

Journalistic Photography as a Communication Media for President Jokowi to Spread Covid-19 Vaccination Information

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Abstract

This study analyzes photojournalism on President Jokowi's official account when disseminating vaccine information. This research uses a qualitative approach and analyzes photos using Roland Barthes' semiotics. Researchers found the results of the study that the news photo provided information so that the public followed the government's recommendation for a vaccine so that the pandemic would end soon and the impact of anxiety about fake news related to vaccines should be minimized because the Covid-19 vaccine was tested to be safe and halal.

Keywords: *Photojournalism, Semiotics, Vaccines, President Jokowi.*



A. INTRODUCTION

Currently photojournalism has become an important element in modern journalistic activities, its development is getting faster when digital cameras are found and many are owned by people, especially those who have duties as journalists. Journalistic photography has a role as a forum to convey information to the public in a precise, accurate and reliable manner. The existence of news accompanied by photos will certainly make the news easier for communicators to accept (Anggara & Supriadi, 2021).

Photos have an important role when news is presented, this opinion is the same as the opinion Ganti et al. (2013) which states that print mass media will only become boring dead pages if they are present without photos or pictures. Photojournalism is a communication process that involves used through photography so that photojournalism becomes news or information needed by the local, regional, national and international community delivered by photographers or photojournalists (Darmawan, 2005; Laba et al., 2015; Gardianto & Setyanto, 2019).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the government's challenges were even greater when the hyper-reality phenomenon emerged that demanded the government to deal with COVID-19 (Dzikri, 2020). This was stated by the Chancellor of Hasanuddin University in his writings in the book, *Sewing Hope in the Middle of the Covid-19 Pandemic* (2020). Hyper-reality can be a source of widespread fear and anxiety, because it can lead to the formation of public perceptions that social, economic and political instability will occur in Indonesia due to the failure to deal with COVID-19. To anticipate the above, communication is an important step to convey the information needed by the community in the midst of a very limited

situation. Especially information related to vaccination as the government's effort so that the Covid-19 pandemic can be overcome and provide defense and protection from various dangerous infectious diseases.

Currently communication is another importance in dealing with the pandemic. The very easy spread of fake news should be of particular concern. Fake news is very easy to find on various social media platforms, and instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook are no exception. The release of vaccine information is also accompanied by news related to the dangers of vaccines that could threaten the government's program to reduce Covid-19 cases in Indonesia. So, departing from this so that mass communication is the right choice to convey information to the public amidst the implementation of social restriction policies. Mass communication is also an alternative in responding to various problems that arise due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so that the process of social interaction continues.

One of the means that is considered effective for conveying mass communication to the public is through social media @jokowi, which is President Joko Widodo's official social media account, is an Instagram account that has many followers. This account has more than 38 million followers or followers with more than 2 thousand uploads. These followers are much larger than the followers of the Fan Page or President Joko Widodo's page which is also the official account of President Jokowi on Facebook which only has 10 million followers.

From this description, researchers see that the role of the government is important in providing information related to vaccine information in Indonesia. If it is not done well, it will be very crucial if the public does not receive unclear information. Especially during a pandemic like now which requires policy makers to always move quickly and make the right decisions. By paying attention to information that must reach the public clearly.

B. METHOD

This research is a qualitative research with research methods with descriptive analysis research type using Roland Barthes semiotic analysis theory as a reference in research. Descriptive analysis is a type of research that aims to explain research subjects in detail so that data can be obtained completely. An opinion was expressed by (Arikunto, 1998) that in general descriptive research is a non-hypothetical research so that in the research step it is not necessary to formulate a hypothesis.

From that opinion, the researcher uses a qualitative descriptive approach and type of research which is expected to be able to provide meaning that matches the phenomenon being studied, in this case how photojournalism is a message for the Covid-19 vaccine information media in Indonesia.

