

Hot Issues in the Discourse on Citizen Journalism

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Abstract -- *With camera-equipped cellphones found everywhere today, nearly anyone is possible to collect, report, analyze and disseminate news stories and information in the process of citizen journalism. Democratic societies are demanding independent and relevant information in a wide range of quantity. The present study is aimed at identifying the hot issues emerged in the discourse of citizen journalism. Clauses are determined to use as the unit of analysis in figuring out the ideational meanings of the texts in the discourse on citizen journalism. The findings suggest that hot issues emerge in the discourse including the idea behind such a phenomenon, the way it distinct from conventional journalism, the way camera proliferation changes our lives in the realm of law enforcement, the conventional journalism's obligation towards citizen journalism as the former gets more and more relies on the latter in terms of the contributive content, and whether cameras lies when images are misled, cropped and enhanced. In addition, violation of privacy and bullying on line is another issue to address.*

Key words: citizen journalism, discourse, hot issues

I. INTRODUCTION

Neumayer et al (2015) conducted a study to explore activists' perspective and the way communication in social media is made use of by different actors. Ethnography inquiry and analysis of Twitter hashtags are combined to figure out the way they are materialized in social media. The consequences of using social media were better understood and despite the claim that Twitter hashtags belong to activists the police use them increasingly deconstructing their perspectives.

Duffy and Wissinger (2017) carried out a study about discourse's role on popular media. Not less than 200 articles were analyzed to find out the way creative work mythologies are circulated in social media. Realities about the demand for ideal labors had been hidden in the ideology of being free, fun and authentic. Image of glamour is resulted in these industries is helped by these myths.

The present study is concerned with the emergence of hot issues in the discourse of citizen journalism. It is aimed at explaining the issues addressed in the discourse of citizen journalism.

II. METHOD

It is assumed that in the discourse on emerging phenomenon called citizen journalism hot issues can be found to investigate. The object of this study is texts on citizen journalism explored in social media. The role of the researcher is to identify the issues in order to analyze and explain them. The method of collecting data includes the Internet browsing in particular social media dealing with the hot issues in the discourse on citizen journalism. The analysis of the data makes use of the theory of Field in systemic functional linguistics.

III. FINDINGS

The analyses of the texts result in information that can be interpreted in terms of the realization of the dimension of field, tenor and mode.

Register Analyses

In terms of field Text # 1 indicates that @Lambe Turah relies on the content contributed by ordinary people. The account has garnered 4.3 million followers. It fits the definition of citizen journalism as it collects, disseminates, and analyzes news and information by means of the Internet. With smartphone in hand nearly everyone today is able to become a citizen journalist. Citizen journalism plays a significant role in raising public awareness on important issues. However, it also creates a problem as it could violate privacy and bullies anyone online.

Text # 2 points out that Citizen journalism has gone beyond professional journalism to reach. It could make it happen due to the use of modern technology tools and the Internet by nearly everyone in creating content. Professional and formal training in journalism is not necessarily required to gain the opportunity. It is suggested that traditional journalism is outside looking whereas citizen journalism is inside looking. Both traditional journalism and citizen journalism has a place in the society. Since 1970s as Internet connected people in both developing and developed countries, events and activities could be reported and sent to television

broadcasting service by anyone as in the case of Jamaica's CVM Television stations.

Text # 3 shows that in the realm of law enforcement camera proliferation has changed our lives dramatically. Local department officers in the US were called for by the former President Obama to be equipped with badge cams. Although nearly everyone today has smartphones what happens during the police encounters remain in the dark. In a courtroom video evidence was be played out to prove whether a woman under arrest was guilty. Multiple versions of three videos were watched and listened to. The police video was different from the citizen video. The jury was in hesitation to make a decision: three video, three narratives.

Text # 4 evidenced that citizen journalists have replaced the role of freelancers. They are untrained and unsupported but they go to the war zones. The accidental journalists are armed with smartphone only but they often reach the events before professional get there. Mainstream media use the content provided by citizen journalists but they do not employ them let alone pay them. For this reason, mainstream media should have responsibility towards them. A duty of care should be realized for the citizen journalist whose content they use. Government agencies, private foundations, and international organizations should fund the training and education for citizen journalists for their best practice. In terms of Tenor, Text # 1, Text # 2, Text # 3, and Text #4 indicate that the relationship between the participants is relatively formal. The power relationship between the writer and the reader is equal. The text is constructed in non-authoritarian solidarity.

In terms of Mode, Text # 1, Text # 2, Text # 3, and Text # 4 indicate that unlike spoken language which use language as action, these texts use language as reflection, context independent. Unlike spoken language which is dynamic and as a nature of process, these texts are in a nature of product (synoptic). They are the result of monologic organization. They are final draft and polished with indicator of earlier draft removed.

IV. DISCUSSION

Discourse on citizen journalism has involved a number of texts. Four significant texts representing the phenomenon have been under the investigation of the present study. They include the practice of citizen journalism in Indonesia, a video footage circulated by a citizen in Jamaica, police misconduct that has been revealed by citizen videos with the dramatic and troubling evidence, and ethics and responsibility issues that have been questioned along with the fact that mainstream media are increasingly depend on the contribution from citizen journalism content.

Text # 1

In Text # 1 it is described that a major role in disseminating information and news has been played by social media in digital world today.

The arrest of Jennifer Dunn by the police because of her consuming crystal methamphetamine made headlines recently. Long before the news, however, a video featuring this infamous artist was posted on the Instagram *@Lambe Turah*. The content of the video shows Jennifer Dunn was being pushed and her hair was pulled by a young woman in a mall while she was standing in line. The young woman screamed at her questioning why she took her father away from her. She said loudly that she hated her so much.

