



Semiotics Analysis of Covid-19 Vaccine Photos in Waspada Newspaper

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Abstract. The semiotic study seeks to uncover the meaning of the message and goodness, as well as the significance of the sign on the news of the COVID-19 immunization photo published in the Waspada Newspaper. This analysis is based on denotative and connotative meanings and myths. The data used are images of medical personnel performing COVID-19 immunizations for youngsters using a semiotic analysis approach, because semiotic analysis explores how mankind understands things that cannot be confused by explaining them. News of photos of COVID-19 vaccinations for children shows that photos of people's activities who are enthusiastic about participating in government programs to comply with health protocols when the COVID-19 pandemic hits Indonesia cannot be separated from the city of Medan. From the results of observations, it is proven that the news of the COVID-19 vaccination photo organized by the government can be a solution to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus and prove that the public cares so much about health. This element of concern for health can be seen in the planning of taking pictures during the child's vaccination activity. The composition in focus on the point of interest (main object) in the image and the arrangement of a number of objects by the photographer in setting the photographer's position by taking into account the distance between them. To provide health care, the picture shoot results are also displayed in the form of a large-sized display (close-up).

Keywords: Semiotic Analysis · Human Interest · Photo Journalism

1 Introduction

Dr. Siti Nadia Tarmizi, a vaccination spokeswoman for the Indonesian Ministry of Health, said on the website Sehatnegeriku.kemkes.go.id that there was a 1% decrease in new weekly cases and a 14% decrease in deaths compared to the previous week. Based on the transmission situation and response capacity, nationally, Indonesia is in the category of community transmission level 1 with moderate response capacity and moderate vaccination. Seeing as the current situation is very dynamic, the government needs to monitor it continuously and implement policies that are in accordance with the level of this situation, especially with the current situation where mobility and interaction between people are increasing and the emergence of new variants that can lead to a new wave at a later date. Sehatnegeriku.kemkes.go.id, retrieved December 5, 2021.

The term “mass communication” or “communication” is defined as a channel, namely “mass media,” which stands for “mass communication media” [1–3]. Mass communication is one form of communication activity carried out using mass media (mass media of communication) [4–6]. Mass communication is communication with the masses (audience or target audience) [7–10]. The masses here are intended as recipients of messages (communicants) who have heterogeneous social and economic status with respect to each other. In general, the mass communication process does not produce immediate feedback but rather delays it by a relatively short time.

Pool in Wiryanto [11] defines mass communication as “communication that takes place in interspersed situations.” When there is no direct contact between the source and the receiver, the communication message flows to the receiver through mass media channels, such as newspapers, magazines, radio, film, or television. Basically, mass communication refers to communication that occurs via the use of mass media (print and electronic media). Because mass communication relies on the establishment of the word media for mass communication at its inception (media for mass communication, namely media produced by modern technology).

Print media, which is static media that prioritizes visual messages, consists of sheets with a number of words, pictures, or photography, in color arrangement and white pages. The main function of print media is as a vehicle for delivering messages and, at the same time, as an entertainment medium that can satisfy the feelings of beauty of the viewer. Print media are documents that record all the events in people’s lives, which are captured by journalists and then converted into information in the form of words, pictures, photography, and so on. Newspapers and magazines are mass-print media commonly used for advertising. Newspapers have a great advantage over most of their competitors because they are accepted as the most trusted medium of mass communication [12].

Businesses of all sizes, from major national organizations to tiny merchants, can benefit from newspaper advertising. Advertising generates more than 70% of newspaper revenue and occupies more than 50% of total newspaper space. [12] is the study of the role of signs in social life, according to Ferdinand de Saussure. He investigates the structures, norms, and conventions that enable these symbols to be meaningful. Connotation and denotation can be identified in photos or photographs, according to Barthes. The photo’s denotation is what’s in it; the photo’s connotation is how it was shot [13, 14]. Semiotics is the science or analytical approach of analyzing signs, where signs are the instruments we use to find our way in this world while being in a position surrounding and among humans. Semiotics, or semiology in Barthes’ terms, seeks to investigate how humans use objects (things). In this scenario, usability (to signal) should not be mistaken with communication (to communicate). Meaning entails not simply using objects to convey information, in which objects spontaneously communicate, but also a systematic system of signals. In one of his writings, *The Photographic Message* [15], he mentions that implications in a photograph might originate through six techniques, which are divided into two categories.

