
Manipulation And Persuasion Through Language Features In Fake News

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Abstract— This study attempts to describe the use of language features in hoaxes to manipulate facts and describe their persuasive power in influencing readers. This research is a qualitative descriptive study. This research data is documented from turnbackhoax.id. This site was chosen because it is one of the most popular hoax repellent sites in Indonesia. Documentation was the method of data collection. Data were collected then classified, organized, and then analyzed using theoretical concepts. Theory used to analyze language manipulation in this research is Barton and Lee's theory of language features and Searle theory of speech acts. Data and analysis are presented in tables with brief descriptions. The results of this study indicates that hoax maker use language features in manipulating facts, those are (1) acronyms and initialisms, (2) word reduction, (3) letters or numbers, (4) stylized/unconventional spelling, (5) emoticons, (6) stylized/unconventional punctuation, and (7) images or photographs. Furthermore, it is found the use of assertive, expressive and directive speech acts to build persuasive power to influence the reader. The results of this study can be used as a reference in seeing the characteristics of language manipulation on hoaxes so that people can maximize the use of their logic and intellectual as a system of verifying information to determine the truth of information, knowing the information is fact or fake, distinguishing an information is a hoax or fact.

Keyword: hoax; hoax maker; language feature; manipulation; persuasion

I. INTRODUCTION

Browsing information on digital media has become one of the needs of the community that causes raise the number of new online news portals. Content of the online news portal can be easily shared on social media. In 2018 the Press Council stated that online or cyber media was estimated to reach 43.300, but only 211 were recorded as professional media and qualified in 2014. The number was reduced to only 168 online media in 2015 (Nashrillah, 2018). Meanwhile, in January 2018 the Ministry of Communication and Information stated only 100 online news portals were verified (kominfo.go.id, 2018).

The ease way of browsing information

on digital media through gadgets is also one of the triggers of hoax easily produced and disseminated, especially through website and social media. Hoax is information that is not true, but is made as if it were true (id.wikipedia.org). Data from the Ministry of Communication and Information states that there are around 800.000 websites in Indonesia that have been indicated as spreading fake news (Pratama, 2016). Then in 2018 the State Intelligence Agency stated 60 percent of social media content was hoax (Meiliana, 2018).

Fake news makers on digital media use language as the instrument to manipulate facts and produce lies. Mey stated that the manipulation instrument most often used was language (Mey, 1994, p. 296) As a

communication device that functions to deliver information, language can influence the reader's ideas and can touch the emotions of the reader. Language has features and has a persuasive effect on its users. Barton and Lee state that youth languages in communication using digital technology are characterized by

the following features, namely acronyms and initialisms, reduction words, letters or homophonic numbers, stylized spelling, emoticons, and stylized/unconventional punctuation (Barton & Lee, 2013, p. 5). Look at one of the documented hoax from turnbackhoax.id below:

Table 1.

Documented hoax from turnbackhoax.id

"Lihat baik2..ini bukan gn.Fuji.di jepang...bukan juga pegunungan Alpen di eropa...tapi ini gn.Dieng Salatiga...Indonesia..suhu -9°C"

[Look carefully.. this is not Mt.Fuji.in Japan ... nor the Alps in Europe ... but this is Mt.Dieng Salatiga...Indonesia..temperature -9°C]

The hoax makers express the repetition of words using number "2" in the "baik2", punctuation in the form of the period "." in unconventional composition "...", and reduce the word "mountain" into "gn.". Hoaxes are produced and spread at aim of influencing the reader, certainly hoax has persuasive power.

A new language in communication in digital technology is characterized by the following features, namely (a) acronyms and initialisms, (b) word reduction, (c) letters or homophonic numbers, (d) stylized spelling, (e) emoticons, and (f) stylized/unconventional punctuation (Barton & Lee, 2013, p. 5).

Besides that, speech acts are classified into five types, namely assertive or representative speech acts, commission speech acts, expressive speech acts, declarative speech acts and directive speech acts. According to (Darmayanti, Nurhadi, & Yubiliana, 2014) characteristics of assertive are in the form of declarative sentences (delivery of information) which function is to inform about a fact, result, description, affirmation, and conclusion. The speaker uses his speech in accordance with reality. According to (Djarmika, 2016) assertiveness is all speech related to the speaker propositions, both true and false. Assertive is usually marked by verbs that imply "state", "say", "explain", "describe", "tell", "comment", "approve", and "provide information". According to (Yayuk, 2016) assertive speech acts relate to stating something, linking the speaker to the facts being told. In general, this speech act used to state something, express an opinion, claim, speculate, and report. Thus, assertive or representative speech acts linking the speaker to the truth of the proposition conveyed. This speech act is marked by the use or at least implies "say", "state", "explain", "suggest", "describe", "tell", "comment", "approve", "give information", "complaining",

"claiming", "criticizing", "reporting", and "reminding".