Jennifer Dunn was known as a beautiful woman who is involved in love affair with married men whereas the young woman who attacked her is the daughter of a man who made the affair with Jennifer. *@Lambe Turah* is a gossip account which is famous for scandalous stories exposures involving high-profile individuals and celebrities. It is distinct from entertainment TV shows that employs paparazzi and reporters of their own, *@Lambe Turah* relies on the content contributed by ordinary people. The account has garnered 4.3 million followers. It fits the definition of citizen journalism as it collects, disseminates, and analyzes news and information by means of Internet.

With smartphone in hand nearly everyone today is able to become a citizen journalist. Citizen journalism plays a significant role in raising public awareness on important issues. However, it also creates a problem as it could violate privacy and bullies anyone online.

Text # 2

Text # 1 discusses a news release in CCN about a man who were reported to attack police was shot and killed in Jamaica. A few days later, however, a video footage was circulated by a citizen showing that the man was unarmed while beaten and eventually shot and killed.

Two policemen were arrested as a result of the footage. However, no one could reveal the identity of the citizen who videotaped the images. Sharp focus had been brought into by the citizen's action as an unprecedented level of access to information came into being. Uploading of photographs and videos to Internet as well as blogs and forums were then labeled 'citizen journalism.'

Citizen journalism has gone beyond professional journalism to reach. It could make it happen due to the use of modern technology tools and Internet by nearly everyone in creating content. Professional and formal training in journalism is not necessarily required to gain the opportunity.

It is suggested that traditional journalism is outside looking whereas citizen journalism is inside looking. Both traditional journalism and citizen journalism has a place in the society. Since 1970s as Internet connected people in both developing and developed countries, events and activities could be reported and sent to television broadcasting service by anyone as in the case of Jamaica's CVM Television stations.

There has been a debate on the emergence of the term citizen journalism. Some believe that it did not come into being prior the age of Internet, others assumed that it had existed since the eighteen century marked by newsletters and independent community papers. The roots can be traced back to the United States founding.

Text # 3

Text # 2 deals with the way video can help police and the public. It is assumed that the number of camera-equipped cellphones today has reached not less than three billion circulating around the world. Almost anyone at present is able to create and share videos. Consequently, visual information has practically awash the life today.

In the realm of law enforcement camera proliferation has changed our lives dramatically. Local department officers in the US were called for by the former President Obama to be equipped with badge cams. Although nearly everyone today has smartphones what happens during the police encounters remains in the dark.

In a courtroom video evidence was be played out to prove whether a woman under arrest was guilty. Multiple versions of three videos were watched and listened to. The police video was different from the citizen video. The jury was in hesitation to make a decision: three video, three narratives.

Reality and truth seems to be determined by timeline. Rodney King case that sparked riots in 1991 was the effect of playing video in real time. Four police officers were acquitted in the case. Unfortunately, the video was never played straight through by the defense attorney for the officers. The attorney had taken the images out context and the timeline was isolated. As a result, the narratives found in favor of the officers.

In revealing what really happened seems to be helped by multiple perspectives and the bigger number of videos. The more cameras we have the better contribution it will be in finding out what happened as no one stands in one place nor do one hold his focus on one spot.

This is complicated and expensive to the perspective of public policy. The resulting videos and who controls the cameras are dependent variables.

Police misconduct has been revealed by citizen videos with the dramatic and troubling evidence. Meanwhile cop-watching video captures only events of note. Public needs to monitor what happens and check of power need to be kept. What happened in front of a police officer can be recorded by badge-cams. However, the issue of privacy, protocols, storage and distribution come along with it.

In one's head images and language works differently. Metaphorically, faster highway is taken by images. Language and logical reasoning are slower in inspiring emotional response. One can be strongly convinced by images. One can easily understand images as images feel real without realizing that special effects in advertisement and movie has manipulated him.

Text # 4

In Text # 3 ethics and responsibility issues have been questioned along with the fact that mainstream media are increasingly depend on the contribution from citizen journalism content. Should the risks and safety of citizen media be protected by mainstream media? History of journalism had been marked by London bombing. Mobile phone images and citizen's eyewitness accounts contributed a lot in making the dreadful events known by public.

Citizen journalists have replaced the role of freelancers. They are untrained and unsupported but they go to the war zones. The accidental journalists are armed with smartphone only but they often reach the events before professional get there. In Syria, stories from risky zones were taken and reported by citizens. Journalist from America, James Foley, and Japanese journalist, Kenji Goto were murdered recently in the conflict zone. *Reporters Without Borders* reported that eight citizen journalists have been imprisoned and killed in 2015. This figure is lower than 2012.

Political problems also arise. Citizen journalists may be put in conflict with authorities when they cover demonstration, coup or riot. Antonio French from St Louis, for instance, was arrested when he tweeted and recorded videos police actions on demonstration in Ferguson.

Mainstream media use the content provided by citizen journalists but they do not employ them let alone pay them. For this reason, mainstream media should have responsibility towards them. A duty of care should be realized for the citizen journalist whose content they use. Government agencies, private foundations, and international organizations should fund the training and education for citizen journalists for their best practice.

V. CONCLUSION

New technologies have opened up new possibilities. Citizen journalism can be compared to film-making. In traditional film-making the director is in control and therefore it is a top-down structure. In traditional journalism, chief editor is in control of what his journalists do in the field. It is likely that the level of democracy has reached a point of no return. Crowd-sourced footage is used today to search for the truth and something interesting there.

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