First, direct engineering that has the potential to influence reality itself. This engineering covers trick effects, poses, and object selection. *Second*, engineering is included in the field of aesthetics, which includes photogenic, aesthetic, and syntactic components.

Some important elements that must be met in photojournalism are: (a) trick effect (photo manipulation) is the process of modifying a photograph by adding, deleting, or changing items in the photograph so that it becomes an entirely different image with a different meaning. (b). Possessive gestures, attitudes, and expressions of items that are based on a specific person's facial expressions and have a specific meaning. (c). Objects are objects or objects structured in such a way that they can be associated with specific thoughts. Bookshelves, for example, are frequently associated with intelligence. (d). Photogenia is the skill of capturing photographs in such a way that the final images are seasoned or adorned with lighting, exposure, and printing procedures. Colors, blur methods, panning, and motion effects are also available. (e). Aesthetics is concerned with the overall composition of an image, which gives rise to a specific meaning. (f). Syntax is typically present in a succession of images exhibited under one title, when time does not reappear in each shot, but rather throughout the full photo displayed, especially if it is associated with the primary title [16–18].

The Waspada newspaper presents a variety of photojournalism news, one of which is found in photo news accompanied by photo captions to clarify the contents of photo news. This national newspaper also covered events that occurred around North Sumatra, one of which was the news of child vaccination photos in January 2022 in the context of the Indonesian government's program to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the city of Medan. Major disaster events that hit in various countries, including Indonesia, are called COVID-19 for the community. Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting research on photo news in the event of child vaccination in Indonesia, which is published in Kora Waspada, because so far, photo news is a picture of real life in terms of photojournalism. Of course, there are no settings or object engineering so that the events that occur are according to the photographer's wishes; everything happens naturally. So, with spontaneous photojournalism, it contains the meaning of the hidden sign behind it. This Study purpose to analyze the meaning of the messages contained in the news of children's vaccination photos during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia and the meaning behind the signs on the news of children's vaccination photos in the Waspada Newspaper.

2 Methodology

The method used is a qualitative descriptive approach using semiotic analysis theory about the meaning in the mass vaccination photo news during the covid-19 pandemic in the Waspada Newspaper. Semiotic analysis is a sign system that reflects the assumptions of a certain society and a certain time [19, 20].

3 Result and Discussion

Waspada newspaper presents this photo news in its Friday, December 31, 2021 edition by taking a wide horizontal shot from the front of the object, which indicates the atmosphere of medical staff injecting vaccines to children to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus so that the moment is dramatic and emotional from this important disaster event.

This photo also shows the various styles and reactions of children when vaccines are injected by medical staff.

The parents, at the time of accompanying, seemed so strong to encourage their children to be afraid of being injected, so the news of this photo looks dramatic. This photograph of a child's vaccination was used as the front-page headline for the Waspada newspaper. As a result, it can be observed that Waspada newspaper wishes to depict the conditions in the event of injecting children's vaccinations, as well as the thrill of children's reactions when they are injected with vaccines. It can be seen that there are those who cover their faces with their hands, and some are confident when injecting vaccines held by medical officers at the hospital. The University of North Sumatra is located in Medan City.

News photos are presented by Waspada newspaper to its readers by displaying photos that have emotional and dramatic value (Fig. 1).

Denotative Meaning

This photograph depicts the many conditions of the dramatic, emotional moment of this significant occurrence, as well as distinct forms of body gestures and reactions. By mimicking a child's face full of fear when the vaccine is injected by a medical officer, the children look like they have hope for change. It is capable of combating the viciousness of the COVID-19 virus after receiving a vaccine injection.

