# The Existence of Language Deviation in Online Language During the Covid 19 Pandemic

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**ABSTRACT**
This study provides data in the form of a small corpus on the use of online language in the Instagram microblog. The focus of this research is in the form of language distortion in the COVID 19 pandemic era. Instagram as a medium makes it easy for its users to communicate with other users for free. Instagram has an influence especially on languages that are created by the creativity of its users. This type of research is descriptive qualitative. The data used in this study used a small corpus, namely 200 comments in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and fragments from Instagram uploaded comments @Lambe_Turah which were taken randomly so that all comments were taken randomly from random uploads. The data were obtained by using the free listening method, engaging, and speaking with the note-taking technique. The results showed that linguistic deviations found on Instagram were non-standard capital letters, excessive use of punctuation marks, emojis, repetitive characters, laughter, abbreviations, and grammatical deviations. Online languages are believed to be creative and unique and these linguistic features indicate that online languages are a combination of written and spoken communication and have paved the way for online languages.

*Keywords: Online Language, CMC, Linguistics Deviation, Instagram.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid 19 pandemic felt by people in the world has had a very significant impact. This can be seen since the development of this virus has resulted in human interaction being mediated by technology-based communication devices. In the world of education, currently, teachers and students do distance learning. Likewise, with offices that use the system of working from home. All aspects around the community are very affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. This causes internet usage to increase.

According to We Are Social [1] there are 175.4 million internet users in Indonesia. This figure has increased by 17% or 25 million users when compared to 2019. According to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation [2] in 2018, it was 263.9 million. Therefore, this means that 66% of Indonesia's population can access the internet. When compared to 2019, this year We Are Social found an increase of 10 million Indonesians who are active on social media. The social media most accessed by Indonesian internet users is Instagram.

The increased use of the Instagram microblog site has resulted in a lot of productivity of new languages that have emerged as a result of the creativity of social media users. Instagram is used as a medium for long-distance communication.

[3] then initiated the term "Netspeak" to refer to the variety of languages used on the CMC platform. The term "Netspeak" is used to replace CMC because the two terms have different implementations: CMC places its focus on the medium while "Netspeak" refers to a language that displays unique features. Apart from "Netspeak", other popular terms that people often use to refer to the same language are online languages, internet languages, and digital languages. The uniqueness of Netspeak's artful, playful, and stylized features [4] makes Netspeak a rich language.

Unfortunately, unlike Crystal who considers "Netspeak" to be a representation of rich language, such creative ways are criticized as deviant spelling even

though the user may do it consciously due to several factors [5]

Language purists believe that electronic communication breaks the grammar of the correct language. Grammar in online languages should be understood as a linguistic drift even though many linguists believe that this is not the case.

The researcher considers that the productivity of language produced in online languages especially on the Instagram microblog is the creativity produced by language users as a result of the development of the language used by the community. Researcher consider some linguistic features in online languages to be acceptable, such as excessive capital letters, but it aims to show the tone the Instagram user wants. Then various laughs in order to distinguish the form of laughter that the user wants. Last, the urban / slang dictionary in which is researcher believe that online language in this linguistic feature needs to be appreciated because it could be that the language can help in the development of Indonesian.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in exploring the characteristics of online languages which focus on its non-standard linguistic features on the Instagram microblog.

## 1.1. Literature Review

Communication that occurs using device-based media is known as CMC (computer-mediated-communication) [6] CMC has grown rapidly, affecting the use of a complete language with its features (grammar and vocabulary).

According to [7] when a writer wants to make his language creative or inventive, he uses a language that is different from the conventional and everyday language of his day. Using unusual or original language can give readers unexpected surprises and make a strong impression on their minds. This type of creative use of language is technically known as language aberration. [8] argues that language drift is more visible in informal registers.

The feature set included in online language bias is typography, orthography, morphology, and syntax.

Online grammar is also different, as a new and still developing phenomenon that does not have "rules" because the patterns vary according to the platform and the situational context [9]. The explanation below provides a summary of features that contain typography, orthography, morphology, and syntax-based on what [10] suggested.

### 1.1.1. Typography

Typography refers to the use of non-alphabetic keyboard symbols such as numbers; repeated punctuation; and special symbols such as &, @, and others. Typography also includes non-standard capitalization and replacement of numbers or letters for words.

### 1.1.2. Orthography

Non-standard orthography includes abbreviations; phonetic motivated letter substitution (for example, d for t, z for s); spelling that mimics dialectical pronunciation; and spelling containing sounds like "heloooooo" or "heeeeiiii".

### 1.1.3. Morphology

When it comes to morphology, that includes truncation, blending, acronyms (Sans, PHP, Mantul, Kuy, Gils), semantic shifting, and conversion. These features are not typical for online languages but they are prolific on the internet, generating new words that pave their way to the Big Indonesian dictionary.

