes slow down or even stops when the virus spreads in an area. Options for lockdown or limited mobility make human activities change. Many activities such as learning, coordinating work, or buying and selling have been done online.

This is reasonable considering the number of victims of Covid-19 around the world has penetrated large numbers. Since it was declared a pandemic in March 2020, until July 9, 2021, 185,291,530 people were confirmed to be COVID-19, 4,010,834 died (WHO, 2021). Meanwhile, in Indonesia 2,491,006 people were positive, 2,052,109 recovered, and 65,457 died (KPC-PEN, 2021). In modern times, this figure has never been achieved by any other disease.

The economic aspect is disrupted, and economic growth cannot be achieved. All efforts are being made to contain this pandemic. Because the government imposes restrictions on people's mobility, the government must assist the community. Projects that are in the form of development must be postponed or suspended.

In conditions like this, other things worsen the situation, namely the circulation of hoaxes around this covid. Hoax is often also called fake news. These fake or hoax stories – intentionally or not – provide false information or deceive audiences. Typically, these stories are created to influence people's views, push a political agenda, or cause confusion and can often be a lucrative business for online publishers (Brennen, 2017). Fake news can deceive people because the sources mostly use names and web addresses similar to those of leading news organizations. There are also cases where fake news is produced accidentally, but it may also confuse and mislead the audience (Mavridis, 2018). In general, hoaxes are fake

news or fake news. An act intended to trick people into believing something is actual when it is not (Info, 2018). Still referring to the same source, the word hoax has an etymology: the term hoax is believed to be from hocus, or something sputtered, and there is also hokum, a blend of hocus-pocus and "bunkum" or "bunk".

In international literature, not all academics use the term hoax. The terms that are often used are disinformation and misinformation. Disinformation is partially true and false information and is used intentionally by individuals or governments to mislead (Fallis, 2015). While disinformation is misinformation that is intentionally used to deceive, misinformation is misinformation, but it can be unintentional (Agarwal & Alsaeedi, 2020). Hoax is fake news, information that does not contain accuracy, not because the maker is not careful, but because it is intentional. Therefore, the aspect of intentionality becomes essential in discussing the production of hoaxes. However, the actors in hoaxes must be divided into two, namely the maker and the spreader. The makers deliberately create hoaxes whose contents are misleading as they wish, but for those who spread hoaxes, there could be other reasons they spread hoaxes, such as common understanding of hoaxes, ignorance, or joining in (Susilo, Afifi, & Yustitia, 2020).

Even though fake news, fake news, or hoaxes have existed for a long time, hoaxes are like finding fertile land through the internet. One of the reasons is the nature of the internet which has a space of anonymity. Cirucci defines anonymity as the inability to link one trait or set of features to the originator of those traits. A person remains anonymous when one identification cannot be tied back to another. For example, when a social media account owner creates a fake account, they have entered anonymity. However, the account cannot be linked to the real identity of the account owner in the real world (Cirruci, 2015).

Based on information from the Ministry of Communication and Information of the Republic of Indonesia, as of August 5, 2020, 1,016 Covid hoax issues were spread across 1,912 digital platforms (Farisa, 2020). Furthermore, as of July 11, 2021, Kominfo conveyed that 1,807 hoax content for the COVID-19 vaccine had been found on various social media platforms (Vidi, 2021). That amount will be shared across multiple platforms by millions of people. Therefore, it can be predicted how many hoaxes are developing in the community.

Numerous types of hoaxes about covid-19 have developed since the virus's spread began until this research was written, or roughly 1.5 years after the virus was declared a pandemic. The content of a hoax can be religious, political, economic, or even medical. Distribution is accomplished via a variety of media, the most prominent of which is digital media. This medium is capable of rapidly disseminating information. However, all hoaxes have a terrible impact because they can be the basis for making wrong decisions.

Through the Ministry of Communication and Informatics, the government and many elements of society continue to try to eradicate hoaxes. What are the efforts to increase people's digital literacy, take down hoaxes or accounts, and some have reached the legal process? However, until now, the hoax seems to continue to flow.

The impact of hoaxes can be counterproductive to the government's efforts to eradicate the spread of Covid-19. Information that cannot be accounted for can erode public confidence in information from the government. If this pandemic continues to drag on, the burden on the government will be even heavier, and the economic recovery will be further away. Therefore, researchers intend to dig deeper into what is behind the hoaxes surrounding Covid-19. Generally, researchers are more interested in examining the spread and impact of exposure to hoaxes than in reviewing the hoax content (Juditha, 2018; Juliswara, 2017; Susilo et al., 2020). hoax prevention in the future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Discourse analysis is a term that comprises many different approaches to language, both in theory and in the method. Some practices find their origin in linguistics and literary studies, but others in sociology, psychology, or anthropology. Nevertheless, they all share an interest in text analysis and speech, and their focus is on the language used. However, within this starting point's theoretical and methodological foundations, discourse analysis emerges as a contested field.