Connotative Meaning

As previously noted, meanings in simiotic photographs can emerge through six techniques, which are divided into two categories. For starters, engineering can have a direct impact on reality. Tricks, positions, and object selection are all part of this method. Second, engineering is a subset of "aesthetics," which includes photogenia, esthetics,



CHILDHOOD VACCINATION: Initial vaccination of children aged 6 to 11 years at the University of North Sumatra Hospital (USU) Thursday (30 December 2021) Children's vaccinations carried out by the Indonesian Pediatrician Association (IDAI) North Sumatra on the first day as many as 950 children were vaccinated against COVID-19 . /Andi Aditya's photo

Fig. 1. Photo News: Friday 31 December 2021 Edition "Child Vaccination"

and syntax. It will first be described for trick effects (photo manipulation), such as adding, deleting, or changing items in a photograph so that it becomes an entirely different image with a different meaning. In fact, photojournalism is not permitted because, after all, photojournalism is defined as a photograph taken solely on facts and without alteration.

Photojournalism captures all types of spontaneous activities or situations. However, if it is limited to cropping or adding illumination to objects, it is just natural. This is consistent with what Waspada Newspaper's photo editor, Surya Efendi, said: "Manipulation is confined to cropping, and lighting settings are normal in taking photo objects, as long as they do not undermine the meaning of the authenticity of the photo." A medical officer injects a child's immunization, as seen in the illustration. At that time, the photographer is in a position close to the object of injecting a vaccine that is administered by a medical officer to children, because the visuals (images) required to publish the front page of the Waspada newspaper are required to be close-up images so that it is clear that the reaction to the object of the vaccine injection was carried out by medical officers, so cropping was necessary to show details or symbols of objects in the photo (interview, Monday, January 31, 2022).

If no photo adjustments like deleting, adding, or changing items are undertaken, the image above appears. There is only minor cropping. When medical officers inject immunizations into children in Medan City, this is designed to sharpen or focus the environment and scenario. As a result, the reader's attention will be drawn to the main object due to the reduction in space. The cropping technique can still be used on the photo's right side. Although it looks a little cut off in the position of a mother who can only see part of her body while holding her child, but most of the pictures are representative and the dramatic atmosphere at the time of the child's vaccination is quite clear. This is done so that the density of the composition in the photo is sufficient to represent the existing news, because just by looking at it, the reader can already feel the situation and picture of the news, so that the meaning of the news is strong in the reader's mind. Then, at the bottom and left of the image that can still be streamlined, up and to the side, but not done, because it intends to describe the situation that occurred when the officer and the child's reaction to holding back fear when the needle entered his body. So not all cropping whose purpose is to fulfill one of the requirements of a news photo, namely 5W+1H, where the points of interest (main object) are, so three of the five points can be summarized in one photo, namely who (who) is the officer when injecting vaccinations to children, Where (where), the child vaccination event took place in Medan City and what (what), in the sense of what was done or happened, namely that medical officers vaccinated children.

Second, poses are movements. Attitudes and expressions of objects that are founded on a person's stock of signs and have a specific meaning. The attitude shown in this picture shows how dramatic the reaction of children when facing medical workers who vaccinate them is. The caring attitude of the medical staff towards the child and the reaction of the child when they receive the vaccine are so integrated that a sense of concern for health to fight the spread of the COVID-19 virus is valuable, and they want to keep the situation safe and secure so that it remains conducive. For example, if someone who is a member of the committee and the medical team works hard and

gets valuable attention from the results of his life by giving something useful, then that person will nurture and maintain a sense of peace in their soul. This happened as in the picture of the implementation of mass vaccines for children in the city of Medan, which seemed to be running smoothly.

Third, objects are objects or an arrangement of a number of supporting objects arranged in such a way that they can be associated with certain ideas. The displayed image, the object is associated with certain ideas. In the photo, it is linked to a message of resistance against the spread of COVID-19 by administering a mass vaccine to children aged 6 to 11 years. Where many people gathered at one point, namely at the University of North Sumatra Hospital (USU) Medan to get vaccines from medical officers facilitated by the USU Hospital.