Furthermore, the commission speech act according to (Partana, 2020) is a speech delivered by a speaker to the speech partner about his willingness to do something, such as giving a promise to be done in the future. Commission realization is usually in a critical condition so that the speech partner gives confidence to the speaker. According to (Wicaksono, 2015) commission speech acts are speech acts to express intention to do something for the speech partners. The intention is done by the speaker with sincerity. These actions have not been carried out and will be carried out in the future. Commission speech acts are carried out by the speaker by stating a promise to the speech partner to do something. According to (Djarmika, 2016) commission speech acts are speeches where the speaker makes a commitment to take action in the future for the speech partner. Commission speech acts are usually marked by the phrase "swear", "promise", "make a pledge", and others. Thus, commission speech acts are delivered using diction that implies or contains promises, vows, offers, and contracts.

Expressive speech acts refer to the emotional feelings of the speaker. According to (Djarmika, 2016) expressive speech acts are marked by expressions of condolence, thanking, praising, insulting, saying goodbye, apologizing, blaming, and so on. So, expressive speech acts are emotional expressions of the speaker, for example the speaker expresses his feelings to the speech partner, the speech used is expressive. This expression is used to express things related to the inner feelings that are felt.

Next, according to Searle, declarative speech acts refer to speakers who reconstruct or change the reality in the world. Declarative

speech acts transform one condition into another condition. According to Searle, the declarative speech act category is a very specific illocutionary act. Declarative acts are carried out by someone who has a specific duty to do so in institutional work plans, for example judge who sentence defendants, officials or people who have positions inaugurating the event, priests who marry the bride.

The directive speech acts according to (Yule, 2006) are used to give orders to the speech partners. This speech act contains orders, requests, and provides advice. The form of speech can be in the form of positive and negative sentences. Verbs that are used imply instructions, such as ordering, instructing, asking, suggesting, prohibiting, inviting, confirming, and so on. According to (Thamrin, 2010) directive speech acts aim to produce an influence in the form of actions. (Darmayanti et al., 2014) added that directive speech acts are realized in the form of imperative sentences to give orders using performativity verbs. According to (Djatmika, 2016) to make speech partners take action or not take action, speakers will use directive speech.

Based on the description above, this study aims to describe the use of language features in hoaxes to manipulate facts and describe their persuasive power in influencing readers.

II. METHODS

This research is a qualitative descriptive study that describes manipulation and persuasion with language features in hoax. The object of the study is fake news that contains manipulative content. Data in this study were collected from turnbackhoax.id. Its source of content was from Forum Anti Fitnah Hasut dan Hoax (FAFHH). This site was chosen because it is one of the popular hoax repellent sites in Indonesia and it is managed by Masyarakat Anti Hoax Indonesia (MAFINDO). MAFINDO is an official organization that was established on 19 November 2016. The documentation technique is used to capture news that has been confirmed as a hoax on the site. Data that has

been documented then processed by through verification and classification. Next, the data is presented on tables with an analysis in the form of descriptions, and the last, composing the conclusions.

Theory are applied to analyze language manipulation in this research is Barton and Lee's theory that are characterized language features into (a) acronyms and initialisms, (b) word reduction, (c) letters or homophonic numbers, (d) stylized spelling, (e) emoticons, and (f) stylized/unconventional punctuation (Barton & Lee, 2013, p. 5). The second theory is the theory of speech acts from Searle which classifies speech acts into five types, namely assertive or representative speech acts, commission speech acts, expressive speech acts, declarative speech acts and directive speech acts. The theory is applied as a reference for analyzing the persuasive power of speech. Then, Suci and Indra Iswara added that the picture or photo was also used in hoax. Verifying photos can be done by using the search engine "Google Photo", using the Exif Viewers application from Jeffrey, or checking photos using the facilities from the site www.wolframalpha.com (Meinarni & Iswara, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on theoretical concept, it is found that hoax maker use language features as the instruments to manipulate facts. In data found the use of manipulative text and images that are different from the original content, composition of letters and numbers, unconventional punctuation, the use of foreign words. It is accordant as (Asya, 2013) state that the characteristic of manipulation are through a unit and category in the form of foreign words, euphemisms, figurative speech, inappropriate content with the original content, and different compositions. Data can be seen in table 2.