Discourse analysts propose steps in thinking about the realm of language, especially in the forms of discourse associated with poststructuralism and postmodernism. Language is no longer seen as a passive medium that conveys information smoothly about the world out there and the people think about this world. Instead, it is conceptualized as an active and constructed tool that shapes the world around us. Language is understood as a construction rather than a reflection of what "really happened."

This conception of language inspired an active critique of the implicit assumption of language as neutral, which is still prevalent in most social science research. As a result, various forms of discourse analysis have evolved, depending on how the notion of context is understood and the influence associated with people versus structure (Stephen Littlejohn, 2009).

Discourse develops and has many variants, both syntagmatic and paradigmatic. The term "critical discourse analysis" refers to the process by which the researcher examines the lesson at the script level in addition to the text's history and context. CDA has two models, Norman Fairclough's model, which has a text having context, and CDA from Ruth Woda k who assesses that text has a history (Hamad, 2007).

So what is CDA analysis? This is not an analysis of discourse "in and of itself," but of the dialectical relationship between discourse and other objects, elements, or moments, as well as an examination of discourse's 'internal relations.' Furthermore, because the analysis of such relationships transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries (linguistics, politics, sociology, and others), CDA is an interdisciplinary, or transdisciplinary, analysis. This term refers to the 'dialogue' between disciplines, theories, and frameworks that occurs during conducting analysis and research and serves as a source of theoretical and methodological development within specific disciplines, theories, and frameworks. (N. Fairclough, 2013b). Social institutions contain various 'ideological-discursive formations' (IDF) associated with different groups within the institution. Usually, one IDF is dominant. Each IDF is a kind of speech community' with its norms of discourse and, embedded within and symbolized by, its own 'ideological norms'. Institutional subjects are constructed according to IDF norms in subject positions whose ideological foundations they may not be aware of. The dominant characteristic of the IDF is the capacity to 'naturalize' ideologies, i.e. to win acceptance for them as non-ideological 'common sense'. It is argued that the regularity of the interaction depends in part on the ideology of naturalization. To 'denaturalize' them is the goal of discourse analysis which adopts a 'critical' goal (N. L. Fairclough, 1985).

CDA brings the critical tradition in social analysis into the study of language and contributes to critical social research with a particular focus on discourse and the relationship between discourse and other social elements (power, ideology, institutions, social identity, and others.). Critical of social analysis is normative and explanatory criticism. This is a normative critique: not only describing existing realities but also evaluating them, assessing the extent to which they fit into values considered (controversially) to be the basis for a just or decent society (e.g., specific requirements for human well-being). This is an explanatory critique: not only describing and evaluating existing realities but attempting to explain them, for example, by showing them to be the effects of structures or mechanisms or forces postulated by analysts and whose realities they wish to examine (e.g., inequalities in wealth, income, and access). For

example, various social goods can be explained as the effects of the mechanisms and forces associated with capitalism or certain types of capitalism). Discourse is used in a variety of senses, including (1) meaning-making as an element of social processes, (2) language related to particular social fields or practices (e.g., 'political discourse'), and (3) ways of interpreting aspects of the world related to social perspectives(N. Fairclough, 2013a).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is qualitative research with a critical approach using CDA from Norman Fairclough as an analytical tool. The reason for choosing Fairclough's n CDA is that the analysis focuses on two dialectic relationships: between structure (primarily social practice as a more concrete level of arrangement) and events (or: structure and action, structure and strategy); and, within each, between semiotics and the other elements (N. Fairclough, 2013a).

The object of research is hoax content that was selected at the beginning of the pandemic (early 2020), during the pandemic (late 2020), and the peak of the pandemic (July 2021), where each period has different issues. Hoax content is taken from the Indonesian Anti-Defamation Society (Mafindo) website, which consistently fights hoaxes in the community.

CDA is based on a realist social ontology (Sayer 2000), which sees concrete social events and abstract social structures as part of social reality. Social structure can be understood as the potential that is selectively actualized in social events – what is possible, as opposed to what is actual. The relationship between social structure and social events is mediated by social practices, which control the selective actualization of potentialities. Diagrammatically these are the levels of analysis: Social structures☐ Social practices☐ Social events.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Social Structure

This level examines the semiotics of the system or language. Hoax message content uses everyday language that most people easily understand. The diction is commonly used in everyday language. There is no foreign term that few people understand. The long side of the sentence also includes a short sentence. Once read or heard, people will believe it. Easy-to-understand language gives the message a chance to be spread by the recipient.

"After it was established that the Corona epidemic did not target Muslims, 20 million Chinese people converted to Islam. Allah demonstrates His majesty." (Chapter 1). This sentence is accompanied by photographs of men with oriental faces standing and being photographed from the side. The recipient will most likely understand the message after reading the sentence and viewing the photo illustration. The way words are written and spelled violates Indonesian spelling rules (Sunendar, 2016). The most frequently used term for writing is Allah, not Allah. Because the final word uses lowercase letters, a hyphen must precede the writing. There is also a typo; namely, a pandemic is written with an epidemic.