Fourth, *photogenia* is the skill of taking photographs in such a way that the final images have been “tasted” or embellished with lighting, exposure, and printing procedures. Color, blur, panning, and motion effects are also available. The lighting approach in this photograph is demonstrated only through the use of natural sunlight. Because the shooting took place during the day, there was no need for a flash, fill inlight, or backdrop lighting because the light required by the camera was adequate. The process of light in hot weather is known as exposure, and the corresponding action in this photograph takes place outside with a lot of light coming in. As a result, exposure is solely dependent on natural light from the sun, with aperture scales ranging from f 2.8 to f 3.5 depending on available light and shutter speeds ranging from 1/125 s. The play of light colors in the room, which is the background of the object in the photo, and the white and light brown colors in the photo of the medical room signify the atmosphere of attention being focused on the child, whose face looks grim with fear. It is quite evident in the image for the medium-angle approach since the focal point of the lens of the photographer’s camera lies on the object of the youngster being vaccinated. Because the photographer wishes to capture the ambience and location of the object. So, that photo news can describe an important event, which rarely uses blurring techniques and is only done for photos that are human interest and factual. The meaning captured is that there is clarity about the events that are happening; nothing is exaggerated (natural).

The fifth concept, *aesthetics*, is concerned with the overall composition of images that give rise to specific meanings. The combination of objects with a symmetrical background in this photograph is loaded with images of medical officers giving vaccines to youngsters aged 6 to 11 years at the University Hospital of North Sumatra, accompanied by their parents, during the mass vaccine implementation in Medan City. The rest is filled with background, which is none other than part of the medical room building where the COVID-19 vaccine is being implemented. The photo was taken at a medium distance, with the aim of focusing on the main object of the child receiving the vaccine from the medical staff of the University of North Sumatra Hospital, thereby narrowing the view of the reader. This is done to show the main object of the child receiving a vaccine from the medical officer by displaying the color of the lights and the white background of the hospital medical room, at least grabbing the reader’s attention. The position of the camera is horizontal to capture the object and the atmosphere in the photo. Such a composition can give the reader feelings of emotion, empathy, or sympathy for the event of implementing a mass vaccine for children aged 6 to 11 years at the University

Hospital of North Sumatra. But on the other hand, because it is a moment that must be shown to the media, which will later be conveyed to the public, the main object of a child receiving a vaccine from a medical officer attracts the attention of the readers of the Waspada newspaper, which also creates a sympathetic impression on the reader. In essence, from a technical point of view, the composition of the photo is sufficient to describe the current situation.

Sixth, the syntax is typically found in a series of images published under a single title, where the time no longer shows in each photo. However, among all of the photographs exhibited, there are a few that the researchers studied based on what was written in the photo description. Coherence, sentence form, and pronouns can all be used to study syntax. In this photograph, there is a temporary word that serves as a link between children aged 6 to 11 years who are taking part in the COVID-19 immunization and medical officers from the University Hospital of North Sumatra.

4 Conclusion

From the overall composition of the photo, it is clear the photographer wanted to show the government's concern for the visual implementation of vaccinations for children aged 6 to 11 years carried out by medical officers at the University of North Sumatra Hospital, as an effort by the Indonesian government to carry out resistance and anticipation of the spread of COVID-19 to the community in Medan. Waspada newspaper is one of the largest national print media in the city of Medan, so it maintains its dedication to delivering information to the entire community through photo news. So, in photo news, it is necessary to highlight the appearance of photos that function to complement the news in print media. This is because in print media, photo news, or in other words, photojournalism, is one of the attractions for readers. Photojournalism with more human interest will be able to convey the feeling of reading every sense of awe, sympathy, joy, or sadness, thus creating a special interest for readers to continue to follow the news or information broadcast by Waspada newspaper.

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