### 1.1.4. Syntax

When deviating from standard syntax, online language syntax is described as telegraphic and fragmented. In the informal style, sentence ineffectiveness such as plenary, ambiguity, the vagueness of the main elements of sentences, cumulative prepositions and words, are common in CMC. The cause of this ineffectiveness is a form of the author's creativity in expressing language that is not following standard rules.

**Table 1.** Relevant research

| Year | Researcher | Medium | Feature |
|------|-----------|--------|---------|
| 1991 | Ferrara.etc | Instant messaging | Omission of subject pronouns; elimination of ovulation; article deletion; dragged sentences; shortened words; |
| 2003 | Palfreyman & Al Khalil | Instant messaging | Use of offensive words; use of the Roman keyboard set to write words in Arabic; local dialect |
| 2004 | Baron | Instant messaging | Two-way communication; abbreviation; contraction; emoticon |
| 2008 | Tagliamonte & Denis | Instant messaging | Emotional abbreviations and language; lowercase for me and you; personal pronouns; amplifier; quotation system; future time; reference |
| 2016 | Villares | Tumblr | Grammar features; abbreviations and acronyms; typography; punctuation |

This research has been conducted by several researchers. Previous researchers also conducted research on language variations used on the CMC (computer mediated communication) platform. Previous researchers chose a medium in the form of instant messaging and tumblr with different linguistic features for this study.

## 2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach that aims to describe forms of language deviation in online languages, especially on the Instagram microblog.

The data collection technique was carried out using the technique of Simak Libas Bebas Cakap (SLBC). According to [11] this technique is carried out by listening to conversations on the Instagram microblog conducted by non-participant researchers and researchers only act as observers of the language used by the informants. The advanced technique used in this study is the note-taking technique, which is to note some relevant language forms from the use of the language found on Instagram. In this case, data collection on the data source is done using a small corpus, which is 200 comments taken from Instagram using random sampling so that all comments are taken randomly from random uploads. In this study, researcher focused on uploading the @Lambe_Turah Instagram account, which is an account that talks a lot about news in the world of actual entertainment. All texts are taken by rewriting and compiled into one document to form a small corpus. Relying on what [12] argues, the advantages of using random sampling are representativeness and generalizability.

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging data obtained from field notes and documentation, by organizing data into categories, breaking down into units, synthesizing, arranging into patterns, choosing which ones are important and what will be studied. , and make conclusions so that they are easily understood by oneself and others [13]. Data analysis in this study was carried out using qualitative content analysis methods to look for forms of deviations in online language from the Instagram microblog site. Data in qualitative content analysis is data obtained through data sources and will then be described, classified, and analyzed.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Capital Letters and Punctuation

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging data obtained from field notes and documentation, by organizing data into categories, breaking down into units, synthesizing, arranging into patterns, choosing which ones are important and what will be studied. , and make conclusions so that they are easily understood by oneself and others [13]. Data analysis in this study was carried out using qualitative content analysis methods to look for forms of deviations in online language from the Instagram microblog site. Data in qualitative content analysis is data obtained through data sources and will then be described, classified, and analyzed.
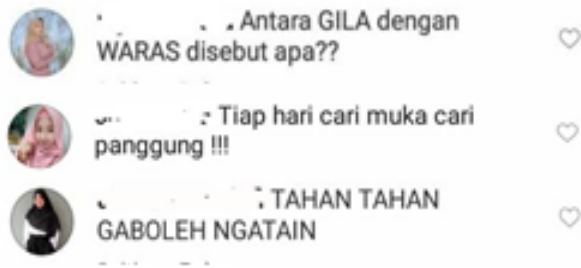
**Figure 1.** Example use of capital letters and punctuation

The various ways Instagram users use online language such as whether to use perfect grammar, shorten words, use capitalization, and excessive use of letters or characteristics for emotions have paved the way for online languages that are inaccessible with KBBI. In online language, when people write everything in capital letters, they are believed to be trying to emphasize what they are saying. Back in 1984, caps lock could mean a cheer or a shout, the current generation has made capital letters more special by giving "meaning" that is more like showing strong feelings. [8] states that online language is unique in that it can create true tone in written media, with written language characteristics, but with a conversational tone. By reading the capital letters, views of how that expression might be recorded in our minds. We can imagine the voices of people: whether they are screaming or whispering.

Another typographic feature is the non-standard use of punctuation. [14] suggests that punctuation on the internet aims to express emotions in communicative situations mediated by platforms that are not possible face-to-face.