The use of figurative words is also carried out, and words that the public understands are chosen, as in corpus 2 "President Vladimir Putin's method is solid,...by spreading wild animals...so that the citizens do not leave their homes….. Another country in +62….not animals wild beasts that are spread… even frogs and tadpoles are spread out". In the picture, you can see a lion roaming the highway. This example is still in the early stages of the pandemic, so people still did not have the awareness to limit mobility. The terms frog and cebong are a metaphor for the lingering rivalry between presidential candidate supporters during

the 2019 election. Jokowi supporters are known as cebong and Prabowo supporters are called kampret. However, the message also has a strong opposition lion vs. tadpole, an unequal contradiction.

Social Practice

Social practice is a particular configuration of discourse, genre, and style, which determines the potential, a distinguishing source for making meaning in texts. Texts are to be understood in an inclusive sense, not only written texts but also, for example, conversations and interviews and 'multimodal' texts (mixing languages, visual images, and sounds) from television and the internet.

In this study, spread hoax messages tend to have multi-text coherence, both writing with pictures, videos or using illustrations to strengthen the message.

For example, the hoax about lions was used to evict people from their homes, including a lion's photograph on a highway. At first glance, the writings and pictures are relevant and convincing. However, in everyday life, we know that lions never roam the streets.

In the video about "tire patching must be online," an officer is depicted talking to a tire repairman on the side of the road. In the widely circulated video, there was a conversation between the police officer and the tire repairman. The officer asked the tire repairman to close his business operations due to the social restrictions period and said that all business should be done online. The tire repairman answered the question, whether the tire patch should be online. This rhetorical question does not need an answer because it is so evident that it is a mockery of the tire patcher to the officers. The video was later twisted by stating that tire patches should be online. A statement that makes no sense because it is impossible to do.

In Corpus 6, a screenshot of a conversation between two people in the WA application is shown. The sender says "Habib Muha... (truncated)" which is probably expected to make people fill the truncated part into a complete name, namely Muhammad. The chat started with instructions to Islamic boarding schools to prepare air rifles to shoot drones that spread dangerous liquids into Islamic boarding schools. To make it more convincing, it is added with information about places that have become victims, namely in Madura and Pondok Pesantren Gontor Putri Mantingan. Finally, the recipient stated that he was ready to carry out the instructions to disseminate the message in the conversation.

The message is not only about the content, but the medium of delivery is also a message. This follows McLuhan's conveyed, "the medium is the message" (McLuhan, 1964). Messages in the WA application are impressed as something severe and must be followed up. The message also seems to be an organic message that is two people: Habib and someone else. Because it seems organic, this hoax becomes more convincing.

Social Events

Social events (and texts) are shaped on the one hand by social practices and social structures and on the other by social agents. One could say that events (and texts) are local and interactional produced by situated agents, but in a way that depends on the continuity of structure and practice. At the same time, texts have a causal effect on non-semiotics as well as semiotic elements of social life – i.e., how can they do ideological

Several things stand out in social events in this research, namely the use of religious sentiment, distrust of the government in handling the Covid-19 pandemic, and the 2019 election residue. The use of

Islamic religious sentiment seems dominant. Initially, there was pride to show that the coronavirus did not infect Muslims, so 20 Chinese people (the country of origin of the virus) converted their beliefs to Islam. Likewise with messages raise social concerns because there is a threat of drones that will spray poison at Islamic boarding schools. Corpus 3 also shows how the author of the message uses Islamic religious terms such as Allah, astaghfirullah, aamiin ya robbal alamin, the establishment of the caliphate. This message is contextualized in light of the health minister's request that the number of doctors killed by Covid-19 not be exaggerated.

In dealing with the pandemic, the government issued several policies, one of which was restrictions on mobility. This has a significant impact on people who have daily income jobs. This hoax is like mocking the government for not providing solutions to the economic aspects of the community. Another mockery is the hoax message pad stating that crazy people will not get the virus, so an effective vaccine should be taken from crazy people's blood. When the government struggles to limit social mobility, hoaxes emerge about Russia's success in using lions to repel people who disobey the mobility restrictions. Several hoaxes indicate distrust of the coronavirus as well as distrust of the government in dealing with the pandemic

One of the residues of the 2019 election is the polarization of society in two camps, namely Jokowi supporters and Prabowo supporters (Yustitia, Susilo, & Afifi, 2019). This is still perpetuated in hoaxes during the pandemic, where the term frog or tadpole is still used. This is not a trivial problem because it shows the people who can still carry out political reconciliation. Similarly, the term khilafah has emerged as one of the black campaigns in the 2019 election.This finding indicates that there is still a feeling of "us and they" in society.

CONCLUSION

CDA analysis on hoax content found that hoaxes were made as simple as possible so that recipients easily understood, agreed, and disseminated the message. Hoax creators also consider the multimodal aspect where messages must be combined appropriately between text, images, and videos. This makes the hoax message even more convincing. The more ultimate findings show several things that stand out: the use of religious sentiments, distrust of the government in handling the Covid-19 pandemic, and the 2019 election residue.

The weakness of this research is that it only examines hoaxes whose source is unclear, or if the source is clear, they are ordinary people. The government and mainstream media should also research hoaxes so that the public gets a balanced understanding.

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