In this semiotics study, researchers analyzed photos of President Jokowi while administering the first and second doses of vaccine directly by understanding the principles that have been studied by semiotic experts. This was done in order to

minimize errors, the researcher confirmed the meaning of the sign with a caption from the @Jokowi Instagram page and observed the meaning of the photo.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Currently journalism is an element that has the power of communication. So that news and pictures can be a tool to convey information (Surahman, 2018). The meaning of the image will be analyzed using Roland Barthes' Semiotics approach. Among them are denotative meanings in the form of written meanings in the images studied, these meanings are the initial meanings that arise when someone sees an image. While the connotative meaning is the meaning formed from the interaction between the signs in the photo with feelings or emotions and the knowledge and cultural values of the reader that will give meaning. In the meaning of connotation, meaning will lead to five procedures, namely trick effect, pose, object, photogenia, and aesthetics. According to Mulyana (2010) in the myth there is also a three-dimensional pattern of markers, signs and signs. However, as a unique system, myth is built by a chain of pre-existing meanings or in other words, myth is a second level meaning system. In myth too, a sign can have several signifiers

Barthes' semiotic theory is almost literally derived from de Saussure's theory of language. Roland Barthes revealed that language is a sign system that reflects the assumptions of a particular society at a certain time (Sobur, 2003).

In the results, the researchers found that there were two photos of President Jokowi showing the public that he had vaccinated. The photo will be analyzed using semiotic theory according to Roland Barthes which makes two stages of semiotic significance, namely denotation and connotation. This denotation and connotation meaning will be analyzed from the photographs contained in President Jokowi's photojournalism. Here's a screenshot from the @Jokowi Instagram account:



Figure 1. President Jokowi's First Vaccine

On January 13, 2021, through President Jokowi's official account (Instagram), this photo was posted with 2,339,764 likes and 59,352 comments. This photo is accompanied by a note: *"Tekanan darah saya diukur, 130/67 mmHg. Normal. Lalu saya*

ditanya: pernah terkonfirmasi positif Covid-19, pernah batuk atau pilek beberapa hari terakhir, pernah mengidap penyakit jantung, atau penyakit lain seperti ginjal? Dan lain-lain. Semua saya jawab tidak. Lalu, lengan baju kiri saya disingkapkan. Dan vaksin pun disuntikkan. Saudara-saudara sebangsa dan setanah air. Pada pukul 9.42 wib pagi ini, saya memulai ikhtiar besar sebagai warga negara Indonesia untuk terbebas dari pandemi ini dengan menerima vaksin Covid-19. Vaksin Covid-19 inilah yang lama kita tunggu-tunggu dan baru disuntikkan setelah BPOM mengeluarkan izin penggunaan darurat, dan Majelis Ulama Indonesia menyatakan suci dan halal untuk digunakan. Saya berharap vaksinasi Covid-19 yang tahapannya sudah dimulai hari ini berjalan lancar“.

Table 1. First Vaccine

Signifier: President Jokowi, Doctor
Signified: Open arm, Syringe
Denotative: Doctor injects President Jokowi's arm
Connotative: The President shows a ready and relaxed sitting position when the vaccination starts.
Myth: A calm, relaxed face means that vaccines are safe

From the observations of the researchers, the news of the first vaccine was carried out by providing information that doctors would ask many things before the vaccine was started so that the public understood that the vaccine was carried out with various conditions that must be complied with. On the picture note it is also written that BPOM has issued an emergency use permit so that public confidence about security has increased. Another thing, if a lot of fake news is spread that vaccines are non-halal liquids, it has been refuted with a note in this picture that the Indonesian Ulema Council declares it is sacred and halal to use.

This image is accompanied by a brief but clear note of information. The expression on the President's face shows a sense of calm and relaxation so that the public can give meaning that the vaccine is safe and does not hurt. Showing vaccine news like this should increase the number of people who take the vaccine with the consideration that the country's leaders have made efforts so that the pandemic will end soon.