### 3.2. Emoticon

The use of basic emoticons such as :( and :) and other emoticon punctuation representing faces and objects also occurred in the data sample, in line with [3] idea that one of the typographic characteristics that define online language is the use of emoticons. Emoticons serve to express users' emotions, generate positive ratings among users, but sometimes they can change the meaning of messages, or even cancel the proportional content altogether [15]. In addition to conventional emoticons that people often use such as :(, :), T_T, -___- etc. Emojis are also seen to give more color to Instagram users' online communication. People tend to use "□□□" instead of classic :). Emoji have succeeded in transforming ordinary colorless emoticons into luxurious, colorful modern graphics, giving people more options to express their feelings and making their conversations more interesting.



**Figure 2.** Example use of emoticon

### 3.3. Repeating and Substitution Letters

Repeating letters that are categorized as non-standard orthography are also considered as one of the defining characteristics of online language and electronic communication. Repetition of letters often manifests spelling behavior indicating loosened orthographic norms [12]. Non-standard orthographies include: (a) abbreviations (acronyms, truncations, vowels, etc.); (b) letter substitution with phonetic motivation; and spelling with repeated letters that produce sounds like "haaaiiiii" or "helloooo", laughter, and other sounds. The findings below show people's repeated use of letters on Instagram.
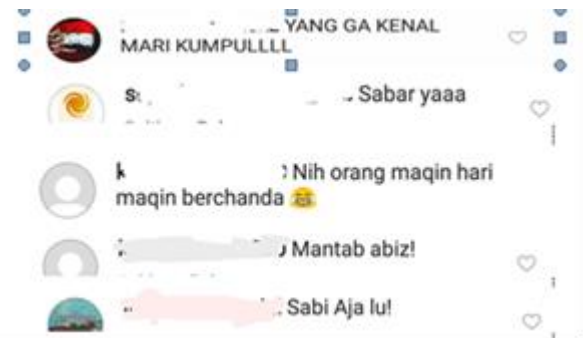


**Figure 3.** Example use of repeating and substitution letters

One thing that must be considered is that other features appear, but because the size of the corpus that is sampled is small, the number of appearances may not be as many as expected but most importantly, these features do exist.

### 3.4. Abbreviation

The form of abbreviation found in the online language on the Instagram microblog site varies widely, but generally, this abbreviation adapts from phrases or clauses that come in English such as "COD" which means "Cash on Delivery". Another abbreviation found is "ASAP" which means "As Soon As Possible" as well as "GPL" or better known as "Ga Pake Lama". Furthermore, "BTW" which means "By the Way" which means by the way. "FYI" or better known as "For Your Information", and "GWS" which stands for English "Get Well Soon" or hopefully get well soon.



**Figure 4.** Example use of abbreviation

Apart from abbreviated forms, online languages also have unique variations of acronyms in the form of acronyms. These words are generally a combination of words that contain relevant meanings, for example, "Baper" which means "Bring Feelings" which refers to someone who takes to heart all the words and actions of others. Furthermore, the use of the term "Bucin" often appears in the online language to mean "Slave of Love" which refers to a man or woman who is crazy about love, in this context that person is willing to do everything for the sake of his loved one. There is also the use of the term "Gaje" for "not clear", and "Gercep means an appeal to someone to take action quickly. The next typography is cutting words like the use of "Leh Uga" for "May Also" as an example (1: H). Another typography is the use of "Gils" and "Goks" for "Crazy" and "Gokil". The phenomenon of shortening a word and adding the letter s appears as in the example (1: I). There is also a phenomenon of vowel removal as found in (5: J) where there is an omission of the vowel "e" in the words "not yet" and "before".

### 3.5. Laughing

Laughing is a form of expression that is usually spoken directly by the speaker. Instagram users need to find a way to display that voice online. The form of laughter that appears in this microblog varies greatly, among others.



**Figure 5.** Example use of laughing form

There are many ways that online language users express their laughter. This form of laughter is not only formed through ordinary letters but some combine with numbers and also different languages. Interestingly, these variations of laughter also have different meanings. For example, in the example (4: e) "LOL" or "Laugh Of Loud" which shows a voice laughing out loud, in contrast to "Hahaha" laughter which shows not laughing. If we look deeper, it is amazing how people can discern the meaning of certain words that have the same purpose, and in this case, their purpose is to show laughter. Some use foreign languages as in the example (4: c) "55555" which is a number which when pronounced in Thai is "Ha" so that the number, when written repeatedly, contains the sound "Ha Ha Ha Ha".