Table 2.
Data

Nomor	Data
1.	"Tanggapi People Power, UYM: Jihad Bela Prabowo "Mati Syahid", Namun Pasti Masuk Neraka!!"

[Respond to People Power, UYM: Jihad defense Prabowo "Dead Syahid", But Surely Go To Hell!!!]

2. "Begni cara mengobati penyakit asam urat,kolestrol,tekanan darah tinggi..
Bahan yg di gunakan..
1.minyak tanah 1 liter
2.garam dapur 1 bks
3.es batu 2 bungkus di hancurkan..Diaduk didalam tempat seperti Poto diatas lalu rendam kaki kita sampai semampu kita menahan rasa sakitnya..di ulang trus sampai 4 kali setiap hari..Selamat mencoba.."
- [This is how to treat gout, cholesterol, high blood pressure..
The material used..
1.1 liter kerosene
2.1 pack salt
3.2 pack ice crushed.. Stir in a bowl as in the photo above then soak our feet until we are able to withstand the pain..repeated up to 4 times every day..Let's try..]
-
3. "Believe it or not :
Sejenis binatang dinegara Arab yg suka tinggal di perkuburan, banyak org menyangka suara ini datang dr suara org tersiksa didalam KUBUR
Inilah suaranya menyerupai suara jeritan SIKSA
Menurut teman yg tinggal di Jepang, binatang ini namanya Suppon dn dimakan"
- [Believe it or not :
A kind of animal in Arab who likes to live in a cemetery, many people think this sound comes from the sound of tortured people in the tomb
This sound resembles the sound of torture screams
According to friends who live in Japan, this animal's name is Suppon and it is consumed]
4. "Untuk Kawan2 ku tersayang
Atas anjuran para Dokter, Menteri Kesehatan di Timur Tengah, maka dikeluarkan peringatan kepada para masyarakat muslim untuk mencuci kurma bersih2 sebelum dimakan.
Karena tahun ini banyak KELELAWAR hidup di pohon2 kurma dan memakannya. Kelelawar2 ini membawa VIRUS CORONA.
CUCILAH BERSIH2 kurma dari negara manapun juga sebelum dimakan.
Selamat dan Barokah Ramadhan 1440 H"
- [For my dear friends
As the advice of doctors, Minister of Health in the Middle East, a warning was issued to Moslem community to wash dates fruit before being eaten.
As this year many BATS live on date palms and eat them. These bats carry CORONA VIRUS.
WASH the dates of any country before eating.
Greetings and Barokah Ramadhan 1440 H]
-
5. "2 PATAHAN MEGA TRUST TEPAT DI BATUI DAN BALANTAK BISA MEMICU GEMPA DAN TSUNAMI SEPERTI DI PALU"
- [2 MEGA TRUST FAULTS IN BATUI AND BALANTAK COULD TRIGGER AN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI LIKE IN PALU]
6. "Innalillahi-wainnailaihi-raajiuun. Sy dikabari, anak bernama Harun (15) warga Duri Kepa, Kebon Jeruk Jakarta Barat yg disiksa oknum di Komplek Masjid Al Huda ini, Syahid hari ini. Semoga Almarhum ditempatkan di tempat yg terbaik disisi Allah SWT, Amiiiiiin YRA"
- [Innalillahi-wainnailaihi-raajiuun. I was told, a child named Harun (15 years old), a resident of Duri Kepa, Kebon Jeruk, West Jakarta who was tortured by a person in the Al Huda Mosque Complex, dead Syahid today. May the deceased be placed in the best place by Allah SWT, Amiiiiiin YRA]
-
7. "Lihat baik2..ini bukan gn.Fuji.di jepang...bukan juga pegunungan Alpen di eropa...tapi ini gn.Dieng Salatiga...Indonesia..suhu -9°C"
- [Look carefully.. this is not Mt.Fuji.in Japan ... nor the Alps in Europe ... but this is Mt.Dieng Salatiga...Indonesia..temperature -9°C]
-

8.