Figure 2. President Jokowi's Second Vaccine

On January 27, 2021 through President Jokowi's official account (instagram) this photo was uploaded with a note of the image: *“Sudah dua pekan lamanya kita menggelar vaksinasi massal Covid-19. Yang pertama, ditujukan kepada para tenaga kesehatan, dokter, perawat, dan yang lainnya, yang sehari-hari di garda terdepan penanganan pandemic ini. Bagaimana perkembangannya? Dari laporan yang saya terima, hari ini sudah ada sekitar 250.000 tenaga kesehatan yang telah menjalani vaksinasi. Memang terasa masih kurang, tapi dari hari ke hari kita membenahi manajemen pelaksanaan vaksinasi. Seperti hari ini, dalam sehari, vaksinasi sudah bisa dilakukan untuk 50.000 tenaga kesehatan. Pemerintah akan tetap berusaha mencapai target vaksinasi atas 900.000 hingga satu juta warga Indonesia setiap hari. Kita memiliki setidaknya 30.000 vaksinator di 10.000-an puskesmas dan tiga ribu rumah sakit di seluruh tanah air. Memang perlu waktu, tapi dengan pembenahan manajemen lapangan yang baik, Insya Allah, ikhtiar kita itu dapat tercapai.”* This news got 650,898 likes and 6,909 comments.

Table 2. Second Vaccine

Signifier: President Jokowi, Doctor
Signified: Open arms, Syringe, Halal writing on back screen
Denotative: Doctor injects President Jokowi's arm
Connotative: The President shows a ready and relaxed sitting position when the vaccination starts. By wearing a mask, you can see the lines under the eyes of the president smiling.
Myth: The majority of Indonesians are Muslims, so safety and halalness are very important things to consider

Pictures and picture notes provide information that President Jokowi not only urges the public to vaccinate but also does it directly. The second vaccine carried out by President Jokowi gave information that the government had a vaccine target so that the COVID-19 pandemic would end soon. In every uploaded image there is an inscription on the image that the vaccine is safe and halal.

The meaning of denotation, this photo shows the atmosphere of a doctor about to inject vaccines to President Jokowi, then in the second stage, in terms of connotation, it can be concluded that through this photo the photographer wants to convey that this was the situation at the scene when President Jokowi vaccinated. The President and Doctor were seen wearing masks and still feeling relaxed.

a. Trick Effect

At this stage the researcher observes whether there is an act of manipulating the photo or editing it in the form of adding objects or reducing objects. In the first and second photos, there is no manipulation or editing action on the photo. Whether it's subtracting or adding objects that can change the meaning and essence of the photo. The photographer uses a small lens to focus the activities of the doctor who will carry out the vaccination.

b. Pose

The second part contains several poses such as gestures and expressions shown by the President and the Doctor. The highlight of the face using the mask is

captured by the camera and displayed to complete this photo. In this pose, as is usual, the doctor bends down when he wants to inject a dose of the vaccine, while President Jokowi sits in a sitting pose and opens his sleeves for an injection.

c. Object

The objects in this photo make a composition that can lead to a certain interpretation, and each object or objects can also be interpreted to certain things. Like the use of masks and face shields, it indicates that the situation when taking photos is during a pandemic.

d. Photogenia

At this stage the researcher observes photographic techniques, related to how lighting and other techniques are used in taking photos. This photo is not embellished with additional lighting, the lighting used is direct light from sunlight. In addition, the researchers saw that the composition of light and color looks sufficient, not too dark and not too bright.

e. Aesthetics

Researchers observed both images as a whole. the photographer takes a narrow angle of view so that he can focus on the activities carried out by doctors and the President who will be vaccinated.

Overall, the connotative meaning of this photo is that the photographer wants to convey and describe what the situation will be like when the President will be vaccinated. From the description above, the researcher is of the opinion that although many fake news are spread, information about safe and halal vaccines has been conveyed through writings and pictures by the President. Thus, people need not hesitate anymore to act. For those who still feel uncomfortable because they think that injecting this vaccine will insert unclean objects into their bodies, the President's official account has announced directly that the vaccine is safe and halal. Another sign behind the news is that people must always wear masks, avoid crowds, always wash their hands, be diligent in exercising and sunbathing and always praying.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis that has been carried out to find out the meaning of journalistic photography as a medium of communication for President Jokowi in sharing information related to the COVID-19 vaccine, the researcher concludes that denotative and connotative meanings are obtained so that the public knows that the President has administered the vaccine and announced that the vaccine is safe and halal. Researchers understand that the meaning of an image can not fully produce the same meaning.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank Dr. Hasrullah, M.A. and Dr. Muliadi Mau, S.Sos., M.Si. The author also thank Hasanuddin University for the support so that the researcher publishes this paper and can be useful to be read by many people.

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