### 3.6. Slangs/ Urban Dictionary

Urban Dictionary is an online dictionary founded by Aaron Peckham in 1999. It contains cultural and slangs words or phrases not found in standard dictionaries. Slang and other "informal" words seem to be characteristic characteristics of any informal communication whether written or spoken. Teenagers are known to have a unique vocabulary because they can create words creatively and then give them new meanings.
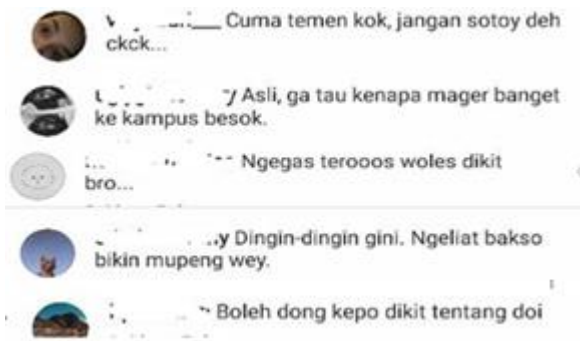
Figure 6. Example use of slangs/ urban dictionary

The form of slang that appears in online languages is "sotoy" as in the example (6: a) which means "pretentious". This word refers to someone who thinks he knows everything. There is also "sotoy" which means to show someone's distrust of information. Furthermore, "mager" which means "lazy to move" is a form of action for someone who does not have the passion to do anything. There is also the word "woles" which is a word to invite people to be calm and not tense. Next, the word "mupeng" which means "face want" is a form of expression of someone who wants something. Also, the word "kepo" is popular among online languages because it refers to a person's curiosity about other people's activities or secrets.

## 3.7. Syntax

The syntax of online languages deviates from the standard syntax because it is sometimes described as 'telegraph' and fragmented [12]. According to Putrayasa [16], sentence ineffectiveness can be caused by several factors, namely pleonasm, ambiguity, unclear sentence core elements, cumulative prepositions and words, and others.

**Table 2.** The form of language deviation with the analysis

| The Sentences | The form of Deviation | Analysis |
|---|---|---|
|  Harga kedelai naik.harga tahu mejerit | Ambiguity | This sentence has an ambiguous meaning because it is humans who can scream, so it is not correct to write "tofu price". Soya bean prices should go up, tofu traders scream. |
| | Pleonasme | The sentence contains excessive words. One of these words should be removed, for example, "para" or "women" |
|  Apalah daya kita para wanita-wanita pejuang skripsi. 15 menit Balas | Unclear core sentence elements | The word does not have the clarity of the core elements of the sentence because it only contains one word, it should be "You look beautiful" |
|  Cantik | The redundancy of prepositions | The preposition "from" in the sentence is redundant, it should be "I'm waiting for a reply to your message." |


Aku lagi nungguin balasan pesan darimu
12 menit   Balas

Although there is an international perception that computers and cell phones affect everyday language use and their effects are not good [17], many linguists now agree that online languages deserve a better place. Online languages are no longer the "barriers" of linguistics [18] or "linguistic breakdowns" of that generation [19]. [17] argues that it is not people's slack attitude towards spelling and grammar but, it is characteristic of the so-called "Anyism" language. However, Randall (2002) believes that online language is unique in that it is not just a new way to exchange messages, provide notes, or send letters. The ability to combine writing and speaking that online languages have is invaluable and unique. It is a creative language.

We make use of a dynamic new communication medium complete with its unique characteristics [20], [3], [8]. This research aims to find the characteristics of online languages that focus on deviations and reveal that in pop culture, with the help of technology, people's creativity in using language increases. Language is not only a tool for communication, it is also a tool for reflecting the thoughts of its speakers. The formation of words and the creation of new words are popularized by online communities, who are mostly teenagers in social networks, mainly because of the existence of the funny word, memes, word games, and certain other types of writing [21].

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## 4. CONCLUSION

In a small corpus consisting of 200 comments on Instagram posts, the language feature that is considered a "deviation" from the Indonesian language that occurs is the use of non-standard capitalization, or in other words excessive word letters and non-standard punctuation. Researcher argue that the use of online language is the creativity of its users. When people over-capitalize online media, they want to create a tone of voice that can't be "heard" directly through speech. The overuse of punctuation marks also performs almost the same function as making sounds. Another distinctive feature of online languages is the use of emoticons, repeating letters, laughter, abbreviations, and grammatical irregularities. These features reinforce the claims of many linguists against online languages who say that online language is a combination of spoken and written language. It's amazing how people can produce the tone of voice that should be spoken using the writing feature.

Little data in a small corpus represents the population. The larger the corpus, the more varied the findings. The small number of data samples in the discussion section can be increased if the research is carried out based on a larger corpus. Because this study is only a small part of a larger study on the characteristics of online language, researchers will create a larger corpus so that their findings can be more

representative and generalized. It is interesting to observe how language changes like that. How language develops over time and creates new registers is something that often escapes our attention even as linguists. The analysis of this research is expected to describe how digital media influences people and directs them to create a "new type of language", which combines spoken and written features. Further research in the field of online linguistics still needs to be done as technology and language do not stop developing.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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