 **Iwan Ridwan Haria** 2 Mei pukul 09.31 · 🌐 Ikuti ...

Untuk Kawan2 ku tersayang 🥰❤️🥰❤️🥰❤️🥰❤️
Atas anjuran para Dokter, Menteri Kesehatan di Timur Tengah,
maka dikeluarkan peringatan kepada para masyarakat muslim untuk mencuci kurma bersih2 sebelum dimakan.
Karena tahun ini banyak *KELELAWAR* hidup di pohon2 kurma dan memakannya. Kelelawar2 ini membawa *VIRUS CORONA.*
CUCILAH BERSIH2 kurma dari negara manapun juga sebelum dimakan.
Selamat dan Barokah Ramadhan 1440 H.

9.

 **Srikandi Gerindra** May 23 at 6:10 PM · 🌐

RIP... selamat jalan sahabat MARGARETHA NAINGGOLAN,... Terima kasih ats perjuanganmu utk kita semua, walaupun kita berbeda keyakinan demi membela ketidakadilan... Almh ini meninggal kemarin pkl 19:15 dlm perjalanan ke Rumkit akibat kena gas air mata, dan berdiri di barisan depan umur 34 thn punya baby ber umur 4 bln 🥲

10.

Halal Pork
Suka Halaman Ini · 27 Oktober 2011 · 🌐

2 · 2 Komentari · 1 Kali dibagi

Suka · Komentari · Bagikan

Faisal Sajjad Syed Hadi Hasan Razak
Ahmed hahaha
Suka · Balas · Lihat Terjemahan · 5t

Alli Raza Shah Wif
Suka · Balas · Lihat Terjemahan · 5t


Tulis komentar... 🗨️ 📷 📧

Manipulation Using Language Features

Barton and Lee stated that various new languages in communication using digital technology are characterized by the following features, namely (a) acronyms and initialisms, for example "GTG" for "got to go"; "LOL" for "laugh out loud", (b) word reductions, for example "gd" for "good"; "hv" for "have", (c) letters or numbers homophones, for example "U" for "you"; "2" for "to", (d) stylized spelling, for example "I'm soooooooooo happy!", (e)

emoticons, such as :-) and :(, (f) unconventional/stylized punctuation, for example "!!!!!!!" or "....." (Barton & Lee, 2013, p. 5). The use of letters and numbers can be unconventional writing styles such as using full capital letters and repetition of words using number "2". Furthermore, (Meinarni & Iswara, 2018) stated that hoax also used (g) manipulated images or photos. The use of those language features in the data can be seen in table 3.

Table 3
The use of language features



Language Features	Number of Data	Use of Language Features
Acronyms and initialisms	1, 6	UYM (Ustad Yusuf Mansyur), SWT (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala)
Word reductions	3, 6, 7	Begni, bks, trus, yg, org, dr, dn, YRA, gn.
Letters or numbers	3, 4, 5, 7	KUBUR, SIKSA, Kawan2, bersih2, pohon2, Kelelawar2, VIRUS CORONA, CUCILAH BERSIH2, PATAHAN...DI PALU
Stylized spelling	6	Amiiiiin
Emoticon	8, 9	
Stylized Punctuations	1, 2, 7	!!, ..., ...
Images or photos	10	image "Halal Pork"

Persuasive Function

Based on the concept of Searle's speech act theory, it is found that hoax makers use language features in the form of assertive speech acts, expressive speech acts, and directive speech acts in conveying fake

information that contains persuasive power to influence the readers. Hoax makers use language to facilitate the distortion of reality, creating inaccuracies and ambiguity. The persuasive function of language features can be seen in the following table.

Table 4.
Persuasive function of language features

Speech acts	Language Feature	Persuasive Function
Assertive	UYM, SWT	convey fake information;
	Begni, bks, trus, yg, org, dr, dn, YRA, gn.	convey fake information with efficient word forms
	KUBUR, SIKSA, VIRUS CORONA	convey fake information; showing emphasis; attract reader's attention through the urgency and excitement
	PATAHAN...DI PALU	convey fake information;
	Kawan2, bersih2, pohon2, Kelelawar2 Image "Halal Pork"	convey fake information; convey fake information with manipulated image
Expressive		express sympathy; attract the reader's attention
		express empathy and sadness
Directive	CUCILAH BERSIH2	stating command or order

IV. CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the hoax makers use language features to

build manipulated content for creating distortions of reality, creating inaccuracies and ambiguity. The language features used consist of acronyms and initialisms,

reduction of words, letters or numbers, stylized/unconventional spelling, emoticons, stylized/unconventional punctuation, and manipulated images or photos. Furthermore, it is found the use of assertive, expressive, and directive speech acts to build persuasive power for leading the reader's ideas, influence the reader to share the hoax, or take action as the order of content of the information.

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